Rovaniemi, the Official Hometown of Santa Claus®



International Media Kit 2016-2017

Rovaniemi Marketing & Tourism Ltd.

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1. Welcome to Rovaniemi, the Official Hometown of Santa Claus®



Rovaniemi, the hometown of Santa Claus, is situated on the Arctic Circle at the heart of the Barents region, in Finnish Lapland. Known as the capital of Finnish Lapland, Rovaniemi offers a unique combination of peaceful nature, Nordic culture and urban activity.

Lapland's eight seasons and rich cultural heritage create an excellent framework for versatile tourism services. Rovaniemi is one of Finland's main destinations for foreign travellers; in numbers of overnight stays by international visitors, it ranks third after Helsinki and Vantaa.

A great variety of annual events, ranging from the Arctic Lapland Rally and the Arctic Design Week to the Santa Claus' departure celebrations (titled Santa is on his way after a popular Finnish Christmas carol), attract visitors and media from all over the world to Rovaniemi. In recent years, Rovaniemi has featured prominently in several international rankings: listing the world's best Christmas destinations, Forbes (2011) placed Rovaniemi in the top ten and CNN (2012) right at number 1! Lonely Planet named Rovaniemi Europe's best winter destination (2012) and, even more recently (2013), the world's second best holiday destination for families.

Welcome to Rovaniemi - No Ordinary Capital!











2. Key Facts and Figures

Rovaniemi is the provincial centre of Lapland, situated at the meeting point of the rivers Kemi and Ounas, on the Arctic Circle. A university town and a popular destination for tourists, Rovaniemi is the commercial, administrative, educational, cultural and sports centre of the region.

- In terms of geographic area, Rovaniemi is the largest town in Europe, spanning 8017 km² in all.
- This total area comprises 7601 km² of land and 415 km² of water.
- The number of citizens is 61,838 (31 December 2015). Including the additional 8000 students (2015 approximate) whose main place of residence is outside of Rovaniemi, the total number of inhabitants rises to 69,838 (31 December 2015).
- More than 2.4 % of the town's residents have foreign citizenship. The total number of different nationalities exceeds 90. (31 December 2015).
- 86 % of residents live in the centre of town.
- Rovaniemi is Finland's 16th largest town.
- The town is surrounded by approximately 30 villages, most of them situated near the rivers Ounas and Kemi.
- Rovaniemi has been the administrative centre of Lapland since 1938.
- Rovaniemi was granted town status in 1960.
- The average temperature is 0.3°C.
- The coldest month of 2015 was January with an average temperature of -10,4 °C. The warmest month was August with an average temperature of +14,5 °C.
- At the end of 2014, age distribution was as follows: 0-14 years, 16.9 per cent; 15-64 years, 65.9 per cent, 65 and older, 17.2 per cent.
- Of citizens 15 years and older, 75.4 per cent had completed secondary school at the end of 2014 and 31.4 per cent had graduated from college or university.
- In 2012, the number of business locations was 3267.
- The employment rate of citizens aged 18-64 was 64.9 in 2013. The unemployment rate was 15,5 % (2013). The percentage of pensioners was 22.1 % (31 December 2013).









- The service sector accounted for 82.9 per cent of jobs, the processing industry for 13.5 % and primary production for 2.4 %. For 1.2 per cent of jobs, the sector was unknown as of 31 December 2013.
- The distribution of jobs by segment is as follows: private services 44 %, public services 39 %, construction 9 %, industry 9 %, agriculture and forestry 3 %.
- 29,982 households

Further information:

City of Rovaniemi, Facts, http://international.rovaniemi.fi/en/Services/About-Us/General-information Regional Council of Lapland, Statistics, http://www.lapland.fi/en/lapinliitto/en/statistics Statistics Finland, http://tilastokeskus.fi/index_en.html

3. Location and Accessibility



Rovaniemi is easy to reach all year round. The town is situated at the crossing of three national main roads and European motorway 75, which intersects the centre of town.

Rovaniemi has excellent connections to all major European and Asian airports, with three to six daily flights to and from Helsinki. Many tour operators have seasonal charter flights to Rovaniemi, mainly during the Christmas and winter season. The airport is only 8 km from downtown Rovaniemi and 80 km from Ranua.

