FINNISH LAPLAND

A SHORT GUIDE FOR TOURISTS

PUBLISHED BY
THE FINNISH TOURIST ASSOCIATION
Finnish Lapland is an extensive, sparsely-inhabited region where chains of fells, desolate plateaus, enormous forests, wide swamps and rapidly-flowing rivers alternate. There are less lakes here than in other parts of Finland, the most important being Inarinqärvi, which is at the same time one of the largest in Finland. The scenery of Lapland has its especial charm for tourists, and since the present roads were constructed, regular daily motor-bus connections arranged and the inns by the wayside brought up to modern requirements, the Lapland tourist route has become one of the most interesting the country can offer. Excursions can be made along numerous less-used roads branching off from the main Rovaniemi-Petsamo route, each interesting in its own way; for such excursions, however, travellers should be specially equipped.

Mosquitoes are the bane of Lapland in the low-lying, damp areas, appearing most profusely in July. Tourists’ equipment must include pitch or lemon oil, which is rubbed on the unprotected parts of the body. A mosquito net of especially close texture and a mosquito cap are also used. Travelling dress must protect the wrists and legs. It should be remembered that the Lapland mosquito is not, like certain tropical varieties, a microbe-bearer, but is harmless. On motor-trips the tourist is quite secure from them, and all bedrooms are suitably protected.

Rovaniemi Urban District (hotels: Hansa, 13 r., 25-35 mks; Lipponen, 10 r., 30-40 mks; Schroderus, 10 r., 25 mks, etc.), situated at the junction of the Kemijoki and its tributary the Ounasjoki flowing down from the north, 4 kms south of the Arctic Circle. The population of the district is about 5,400; the district is developing rapidly and forms the traffic centre of the whole of Lapland, »The Capital of Lapland», from which roads radiate in different directions. A railroad is also in course of construction east
to Kemijärvi. Two great markets are held there annually, one February 18th to 20th and the other at Midsummer; people arrive from great distances; for the winter market buyers of furs even arrive from abroad. — Opposite Rovaniemi on the other bank of the Kemijoki rises the Ounasvaara hill (216 m.), from where the midnight sun can be seen at midsummer and where skiing and bobsleigh competitions are held in the winter.

There is a regular motor-bus traffic from Rovaniemi north along the Ounasjoki to Kittilä (157 kms), from where the road continues to Muonio, east to Kemijärvi (87 kms) and Kuolajärvi (188 kms), southeast to Kuusamo (190 kms) and west to Ylitornio (136 kms).

The total length by road of the journey Rovaniemi-Petsamo (Trifona) is 525 kms. On the first day the stage Rovaniemi-Ivalo (295 kms; about 11 1/2 hours) is made; the night is spent at Ivalo, and on the following day the final stage, Ivalo-Petsamo (230 kms; about 10 hours), is completed.

Leaving Rovaniemi we first proceed over the combined road and railway bridge over the Ounaskoski rapids to the left bank of the Kemijoki and across the Suutarinkorva bridge to the right side again. From here the road leads northeast past Olkkavaara (232 kms) and Olkkajärvi (right) to the village of Vikajärvi, from where the Kemijärvi road continues northeast, the Petsamo road turning north and passing through wild and sparsely-inhabited areas along the course of the Raudanjoki. — 93 kms Vuojärvi, near which point (92 kms) the first real mountain of Lapland, Pyhäunturi (539 m.) can be seen dimly in the east. — The road leads on to the shore of Kutinen, the western tributary of the Kemijoki, and continues to the village of Sodankylä (130 kms) at the junction of the Kutinen and Jesiöjoki. One of the sights of the village is an old church of the 18th century near the new church built later. 5 kms south of the village is Tähtelä, the Finnish Scientific Society's magnetic and meteorological observation station. — From Sodankylä the road passes north through stretches of wilderness, following the course of the Kutinen. The Sattasjoki is
crossed by a ferry, and at Peuraniemi the Suvanto ferry takes us to the left bank of the Kitinen. The magnificent Nattastunturi fells (547 m.) loom into sight in the northeast. — 220 kms the Lapp village of Vuotso. — The scenery becomes more rugged; the road approaches the ridges of the Maanselkä watershed; Raututunturi (550 m.) can be seen to the northeast. — 260 kms Laanila, where an attempt was made at the beginning of this century to commence gold-washing on a large scale, with but poor results. — From Laanila the road leads up a steep slope and over the open Kaunispää fell; from here there is an extensive view of typical fell scenery. From Kaunispää we descend to the region north of Maanselkä, where the waters flow towards the Arctic Ocean. — Near the village of Tömänen we arrive at the valley of the Ivalojoki, flowing into Inarinenjärvi.

