THIS IS FINLAND

Smart cities call for innovative technologies & BRIGHT THINKERS

BUSINESS
Top-notch location for R&D investments

PEOPLE
A Michelin star chef reveals his winning recipe

TECHNOLOGY
Eliminating waste in a circular economy

FUN
The character of Finnish films
A warm sleeping bag, a hat with tiny pompons and animal-themed baby clothes, all spread out in a living room that will welcome a small baby bringing great change. These are familiar images in Finnish homes where a mother is preparing for the birth of her child. In Finland the social security system provides a maternity package to every expectant mother as a starter kit for the family. The box contains children’s clothes and other necessary items, such as nappies, bedding, muslins and child-care products. The box even comes with a light mattress, which means it can be used as a baby’s first bed.

The emphasis is on promoting the health and well-being of the mother and the child. The first maternity packages were given to low income mothers in 1937, and since 1949 it has been available to all. The maternity package is only one example of how every mother and child, regardless of the family’s income, is well taken care of. The infant mortality rate is one of world’s lowest, thanks to the high-quality, free public healthcare.

THE MATERNITY BOX

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WE MAKE IT WORK

In Finland and other Nordic countries it is completely normal to let babies have their afternoon naps outdoors, even in sub-zero temperatures. “All Finnish parents know that babies sleep better outdoors. This is a very long tradition. It’s all about the right clothing: the colder it is, the more layers you need, says Specialist in Paediatrics Erik Qvist of Pikkujätt Medical Centre for Children and Youth.

EDITORIAL

PROBLEM SOLVERS

Jari Gustafsson
Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Employment and the Economy

It is not an easy task to squeeze Finland into 40 pages. Luckily, Finns tend to make things work, even when restricted by paper. So, we have hand-picked topics that we find important on a global scale, next to easy-read snapshots of Finnish society and culture.

For your entrée, you are invited on a delicious tour of Finnish food culture. Finland’s very distinct four seasons have always determined what Finns eat, and the harsh climate cultivates top-notch ingredients. Please meet the master of Scandinavian flavours, a Michelin-star chef Pekka Terävä (starting page 6).

During the hearty main course, we present Finnish cures for major climate problems and resource scarcity. With no major natural resources of our own, we have been forced to create clever processes that promote the sustainable use of what we have. Good showcases of Finland’s ingenuity include the concept of “circular economy”, where all materials are fully utilized and recycled, and Finnish meteorological excellence, which helps in tackling climate change.

Resource scarcity is not the case with high-class engineering talent. Rapid structural change in the telecom industry has created a well-educated talent pool. Finland tops global rankings in both innovations and IPR, which, added to the booming start-up scene, make Finland a perfect place to invest in.

For dessert, have a look at the dynamic new generation of Finnish fashion talent. And when you finish the magazine, I hope your journey with Finns has only just begun. Meet Team Finland as it networks across the world, and ask us for help or challenge us to solve your problem at hand. Finns are famous for making it work.

*The Mademoiselle chair, made of painted solid birch, was designed by Ilmari Tapiovaara in 1956. Mademoiselle represents Finnish design classics of the 1950s, and its design is based on the traditional Finnish spoke chair.

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Stefan Heinonen
The world map on pages 12-13 was illustrated by Eili-Kaija Kuusniemi, who creates her loose, feminine style with ink, pencil and watercolours, finishing them digitally. A graduate from the Aalto University School of Arts, with an MA in Graphic Design, Eili-Kaija has taken on many roles in the industry: illustration, art direction and graphic design. Her clients include various fashion brands and other global brands.

*eili-kaija.com
6 | IN TOUCH

**Master of Scandinavian flavours**
Strong seasonal changes characterise Finnish food culture.

9 **Wild and Wonderful**
Pick or catch your own food.

10 **Stunted Growth, Superior Quality**
The Finnish climate creates ingredients unique both in flavor and health boosting benefits.

11 **Best served with friends**
Community building: DIY restaurants and street food festivals.

12 | MEET&GREET

**Meet with a Finn**
See where and when.

14 | SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

**Weatherman for the World**
Meteorological excellence helps tackle the problems caused by the climate change.

18 **Circular economy**
Making most of material and minimising waste.

20 **Transport solutions for smart cities**
Small and agile Finland is an excellent test-bed for joined-up transport solutions.

22 | KEEP IT SHORT

The bits and bytes of fresh Finnish innovations and things to know.

24 | SOCIAL CONTEXT

**A Penny for Your Thoughts**
We asked five foreigners for their thoughts on Finland.

25 | WHY FINLAND?

**Perfect Place for R&D**
A well-educated talent pool and the booming start-up scene attract foreign investors to Finland.

27 **Zalando chose Finland**
E-commerce giant sets up a tech office.

29 **Haltian**
A promising startup with innovative solution for Internet of Things.

30 | MOVIE

**The Arctic Movie**
Check out which films our editor chose for you to watch!

32 | DESIGN DRIVEN

**Shaping the Future**
A pioneering fashion professor Pirjo Hirvonen.

35 **Ones to Watch**
Fresh Finnish fashion talent.

37 **Finns brave chilly weather in high-tech clothes**
“There’s no bad weather, only inadequate clothing”.

38 | FINNISH BY NATURE

**“Mother wait”**
Antti Leinonen captures a magical moment to win Finnish Wildlife Photo of the Year.
Keep it simple. That is the recipe for any good dish, argues Pekka Terävä, a Michelin-star chef and restaurateur.

