



Finnish Cultural Profile

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Finnish Cultural Profile

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Disclaimer

This cultural profile is a synthesis of information from a range of sources believed to be reliable. Diversicare gives no guarantee that the said base sources are correct, and accepts no responsibility for any resultant errors contained herein or for decision and actions taken as a result and any damage.

Please note there may be costs associated with some of the resources and services listed in this directory.

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This profile of the Finnish cultural community is one of the projects undertaken by the Community Partners Program.

One of the aims the Community Partners Program has is to provide resources for aged care service providers to better meet their clients' needs from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This booklet is about ensuring that needs of older people from a Finnish background are met.

This profile is intended to provide some insights into the Finnish culture. Two things are important to notice. First, each person is unique and has his/her own individual necessities which need to be considered when planning care. Second, most people from a Finnish background have lived for decades in Australia. They have settled into Australian society very well. Finnish culture in Australia differs a lot from the Finnish culture in modern Finland, and features from both cultures are evident in Australia today.

The profile provides useful information about a range of topics and resources including books, articles, visual aids and services.



This symbol is used to indicate a “tip”, which you, as the caregiver of a person who was born in Finland, may find useful in your day-to-day support of that person.

In an effort to maintain the accuracy of this profile and improve its contents for all stakeholders, we encourage readers to complete the feedback form on the last page to inform us of any inaccuracies or other resources available. It is considered that this feedback will assist us to maintain a user relevant and quality resource.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McDonald

Director

Leena Vuorinen

CPP Project Officer

Finland is located in Northern Europe between Sweden and Russia. It borders the Baltic Sea, the Gulf of Bothnia, and the Gulf of Finland. It shares a border with Norway in the north; with Sweden in the west; and with Russia in the east. The capital city, Helsinki, is situated in Southern Finland. Other major cities include Turku, Tampere, Oulu, Kuopio, Lahti and Jyväskylä.

The Finnish landscape is flat, characterised by forest and lakes. The forests cover approximately 75% of the land and the lakes cover almost 10% of the total area, and because of this, Finland is also known as the “Land of the Thousand Lakes”. The climate is subarctic; however, due to the influence of the North Atlantic Current the climate is comparatively mild. Finland has long, cold winters and short, relatively warm summers. The weather is warmest in July when the day temperature can climb over 25 degrees, and coldest in February when the temperature can often be as low as minus 20 degrees. As Finland is situated near the Arctic Circle, there is a great variation in sunlight. In some parts of Finland the sun does not set in summer, whereas in winter the days are extremely short.



History

Finland has a long history with Sweden. Finland was a part of Sweden from the 13th century until 1809 when it became an autonomous part of Imperial Russia. Finland declared its independence on 6th December, 1917. During the Second World War, Finland fought twice against the Soviet Union. The wars were lost; however, Finland still maintained its independence. Since the Second World War, Finland has gone through dramatic changes from a rural and agrarian society, to an information society, via an industrial society. Today, Finland is one of the world's leading societies providing high quality education, welfare services, and increasing benefits to its inhabitants.



Population

Finland has a population of 5.4 million people which is mostly concentrated in Southern Finland, and around the major cities. The population is very homogenous, with most of the population being Finns; however, there is also a small population of Sami people in Lapland, Northern Finland. Only 2.5% of the population are foreigners.

Language

There are two official languages; Finnish and Swedish, in Finland. Finnish is the main language while Swedish is a native language for only 5.5% of the Finnish population. Both Finnish and Swedish speaking Finns live in Australia.

Migration to Australia

The first Finnish man, Herman Dietrich Spöring, arrived with Captain Cook in Australia in 1770. He was a naturalist, a botanist, and a draughtsman who belonged to Joseph Bank's scientific staff on board the *Endeavour*. He also assisted with the maintenance of scientific equipment on the ship. Soon after 1770, a few seamen and prospectors from Finnish background settled in Australia. According to the 1921 Census, 1358 persons born in Finland lived in Australia at that time.

Migration from Finland to other countries increased after the Second World War. Finnish people did not only migrate to Australia, but also to Sweden, Canada and the United States. Peak times were at the end of the 50s and 60s. For example in 1959, 2300 Finnish people migrated to Australia. The highest recorded year was 1971 where the census shows that 10,359 persons born in Finland lived in Australia. In total, about 20,000 Finnish people migrated to Australia. It has been estimated that around 40% of them moved back to Finland, or to another country.

When searching for reasons for migration "pushing" and "pulling" factors are usually mentioned. Pushing factors are those factors or features that result in a person wishing to emigrate. Pulling factors are those related to the country of destination. There are many factors that attract people to emigrate.

After the Second World War, Finland was experiencing a huge change from an agricultural society to an industrial society. Agriculture did not provide enough jobs due to the increasing technology, and therefore people were not needed any longer. Despite the growing industrial technology industry, Finland could not offer enough work to the large number of people moving from the countryside to urban areas. The high unemployment rate at the time was one of the main pushing factors that contributed to the mass migration from post-war Finland. Another significant factor was the high level of taxation. Taxes were – and are still – high in Finland. This was why entrepreneurs especially migrated to Australia.