In addition, the two towns are connected by several day trains and two night trains every day. Coach services operate between Rovaniemi and other destinations throughout Lapland, including Kemi and the ski resorts.

Distances from Rovaniemi:

Helsinki 835 km Inari 332 km Kilpisjärvi 428 km
Oulu 220 km Kiiruna 300 km Murmansk 500 km
Narvik 500 km Nordkapp 600 km North Pole 2,500 km









Further information on traffic connections:

Flight connections: Daily flights between Rovaniemi and Helsinki are offered throughout the year by Finnair (www.finnair.com) and Norwegian (www.norwegian.com).

Train connections: Finnish railroads are operated by the state company VR. Rovaniemi is easy to reach by rail from many Finnish towns, with several trains running to and from Helsinki every day (www.vr.fi).

Coach connections: Coaches are not only an option for reaching Rovaniemi from the south; they are also the only means of public transport that connects the town with the northern parts of Lapland (www.matkahuolto.fi).

Travelling by road: Rovaniemi is also easy to reach by car from all directions. Up-to-date information on road conditions is published by the Finnish Traffic Administration (http://www.liikennevirasto.fi/web/en).

Rovaniemi airport: www.finavia.fi/en/rovaniemi/







4. Facts about Rovaniemi Tourism



Since 1920's tourism has played a significant role in Rovaniemi. The busiest tourist season is winter from November until April. The winter season counts for approximately 50-60 percent of the total number of visitors. Economically the winter season is even more significant. Christmas tourism has shown significant growth in the last years. The share of Christmas flights in the total international passenger traffic is 62 %. The

biggest attraction is Santa Claus, but the growth of Christmas tourism is largely based on the Christmas programmes offered by the area's activity services as well as the Christmas season events. In winter, the most popular activities are skiing, snowmobiling, reindeer and husky dog safaris and winter driving schools.

In 2015, accommodation numbers in Rovaniemi reached 470 230. At 54,5 per cent, the occupancy rate is higher in Rovaniemi than in Finland as a whole (48,3 %). The average price of accommodation in 2015 was EUR 50.33.

Visitors from Europe currently account for 80 per cent of all overnight stays by foreign guests, but their percentage has been shrinking. At the same, visitor volumes from Asia are on the rise. Travellers from abroad account for more than 54 per cent of all overnight stays in Rovaniemi. In nationwide accommodation statistics, the town ranks third behind Helsinki and Vantaa in terms of visitors from abroad.

- The total number of overnight stays was 470 230.
- Foreign visitors accounted for 258 143 of these, Finnish guests for 212 087
- Accommodation statistics by purpose: 70,7 % leisure, 29,3 % business.
- In 2012, 20.7 % of all overnight stays in Lapland were reported in Rovaniemi.
- Most international visitors in 2015 came from Germany (24 112 overnight stays), France (23 942),
 Russia (22 211), the United Kingdom (21 753) and Israel (17 844).
- Seasonal division of overnight stays (2015): winter 58 % (November April), summer 32 % (June –
 September), others 10 % (May and October).
- In 2015, the average price of an overnight stay was EUR 50.33.









- The occupancy rate of accommodation establishments in Rovaniemi was 54,5 % in 2015.
- The number of flight passengers registered at Rovaniemi Airport in 2015 was 478,342.
- The accommodation capacity of Rovaniemi is 1400 rooms (3300 bedplaces)

5. Rovaniemi Highlights

5.1 Being Able to Meet Santa Claus Every Day of the Year



Santa Claus has lived in Finnish Lapland longer than even he can remember. His original home is on Korvatunturi, a fell, where many of Christmas' greatest secrets still lie hidden.

In 1927, a good friend of Santa, known as Uncle Markus, accidentally revealed the whereabouts of Santa's home and curious searchers began to follow his trail. Of course, they failed to find the home of Santa Claus, which is one of

the world's closest guarded secrets. However, Santa didn't want to disappoint his friends. Accordingly, half a century later, he welcomed them for the first time to Rovaniemi at the Arctic Circle. He could not have chosen a better place. As well as being the home of Santa's magical world, the Arctic Circle also acts as a gateway to a slower-paced, enchanted time.