"Let the ingredient talk. Everything superfluous has to be taken away."
In the forests, there are elk, chanterelles, berries and wild herbs, just to name a few. Many of them are only freshly available for a short period.

“If I was to peel asparagus every day, I would get bored very soon,” Terävä says and continues: “The strong seasonal changes inspire my work. I can always use what’s best at the moment.” When the first layer of ice appears on Lake Inari in Lapland, we see reindeer on Olo’s menu. When the first snow blankets the Kustavi archipelago in Southwest Finland, we get venison.

“Finnish potatoes are the best in the world. The short season keeps the land rich in nutrients and makes the potato fight for its existence, which generates the superior taste. The same is true of the natural world provides a balance to life in the vast land.”

Terävä sees airports more than his summer cottage. Travelling comes with the job, though Terävä often takes his family along.

“When abroad, me and my wife get to choose the restaurant one day and the kids the next”, he laughs. “But it is not just about the food, it is about gathering people together to enjoy the food and the company.”

TEAM OF TOP CHEFS

One of Pekka Terävä’s passions is the Bocuse d’Or, a biennial world chef championship that is considered one of the world’s most prestigious cooking competitions. Terävä is the President of the Finnish Bocuse d’Or team and has previously competed himself. Now Terävä is coaching an ambitious young chef Benn Voutilainen, who will represent Finland in the 2016 European semi-finals in Budapest, Hungary. From there, the best two countries continue to the final, held in 2017 in Lyon, France.

“It is a huge effort. The whole team works long days. Attributes that have brought Pekka Terävä quite far in his culinary career.”

“THE STRONG SEASONAL CHANGES INSPIRE MY WORK.”

PIKEPERCH BY PEKKA TERÄVÄ

Picture on previous page

Serves 4

2 pikeperch fillet

4 pcs Jerusalem artichokes

50 g vendace roe

Butter

Whey butter

Baby leek

Whey butter

Dill

Salt

Oil

1. Cut the pikeperch into a few slices. Add only a little salt to the pikeperch. It has a delicate flavour and doesn’t need much else.

2. Soak the baby leek in cold water for 10 minutes.

3. Wash the Jerusalem artichokes thoroughly and grill them in the oven for 15 min.

4. Prepare the sauce: Mix dill into the whey butter and add salt. Taste.

5. Fry fish on little oil until nicely brown. Check that the fish is cooked, but don’t overdo it. Fry also the leek and add salt.

6. Quickly fry borecole in salted butter, with few spoonful of whey butter. Pour the sauce over the fish.

7. Check the flavours and create the portions.

8. Finish with vendace roe.

Watch the video recipe:
finland.fi/life-society/master-of-scandinavian-flavours/

“Wild food is local, organic, seasonal, healthy and free. It includes plants, berries, mushrooms, honey, sap, fish and game. It’s the best kind of Finnish food, and it’s accessible even in Helsinki,” says wild food expert and enthusiast Chef Sami Tallberg.

“He’s a wild food ambassador for the ELÖ Foundation, which promotes Finnish food culture. Tallberg takes groups of food lovers into their local natural environment and teaches them how to gather their own food.”

“Every season has its own delicacies. Our summer is short, but it’s possible to find edible plants from April until October. You can also dry and freeze plants and berries for the winter,” Tallberg concludes.

For tourists, a foraging course is a wonderful chance to see the richness of Finland’s nature.

EVERYMAN’S RIGHTS

Download a booklet in English: www.samitallberg.com

WILD AND WONDERFUL

Wild food is a big international trend, but only in a few places is nature as accessible as it is in Finland. Pick or catch your own food and enjoy.

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EVERYMAN’S RIGHTS

YOU MAY:

• walk, ski and cycle freely, except near people’s homes or in fields and gardens;

• pick wild berries, mushrooms and flowers as long as they are not protected species;

• fish with a rod and line;

• set up a camp temporarily at a reasonable distance from homes;

• let your pets off their leashes;

• pay your respects at cemeteries.

YOU MUST NOT:

• disturb people or damage property;

• disturb animals and birds;

• cut down or damage trees;

• leave litter, light open campfires or have fires in inner city parks;

• collect moss, lichen or wood on other people’s property;

• let your pets off their leashes;

• fish or hunt without the relevant permits.
The short Finnish summer and low sun give our produce certain unique features, such as intense flavour and various health properties.

“Many of the foods produced in Finland are not found anywhere else on the planet. Although the yield obtained from vegetable and fruit produce and animal products can be quite low, the growing conditions can create exceptional quality. As a result, our food plants offer not only intense aromas but also numerous immunity-boosting compounds,” says Professor of Food Chemistry Heikki Kallio from the University of Turku.

The reason can be found in Finland’s unusual geographical position. The country lies on latitudes which, in places like Canada and Russia, are usually covered by tundra. Finland is “shifted” from the high-low axis has the same effect on altitudes in the Himalayas and found that studied sea buckthorn growing at different conditions for food growth.

SEA BUCKTHORN IS A SUPERFOOD

Each year, Finnish woodlands produce millions of kilos of wild berries. The Finnish bilberry is particularly popular in Japan and South Korea. One of the reasons is its intense colour and flavour. Bilberry and certain other berries, such as sea buckthorn, have been found to be beneficial for cardiovascular health. Sea buckthorn oil reduces the coagulation of platelets and dry eye symptoms.

