








WHAT IS FINNISH LUXURY? BUSINESS FINLAND SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

JURI MÄKI, ANNA-STIINA TERVO – RED NOTE - 2019

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OUR AIM IS TO OFFER INSIGHTS INTO FINNISH LUXURY TRAVEL , HOW IT APPEARS CURRENTLY, HOW IT IS PERCEIVED AND WHAT GUIDELINES CAN BE PUT IN PLACE.

WE INTERVIEWED DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TRAVEL SECTOR PROFESSIONALS WHO OPERATE WITH LUXURY TRAVELLERS

Finland 	UK 	USA 	India 	UAE 
7 interviewees, operators and travel sector experts (Lapland (3), Lake-Finland (2), Coast (2))	2 interviewees luxury tour operators (London)	2 interviewees luxury tour operators (Illinois, Connecticut)	2 interviewees luxury tour operators (Mumbai, New Delhi)	2 interviewees luxury tour operators (Dubai)

- We collected feedback from foreign interviewees also via our online-community, where they were able to evaluate picture material regarding Finnish luxury.
- In addition, we did groundwork by visiting luxury tour operator websites of the countries in question and found out about how Finland is shown as a travel destination.

WHAT IS LUXURY?

LUXURY CONCEPT AND THE NEEDS OF LUXURY TRAVELLERS



CLASSIC LUXURY IS EXPENSIVE AND SHOWY

HISTORICAL



ELITIST AND
ARROGANT



HIGH
QUALITY



VISIBLE



PERFECTIONIST



FORMAL



TRADITIONAL



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TRADITIONAL LUXURY CAN ALSO BE SEEN IN TRAVEL

*We had a client who was very adventurous. He travelled to Mongolia and they had a mobile camp, it was about 10 days horse safari...along the way for 10 days the team goes ahead to setup camp and the camp has **the 5 star amenities, the 5 star luxury like a luxury bed** and they bring their own chef and sourced a staff team from the Four Seasons.*

(Interviewee, UAE)

RELAXED LUXURY IS MORE EXPERIENCE ORIENTED

EXPERIENCES
& UNIQUENESS



AUTHENTICITY

RELAXED



FUNCTIONAL
STYLE

HIDDEN
WEALTH



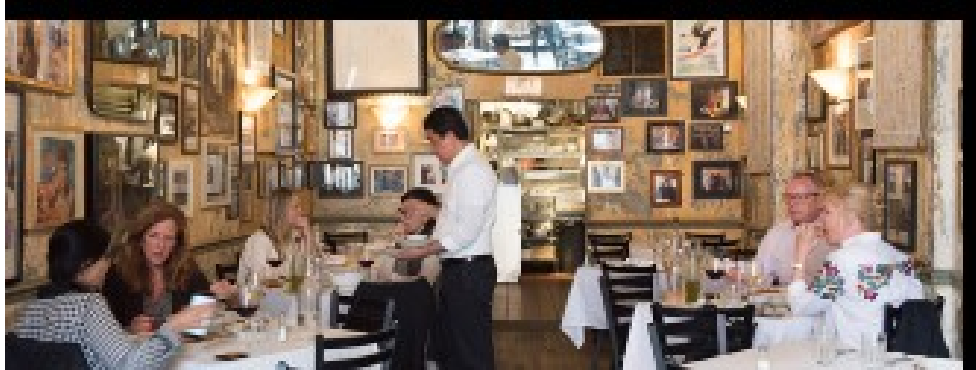
QUALITY

HUMAN TO
HUMAN SERVICE



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LUXURY IS A BROAD AND DIVERSE THEME



There is no single clear concept of luxury and its content keeps changing

Luxury can be experienced in many ways and **expectations differ**

The service provider has to have a clear understanding **what kind of luxury they offer and to whom they offer it to**