At the same time, employment opportunities were high in Australia and the level of taxation was low. Australia was seen as a peaceful and secure place. Furthermore, the warm climate, pleasant weather and friendly people was what attracted many Finnish people. The most popular reasons for migration were the hope of a better future, and a sense of adventure. Problems encountered in the new country have included limited English skills, and difficulties obtaining a job equivalent to the qualifications and skills possessed in Finland.

Perhaps the biggest pulling factor for migration to Australia was the financial support the Australian Government offered to those who moved to Australia and lived there for at least two years. In the beginning, the payment was a third of the travelling expenditure, but from 1966 onwards, all costs were covered.

Finnish people who migrated to Australia have not only worked within the construction and mining industries, but also within agriculture, forestry, and as service workers. A lot of people of Finnish background live in Mt Isa, and in the capital cities of all the states and territories of Australia.

The 2006 Australian Census shows that:

- 7950 Finland-born persons lived in Australia
- 2630 Finland-born people lived in Queensland, 2300 in New South Wales and 1180 in Victoria
- in South East Queensland the largest Finnish population is in Brisbane (618), Gold Coast (415), Redlands (255), and Logan (257)
- 26.9% of all Finland-born population in Australia were 65 and over

Features Finnish people like best about Australia are:

- The climate
- Friendly and caring people
- Good financial opportunities
- Good future options

Finnish Characteristic

The Finnish characteristic could best be described as modest. They are a people of quiet determination who are strong in adversity and who quietly go about their business. Finnish homes are simply furnished and do not have excessive decoration. Their minimalist attitudes are reflected in the way they speak and express their feelings. They do not praise themselves. When receiving a compliment they are humble and tend to undervalue what they have done.

They are not comfortable with strangers, and they do not like to rely on other people. It takes them a long time to develop a trusting relationship, but after earning their respect, you have got an everlasting friendship.

Finnish people have good time-management skills. Being late is seen as rude and if you are going to be late, it is polite to apologise and give a reason for the lateness. For example, if a home care worker has made arrangements to arrive at 10:00 am and they are 10 minutes late, it is polite to apologise.



TIP: If you know in advance that you are going to be late it is a good idea to give a call and let the client know. Finnish people appreciate this gesture.

Greetings

Finnish people greet each other by shaking hands on formal occasions. Direct eye contact, and a firm handshake can tell that a person is trustful and honest. On informal occasions, greetings such as 'Good morning' or 'Good afternoon', or even the more casual 'Hi' are generally used. Traditionally, affectionate customs such as hugging and kissing are frowned upon and generally not practised, not even between family members; however, this is now becoming more acceptable, especially among Australian Finns. It is quite all right to give a hug when greeting friends and family members.

Addressing Others

The Finns use Christian names and surnames. They do not use middle names. Christian names are either for females or for males. Very few names can be used for either gender. Finnish people do not use titles. Only on formal occasions are titles such as Mrs, Mr and Dr used. They do not use nicknames, and prefer to be called by their first name.

Language

There are two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. Finnish is the main language, while Swedish is the native language for only 5.5% of the population. Both Finnish and Swedish speaking Finns live in Australia.

Language provision among Finnish people in Australia according to the 2006 Census is:

- 55.9 % of Finland-born people spoke Finnish, 39.4 % English and 2.1 % Swedish at home
- 81.9 % of Finnish speaking Finland-born people spoke English well or very well
- 17.2 % of them spoke English not well or not at all

A better understanding of the language and communication styles will assist and improve communicating, and hopefully find solutions when facing these difficulties. Our cultural background has its own impact on our way of communicating and understanding each other. When communicating with a person from a Finnish background it is helpful to know a few things about the Finnish language and the way we conduct ourselves.

The Finnish language is a member of the Finnic group of the Uralic family of languages. It differs greatly from the English language. Both the structure and pronunciation of the Finnish language is significantly different from the English language. In the Finnish language there is no distinction in words for females and males, e.g. the word, 'hän', is used to refer to both 'she' and 'he'. This is also the reason why one of the most common mistakes Finnish people make when speaking English is to mix female and male words such as 'she', 'he', 'her' and 'him'. This can happen even in the same sentence when talking about the same person.

Customs in Everyday Life

The word 'please' is not commonly used in the Finnish language. Actually there is no word for 'please' in the Finnish language with the same meaning as the English word. That's why Finnish people might not use "please", or they may use an incorrect word to replace it such as "thank you". They do not mean to be impolite.

Prepositions and articles are missing in the Finnish language. Instead of prepositions there are postpositions. That's why Finnish native speakers often forget articles and are unsure what the correct preposition is. Another characteristic of the Finnish language is that the future tense is missing. A notable difference with English is that the letters 'ä' and 'ö' are used.

In Australia Finnish people often mix both the Finnish and English languages together when speaking. The language is called *Finglish*.

Common mistakes Finnish people make when speaking English:

- Mixing female and male words, such as using 'she' when speaking about a male
- Missing articles
- Missing or using incorrect prepositions
- Missing the word 'please'
- Not using first names as often as Australians do

Communication with Others

There are certain distinctive traits of communication with Finnish people and it might help to be aware of them when interacting with a person from a Finnish background. They are:

- Long response time
- Small talk is not common
- High tolerance of silence
- Body language is minimal
- Interrupting is rude
- Seriousness: you mean what you say

Finnish people may take a long time to respond, and don't interrupt when others are speaking. A Finnish person will often wait quite a long time before starting to speak. This pause may feel uncomfortable; however, it is polite to be tolerant of this silence and to let the Finnish person speak when they are ready.