“In Finland, sea buckthorn grows from north to south, from Kittilä in Lapland to Turku over 800 km away. Sea buckthorn grown in the north contains twice as much vitamin C, one and a half times the amount of sugar, and more phenolic compounds which protect human health. We have also studied sea buckthorn growing at different altitudes in the Himalayas and found that the high-low axis has the same effect on growth as the north-south axis,” Kallio explains.

The warmth of the Gulf Stream, which warms the whole of the planet, and punctuated by severe winters. In the Finnish growing seasons are short and long daylight hours create unique conditions for food growth.

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In Lapland above the Arctic Circle, the sun doesn’t set at all during a certain period. The warmth of the Gulf Stream combined with the low-intensity daylight and long daylight hours create unique conditions for food growth.

VIENNOIS: “One of the world’s finest meals. It has a strong and sophisticated game taste. The meat is tender and can be creatively used for many different purposes and dishes.”

Chanterelle: “An amazing mushroom that embodies the taste of the Finnish forest. It works in salads, sauces or as a side dish on its own. Chanterelle with smoky bacon over a brioche makes a superb main course for a crayfish party. Tastes best when self-picked.”

Jaakko Sorsa works as the Executive Chef at restaurant FINDS in Hong Kong, introducing true Nordic flavors to Asia. He has over 20 years of experience in working in the most demanding restaurants around the world, winning culinary awards and even cooking for royalty.

Spruce shoots: “Whilst in Finland, I love picking them in the forest, and then serving them here in Hong Kong. Our customers are amazed to be served tiny food portions were sold during the event.

Venison: “The climate creates unique conditions for food production.”

THE CLIMATE CREATES UNIQUE CONDITIONS FOR FOOD PRODUCTION.”

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THE CLIMATE CREATES UNIQUE CONDITIONS FOR FOOD PRODUCTION.”

“The Finnish summer and low sun give our produce certain unique features, such as intense flavour and various health properties.”
Pick one of these events and meet & greet with Team Finland in 2016.

**AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA**  
11-20 MARCH  
**SXSW®**  
The South by Southwest® Conferences & Festivals offers a unique convergence of distinctive music, independent film, emerging technology and vibrant Finnish start-ups.  
www.sxsw.com  
**NEW YORK, USA**  
**SPRING**  
Samuji Store  
Samuji, a Helsinki based creative studio and design house, will open in New York. Uncover inimitable items, elegantly designed and crafted from quality materials sourced from European and Japanese suppliers.  
www.samuji.com  
**BUDAPEST, HUNGARY**  
**10-11 MAY**  
Bocuse d’Or Europe  
The Crème de la crème of European chefs will compete in the most prestigious gastronomic competition, Bocuse d’Or. The Finnish representative, chef Eero Vottonen, will put his heart and talent into winning a place in the final, which takes place in Lyon, France, in 2017.  
www.bocuseoral.com/seLECTION-europe-2016-1  
**RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL**  
5-21 AUGUST, 7-18 SEPTEMBER  
Olympic and Paralympic Games  
Did you know that the Finn dinghy was originally designed for the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952? Watch Finnish athletes compete in sailing and other sports. And win or lose, they will also be stylish in their blue and white kit!  
www.rio2016.com  
**HELSENKI, FINLAND**  
2-4 MAY  
World Press Freedom Day Conference  
The Finnish government is honoured to co-host the international World Press Freedom Day’s main event with UNESCO. This is the first time the event will be held in Scandinavia.  
www.unesco.org/new/en/wpfd  
**CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**  
5-11 FEBRUARY  
Mining Indaba  
Finnish knowhow in the mining sector is strong and will be present at the Finnish pavilion during the world’s largest mining investment event.  
www.miningindaba.com  
**SHANGHAI, CHINA**  
5-7 MAY  
SIAL China  
The Finnish food industry will be present at Asia’s largest professional food and beverage exhibition.  
www.sialchina.com  
**ACROSS CHINA**  
**SPRING 2016**  
Air Quality Roadshow  
The Beautiful Beijing Growth Program brings Finnish Cleantech knowhow to Chinese markets. Finland’s world class expertise in Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) will be introduced through an Indoor Air Quality roadshow that will visit Chinese cities.  
www.cleantechfinland.com/content/beautiful-beijing-1  
**TOKYO, JAPAN**  
**APRIL**  
SLUSH  
This leading start-up conference, based originally in Helsinki, promises to arrange the biggest entrepreneurial event in the history of Asia. Check the latest locations and details.  
www.slush.org
Foreigners in Finland are often amazed to find that everything still seems to work here even in the worst Nordic winter weather. One key factor behind this miracle is the expert forecasting work done by the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) – one of the world’s oldest and most professionally respected national meteorological offices.

“About half of FMI’s staff of 720 work in R&D, but we also produce a wide range of practical forecasting and warning services for our clients, especially in the transport sector,” says Petteri Taalas, who will now lead the Geneva-based World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) for the next 4-8 years, after serving as FMI’s Director General for 11 years.

SNOW BUSINESS

Taalas lists FMI’s specialities, including snow and ice monitoring, assisting icebreakers and other ships on the frozen Baltic Sea each winter, and providing services to support Finland’s effective winter road maintenance. “We’re proud to have built up strong expertise in many areas. Among meteorological institutes we are number two in the world in terms of published scientific articles.”

Taalas now hopes to help the WMO reproduce Finland’s achievements around the world by transferring advanced knowhow to help other meteorological agencies provide high-tech customer-oriented services, especially in developing countries.

