

# EXPLORE RURAL FINLAND AT ITS FINEST!

## Lake Pielinen and Vuonislahti Village in Karelia

### How to find Vuonislahti?

Vuonislahti is located at the northern end of the Finnish Lakeland, on the eastern bank of Lake Pielinen. The village is a part of the Town of Lieksa; half an hour's drive from the centre of Lieksa. Koli area with its national park lies on the opposite side of Lake Pielinen.

### By Road

Vuonislahti is situated by the old "shore road" of Lake Pielinen. There is an hour's drive (80 km) to Nurmes at the northern end of Lake Pielinen, and an hour's drive to Joensuu at the southern end of River Pielisjoki. Joensuu is the capital of North Karelia with its 73 000 inhabitants. Unfortunately there are no bus connections to Vuonislahti.

The speciality in whole Finland is the ICE ROAD on Lake Pielinen between Koli and Vuonislahti. This public road (length 7 km) is usually opened in January, when the ice has the thickness of 40 cm. It is allowed to drive the ice road by passenger cars. Closing the ice road depends on weather conditions, normally the road will be closed in March.

### By Rail

The Finnish Railroads [www.vr.fi](http://www.vr.fi) operates from Joensuu to Nurmes twice a day. The trains stop at Vuonislahti. Joensuu – Vuonislahti takes 59 minutes by train. The quickest connection Helsinki – Joensuu by train is 4 ½ hrs.

### By Air

Joensuu International airport is within an hour's drive from Vuonislahti. There are several daily flights between Helsinki and Joensuu [www.finnair.fi](http://www.finnair.fi). The air travel time Helsinki – Joensuu is 40 minutes. You can hire a car on the airport, and there is a taxi serving customers from the airport to Lieksa.

### An ideal choice for nature lovers

You'll find healthy exercise for your body and mind. In the summer time walking, cycling, horseback riding, paddling, rowing, and motor boat tours, not to forget fishing. Winter activities include cross-country skiing, kick-sledging, horseback riding, and ice jigging. In the neighbourhood there are also companies organising husky safaris and snowmobile tours. In the Koli area there are two ski resorts with downhill skiing slopes.

### Explore Lake Pielinen

Finland is known as a country of thousands of lakes. The province of North Karelia has nearly 2200 lakes with a surface area over 123 acres. Lakes account for 17 percent of the region's surface area. Lake Pielinen is the fourth largest lake in Finland, offering just splendid opportunities for different water activities. You may try different types of rowing boats and canoes or kayaks. By rowing you may explore uninhabited islands and find spots for photographing and bird watching. A preferable day's rowing tour is from the centre of the village to Paateri, sculptor Eva Rynnänen's home and studio. On the way to Paateri there are couple of open fire places on the stop over sites. Most islands are uninhabited, and it's allowed to land there. In Finland there are "everyman's rights" allowing picking up forest berries and mushrooms, as well as walking everywhere except in the vicinity of private houses. More about everyman's rights in English: [www.luontoon.fi](http://www.luontoon.fi)

A speciality of the region are tours made by big wooden "church boats". In these motor boats there is place for fifteen persons. In the midsummer you can participate in the transfers between Koli and Vuonislahti sailed by church boats.

Lake Pielinen contains salmon, trout, pike, perch, pike-perch, small vendace, and some other species of fish. There are a lot of good fishing spots, you just ask for tips and a good map from the hosts of the guest house. For a rod and a line you don't need any licence, but for fishing with lure, nets, and traps you have to acquire the licence. Boat and canoe rental is in Herranniemi Inn.

### Enjoying arts and the spirit of forests

Hiking and cycling in the village and in the neighbourhood offer you possibility to get acquainted with the nature and the way people live far away from big centres. There is a marked walking path (5 km) from the village to the studio of sculptress Eva Rynnänen. This path is suitable also for casual rambles. On the way there is an open fire place, a peaceful place for a picnic. In case you are interested in riding, there are Iceland ponies on Kuivala Farm. If you want experienced guidance, wilderness guide Markku Penttinen is happy to offer you guidance in English. Markku also runs the activity center Kukko, which is in the middle of the village serving both village

people and visitors with lunch and café.

The home and studio of Eva Rynnänen, Paateri, is situated by Lake Jauhiainen. It's possible to cycle around the lake, which makes about 15 km, a nice half a day's tour.

The studio and home of sculptress Eva Rynnänen, Paateri, is a very special sight. The buildings: main house, studio, church, and cafeteria all represent a combination of traditional architecture and arts. Eva Rynnänen was a sculptress, who saw into the soul of trees. Different wooden children and animal motives captivate the visitors to Paateri. There are also concerts held in the church of Paateri.

A new building project in the village is Hupeli, the House of Artists. The construction work was started in early September 2009 with building the sauna. The main building will be completed in 2010, and it will offer studio and lodging premises for three artists or researchers. The studios are designed for painters, sculptors, writers, and researchers.

### Bases for your holidays

Herranniemi is a traditional family-run country inn in Vuonislahti. Herranniemi has a restaurant and accommodation in rooms and cottages. If you are looking for a self-catering holiday, there is a kitchen at your disposal. Different saunas, in the winter even a SAUNA BUILT OFFICE, offer you possibility to try your hand of bathing in the real Finnish way! You may hire bikes, boats and canoes at Herranniemi Inn. More detailed information at [www.herranniemi.com](http://www.herranniemi.com). Hotel Pielinen is an ideal place for groups, Kuivala and Kirkkola Farmhouses with bed and breakfast services are both in the centre of Vuonislahti Village. Hanhiniemi Holiday cottages offer a high quality accommodation all the year round. There are also Loma Pielinen holiday cabins on the island of Kelvänsaari and Nuutilan Loma cabins in Sarkkila. More detailed information at [www.vuonislahti.fi](http://www.vuonislahti.fi)

Welcome to Karelia and Vuonislahti – Rural Finland at its finest!