As Finnish people often have minimal body language and take a long time to respond, they are often thought of as being quiet and shy. However, you can rely on what they are saying because in their culture words and their meanings are taken very seriously. If someone promises to do something, that person will mean what they say, and will do what they say. Conversely, a Finnish person takes others at their word and expects that person to do what they have said they will do.

Honesty

One of the values Finnish people appreciate is honesty which is shown by direct eye contact. Also relying on another person's word reflects this value. For a Finnish person, a man's word is his bond. Failing to fulfil promises or not living up to one's word equates to losing a Finnish person's trust and respect. Finnish people do not give compliments unless they really mean them.

Respect & Equality

To treat other people respectfully, and to be treated respectfully, is important to Finnish people. Equality is an essential principle for them. Finnish society is egalitarian which means that all people are treated equally regardless of gender. In family life, both parents are equals. They care for their children, go to work and do domestic duties. As well, children are taught to do domestic duties and to participate in decision-making.

Domestic Situation

Finnish people are very prudent and careful with money. They are thrifty and save what they can, when they can, in case anything might be able to be used later on. The wise use of money is a valued virtue among Finnish people. Their homes are kept tidy and neat, and it is usual to have two spring-cleans a year; before Christmas and before Easter (or in early June when it is a spring time in Finland). A major spring-clean includes cleaning windows, organising and cleaning wardrobes, and cleaning lockers and bookcases etc. Sometimes even curtains are washed and ironed then. A weekly clean includes careful vacuuming, shaking rugs, washing floors, and cleaning toilets and showers.



TIP: Finnish people vacuum very thoroughly and make sure they vacuum corners, behind doors and under furniture.



Personal Hygiene

Finnish people prefer having a shower to taking a bath. Usually they have a daily morning shower but some prefer to have a shower before going to bed. During the hot Australian summers, many Finnish people prefer to have a shower twice a day. Men like to shave daily.

Finnish people love saunas. There are over 2 million saunas in Finland and even in Australia many people from a Finnish background have a Finnish-style sauna. Saunas are not only for hygiene purposes, but also for relaxing and socialising.

Finnish people take pride in their appearance.



Family Structure

The Finnish family is a nuclear family consisting of the parents and children. The Finnish agricultural family structure was much broader and included a husband's parents who often lived with the young couple and their children on a farm. Urbanisation has changed the family structure and nowadays it is unusual to have more than two generations in the same household.

Younger family members look after older loved ones. However, often they are not able to provide care for their older family members because they live too far away, work full-time, or have other family commitments. That is when aged care services have to be used.



Religion

Christianity is the main religion in Finland and people are mainly Lutherans, but not practising church-goers. In Australia, a Finnish person might be a member of the Lutheran Church, but also belong to the Pentecostal Church which is quite popular among the Finnish community as well. A large number of Finnish people living in Australia are non-denominational; therefore, it is always good practice to ask about a person's religious attitudes and wishes.

Churches

Finnish Lutheran Church of Brisbane (services South East Queensland)