The FMI itself currently works in more than 50 countries around the world. In Nepal, Finnish experts are leading a major World Bank funded project aiming to improve national weather observations and create forecasting and warning services that will benefit everyone from airport managers to Himalayan farmers.

WEATHERMAN FOR THE WORLD

The global reputation of Finnish meteorological excellence is reflected in the appointment of the head of the Finnish Meteorological Institute Petteri Taalas as Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organisation from January 2016.
The Finnish Meteorological Institute’s work on climate change involves the detailed monitoring of the increasing atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases that are causing global climate change, including carbon dioxide and methane.

“In addition to our measurement stations around Finland we also collect data from FMI stations located in Antarctica, Siberia, South Africa and the Indian Himalayas,” says Petteri Taalas. The FMI’s state-of-the-art stations at Pallás and Sodankylä in Finnish Lapland also form a crucial link in a worldwide network of atmospheric measurement stations contributing data to the World Meteorological Organisation’s Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) programme. Taalas emphasises the importance of the programmes as a global watchdog constantly surveying the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases.

“But to find ways to mitigate climate change effectively it’s not enough just to measure the amounts of greenhouse gases in the air, since we also need to understand the whole carbon cycle – and exactly what happens to additional carbon emissions,” explains Taalas. This means measuring fluxes of carbon between the atmosphere and carbon sinks such as the seas and forests.

The FMI’s marine and atmospheric research station on Ultø, a remote island in the Gulf of Finland, uses ultra-modern devices to collect real-time physical, chemical and biological data above and beneath the waves. Ultø is one of four Finnish atmospheric stations that form a key part of the Integrated Carbon Observation System (ICOS), a Europe-wide research network focusing on greenhouse gas balances and carbon cycles. The ICOS network, consisting of 50 stations in 15 countries, is run from FMI’s Helsinki headquarters, reflecting Finland’s keen interest in contributing to international action on climate issues.

“The intensification of global efforts to combat climate change brings opportunities for businesses producing technologies and services that can help their clients mitigate climate change or adapt to its consequences,” says Taalas. Finland’s Climate Leadership Council brings together many leading Finnish businesses and research organisations keen to respond to the threat of climate change. According to a study recently conducted by the Confederation of Finnish Industries, as many as 3,000 businesses in Finland see climate change mitigation as a business opportunity.

“Finland’s strengths in relation to mitigating climate change include many technologies that improve energy efficiency, as well as expertise in the sustainable use of forests and the generation of energy from renewable forest-biomass,” says Taalas.

In spite of the clear risk of catastrophic climate change Taalas sees room for optimism, as long as the international community finds the political will to act concertedly. In the 1990s his own PhD studies focused on the depletion of the ozone layer – a global threat that is now thankfully under control. “In combating acid rain and ozone depletion we already have two success stories where the world has responded to urgent problems in our atmosphere pointed out by scientists,” says Taalas.

Accurate real-time meteorological data is today more urgently needed than ever, especially in cities and regions vulnerable to extreme weather events. The Finnish-based global environmental and industrial measurement specialists Vaisala offer a wide range of meteorological instruments from wind, rain or lightning sensors to weather radars and entire automatic weather stations. Vaisala’s key customers include airports, road and rail transport agencies, maritime operators and renewable energy producers, as well as national meteorological agencies around the world.
When it comes to making the most of materials and minimising waste, Finland already has plenty of expertise on how innovative technologies can be used in crucial sectors.

The concept of a “circular economy”, where all materials are fully utilised and recycled, is becoming increasingly appreciated as a vital goal in a world facing critical problems such as climate change and dwindling natural resources.

The European Union is finalising an ambitious Circular Economy Strategy, while the Finnish Government has prioritised investments promoting the circular economy among its new spearhead projects.

“Building a circular economy will involve much more than recycling waste. It will mean radical changes ranging from the choice of raw materials, through product design and new service concepts, to the wider use of sidestreams from industry as raw materials for other businesses,” explains Mari Pantsar, Ecological Sustainability Director at the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra.

MATERIAL AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN INDUSTRY

“Finland’s pulp and paper industry is a prime example of a major industry where almost all the materials and sidestreams generated during wood processing are already utilised in many kinds of products or to generate renewable energy,” says Pantsar. Finnish firms are rapidly finding new applications for innovative biomaterials derived from wood – enabling the enhanced utilisation of biomass from Finland’s sustainably managed forests, where much more timber grows than is harvested each year.

Improved raw material use typically comes hand in hand with maximising energy efficiency in industry and buildings. Such exportable expertise is now more important than ever considering the need to reduce emissions and mitigate global warming.

In addition to building up a sustainable carbon-neutral bioeconomy by making better use of forest biomass, Finland is actively bringing the concept of the circular economy into other key areas.

Pantsar explains how machinery and electronic equipment should increasingly be designed to enable them or their different materials and components to be recovered for reuse. “The Finnish forestry machine manufacturers Posio have pioneered the concept of product modularity by integrating multi-purpose parts in machines that they can easily take back for maintenance and reuse – also through their international sales network,” she adds.

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Households can also help to eliminate waste and re-circulate goods and materials through the economy by increasingly opting for leasing services, sharing schemes and second-hand goods. In conventional recycling Finnish families have long led the way when it comes to drinks containers and paper. Improvements in collection, sorting and processing will next focus on other reusable materials including plastics, metals and textiles.