PROBLEMS ARISE WHEN EXPECTATIONS AND WHAT IS OFFERED DON'T MEET

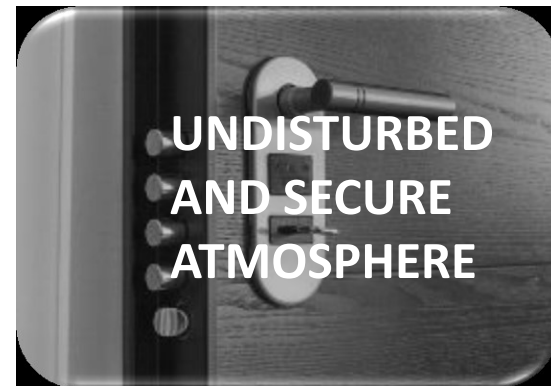
*We had a family from the Middle-East, who had reserved a lakeside cottage. It was just a cottage and at that time our services weren't that developed here. When they arrived, they asked where the jet skis and all the services were...**when they didn't see any yahts and we couldn't provide those straight away, they left for a return journey to Helsinki** and we booked them into Hotel Kämp.*

(Interviewee, Lake-Finland)

LUXURY TRAVEL IS DEFINED BY SIX DIFFERENT NEEDS



WHAT SHOULD LUXURY TRAVEL OFFER?



WHAT IS LUXURY?

Luxury is a loose and diverse topic— when using it, it's important that its meaning is clearly explained and defined

Luxury travellers share similar needs, even though in the end expectations of a service may be very different.

The core of Luxury travel is understanding **individual customer needs and having the service offering tailor-made** to meet their expectations.

” I don’t send anybody to Finland for their first trip to Europe. There is no VIP culture. You land and you find nothing is working in my favor. It will not be a positive experience. “ (interviewee India)

- ✓ Finland is not seen as a classic luxury destination and Finland has weak opportunities for competing in that sector.
- ✓ Finland best suits a more experienced traveller, who values experiences when choosing a destination

**Don't try to market
Finland too much
from a "classic luxury"
point of view**





WHAT IS FINLAND LIKE?

COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

FINLAND'S IMAGE IS BASED ALMOST SOLELY AROUND WINTER



FINLAND'S SUMMERS ARE UNFAMILIAR

There is no awareness and I have not seen any USP (unique selling proposal) so far to go there in summer. In comparison I promote summers in Iceland, there is altogether a different perception there regarding summer. I don't find that thing in Finland in summer.

(Interviewee, India)

FINLAND DOES NOT APPEAR COMPLETELY UNIQUE

SWEDEN



NORWAY



FINLAND



WORK STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE TO RAISE AWARENESS

*Currently Finland is **not a destination that is talked about on any level** good, bad or ugly, it is just not there yet... I would question how many Americans could find Finland on a map.*

(Interviewee, USA)