Pastor Tommi Vuorinen

30B Corypha Crescent, Calamvale QLD 4116

Phone: (07) 3272 4316

Email: tommi.vuorinen@lca.org.au

Finnish Lutheran Church of Mount Isa

Pastor Lauri Iso-Aho

PO Box 212, Mount Isa QLD 4825

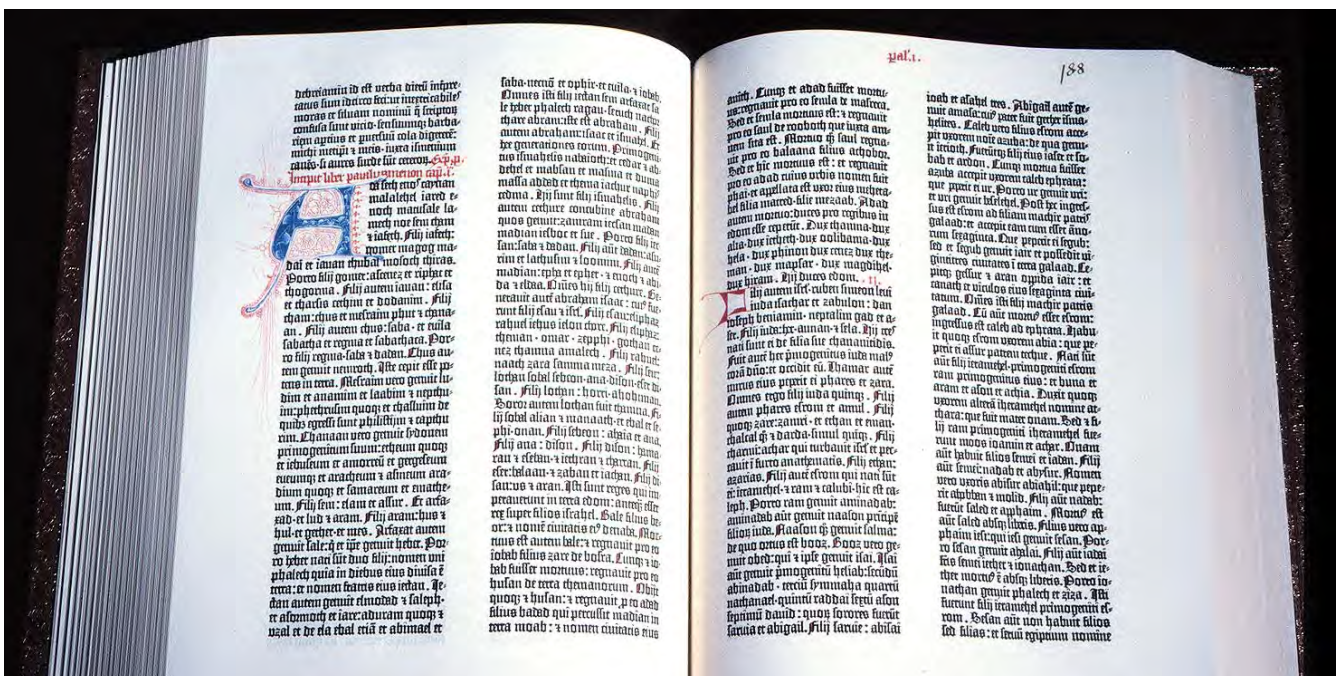
Phone: (07) 4743 8186

Email: isoaho@bigpond.com

Finnish Pentecostal Church in Brisbane

Pastor Heikki Kivimäki

Mobile: 0415 752 174



Finland and Australia signed an agreement with pension payments on 01/07/2009. Finnish people may get pensions from both Finland and Australia. It is everyone's own responsibility to check if they are eligible to receive a pension from Finland, and apply for it.



Indoor/Outdoor Activities

Finnish people enjoy various outdoor activities such as walking, gardening, fishing and various types of outdoor games. They prefer to spend some time outdoors every day, especially in the morning. Morning walks are popular among Finnish people as they believe that it is healthy to have plenty of fresh air.

Hobbies

Finnish people like using their hands. The men enjoy woodwork and renovations and the ladies like crafts and knitting and sewing. Baking is also very popular among the ladies. Finnish women are proud of their baking skills and when friends visit, various cakes are offered. Giving a compliment is a polite and nice gesture.

Finnish people like reading. Finnish books are available at the library hosted by the Finnish Club in Brisbane, and at the library at *Finlandia Village*. (See contact details and addresses at the end of this booklet.)

Music plays an important part in Finnish culture. Singing and dancing are very popular when Finnish people get together. Playing instruments is another popular past-time. When festivals are held, music is an essential part of the celebrations.



Socialising

Finnish people love socialising, and coffee (preferably brewed or filtered) is always offered, together with various cakes and slices. There are many formal and informal group activities for Finnish people in Australia. Finnish clubs, and the Lutheran and Pentecostal Churches organise regular meetings for Finnish people. Informal groups also meet on a regular basis. These meetings are advertised in Finnish newspapers. The clubs and churches advertise their meetings in the *Suomi Newspaper* which is published fortnightly. The Pentecostal Church has its own newspaper, the *Australian Hyv  Sanoma* which is published four times a year.

Social Clubs

Clubs offer entertainment, library facilities and different functions throughout the year.

The Finnish Club of Brisbane

62 Newnham Road, Mt Gravatt QLD 4122

Phone: (07) 5543 1695

Email: kyllickihavukainen@yahoo.com.au

Gold Coast Finnish Sports Club Inc.

PO Box 6247, GC Mail Centre QLD 4217

Mobile: 0417 077 895

Email: hellevi@onthenet.com.au

Finnish Club of the Gold Coast

44/33-67 Edmund Rice Drive, Southport QLD 4215

Phone: (07) 5527 9537

Email: 0424226882@iprimus.com.au

Sunshine Coast Social Club

103/42 Queen Street, Caloundra QLD 4551

Phone: (07) 5437 2576

Email: timo.koski@calcom.com.au

Townsville Finnish Sport Club

5/5-7 Morehead Street, South Townsville QLD 4810

Phone: (07) 4721 4741

Email: arikk@bigpond.com

Lions Club of Brisbane Finlandia Inc.

Vesa Pekkarinen

3 Gorlois Court, Carindale QLD 4152

Phone: (07) 3398 7243

Email: pekkarinen@bigpond.com.au

Finnish War Veterans Australia Inc.

Seppo Kasurinen

8 Noir Court, Thornlands QLD 4164

Phone: (07) 3286 9395

Email: seppo.kasurinen@yahoo.com

Radio

Two radio channels, **4EB** and **SBS** have Finnish broadcasting. These radio programs are widely listened to by Finnish people.

4EB FM 98.1

Radio 4EB Finnish Programs
PO Box 7300, East Brisbane QLD 4169
Phone: (07) 3878 2025

Wednesday 5:15pm - 6:15pm
Saturday 1:30pm - 2:15pm

Finlandia Radio FM 98.1

PO Box 7300, East Brisbane QLD 4169
Phone: (07) 3286 7991

Sunday 6:00pm - 8:00pm

SBS FM 93.3

Sunday 5:00pm - 6:00pm



TIP: Check your radio program guide or the websites for local listening times as they may change in rural areas or across time zones. <http://www.sbs.com.au/radio/>

Newspapers

Suomi Newspaper

PO Box 303, Malvern VIC 3144
Phone: (03) 9572 2543
Fax: (03) 9563 6223
Email: suomi@hotmail.net.au
suomine newspaper.com.au

Australian Hyv  Sanoma

PO Box 489, Kippax Holt ACT 2615
Phone: (02) 6253 0607
Email: ahs@tpg.com.au

It is said that Finnish people celebrate more Eves, (days before the main festival) than the day itself. Every annual "special day" has its own "special" food. In the table below the main festivities are briefly set out and are described in more detail under Customary Practices to give a better understanding of the event.