Finland’s food producers and distributors are meanwhile aiming for radical reductions in food waste. The Finnish energy company St1 is pioneering the production of biofuel from food industry residuals.

Down on the farm, Pantsar explains that recycling the nutrients needed for growing crops is another crucial goal for Finland - not least because surplus nutrients in runoff from farmland worsen ecological problems in the Baltic Sea. “Instead of using imported chemical fertilisers, farmers are being encouraged to apply recycled organic wastes on their fields, or include nutrient-binding crops in cultivation cycles,” she says.

Sitra’s experts are helping to create an ambitious road map aiming to get goods and materials circulating smoothly throughout the Finnish economy. They have identified potential savings amounting to billions of euros a year in key sectors.

NEW CLOTHES FROM OLD

Worn-out clothes can now be turned into new fashions, thanks to an innovative process devised by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and Ethics as part of the Finnish Circular Economy of Textiles project.

In the first step of this ground-breaking recycling demonstration scheme, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse Centre separates cotton clothes that contain reusable fibres, even though their fabric may be too worn out for them to be resold second hand.

Cotton fabric crushed by recycling specialist Suez is then dissolved in alkali to form a cellulose solution. New fibres are then formed by spinning this solution in a demonstration scheme, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse Centre separates cotton clothes that contain reusable fibres, even though their fabric may be too worn out for them to be resold second hand.

Cotton fabric crushed by recycling specialist Suez is then dissolved in alkali to form a cellulose solution. New fibres are then formed by spinning this solution in pop-up facilities located in a disused viscose mill. New knitted fabrics are then manufactured from the recycled fibres by the Finnish firm Pure Waste, and made into new clothes designed for the high street fashion chain Seppälä.

The first new clothes created through the scheme will go on sale during 2016 in Seppälä’s stores. They may also be purchasable online and delivered in reusable RePack packaging – eliminating another layer of waste and enabling consumers to return old clothes, completing the cycle.

www.vttresearch.com

“OUR PLANS EMPHASISE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY, RESEARCHERS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LEGISLATORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES,” says Pantsar. “Through R&D work new business models and modular product designs can be created that take into account the need for easy maintenance, multiple reuse and recycling right from the start.”

“POTENTIAL SAVINGS AMOUNT TO BILLIONS OF EUROS A YEAR.”
Residents of smart cities will in future be linked through their smartphones to mobility integration services that enable them to travel conveniently wherever they wish, switching flexibly between different transport modes. Finland is a global forerunner in the piloting of such services.

The concept of a smart city involves using exciting and innovative technologies to make life easier for everyone. We can especially find the best way to get where you want to go using any combination of transport modes – and letting you pay for all your mobility needs conveniently through a single system," explains Sonja Heikkilä who coordinated Tekes’s MaaS programme in 2015, and now works at OP Financial Group, leading a project developing new mobility services.

MOBILITY ON DEMAND

According to Heikkilä, it is already feasible to expand the journey planning services run by Finland’s Ministry of Transport and Communications and Tekes aims to realise the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS). “The idea is that a single smartphone app will look after all your mobility needs, finding the best way to get where you want to go using any combination of transport modes — and letting you pay for all your mobility needs conveniently through a single system,” explains Sonja Heikkilä who coordinated Tekes’s MaaS programme in 2015, and now works at OP Financial Group, leading a project developing new mobility services.

Such schemes depend on transport operators giving mobility integrators access to their information and payment systems. The Finnish Taxi-Owners’ Federation and railway company VR are already open to their information and payment systems. Airlines and shipping companies can be integrated, while in some localities vehicles delivering goods or the post could also carry passengers attracted through mobility integrators.

Heikkilä believes the time is ripe for such schemes, since attitudes towards mobility among the smartphone generation are changing fast. “Young people in cities no longer feel it’s so important to have their own car,” she says. “Instead they appreciate the flexibility of switching between private and public transport modes, as well as the economies of crowdsourcing solutions such as sharing a car or a ride.”

Though such multimodal mobility trends may mainly be driven by demands for convenience, they will also mean cleaner air and more space for pedestrians and cyclists on city streets.

“AS A SMALL AND AGILE MARKET FINLAND IS AN EXCELLENT TEST-BED.”

As a small and agile market Finland is an excellent test-bed for such schemes, with real users during 2016. Interested cities include Helsinki, Tampere, Seinajoki, Hämeenlinna and Turku, while the ski resort of Ylläs in Finnish Lapland is planning a unique scheme to help tech-savvy visitors get to, from and around the resort.

TRAINS AND BOATS AND PLANES

Though it takes time to change attitudes and behaviour, such systems could become large-scale within a couple of years,” says Heikkilä. Heikkilä’s vision of future integrated mobility services in Helsinki, as set out in her Master’s thesis for Aalto University, has attracted international interest. Foreign Policy magazine listed her among their 100 Leading Global Thinkers in 2014. As a small and agile market Finland is an excellent test-bed for such schemes, with real users during 2016. Interested cities include Helsinki, Tampere, Seinajoki, Hämeenlinna and Turku, while the ski resort of Ylläs in Finnish Lapland is planning a unique scheme to help tech-savvy visitors get to, from and around the resort.

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“AS A SMALL AND AGILE MARKET FINLAND IS AN EXCELLENT TEST-BED.”