As the number of guests grew year by year, Santa finally made an historic promise: Rovaniemi would become his official home town, a meeting place for all friends of Christmas, and Santa himself would be available to meet them on every day of the year.

As the Official Hometown of Santa Claus^(R), Rovaniemi is one of the very few places on Earth where Christmas can be experienced all year round. Every day, Santa welcomes visitors from all over the world at the Santa Claus Village, 8 km north from the centre of Rovaniemi.

Letters from around the globe are on display at Santa Claus' Main Post Office, where visitors can order letters from Santa and send their own holiday greetings, stamped with a special postmark. Its official









address is: Santa Claus' Main Post office, Santa Claus Village Rovaniemi, Tähtikuja 1, 96930 Arctic Circle,

Finland. The post office is open every day of the year.

Key figures

• In 2015, there were more than 350 000 people who visited Santa Claus in the Santa Claus Village.

Of all the visitors, top five countries were Finland, Japan, China, Russia and Italy, followed by

France, Germany, Hong Kong and Spain.

Santa Claus receives more than 500,000 letters per year, from approximately 200 different

countries.

• Most of the letters come from China, Poland, Italy, United Kingdom, Japan, Finland and Russia.

Further information:

Santa Claus information, www.santaclaus.fi

Santa Claus Village, www.santaclausvillage.info

Santa Claus Office, www.santaclauslive.com

Santa Claus Main Post Office, www.santaclaus.posti.fi

5.2 Crossing over or under the Arctic Circle

Rovaniemi is situated directly on the Arctic Circle. This latitude marks the southern boundary of the Arctic

region. The current latitude of the Arctic Circle is approximately 66.5°N, but it moves north at an annual

rate of ca. 15 m. While there are several countries in the Arctic Circle, only Finland has a major city at this

latitude - Rovaniemi, whose airport's main runway bisects this invisible line. Crossing the Arctic Circle has

become a highly popular initiation ritual for travelers. Santa Park in Rovaniemi is the only place in the world

to undercross the magical Arctic Circle.

Further information:

Santa Park: www.santapark.com/en/santapark









5.3 Experiencing the Eight Seasons in the Rhythm of Nature



According to Lapp and Sámi tradition, the year contains eight seasons rather than four. A simple division into spring, summer, autumn and winter would not do the annual cycle justice in the far North, where seasons of transition — spring-winter, summer-spring, autumn-summer and winter-autumn, so to speak — have their own distinct characters.

The eight seasons of the North make Rovaniemi an ideal place for cherishing the nightless nights of summer and the unique twilight of winter. On clear nights, the midnight sun is visible in Rovaniemi from 6 June to 7 July. The first snowfalls usually occur in October.

Rovaniemi and its surroundings offer a wealth of outdoor experiences. In the North, nature plays an important part in people's everyday lives. For many locals sport and so-called functional exercise, such as berry picking and mushrooming, are favourite pastimes. There are many nature trails in the vicinity of Rovaniemi.

Further details:

Lapland, Above Ordinary - The eight seasons of Lapland:

http://www.lapland.fi/en/lapland/nature/eightseasons

VisitRovaniemi website: www.visitrovaniemi.fi









5.4 Joining One of the Great Events



Rovaniemi offers plenty of entertainment, including several international events around the year. Examples include Arctic Lapland Rally, Arctic Design Week, the Grand Christmas Opening and Santa is on his way. Moreover, Rovaniemi had the honour of arranging the IX Winter Swimming World Championships on 20–23 March 2014.

Further information:

The event calendar of Visit Rovaniemi, www.visitrovaniemi.fi
Arctic Design Week, www.arcticdesignweek.fi
Arctic Lapland Rally , www.arcticrally.fi

5.5 Getting Sporty in Ounasvaara



Rovaniemi boasts a versatile sports culture. The town's 380 sports facilities range from skating rinks to swimming halls and snowmobile routes. The total number of sports clubs is over 200.

