



Photo Tour Finland - Kuusamo & surroundings *with NatureTalks*

Finland is not only the land of a thousand lakes; it is also blessed with some of the most stunning natural scenery on the planet. Kuusamo and its surroundings in particular breaths photography: The **Oulanka National Park** and especially the **Riisitunturi National Park**'s humid climatic conditions contribute to its natural beauty. In winter the spruce trees that cover many of the park's hillsides are clad with a thick coating of condensed frost, creating a **photogenic white forest**. Many small streams are offering great opportunities for photographing fishing **White-throated Dippers**. Local specialities such as **Siberian Jays** and **Siberian Tits** along with a whole array of other passerines can be found at several hot spots with stunning backgrounds.

In addition, there will also be a chance to photograph **Golden Eagles** from well-positioned, heated, hides. February is likely the best month for eagles, the days are getting longer, though with the cold temperatures still present, the eagles are more likely to feed (longer) than later in the winter. There are certainly good chances to see other species such as Black Grouse, Hazel Grouse, Bohemian Waxwing, Northern Hawk-owl, Great Grey Owl and mammals such as the European Otter and Reindeer. During the evenings and nights we lookout for **Northern Lights** and visit the best places to capture this amazing phenomenon.

I welcome you to my next journeys to Kuusamo in February 2023 and 2024.

Dates: 11 to 18 February 2023 & 10 to 17 February 2024

Duration: 8 days

Place: Kuusamo (Finland) and surroundings

Cost: please check <https://www.naturetalks.nl/product/winterfotoreis-finland-kuusamo-omgeving/>

Cost includes: International flights, accommodation, all local transport, hide fees and all meals

Cost excludes: Snacks and alcohol

Meeting place: Kuusamo airport

Target group: Photographers, from beginners to experts

Group size: max 6

Accommodation: Clean and comfortable Scandinavian guest house

Level of fitness: Walks to the places of interest can involve deep snow and steep climbs, but are rarely more than 10-15 minutes. The days can get cold, even up to -25 °C, so appropriate clothing and footwear is a necessity

Themes: Winter landscapes, Northern Lights, birds including local specialties such as Golden Eagles, Siberian Jays, Siberian Tits and White-throated Dippers.

Born in one of the smallest towns you can find in the Netherlands, I now live and work in one of the largest *metropolitan* areas of Finland. I love the days when steel and concrete are replaced by the wilderness of nature. Once back in that remote forest or arctic winter land I channel my passion to nature photography. Sounds familiar?

I have lived in Finland for over 20 years and I know many remote forests and arctic winter lands, such as Kuusamo and its surroundings, like the back of my hand.

Itinerary:

Day 1

Pick up from Kuusamo airport and transfer to our local accommodation in area of Kuusamo

Dinner in the evening, walk through the program and consider newly presented photographic opportunities (see next page bottom *)

Day 2

Breakfast before sunrise

Visit a few small streams to photograph fishing White-throated Dippers

Lunch

Transfer to the northernmost tip of the mountain range in Kuusamo. The height of that mountain range is just over 400 meters and offers great chances to photograph Siberian Jays

Transfer to accommodation and dinner

Lookout for Northern Lights

Day 3

Breakfast before sunrise

Transfer to Riisitunturi National Park for some amazing landscape



photography opportunities
Lunch (prepare this in the early morning and have it as a picnic)
Stay in the national park until sunset
Transfer to accommodation and dinner
Lookout for Northern Lights

Day 4 - 5

Breakfast before sunrise
Transfer to the Oulanka National Park to photograph Golden Eagles from well-positioned, heated, hides for the whole day
Lunch (prepare this in the early morning and have it in the hide)
Transfer to accommodation and dinner
Lookout for Northern Lights

Day 6 - 7

Breakfast before sunrise
Visit a few small streams to photograph fishing White-throated Dippers or transfer to the northernmost tip of the mountain range in Kuusamo. The height of that mountain range is just over 400 meters and offers great chances to photograph Siberian Jays
Lunch
Transfer to Oulanka National Park, known for its pines, river valleys and rapids, for some refreshing landscape photography opportunities
Stay in the national park until sunset
Transfer to accommodation and dinner

Day 8

Breakfast
Transfer from our local accommodation to Kuusamo airport

Reservations and information:

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Please take the following into consideration: The itinerary and its priorities are in principle fixed, however the nature of wildlife, and in particular in winter, will define what the exact daily photographic opportunities * and priorities are, we will go after. Hunting Northern Hawk-owls and Great Grey Owls may be such opportunities changing the daily plans. Anyways, the trip is built in such a way that there are various options every day to ensure a marvelous photographic experience.



Things to bring (check list):

Documents

- Passport
- Flight tickets
- Insurance papers

Clothing (warm and weatherproof to keep your head, feet and hands warm)

- Waterproof walking boots with thermal lining
- Thermal underwear and woolen socks
- Fleece
- Hiking pants with thermal lining
- Down coat or any coat which can handle up to -30 °C
- Hat, waterproof gloves (fingerless mittens are a plus)

Camera equipment

- Camera
- Several batteries + charger
- memory cards
- remote trigger
- lenses (telephoto (300 or 500), extender, zoom (70-200) wide angle (14 or 24-70), macro)
- cleaning kit
- filters (polarizer, neutral density and stoppers)
- tripod
- laptop
- headlamp + batteries
- thermo bottle

Please contact me if you got any question.

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