295 kms village of Ivalo, situated on the bank of the Ivalojoki at the junction of the Petsamo and Inari highways. The Finnish Tourist Association’s guesthouse, modernly equipped, is situated here, and at this guesthouse and at the Ivalo inn, nearby, tourists on the way to Petsamo can stop for the night. Motor-boat excursions can be taken from Ivalo on the beautiful Inarinenjärvi.

From Ivalo a road leads northwest through lovely scenery to the village of Inari (40 kms) situated at the eastern end of Inarinenjärvi; here one can see on Sundays the Lapps who have arrived for the church service.

From Ivalo the Petsamo road continues northeast near the shores of Inarinenjärvi, glimpses of the bays in the lake being caught now and again from the road. — 348 kms Virtaniemi (Finnish Tourist Association’s inn) on the bank of the Patsjoki near the point where the river flows out of Inarinenjärvi; angling, for which permission can be obtained at the inn. — The road continues through uninhabited regions, crosses the former Finnish-Russian border near Nautsi inn (378 kms) into the Petsamo area and runs along the Patsjoki near the Norwegian border past Hevosjoki to Höyhenjärvi (398 kms). From here the road passes between
Kaskamajärvi (left) and Kaskamatunturi (348 m.; right) to Pitkäjärvi (425 kms) and continues via Porojärvi to Salmijärvi (455 kms), which is a village of considerable size on the shore of the sound uniting Salmijärvi Lake in the Patsjoki River and Kuotsjärvi lying farther east. There is a motor-boat connection north from Salmijärvi to Kolttaköngäs (see p. 7). From Salmijärvi the Petsamo road skirts Kuotsjärvi and continues east. After Kuvernöörinkoski (471 kms) the region becomes more mountainous until we arrive at the valley of the Petsamonjoki, where vegetation again becomes more luxuriant. — 505 kms Yläluostari monastery in the valley of the Petsamonjoki (Finnish Tourist Association’s inn); angling. On the right a road leads to the Greek Orthodox monastery, the fine church with its sacred relics being worth a visit. From Yläluostari the road follows the Petsamonjoki to Alaluostari (518 kms), which is the administrative centre of the Petsamo area; the post and telegraph offices and the military barracks, etc., are situated here; there is also a Lutheran church. North of Alaluostari is the peasant village of Näsykkä, and farther the village of Parkkina, which is situated at the upper end of the 15 km. long Petsamo fjord and is the most densely-inhabited centre in the Petsamo area. At Parkkina there are a Greek Orthodox church, an elementary school, a hospital, a bank (branch office of the Kansallis-Osake-Pankki), etc. The road follows the shore of the fjord north to the harbour of Trifona (525 kms; Finnish Tourist Association’s inn), from where there is a steamer service to Kirkenes (see p. 8) in Norway and to Vaitolahti (see p. 8), and where the motor-bus service now terminates, and continues 8 kms farther north to Liinahamari on the shore of the fjord, where the real deep-water harbour of Petsamo and an hotel are under construction. Liinahamari will then become the traffic centre of Petsamo.