Ounasvaara is Rovaniemi's green oasis – or white in winter, when the hill becomes a resort for skiers and snowboarders.

Sports institute Santasport at Ounasvaara offers first-class training in a wide range of sports. Its facilities and services include an ice hall, indoor fields for football and athletics, well-equipped gyms and a cross-country skiing track supplemented with artificial snow as well as a spa, a sports club, a bowling alley, the Funpark for kids and accommodation.









Ounasvaara facts:

- 7 slopes, 4 lifts, altitude difference 140 m
- 100 km of cross-country skiing tracks (50 km illuminated)
- Children's skiing park; snowboarding street and halfpipe
- Ski rental, ski school, restaurant
- Winter and summer sledging
- Downhill cycling park
- Popular viewpoint, several nature trails
- Ski jumping

Further information:

Ounasvaara ski resort: www.ounasvaara.fi/en Santasport homepage: www.santasport.fi

5.6 Enjoying the Cultural Scene of Rovaniemi



Creativity is one of Rovaniemi's key values. Rovaniemi offers a range of cultural and experience services, a flourishing tourist sector and high-quality art education, from workshops to university courses. The region is home to a host of firms in the creative sector, which engage in content production, advertising and communications, the film industry and industrial art and design.

Music and Art at Korundi House of Culture

Korundi House of Culture has a fascinating history. This building is one of the few in Rovaniemi that survived the Second World War. Built in 1933, the premises saw long service as a depot for postal vehicles. After the war, an extension was added to the depot, using bricks salvaged from the ruins strewed across









the city. In 2009 and 2010, a new round of extension and renovation work was performed, headed by local architect studio Juhani Pallasmaa.

Two art organisations of Finnish and international interest and importance lie at the core of activities at the Korundi House of Culture: The Chamber Orchestra of Lapland and the **Rovaniemi Art Museum**. The museum's Jenny & Antti Wihuri Foundation Collection is one of Finland's finest collections of modern art. The museum's key exhibition theme is the Nordic perspective and the Arctic regions. Temporary exhibitions focus on international and local phenomena, based on a wide variety of visual artwork.

The Chamber Orchestra of Lapland is the most northerly professional orchestra in Finland and the European Union. It has 18 players and conductor John Storgårds has been its Artistic Director since autumn 1996. The orchestra frequently gives Finland's first performances of works by international composers and has premièred pieces by a number of leading composers.

The Arktikum Museum and Arctic Science Centre



Arktikum was opened to the public in 1992, during Finland's 75th Independence Day celebrations. The building was designed by the Danish architecture group Birch-Bonderup & Thorup-Waade. Designed by Bonderup and Lehtipalo, the crescent-shaped new annex was completed in autumn 1997. The museum's most striking feature, its glass corridor, is 172 metres long. This tube serves as the "Gateway to the North".

The Provincial Museum of Lapland's permanent exhibition, Northern Ways, introduces visitors to the story of how people and nature have prevailed in the North. Taking visitors on a tour through history from ancient times to the present day, the exhibition gives a rich account of the causes and effects of local cultural development. The Arctic Centre's main exhibition, the Arctic in Change, is an interactive introduction to the cultures, living conditions and natural life of the northern region. Temporary exhibitions at Arktikum provide fascinating further perspectives on the Arctic theme.











Alvar Aalto's architecture and town plan

Alvar Aalto (1898 – 1976) had a major influence on the architecture of Rovaniemi: he designed several of the city's buildings and created many of its plans. In 1961, Aalto sketched out a three-building configuration to function as the city's administrative and cultural centre: a library building, concert and congress halls, and a town hall. Together, this cluster of buildings forms a monument in its own right. Moreover, known as the Reindeer Antler, Rovaniemi's town plan was designed by Alvar Aalto, in 1945. This much discussed plan was named after the 'picture puzzle' outlined on maps by the city centre: bounded by green areas the city's traffic zones, which form the limits of the heart of Rovaniemi, are reminiscent of a reindeer antler. This antler

joins together with the Rivers Ounas and Kemi to form a reindeer's head. An eye is formed by the city centre sports field, while the crown at the tips of the antler is depicted by residential streets that meander in the manner of reindeer trails.