Heikkilä: “It’s been a lot of international interest in how we’re pioneering the MaaS concept in Finland. We believe such schemes can be scaled up and replicated through international cooperation to enable travellers to use similar interoperable services anywhere in the world through ‘roaming’ mobility services like those we already use for telecoms.”

Airlines and shipping companies can be integrated, while in some localities vehicles delivering goods or the post could also carry passengers attracted through mobility integrators.

Heikkilä believes the time is ripe for such schemes, since attitudes towards mobility among the smartphone generation are changing fast. “Young people in cities no longer feel it’s so important to have their own car,” she says. “Instead they appreciate the flexibility of switching between private and public transport modes, as well as the economies of crowdsourcing solutions such as sharing a car or a ride.”

Though such multimodal mobility trends may mainly be driven by demands for convenience, they will also mean cleaner air and more space for pedestrians and cyclists on city streets.

“AS A SMALL AND AGILE MARKET FINLAND IS AN EXCELLENT TEST-BED.”

Selected projects have been developed elsewhere in Finland, including MaaS.fi, Tuup, Tziip and Tellisaneura, to expand their pilot schemes with real users during 2016. Helsinki’s MaaS Programme during 2015, building Finnish mobility integrators including Maas.fi, Tuup, Tziip and Tellisaneura, to expand their pilot schemes with real users during 2016.

The Finnish Taxi-Owners’ Federation and railway company VR are already open to their information and payment systems. Airlines and shipping companies can be integrated, while in some localities vehicles delivering goods or the post could also carry passengers attracted through mobility integrators.

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The concept of smart cities involves using exciting and innovative technologies to make life easier for everyone. In Finland, the Ministry of Transport and Communications and Tekes aims to realise the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS). The idea is that a single smartphone app will look after all your mobility needs, finding the best way to get where you want to go using any combination of transport modes — and letting you pay for all your mobility needs conveniently through a single system, explains Sonja Heikkilä who coordinated Tekes’s MaaS programme in 2015, and now works at OP Financial Group, leading a project developing new mobility services.

MOBILITY ON DEMAND

According to Heikkilä, it is already feasible to expand the journey planning services run in many large cities to encompass options like taxi services, shared car rides or even free city bikes, as well as public bus and rail services. These bundled options will be provided by “mobility integrators.” Working in a whole new business area, these competitive service-providers will run hi-tech systems that display information on timetables, real-time vehicle locations and journey fares on user-friendly interfaces, while enabling you to instantly book all parts of your trip.

“Depending on your agreement with your chosen mobility integrator, you might pay as you go for whatever mode of transport you use, pay in advance for a fixed time period package, or pay afterwards just like the way we pay our telecom bills,” adds Heikkilä.

Such schemes depend on transport operators giving mobility integrators access to their information and payment systems. The Finnish Taxi-Owners’ Federation and railway company VR are already open to the idea.

As a small and agile market Finland is an excellent test-bed for such solutions. Finland is a global forerunner in the piloting of such services. The Finnish Taxi-Owners’ Federation and railway company VR are already open to their information and payment systems. Airlines and shipping companies can be integrated, while in some localities vehicles delivering goods or the post could also carry passengers attracted through mobility integrators.

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Though such multimodal mobility trends may mainly be driven by demands for convenience, they will also mean cleaner air and more space for pedestrians and cyclists on city streets. "AS A SMALL AND AGILE MARKET FINLAND IS AN EXCELLENT TEST-BED."
THE CHALLENGER

Solu is a Finnish start-up revolutionizing the way we use mobile devices for social interaction, leisure and work. Solu means “cell” and it is the first operating system to use a cloud system as a key component. With its unique, zoomable, graphic interface and a powerful 2.3 GHz processor, it can be paired with a keyboard and a display or used on its own. Solu is a refreshing challenger to ordinary computers and mobile devices.

GROUNDBREAKING BIOPRODUCT MILL

Neste Fibre, part of Neste Group, will build a new bioproduct mill in Äänekoski, Central Finland. This is the first next-generation bio-product mill in the world, and with a value of EUR 1.2 billion it is the largest investment in the history of the Finnish forest industry. It will create more than 2,500 jobs. In addition to high-quality pulp, it will produce bio-products, such as tall oil, turpentine, lignin products, bioelectricity and wood fuel, while the production side-streams have the potential to create a variety of products. The mill will begin operating in 2017.

FLY WITH EASE

Finnair is the first European airline to receive the new Airbus A350 XWB (Extra Wide Body) aircraft: Flights to Shanghai have begun, while Beijing, Bangkok, Hong Kong and Singapore are set to follow. The eco-smart design brings more than 25% improvement in fuel efficiency compared to the previous generation of aircraft. Helsinki is already the smart place for a stopover or catching your connecting flight to Asia, and with the A350 it is more comfortable than ever.

SUPERFAST UNDERSEA CABLE

The first direct cable link between mainland Europe and the Nordic region will be put into operation in 2016, providing super-fast telecommunication connections. Finland has already attracted major data center investments, thanks to its location between east and west, first-rate infrastructure, cool climate and low energy costs. The new cable will add to these advantages. For example, data center operator and an investor in the cable, Hetzner Online, will be using it to connect from its data centers to the Nordic countries.

KIDS THAT CODE

Coding becomes part of the core curriculum for students at Finnish comprehensive schools in 2016. Whether you’re making an animation film, developing a self-parking system for cars or building new applications for mobile phones, it is all based on simple bits of code. No wonder Finnish education experts feel that coding is a bright idea for raising computer-literate school kids.

