



FINNISH FRIEND PROGRAMME

Handbook for exchange students

The Finnish Friend Programme does not only offer you an opportunity to experience everyday Finnish life and culture but also helps to adapt to new surroundings by connecting with a welcoming Finnish friend. You will be matched with a local from the Rovaniemi region to then share your culture with each other and spend time together.



Matching friends

The Finnish friends can be of different ages and at different stages of life. When matching the participants, interests, hobbies, language skills and more are taken into account.

What's in it for me?

- make new (local!) friends
- expand your horizons
- get to see life from the perspective of Finns
- learn more about the Finnish everyday life and culture
- learn Finnish
- be an ambassador of your home country
- lots of fun

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Good practices

A first meeting is arranged on behalf of the programme. After that it is up to you to organise free-time activities together.

You can:

- meet for coffee or drinks
- go on walks
- cook (e.g. traditional food)
- watch movies
- go on trips
- play board games
- go to museums & concerts

Keep in touch

Exchange your contact information with your new friend as soon as possible and make sure you have a common way to communicate.

Keep in mind

All participants are volunteers and you are an independent young adult. They are not responsible for your overall amusement in Rovaniemi, instead you shall organise the get-togethers jointly.

"I am totally satisfied with my friend family programme and would not hesitate to recommend my friend to join this programme hoping that they are lucky enough to meet a very nice family as I was."

– exchange student

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Common challenges

As in life in general, things do not always go as planned. If something unexpected happens, make sure to inform your new friend about it. In case you are planning to drop out of the friend programme, please contact the programme leaders.

Spending time with a Finnish friend is lots of fun but sometimes feelings of hesitation emerge. This is very normal and will usually pass with some time and patience, much like a culture shock does.

These are common challenges:

- language barriers
- long distances
- only one person in the family is seemingly excited and willing to use the foreign language in the beginning
- sudden lack of time: You might realise that there are lot of things you need to do and that you have a limited amount of time. In these moments try to remember your Finnish friend and initiate you do something together.

Do not forget -
challenges exist to be
overcome and
there is no adventure
without a little dare! :)

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact us here:

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