Other parts of the Rovaniemi townscape designed by the same architect include the Korkalorinne residential area, know as the garden city of the Arctic Circle, the Aho residential and business premises on Koskikatu and Jaakonkatu, and the Maison Aho private residence (Pohjolankatu 32).

The Pilke Science Centre

Pilke is an example of ecological wooden construction at its best and is a showpiece of Finnish architecture. The façade is made of dark-stained spruce. Space, natural light, riverscapes and undulating hills, and a sense of space are the key elements of Pilke House's design. The building has 650 m2 of exhibition space, as well as office space for 135 workers. Pilke was designed by Architectural Studio Artto Palo Rossi Tikka Architects, APRT. The building houses an interactive and wide-ranging exhibition on the importance of forests and a variety of workshops are offered.

Further details:

Arktikum: www.arkitikum.fi

City of Rovaniemi: http://international.rovaniemi.fi/en/Services/Cultural-Services/Architecture/Alvar-Aalto

Korundi House of Culture: www.korundi.fi

Pilke Science Center: www.sciencecentre-pilke.fi









5.7 Discovering Rovaniemi as the Conference Destination in Lapland

Rovaniemi has long traditions as a meeting place. These traditions go far to ancient history: Rovaniemi is located in the junction of two great rivers, which has made it easy to reach by boat or by road. People gathered here to trade goods and exchange news. Nowadays most guests arrive by airplane of train and travel to Rovaniemi for both leisure and business purposes. Rovaniemi has pioneered incentive travel business in Lapland in 1980's and is today highly desired MICE destination.

Altogether Rovaniemi has more than 100 different meeting rooms and venues. The largest conference capacity is 5200 people and there are several venues suitable for 100 - 450 people, not to forget all the inspirational venues like stylish log houses, igloos, kota-huts and saunas.

In 2013, accommodation capacity (city centre, Ounasvaara and Santa Claus Village) totals 3300 beds.

More information:

Rovaniemi Congresses, www.rovaniemicongresses.com

6. Education and Research in Royaniemi

Rovaniemi is a well-known university town. It is home to the University of Lapland, the Arctic Centre and the Multidimensional Tourism Institute. Their one of main field of specialization is Arctic studies.

University of Lapland

- International university of arts and sciences
- Founded in 1979
- Education and research in pedagogy, tourism, business, law, industrial arts, social sciences and Northern/Arctic affairs.
- In 2014, the University of Lapland had 4349 bachelor and masters students and 346 postgraduates, 143 of its regular students were from abroad; in addition, the university was visited by 244 exchange students. Its public courses Open University, vocational seminars and Senior University were attended by 4715 people in total.
- The total number of staff in 2014 was 633.









Arctic Centre

Interdisciplinary centre and library for research, education and communication, specialising in

Arctic studies

Founded in 1989

Location: Arktikum, Rovaniemi

Staff: approximately 60

Multidimensional Tourism Institute

The Multidimensional Tourism Institute (MTI) combines all levels of tourism education as well as innovative

research and development activities. The goal of the institute is to enhance the operational conditions of

the tourism industry in cooperation with companies and public organizations. The institute comprises the

tourism research of the University of Lapland, the field of tourism and hospitality management of Lapland

University of Applied Sciences and the vocational education at the Lapland Tourism College.

Further details:

City of Rovaniemi, http://international.rovaniemi.fi/en/Services/Education

The Arctic Centre, www.arcticcentre.org

The Multidimensional Tourism Institute, http://matkailu.luc.fi/In-English/Main-Page

The University of Lapland, www.ulapland.fi

7. Rovaniemi as a Business Hub

Rovaniemi is the commercial and logistic centre of Lapland, a hub for both trade and consumers.

International business has been growing vigorously. Companies and investors appreciate Rovaniemi as a

highly supportive environment for tourism, the creative sector, industrial production, IT, cold testing,

commerce, services and many other lines of business.

In addition to the vivid city centre, which offers a wide range of services, the city also boasts a diverse

concentration of special trade. A reliable and multifaceted network of services and infrastructure has

elevated Rovaniemi into one of the most important centres of business in the Barents region.