EXPLORE WITH A STYLE

The Finnish watchmaker Suunto is known for its pioneering innovations for adventurers, from compasses to dive computers and sport watches. The new Suunto Kailash, part of a Suunto World Collection, is named after the holy Tibetan peak. Handmade in Finland, this watch combines quality, innovation and reliability. “The design of Kailash watches aims for purity and modernity. Premium detailing complements a discreet, classic form,” says Timo Yli-Kuoma, lead designer.

Keep it short

By Ilpo Salonen, Juana Kalliohieni, Maarit Niemelä

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A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

We asked five foreigners for their views on Finland, their new homeland.

RUGGERO VALSECCHI
Originally from Italy
Sales manager
“I like the Finnish work mentality. There is a general respect and trust between employers and employees. Time is not spent on formalities – people cut straight to the point and finish things on time. Also, affordable public day care for our daughter is a good benefit.”

SHUO YANG
Originally from China
Software engineer
“There are so many things people take for granted here: fresh air, clear blue skies, to be able to go to the forest and pick mushrooms and blueberries. In China you would have to pay for that! My Finnish boyfriend does not understand when I tell him that we should appreciate these things.”

ALLEN BROWN
Originally from the UK
On disability pension
“From personal experience, I’d say that if you are going to get cancer, get it in Finland. Also, the Finnish mentality suits me. Here, people respect you for telling the truth.”

EVON SÖDERLUND
Originally from Malaysia
Entrepreneur, CEO
“When I started my studies in Finland, I was amazed at how informal the culture was. The teachers wouldn’t respond if I called them ‘teacher’. Then I would use their first name, and their head turned immediately!”

JOSEPH KNOWLES
Originally from the USA
PR manager and senior writer
“Generally I would say people are outward looking. Finns know a lot about the outside world. You can spend your whole life in New York and think that whole world evolves around NY because it is big enough. But Finns have this awareness of the outside world. Everyone speaks at least two languages.”

Read full-length interviews on finland.fi/life-society/a-penny-for-your-thoughts
apid structural change in the Finnish telecom industry has created a unique opportunity for companies looking to hire high-class engineering talent. Today, Finland is a perfect place to set up a research and development unit.

Continuous growth between 1990 and 2009 turned the Finnish telecom industry into a nationally important sector – with ICT regarded as the cornerstone of the national economy. In those days, Nokia was the jewel in the crown that all Finns were proud of.

THE RISE AND FALL OF NOKIA’S MOBILE PHONES

But the new decade saw a structural change brought about by the maturization of the telecom industry, new players, a new global model and changing market shares. In 2009, Nokia started to downsize its mobile operations, making more and more people redundant. Confronted with plummeting sales figures, Nokia eventually decided to sell its mobile phone business to Microsoft in 2013. This caused a radical contraction in the large Nokia ecosystem.

Further bad news followed in summer 2015, when Microsoft announced it was scaling down its mobile business and laying off roughly 2,300 employees in Finland. The R&D site in Salo was to be closed down and major redundancies were expected elsewhere in Finland.

End of the story? A discouraging final blow for Finnish ICT? No, Finns do not give up that easily. This is where a new story, a new vision, of determined recovery begins.

FINLAND’S GREATEST ASSET: TALENTED R&D ENGINEERS
“HELSINKI IS LISTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE TECH CITIES IN THE WORLD.”

A NEW START

Extensive and rapid change is painful but also a strong driver for renewal. Major mobile players have exited the stage, but today’s Finnish ICT arena is alive with new energy and an ambitious can-do attitude. Telecoms, radio technology and mobile technology remain strong, the ICT subcontracting industry is competent and lean and the Finnish gaming industry has been booming. Hundreds of new technology startups have created a vibrant startup scene. And new players such as Intel, Huawei, LG and Zalando have set up R&D units in Finland to utilise the available talent pool and to tap into the local tech community. In a recent study for innovative capital cities, Helsinki is listed as one of the top five tech cities in the world.

This rapid change has created a unique opportunity to utilise world-class Finnish R&D expertise. You could say Finnish engineers are amongst Finland’s greatest assets,” says Minna Matinaho, Head of Customer Process at Invest in Finland.

“In Finland the price to quality ratio of technology professionals is excellent. The R&D engineers are innovative problem-solvers and committed to the task and to the job,” Matinaho highlights.

FINNS GO THAT EXTRA MILE

Creoir is a Finnish startup providing design and engineering services. Winner of the IF Design Award 2015, Creoir specializes in designing user interfaces for consumer brands, most notably designing the Marshall London smartphone and the Ibis smartwatch. Most of Creoir’s employees have a Nokia background. Pekka Väyrynen, CEO of Creoir, is convinced that the way Finns work makes a real difference.

“Before joining Creoir at the end of 2012, I headed the product development of Nokia’s N9 Meego phones in Oulu. During my business trips across the world, I got to see various working cultures, and realized how naturally it comes to Finnish employees to show initiative and always walk the extra mile,” Väyrynen says.

“You may be able to outsource work overseas at a lower price, but Finnish workers are extremely flexible. If quality and adhering to schedules are important to you, choose Finland,” he urges.

LEGACY NETWORKS AND GOOD LANGUAGE SKILLS

Part of the Nokia and Microsoft legacy are the professional networks born during those years.