The Petsamo area came under Russian influence at the end of the 15th century. In the 1550’s the monk Trifon founded a Greek-Orthodox monastery there, which became the centre of Russian
rule in the district. During desultory warfare between the Finns and the Russians, a leader of the Finnish farmers, Pekka (Juho) Vesainen, led an expedition from the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia to the Arctic coast and destroyed the monastery in 1589. It was only re-erected last century.

The ownership of the Petsamo area has been the cause of lengthy strife. Negotiations finally led to Petsamo being united to Finland by the Dorpat Peace Treaty of 1920 between Finland and Russia, Finland thus gaining a path to the Arctic Ocean. Petsamo was first formed into a temporary province, but is now united to Finland as a county.

The area of Petsamo is 10,470 sq. kms and the population about 2,300; a considerable number of the inhabitants are «Skoltje» Lapps, whose means of livelihood are reindeer breeding and fishing. The majority of the inhabitants are Greek-Orthodox.

**Salmijärvi—Kolttaköngäs.**

From Salmijärvi (see p. 6) there is a mail motor-boat service northward along Patsjoki to the village of Kolttaköngäs (about 3 1/2 hours), situated on the Finnish-Norwegian border. From Salmijärvi we first arrive at Kontiojärvi, from where the two-forked Saarikoski rapids lead to the 9 km. long Töllevijärvi; a roller track has been constructed on the eastern side of the rapids, along which the motor-boat is transported past the rapids. Töllevijärvi is a beautiful lake surrounded by fells; the fine rapids of Jäniskoski commence at its northern end, and a roller track has been constructed beside these rapids also, on the Finnish side. Below Jänisjärvi the journey is continued down the swift current to the last mighty rapids in Patsjoki, Kolttaköngäs waterfall, just above which we land. From here there is a 1 km. walk down the western bank to the Lapp village Kolttaköngäs (Finnish Tourist Association's inn); Greek Orthodox church; angling. Here both banks of the river are Finnish territory.

The village near Kolttaköngäs is also called Boris-Gieb after the old church built there in the 16th century by St. Trifona in memory of the Christian princes Boris and Gleb who were murdered about 800. Near this church stands the new church, built in the 19th century.
From Kolttaköngäs the journey can be continued to the Norwegian town of Kirkenes, situated at the mouth of the Patsjoki on the shore of Bok fjord. The journey can be made either by motor-boat from Kolttaköngäs to the village of Elvenes on the Norwegian side and onward by a Finnish motor-ship leaving for Kirkenes twice a week, by motor-bus leaving for Kirkenes twice daily, or by motor-boat direct to Kirkenes. Kirkenes is the terminus of the Norwegian coast mail steamer service, and it is therefore possible to continue thence southward down the Norwegian coast.

A motor-ship service is maintained twice weekly (about 7 hours) between Kirkenes and Petsamo (Trifona). From Bok fjord the ship proceeds north to the Arctic Ocean and continues east along the coast, stopping at the village of Vuoremi situated at the mouth of the Vuoremijoki forming the Finnish-Norwegian border and turning into the Petsamo fjord; the journey ends at the harbour of Trifona (see p. 6) on the shore of the fjord.

**Petsamo—Vaitolahti.**

Once a week a motor-vessel plies between Petsamo (Trifona) and the village of Vaitolahti (about 10 hours’ journey), situated at the northern end of the cape of Kalastaja saarento. The Finnish-Russian border passes across Kalastajasarento; the western shore belongs to Finland, the eastern part of the cape to Russia. The ship first stops at the Maattivuono fjord, piercing the foot of the cape, and then at the low Heinäsaari islands, interesting owing to the profusion of bird life to be found there. The journey is continued to the village of Pummatami, situated on the southwest shore of the Pummatami fjord, which penetrates into the middle of Kalastajasarento, to the village of Kervanto on the northern side of the fjord, and skirting the end of the cape, to Vaitolahti, (Finnish Tourist Association’s inn), situated behind the cape on the very border of Finland.