Main festivities and how they are celebrated among Finnish people in Australia:

Festivity	Month/Day	Customary Practice
Christmas	24 - 26 December	<p>Celebrate with traditional Finnish Christmas food, Christmas singing, and gifts are given out before dinner. Some people visit their family graves.</p> <p>On Christmas Day an Australian style Christmas is celebrated. People often attend a church service early on Christmas Day morning.</p> <p>In the lead up to Christmas, Finnish people thoroughly clean their houses, prepare food, do baking, and send Christmas greetings. Christmas parties are held with traditional Finnish Christmas food, Christmas songs and Santa Claus visits.</p>
Easter	In March or April	<p>Long (Good) Friday is spent quietly. Easter Sunday morning people might attend a church service.</p> <p>Traditional Finnish Easter food is served.</p> <p>Annual Finnish festivals in Australia, Suomi-päivät are held.</p>
Mother's Day	2nd Sunday in May	<p>Families celebrate with gifts, flowers, songs and cake.</p> <p>Community celebrations are held as well as nomination of the Mother of the Year.</p>
Midsummer Feast	At the end of June	<p>Community celebrations with dancing and dinner, and sometimes with Midsummer bonfires.</p>
Independence Day	6 December	<p>Community celebrations with music, speeches, and festive food.</p>

New Year's Eve:

The New Year celebration starts the day before, i.e. 31st December. New Year is celebrated with family members and friends (often outside of private homes), in restaurants and in pubs. Festival foods are sausages, and a German style potato salad. Fireworks, New Year promises, dancing and forecasting the future are common activities. In Australia, Finnish people mainly celebrate New Year the Australian way.

Easter:

Easter is one of the largest festivals in Finland. Traditionally, Long (Good) Friday is spent quietly at home. On Easter Sunday people usually go to church, and Easter eggs are hidden for children. Chicken and lamb is served as a main dish for dinner. There are two special Finnish desserts at Easter time. *Mämmi* is a dark brown dessert made from rye and is served with sugar and full cream. Another Easter dessert is *pasha* which has been adopted from Russia. This is made from a milk product and contains nuts and almonds.

In Australia, Finnish people celebrate Easter with their families and some might attend a church service. Some people prepare the traditional Finnish dessert, *mämmi*, or maybe purchase it from the Scandinavian Bakery, or *Finlandia Village*.

Suomi-päivät is held during the Easter weekend. It is the biggest festival among the Finnish community in Australia. This festival gathers together Finnish people from all around Australia to celebrate Finnish culture, and sports.

Mother's Day:

Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May, the same time as in Australia. Mother's Day is a family celebration when mothers are treated with flowers, special breakfasts, singing, and cake. Special events are organised and nominated mothers are recognised by the President of Finland. In Australia, Finnish communities celebrate Mother's Day by having a Mother's Day party and nominating Mother of the Year.

Father's Day:

Father's Day in Finland is celebrated on the second Sunday in November. Families celebrate with cakes, singing, and gifts. However, Finnish people in Australia celebrate Father's Day in September.

Midsummer Feast (Australian Winter):

In Finland at the end of June the Midsummer Fest is celebrated. This fest is mostly celebrated in the country side, preferably at a summer cottage close to a lake. Swimming and having saunas are the main activities. After having a sauna, grilled sausages with beer are eaten. We also have dancing and bonfires. Other summer food, such as salads, new potatoes and herrings in various sauces are also served.

Independence Day:

Finland's Independence Day is celebrated on 6th December. It is a public holiday in Finland. Parades are organised, speeches given, and veterans of the wars are recognised. In Australia, celebrations are organised with speeches, music, dinners and recognition of war veterans by Finnish clubs, associations and churches. The celebrations are held on the nearest Sunday to the 6th December. Independence Day celebrations are one of the most important community celebrations for Finnish people in Australia.



Tip: To celebrate Independence Day with your client/resident from a Finnish background, listen to *Finlandia* by Jean Sibelius from YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fgwr3wrenkQ>, have a cup of coffee, and light a candle.

Christmas:

In Australia Finnish people usually have a Finnish style celebration on Christmas Eve and an Australian Christmas on Christmas day. Many people attend a church service on Christmas Day morning. In the lead up to Christmas, Finnish people have many Christmas parties within the community. At these parties Finnish Christmas food is offered, Christmas carols are sung, and Santa Claus visits.

Christmas is the biggest and most important annual celebration. It is important to recognise that Finnish people celebrate Christmas Eve. Christmas Day is a public holiday in Finland. The celebrations start at noon with the declaration of the Christmas Peace, a special announcement which comes on the television and radio. Families sit in their living rooms and watch television or listen to the radio. In Australia, some Finnish people listen to the declaration via the internet. Cemeteries are visited at this time, and a candle is lit to remember loved ones. Having saunas is an essential part of the Christmas celebrations and after the sauna, Christmas dinner is served.