THE IMPRESSION OF FINLAND IS STILL OFTEN UNCLEAR

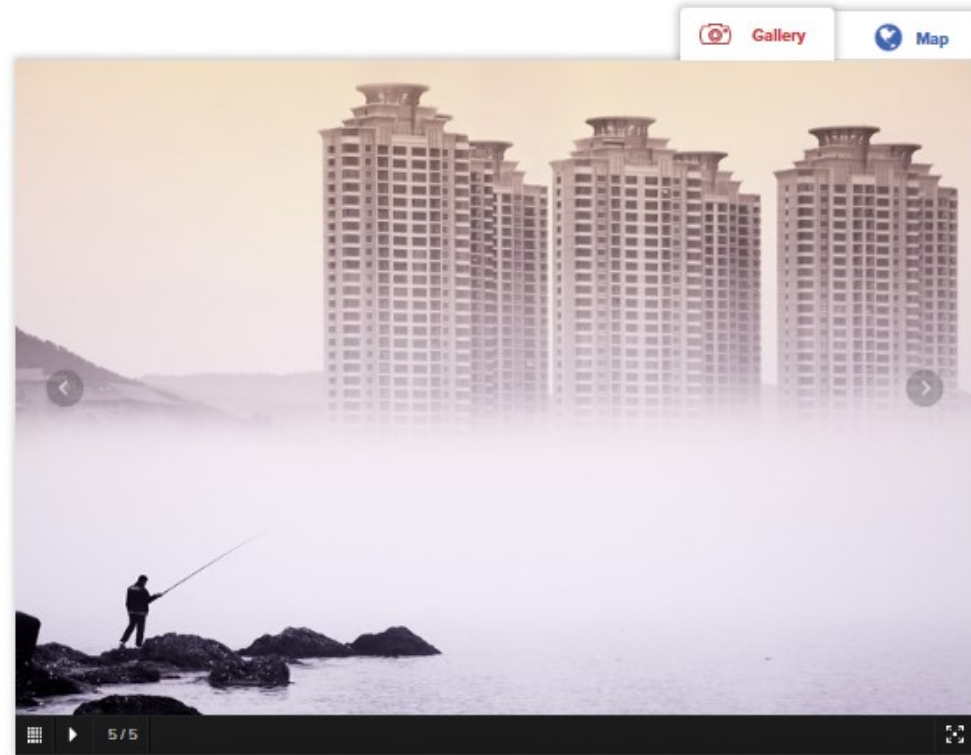
Finland

Natural Escape

Woodlands, Rivers and Arctic Wilderness for Adventurers

Swathed in forest, Finland hooks hikers, and with 188,000 lakes, it's a paradise for paddlers. It's also a haven for fishermen looking to land sea trout, pike and salmon, and bliss for bicyclists, with thousands of miles of bike routes. In Lapland, discover a winter wonderland, with husky-drawn sleigh rides, skiing from October through mid-May, tours of indigenous Sami villages, and year-round visits with Santa in his "office" in Rovaniemi.

Share



Although Finland has a strong profile as a wintry nature destination, **it lacks its own strong identity**

Finland does not stand out as a unique country like Iceland, but appears very similar to Sweden and Norway – and to some degree Central-Europe

FOREIGN TOUR OPERATORS EVALUATED AND COMMENTED ON PICTURES ALSO ON THE ONLINE-COMMUNITY



WHAT WORKS IN PICTURES AND WHAT DOES NOT

DO THIS



- Create **atmosphere**, **communicate experience**
- Make the experience in the picture **easy to identify** with, e.g. a social context



- Make sure, the picture has **globally recognizable elements**
- Pay attention to **details**

AVOID



- Don't make a picture **too generic**
- **Avoid factual pictures**, that lack feeling and atmosphere



- Remember, that picture **has to communicate the luxury elements**, such as uniqueness, privacy and wellbeing

WHAT DOES FINLAND LOOK LIKE?

Finland is defined primarily by **winter, nature, Europeanness, adventure and experience themes**. The role of luxury falls more into background

Although Finland has a clear profile, its **ability to differentiate itself from e.g. Sweden or Norway is weak** and requires deep knowledge of the countries

The image and knowledge of Finland is still blurred and is based mainly around winter and Lapland

Try and create recognizable and unique elements for Finland and repeat them in communication – invest in deepening the awareness

*” You should concentrate on the luxury of experience, authenticity of what you are offering rather than luxurious hotels, **concentrate on what Finland has to offer** “ (Interviewee USA)*

- ✓ Luxury segment needs quality in every sector, but a competitive edge can only be built around strong and distinguished factors
- ✓ The core of communication should stay sharp and it should differentiate Finland from other Nordic countries

**Sharpen core
communication and
establish
recognizability**



A winter landscape in Finland, featuring snow-covered trees and the Aurora Borealis in the sky. The scene is illuminated by the green light of the aurora, creating a magical atmosphere. The trees are heavily laden with snow, and the ground is a smooth, white expanse. The overall tone is serene and majestic.

WHAT IS OF INTEREST IN FINLAND?

WEAKNESSES & STRENGTHS

CHALLENGES OF FINLAND AS A LUXURY TRAVEL DESTINATION



LACKS SERVICE
KNOW-HOW

LIMITED
OFFERING

COST AND
PRICING

FINLAND HAS AN EQUALITARIAN AND INDIVIDUALISTIC CULTURE

” There is no VIP culture in Finland. It is all equalitarian society. You are not better than the next person, no matter who is rich and who is poor. Our customers don’t understand this. They think that if they throw money around, they can get anything.”

(Interviewee, India)



LACK OF
SERVICE
KNOW-HOW

LIMITED
OFFERING

COST AND
PRICING

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

LIMITED EXPERIENCE

LACK OF TRAINING

LUXURY NEEDS INVESTMENT IN SERVICE AND DETAILS

*“Snowmobiling itself is not necessarily a luxury activity, but say you add something to it like when we were doing that break and there was a hut there and if there had been that opportunity to go inside the hut and maybe have a cup of coffee, have a traditional cake or something and hear a story about something that happened there like by a Saami and **this way you take it to the next level.**”*

(Interviewee, USA)



