



'Back to Nature' Finnish Design



The Finlandia Hall, designed by legendary Finnish architect Alvar Aalto

(Hong Kong, May 29, 2018) – Finland's 'back to nature' design culture is one of the unique features that makes the Nordic country such a beautiful place to visit.

"Finnish design is more than just pretty objects. It's a way of living woven seamlessly into everyday life, at the very core of national identity surrounding you everywhere," says Paavo Virkkunen, Executive VP for Business Finland & Head of Visit Finland.

"Falling in in love with Finnish design isn't just about what you see — it's something you experience."

This unique 'design experience' brings Finland into the spotlight as a hip destination for Chinese tourism. Finns take inspiration from nature and spin it into beloved objects, making Helsinki home to many internationally recognised design brands.

The Design District of Finland's capital of Helsinki brings together the city's creative enterprises, encompassing boutiques, galleries and showrooms. The neighbourhood is home to flagship stores of design icons such as Artek, Iittala and Marimekko, as well as many smaller boutiques selling the latest creations of successful young fashion designers. It is also home to the Design Museum and Museum of Finnish Architecture.

Helsinki Design Week in turn is the biggest design event in the Nordic region and takes place each year in September.

Habitare, Finland's largest interior decoration and design event open for public, is organised at the same time as Helsinki Design week. Habitare 2018 will be held from September 12-16 in 2018. Habitare 2017 was a huge success and attracted 56, 000 visitors and more than 400 companies. The Habitare 2018 theme of Roots will bring out and highlight the authenticity and personality of things. The Habitare exhibition design, conceived around the theme, will be by Mattila & Merz. The theme manifests itself in the exhibitor stands and the programme at Habitare.

<https://habitare.messukeskus.com/?lang=en> .

Finns love to dress up in the fresh, bold colours of Finnish textile design and Marimekko dresses are a colourful reminder a bright sunny day, no matter what the season. Marimekko recently launched a new special edition together with UNIQLO, and its original textile printing factory and outlet can be reached within just 15 minutes from the city centre by metro.

Designs by legendary Finnish architect Alvar Aalto can be seen throughout the city. Known as father of Finnish Modernism, Aalto borrowed shapes and colours from the Finnish landscape and believed that good design should be a part of everyday life – and by embracing the natural world, it was possible to create a more humane society.

Aalto's Organic Modernism set Finland apart from its contemporaries, blending form and function to create sensuous and livable spaces for the modern world. His legacy can be seen throughout Finland and his home and studio are also open to visitors.

Design is at the very core of Helsinki's identity, with the capital's multi-layers of architecture, from Empire-style to Art Nouveau and Functionalist to Modernist extending to design hotels.

The new Helsinki Central Library Oodi is showcasing Finnish wooden construction expertise and sets an example for the libraries of the future when it opens in the heart of the city in December this year. Designed by ALA Architects, it is hailed as a masterpiece of modern architecture and one of the world's most anticipated buildings of 2018.

A new museum called Amos Rex targeting young audiences will open in August 2018, designed by architectural firm JKMM. The location of the new museum has historical significance in Helsinki as it was originally the site of a war barracks destroyed in the 1917 Finnish Civil War. The original building named "Lasipalatsi" in which the new museum is being renovated from means glass palace and was built in 1936. The old Lasipalatsi including its movie theatre Bio Rex, and exhibition spaces beneath the Lasipalatsi square.

Lasipalatsi will retain its distinctive character while the adjacent Lasipalatsi square will undergo considerable modernization. In connection with the construction of the art museum the protected building is being gently renovated. Amos Rex is a space dedicated to art, that is easy to reach and a cool place to hang out; a protean space that can readily take on various forms, is open to

experimentation and new forms of collaboration. The heart of the new art museum consists of a 2000 m² exhibition hall situated beneath the Lasipalatsi square.

The new exhibition hall– the core of the museum – will be built so that it can adapt to various purposes making it a unique space, in a Finnish context, for future art practices. Bio Rex offers excellent opportunities for exploring the intersection of visual art and film and will remain a home for film festivals.

<https://amosanderson.fi/en/lasipalatsi/>

Löyly, one of the city's biggest public saunas, is another design icon opened in May 2016. This impressive new contemporary wooden sauna complex has a large terrace stretching out over the Baltic with stunning sea views, with a restaurant serving local Finnish food. The complex features three different saunas, all heated with wood, including a traditional Finnish smoke sauna. In winter, there is an "avanto" hole in the ice for winter swimming – a popular hobby in Finland.

The already generous selection of over 60 hotels in Helsinki will be further expanded and to open 2nd of May 2018 when the five-star St. George opens in a historic building in the city centre. The exclusive new hotel combines wellness, cuisine and art to create a complete experience for guests. Just over one year ago, Kämp Collection Hotels unveiled its tenth hotel venture. Now, following a meticulous restoration, Hotel St. George will open its doors 2.5.2018 at Yrjönkatu 13, directly across from the beautiful Old Church Park in the heart of Helsinki.

While the oldest sections of Hotel St. George date back to the 1840s, the most iconic – designed by architect Onni Tarjanne – was completed in 1890. Tarjanne is best known for designing the Finnish National Theatre in 1902. Throughout the years, the building at Yrjönkatu 13 has hosted the Finnish Literature Society, the printing house for the first Finnish newspaper, Suometar, and the Helsinki Finnish Club, among others. Stories from its past have played a crucial role in the interior design of the hotel. When the hotel is completed, such stories will also serve as inspiration for the themes of future events.

<https://www.stgeorgehelsinki.com/>

"Helsinki is an urban, trendy and cultural city that is very close to nature. Visitors can find everything from design to delicious restaurant experiences and museums to outdoor activities. Getting around time is really easy, so you don't waste any time sitting in traffic jams, and you can get by with English everywhere," says Laura Aalto, CEO of Helsinki Marketing.

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About Visit Finland

Visit Finland, is a state agency actively promoting Finland as a destination for foreign travelers.

Visit Finland works closely with Finnish travel regions, travel businesses, transport companies and ministries, marketing tourism to Finland from abroad.

For more information about Visit Finland, please visit: www.visitfinland.com/

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Artek store in Helsinki city centre



Helsinki Iittala shop



Customers at Marimekko store



Löyly, Helsinki's biggest and ambitious public saunas



Design Museum Exterior



Sky Suite Egg Bed in Klaus K Hotel