The dinner on Christmas eve includes various casseroles made from carrots, swedes and potatoes. Ham is also served. Traditionally, rice porridge with fruit soup is offered as a dessert. The rest of the evening is spent singing Christmas carols, giving presents, and having Santa Claus visit.

Early on Christmas Day people may attend a church service, and the celebrations continue until the end of Boxing Day. Time is spent with extended family members and friends.



TIP: In a nursing home, to arrange a Christmas feeling for a resident from a Finnish background on Christmas Eve, provide a cup of coffee with a slice, light a candle, and play Christmas carols such as *Silent Night*.

Other General Celebration Days

The Festival days below are not usually celebrated among Finns in Australia. However, some Australian Finnish families organise traditional festive food for the occasion, and sometimes Finnish clubs and associations organise community parties with food, dancing and music as a celebration.

Epiphany, the 6th of January, is nowadays a public holiday in Finland. Traditional Finnish Christmas food is served.

The 5th of February is a Runeberg's Day. J.L. Runeberg was a Finnish poet. On that day a special cake, *Runeberg's pastry*, is served.

Quinquagesima Sunday in Finland is widely celebrated. People usually play outdoor games and go sliding in the snow. Pea soup, pancakes with jam and whipped cream, and buns filled with jam and whipped cream are offered.

Labour Day, which is also called Warlpiri's day (*Vappu*), is a carnival-style festival. The celebration begins on the evening of 30th April and continues through to 1st May, which is a public holiday in Finland. A special drink, *sima* is served with do-nuts. In Australia, parties with dancing and a dinner are often organised by Finnish clubs and associations.

All Saints' Day is celebrated in November. Often people bring flowers or light candles on their families' graves. Here in Australia, Finnish people have the same custom. Some may attend a church service.

Birthday Celebrations:

Birthdays are widely celebrated among Finnish people. Children's birthdays are celebrated with family members, friends, and a children's party is usually organised. An older person's birthday celebration is more formal. Invitations are usually sent out for those people celebrating their 70th, 80th, 85th (and so on) birthdays. Gifts and flowers are given. People dress formally and speeches and other entertainment such as singing is part of the program. Birthday cake is served so that every person cuts their own slice.

Traditionally, the Finnish diet includes a lot of potatoes, vegetables, milk products, berries, grains and wholemeal products such as dark rye bread. As well, herrings in various sauces, and sausages, are eaten. In Australia, Finnish people have adapted dishes from both Finnish and Australian cuisines, e.g. sandwiches often replace a warm lunch, and seafood is eaten. In Finland seafood is not usually eaten except for prawns. Milk is usually served with all meals, along with butter milk and water.

Meal		Time
Breakfast	<p>Porridge made with oats, barley, semolina etc with berries and pieces of fruit.</p> <p>A slice of bread, preferably wholemeal or dark rye bread with various toppings such as cheese, or ham.</p> <p>Coffee/tea</p> <p>Milk/juice</p>	Upon rising
Lunch	<p>Either warm lunch e.g. soup (see dinner) or cold lunch such as sandwiches.</p> <p>Milk, butter milk or water</p> <p>A cup of coffee as a dessert</p>	At noon
Afternoon Tea	A cup of coffee and a slice of cake	Around 3pm
Dinner	<p>Cooked or mashed potato - can be replaced by pasta or rice.</p> <p>Meat, fish, chicken,</p> <p>Vegetables and salads</p> <p>Alternatively soup e.g. fish soup with slices of bread</p> <p>Milk, butter milk or water</p>	<p>5-7pm</p> <p>Some Finnish people in Australia still have an early dinner but some have adopted the Australian habit of eating a late dinner.</p>

Meals

Breakfast:

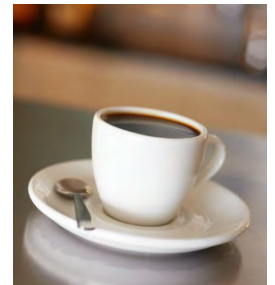
Many older Finnish people start their day by eating porridge made from oats, barley, semolina or other grains. If porridge is made from oats or barley, then water is used as a basis. Rice and semolina porridges are made with milk. Breakfast is usually a cup of coffee and a slice of bread (preferred rye bread with toppings such as cheese, ham and vegetables) A glass of juice might be included with the breakfast. Those who enjoy porridge for breakfast have a morning coffee later, about two hours after breakfast. Some Finnish people prefer tea to coffee.

Lunch:

Traditionally, a Finnish lunch is a proper warm dish including potato, meat or fish with side dishes. The lunch is traditionally seen as the main meal of the day. Casseroles and soups might be served as well. Bread and milk are part of a Finnish lunch. Butter milk or water may be taken instead of milk.

Afternoon Tea/Coffee:

Afternoon tea (coffee) is an important part of the daily diet for a Finnish person. Brewed or filtered coffee is popular, but instant coffee is also widely accepted among Finns in Australia. It is polite to enquire how a person wants to have their coffee. Cakes and slices are offered. Traditionally coffee is served in cups, but nowadays mugs are often used.