LACK OF
SERVICE
KNOW-HOW

LIMITED
OFFERING

COST AND
PRICING

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

NUMBER OF
OPERATORS

LIMITED EXPERIENCE

LACK OF NETWORKS

LACK OF TRAINING

THE PRICE LEVEL DOES NOT MEET EXCPECTIONS

*“ One of the biggest obstacles is going to be the cost as **Finland is so much more expensive than the rest of Europe**. The sense of value doesn't match what they are paying. Price might be the same as a central Paris hotel room, the experience they are going to get, one versus the other is quite drastically different. Expectation does not match the experience. ”*

(Interviewee, USA)



LACK OF SERVICE
KNOW-HOW

LIMITED
OFFERING

COST AND
PRICING

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

NUMBER OF
OPERATORS

PRICE-QUALITY RATIO

LIMITED EXPERIENCE

LACK OF NETWORKS

TRANSPARENCY

LACK OF TRAINING

Growth would require more
know-how, co-operation,
training and service providers.



An aerial photograph of two cyclists riding on a narrow, snow-covered path in a vast, snowy landscape. The cyclists are positioned in the lower center of the frame, moving away from the viewer. The surrounding terrain is covered in deep snow with some rocky patches visible. The overall scene is serene and emphasizes the unique winter environment of Finland.

” People want to do things that are a little bit different and Finland offers that. There is a genuineness about the country. Finland offers that unique & genuine experience, something magical.“

(Interviewee UK)

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE OF FINLAND IS SUMMARISED IN TWO THEMES

SAFE & EXOTIC

- Seen as an exotic part of Europe
- Feels like adventure but also safe
- Unique themes e.g. Santa Claus

AUTHENTICITY

- Genuine and honest people
- Untouched and wild nature
- Clean, peaceful and close to nature



*” Having been to Scandinavia I did not find the warmth and friendliness or anything but in Finland I found **everybody was very warm and welcoming.** I never thought that would be the case. “ (Interviewee UAE)*

- ✓ Dare to be genuine and distinctive in luxury travel
- ✓ Strengthen Finnish service culture, which can at its best be genuine, compassionate and equal.
- ✓ Watch out for losing authenticity with increase in travel volume

WHAT IS OF INTEREST IN FINLAND?

The differentiating core of the Finnish luxury segment is ability offer **authentic and exotic experiences in a safe environment**

The greatest weaknesses in the luxury segment are **limited know-how and offering**, which can easily lead in inconsistent service quality

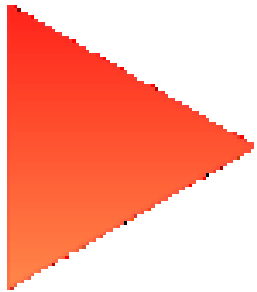
The luxury travel market is also very competitive and the price-quality ratio and lack in pricing transparency are raised

**Authentic but safe
experience should be
the core of the
communication**



WHAT TO DO IN PRACTICE?

1. CONTINUE TO CREATE **BETTER AND DEEPER AWARENESS** ABOUT FINNISH OFFERING
2. **CLARIFY THE COMPETITIVE EDGE** AND BE MORE CONSISTENT IN COMMUNICATION
3. HELP BUSINESSES TO CREATE **MORE DIRECT CONTACTS TO** MEDIA AND TOUR OPERATORS
4. **PROVIDE MARKETING SUPPORT**



WHAT TO DO IN PRACTICE?

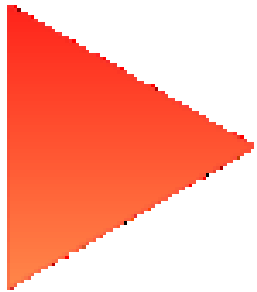
6. **PROMOTE SUMMERTIME TRAVEL**

7. **SHARE KNOW-HOW AND CREATE CO-OPERATION**

8. **OFFER LUXURY CONSULTATION AND GUIDANCE**

9. **PROVIDE A OFFICIAL LIST OF LUXURY DESTINATIONS AND OFFERING**

10. **PROVIDE CULTURAL TRAINING FOR BUSINESSES AND OPERATORS**



OBSCURITY ▶ CLARITY

CONTACTS:

JURI MÄKI

+358 50 380 7979

JURI.MÄKI@REDNOTE.FI

ANNA-STIINA TERVO

+358 40 562 2650

ANNA-STIINA.TERVO@REDNOTE.FI

OFFICE:

BULEVARDI 5A, 3RD FLOOR

FI-00120 HELSINKI

RED NOTE