Rovaniemi provides an ideal setting for both for traditional manufacturing - not least when cold technologies are concerned - as well as the creative industries. Rovaniemi is home to manufacturing companies with global activities: both Finnish (e.g. playground manufacturer Lappset) and foreign (e.g. BRP).

Further information:

Rovaniemi Regional Development Agency Ltd, www.rovaniemenkehitys.fi.

8. History of Rovaniemi in a Nutshell

Located at the confluence of two large rivers, the most important transport routes at the time, Rovaniemi began to adopt the role of the "gateway to Lapland". The history of the Rovaniemi region stretches back some 8000 years. For thousands of years Rovaniemi was just a stopping place for hunters, fishermen and trademen who exported furs and other items from north to south.

Rovaniemi was permanently settled in the 11th to 12th centuries. At the turn of the 19th century Rovaniemi began to grow in the administrative, cultural and commercial centre of the Province of Lapland.

The modern look of the Rovaniemi is mainly due to the Second World War. During the war, Rovaniemi was destroyed, only a few houses remained in the centre. The reconstruction work was started in 1946 according the town plan designed by the most famous Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto.

The word Rovaniemi has often been considered to be of Lappish origin, as "roavve" in Saami denotes a forested ridge or hill or the site of an old forest fire. In the dialects of southern Lapland, however, "rova" means a heap of stones, a rock or group of rocks in a stretch of rapids, or even a sauna stove.

More information:

City of Rovaniemi, http://international.rovaniemi.fi/en/Services/About-Us









9. About Visit Rovaniemi

Visit Rovaniemi (Rovaniemi Tourism & Marketing Ltd.) is a regional marketing organisation founded in 2007 by the municipalities of Rovaniemi and Ranua. Its main task is to provide Rovaniemi and Ranua with image marketing, travel information, MICE marketing and PR services. In addition, Visit Rovaniemi coordinates and operates travel marketing for the region.

As a separate unit, Rovaniemi Congresses sells and brokers meeting facilities, conference services and the related products for domestic and international customers. Travel products and Rovaniemi-brand products and souvenirs are also sold to visitors from Tourist Information.

The company's over business idea involves

- Offering centralised tourism services in Rovaniemi
- Developing and productising Rovaniemi's attractiveness as a destination
- Representing the interests of tourist companies and tourists
- Coordinating regional marketing
- Managing the Christmas brand
- Providing tourist information services
- Selling and supplying tourism products and services
- Developing regional MICE marketing (Rovaniemi Congresses)

Visit Rovaniemi is subsidiary of Rovaniemi Regional Development Agency Ltd (which owns 51 % of the company). The remaining 49% of the company is owned by 160 local tourism companies. Financing for regional marketing is mainly derived from the stakeholder companies, the City of Rovaniemi, Ranua municipality and from profits from business operations.

In addition to cooperating with its owners and stakeholders, Visit Rovaniemi works in close co-operation with Lapland's other regional tourism organisations, Visit Finland, Finland Convention Bureau, Finpro and The Regional Council of Lapland. Further partners include transport companies (such as the airlines Finnair, Norwegian and Finnish Railways), international tour operators and media players (Finnish and international). Every year, Visit Rovaniemi assists several hundred international media groups.









10. Contact Details

Rovaniemi Tourism & Marketing Ltd. Tel. +358 (0)16 346 270

Rovaniemi Tourist Information E-mail: info@visitrovaniemi.fi

Rovaniemi Congresses Internet : www.visitrovaniemi.fi

Lordi's Square Facebook 1: www.facebook.com/VisitRovaniemi.fi

Maakuntakatu 29-31 Facebook 2: www.facebook.com/RoiCongresses

96200 ROVANIEMI Instagram: www.instagram.com/visitrovaniemi

FINLAND Twitter: www.twitter.com/VisitRovaniemi

YouTube: www.youtube.com/rovaniemiofficial

VK: http://vk.com/visitrovaniemi

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/VisitRovaniemi

WeChat: 爱在罗瓦涅米

Weibo 1: 爱在罗瓦涅**米**

Weibo 2: 圣诞老人 SantaClaus