Finland is a leading nation in coffee consumption. About 12 kilos coffee per person was consumed in Finland in 2008. Coffee is served for breakfast; as a dessert after lunch; and as an afternoon tea/coffee break. Often sweet confectionery is served with coffee. Coffee is always served when friends visit.



TIP: Provide an opportunity for a cup of coffee for your client/resident when their family members and friends visit. Finnish people very much appreciate this gesture.

Dinner:

Dinner is often quite similar to lunch. It includes potato, preferred simply cooked or mashed, with vegetables, as well as various types of pasta. Cooked or steamed rice can replace potato. Fish, meat, pork or chicken is prepared in various ways and served with potato, pasta or rice. Finnish cuisine includes a lot of different casseroles, sauces and soups. Potato is often used as the basis for the soup.

In Finland meals are eaten earlier than in Australia. Some Australian Finns have adopted the Australian way and have a late dinner, but some still keep to the Finnish tradition of eating dinner around 5 pm. If dinner is eaten early, most people have a light snack before going to bed. This snack could include a cup of tea or hot chocolate with a small slice of bread.

Some Finnish Recipes

Here are four recipes. There are all quick and easy to prepare.

More recipes are available: <http://www.foodfromfinland.com/index.phtml?s=1>

Traditional Salmon soup

Ingredients

- 200g onions
- 100g butter
- 800g potatoes
- 2 litres fish stock
- 6dl cream
- sea salt
- 12pc allspice
- 5 bay leaves
- 2 slices rye bread
- 500g salmon
- 20g dill

Method

Simmer chopped onions in a butter. Add peeled and diced potatoes and continued simmering. Add fish stock and cream. Wrapped spices and rye bread to a food cloth and add it to a soup base. When potatoes are almost ready, add diced salmons. Let it simmer until potatoes and salmon is cooked. Remove food cloth. Add salt and chopped dill.



Meatballs

Ingredients

- 500g minced beef
- 1dl fine dry breadcrumbs or two slices white bread
- 1 dl cream
- 1 onion
- 1 tablespoon
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice or white pepper

Gravy

- 2 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoon flour
- 4 dl pan juices

Method

Mix the breadcrumbs with the cream and some water in a bowl. Let it stand for a while. Finely chop the onion and sauté in oil in a frying pan or microwave oven. Add the onion, egg, seasonings and meat. Mix until smooth. Make the balls with moist hands. Fry the meatballs on all sides; small balls will be done in 3-5 minutes, larger ones in 5-8 minutes.

To make the gravy, brown the flour lightly in butter. Add the liquid, stirring all the time. Add the cream and check the taste. The gravy can be served separately or poured over the meatballs. Serve with potatoes and grated carrots. Lingonberry jam and gherkins also go well with this dish.

Karelian Beef Stew

Ingredients

- 300g beef chuck
- 300g pork shoulder
- 300g stewing lamb or mutton
- 2-3 onions
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 8 wholegrain of allspice
- water



Method

Cut the meat into cubes (4x4 cm). There is no need to remove small bones. Set the meat and coarsely chopped onions in layers in a casserole or a cooking pot, seasoning each layer with salt and allspice. Add enough water to almost cover the meat. Cook without a cover at a moderate temperature, 175 °C, for 2.5 -3 hours. Cover the pot towards the end of the cooking time. Serve with mashed potato, boiled swedes (rutabagas) and lingonberry purée

Minced Meat in Sauce

Ingredients

- 2 carrots
- 1 onion
- stick celery
- 300g minced meat
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 3dl water
- 200g crushed tomatoes
- 1 garlic clove
- 1-2 tablespoons tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon salt
- black pepper
- oregano

Method

Peel the carrots (and celery) and grate coarsely. Cut the onion. Fry the minced meat in a saucepan until browned. Add the diced onion, grated carrots and celery, and, after awhile, the flour. When the sauce has simmered for a while, add the water, crushed tomatoes, crushed garlic clove, tomato puree and spices. Leave to simmer for about 15 minutes.

Food Sources

Scandinavian Bakery Café

15 Dennis Road, Shop 9, Springwood Plaza QLD 4127

Open: Monday to Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm

Saturday 8:00am - 2:00pm

Mobile Catering (caters for South East Queensland)

Mobile: 0415 036 386

Email: risto@scandimaniacchef.com.au

Website: www.scandimaniacchef.com.au

Finlandia Village (offers rye bread, frozen Finnish type meals etc.)

343 Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, Thornlands QLD 4164

Phone: (07) 3829 4800

Fax: (07)3829 4899

Email: info@afrrha.com.au

Website: www.afrrha.com.au

IKEA Food (at IKEA Logan)

Exit 23, 3539-3565 Pacific Highway, Slacks Creek QLD 4127

Phone: (07) 3380 6800

Aged Care Services

Today, Finnish people accept aged care services and see them as an essential part of supporting healthy ageing. However, many people from Finnish backgrounds try to manage by themselves for as long as possible. They do not want to be a burden to anyone, not even to their own family members.

Barriers Finnish people face when accessing aged care services:

- Limited English skills
- Cross-cultural communication
- Limited awareness of aged care services
- Poor awareness and use of interpreting services
- Lack of transport

Health

Finnish people are keen on healthy life-style options for improving their quality of life and living to a good old age. They want to know more about healthy eating, suitable physical exercise, good sleeping habits etc, and how to also adopt a healthy life-style into their everyday life.

Pain & Illness

Finnish people talk about their illnesses openly with their family members and friends, but might not be willing to share their worries and concerns about their health with a person they do not know. They do not want to inconvenience other people, and because of this, some Finnish people, especially older males, are reluctant to seek any form of medical treatment at all. Some illnesses, such as dementia, are still neglected or underestimated. Some medical problems such as incontinence are hidden due to its intimate nature. Even speaking with a doctor about their medical problems is difficult for many, but they prefer to visit a doctor as opposed to alternative medicine treatments. They will follow directions given by a doctor; however, they will sometimes challenge the doctor's diagnosis and seek a second opinion.

The use of complementary and alternative medicines is not widely accepted. Still, some forms of complementary treatments are acceptable such as massages, and naturopathy, especially as a treatment for pain management.

Due to language issues Finnish speaking doctors are preferred, or an interpreter can be used. However, many older Finnish speaking people are confident with their English skills and will want to visit their doctor on their own.

Medicine on the whole is wisely used. Finnish people are often curious to know about their medication and its effects and side effects. They will often ask their doctor questions, and desire comprehensive answers.

Palliative Care

Options in palliative care are not yet well known among Finnish people; however, when this stage of life is reached they are then keen to know more about alternative medicines even though they may initially show resistance. Information on pain management is especially valued.

Death

Death is seen as a normal, natural part of the end of life. At the moment of death there are only family members with the dying person. Often the family members will agree to organise their day so that there is someone from the family with the dying person at all times. If the family members arrive late after the death or they are not able to come, it is of course disappointing and sad.

Some Finnish people will want a Pastor to visit them before they die. This usually occurs well beforehand so that the person can still speak and communicate with the Pastor.

There are no rituals at the moment of the death, but sometimes the Pastor is asked to hold the last rites. If the family is religious a short prayer may be said, and a hymn might be sung. It is courteous to ask the family if they have any special needs or if they want a Pastor to come. Funerals are organised soon after the death. People get together after the funeral, usually at the home of a family member, although another venue is acceptable. A table with a photo of the person who has died, two candles and flowers are usually on display at the funeral. Afterwards, coffee with cakes and slices are served, and sometimes speeches are made and few hymns or even folk songs are sung. Mourners are neatly dressed, mainly in dark colours.



Consultation in appropriate Aged Care for people from a Finnish background:

Australian Finnish Rest Home Association (AFRHA) *Finlandia Village*

343 Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, Thornlands QLD 4164

Phone: (07) 3829 4800

Fax: (07) 3829 4899

Email: info@afrha.com.au

Website: www.afrha.com.au

Embassy of Finland

12 Darwin Ave, Yarralumla ACT 2600

Ph: (02) 6273 3800

Fax: (02) 6273 3603

Email: sanomat.can@formin.fi

Website: www.finland.org.au

formin.finland.fi (Finnish) or virtual.finland.fi (English)

Ambassador Maija Lähteenmäki

Open: Mon-Thurs 8.45am-12.30pm, 13.00pm-17.00pm

Fri 8.45am-12.30pm, 13.00pm-14.30pm

Finnish Honorary Consulate Queensland

Tommy Ruonala

707 Grieve Road, Rochedale QLD 4123

Phone: (07) 3382 0974

Fax: (07) 3804 9099

Email: tom@uniline.com.au

Diversicare

www.diversicare.com.au

Queensland

www.health.qld.gov.au/multicultural

Federal Government

www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/multilin.htm

www.ageing.health.gov.au/publicat/pubindex.htm

Alzheimer's Australia

www.alzheimers.org.au/content.cfm?categoryid=14

Queensland Health – Multicultural Health Publications

www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/restopicmaster.asp?

[Rec=40&frmHealthTopic=MulticulturalHealth](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/restopicmaster.asp?Rec=40&frmHealthTopic=MulticulturalHealth)

Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre

www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/qtmhc/multilingual_resources.asp

Australian Finnish Rest Home Association (AFRHA)

(Information on services at Finlandia Village and also useful information on Finnish culture)

<http://www.afrha.com/Finnish-Culture.aspx>

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

(Community Information Summary, Finland-born, Australian Government)

http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/finland.pdf

Embassy of Finland

(Information on Finland, Finnish culture in Finland and Australia, and a history of Finnish immigration etc)

<http://www.finland.org.au/public/default.aspx?contentlan=2>

Finland Australia Chamber of Commerce (FACC)

<http://www.finland.com.au/index.htm>

Institute of Migration

<http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/index.php>

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/finland.pdf

Australian Finnish Rest Home Association (AFRHA)

<http://www.afrha.com/Finnish-Culture.aspx>

Embassy of Finland

<http://www.finland.org.au/public/default.aspx?contentlan=2>

Finland Australia Chamber of Commerce Inc (FACC)

<http://www.finland.com.au/index.htm>

Institute of migration

<http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/index.php>

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Bird, Tim - Snitt, Ingalill (2005): Suomalaista elämäntapaa etsimässä. (Living in Finland). Helsinki, WSOY.

Correction / Addition Form

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Please complete the following page if you are aware of either incorrect details or you know of additional resources that should be included.

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