“Looking back, the thing I appreciate most is the professional competence we accumulated while working for Nokia. Old networks are crucial to the current success of our company. They enable us to scale up our production. And they allow potential cooperation partners to learn about us,” Väyrynen says.

Another valuable legacy is the ability to use English as a working language. “Finns speak English really well. We are used to working in an international multi-site environment and we have existing contacts around the world. This means we can always find a solution to any problem that may arise. Other important factors were Finland’s strong mobile sector and the e-commerce friendly atmosphere.

In 2015, the leading start-up conference Slush brought 1,700 startups, 800 venture capital investors and 630 journalists to Helsinki.

ZALANDO CHOSE HELSINKI

Attracted by Helsinki’s huge talent pool and the strong mobile sector, rapidly growing German e-commerce giant Zalando set up a tech office in Finland’s capital.

Headquartered in Berlin, Zalando is an e-commerce company that maintains a cross-platform online store selling shoes, clothing and other fashion items. It operates in 15 European countries and has more than 16 million active customers.

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“Personnel don’t change twice a year, as happens in certain countries. This means you don’t have to use valuable working time for training new employees or getting trained. Also Finns can admit their errors. Problems can often be solved quicker if you do not have to think about saving face,” Väyrynen notes.

According to Marc Lamik, Zalando’s Head of Tech Expansion, the main reason why Zalando chose Helsinki was the huge available talent pool. There is an ample supply of engineering, user experience and design talent to hire.

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“We received significant help from local authorities and organizations like Helsinki Business Hub and Finpro. They assisted us with recruiting staff and finding premises, and they put us in contact with all the right people. The more local knowledge you have, the smoother it is to set up operations,” Lamik says.

Zalando’s Helsinki unit is focusing on developing consumer-facing products. “We are building a new fashion application that connects customers, brands and retailers. Our development work touches all areas of modern software architecture. We have cross-functional teams that work on everything from the user interface on your mobile phone to the code that runs on servers, supporting millions of customers,” explains Kytömaa.

THE OULU SUCCESS STORY

The city of Oulu managed to turn a tide of massive ICT redundancies into new beginnings and new hope.

Oulu is a city of close to 200,000 inhabitants in Northern Finland. It used to be a bustling tech hub and home to several top ICT companies’ R&D sites until it was hit by a tsunami of downsizing and closures. After several downsizing rounds, Microsoft (formerly Nokia) closed down its mobile handset R&D site, forcing the Nokia cluster subcontractors to downsize as well. Broadcom closed down its cellular semiconductor cluster followed suit. A total of 4,500 people were made redundant between 2010 and 2015. This could have been a major catastrophe, but Oulu has managed to reverse the negative trend and turn it into a positive, hope-inspiring challenge.

RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The local government reacted promptly, joining forces with the Finnish state, the local business accelerator BusinessOulu, Invest in Finland and other actors to devise a recovery action plan. Further funding, entrepreneurial guidance and networking opportunities were provided to unemployed professionals. Since then, more than 400 startups have emerged, existing companies like Nokia Networks have hired new staff, and the available engineering and R&D talent has lured many international ICT companies to establish a presence in Oulu.

THE FUTURE IS BUILT ON EXISTING EXPERTISE

“The key to the upward trend was realizing that our professional competence is the rock that our future can be built on. We saw that our expertise is what attracts new companies and generates new business,” says Kari Kivistö, former innovation manager at Nokia Mobile Phones in Oulu, and now CEO of Oulun Yritystakomo, a networking and innovation forum for ICT professionals.

An excellent engineering team with visionary ideas have made Haltian, a 3-year old startup, a promising Internet of Things supplier.

In June 2012, the employees at the Emerging Products Unit within Nokia in Oulu heard that their unit was to be shut down. Later that day, they got together to consider their options.

“We realized we had an excellent team, visionary ideas for smart products of our own, and the quality of our engineering was exceptionally good. Having purchased design services previously, I knew the market and saw we would be able to provide high-class premium design services,” recalls Pasi Leipälä, CEO of Haltian.

It took them a couple of months to set up Haltian, spread the word about it to their global networks and get their first customer projects. Today, Haltian has 80 employees, several patents and a sales office in Silicon Valley.

FROM PRODUCT IDEA TO SALES PACKAGE

“We are able to deliver finalized devices in sales packages based on any new idea for a wireless product. Among the items we have designed and productized are the Oura wellness ring and the Amso charger,” Leipälä says.

Trust is a crucial asset in the service business, according to Leipälä. Thus, new customers have come through existing global networks; half of Haltian’s customers are located in the US and Central Europe, the other half in Finland.

LAUNCHING THE THINGS ONE

“Currently we focus on design services for the Internet of Things. Volume production and shipments of our Things One IoT developer device started in August 2015,” Leipälä explains. The Things One is a mass consumer product, but an innovation platform that liberates its users from having to design an entire customized device. It is a patented product that comes complete with service and connectivity.

The Oulu-based Polar Bear Pitching is literally the world’s coolest stage for start-ups. They get to pitch to top-tier international investors as long as they can! www.polarbearpitching.com

THE E-COMMERCE MOBILE SECTOR AND FINLAND’S STRONG MOBILE SECTOR AND E-COMMERCE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE.

“OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS WERE FINLAND’S STRONG MOBILE SECTOR AND E-COMMERCE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE.”

WIRELESS & VISIONARY

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“The device is aimed at three user groups: professional business developers who develop IoT services and applications, private firms and user communities developing their own web applications, and individuals who use it in their homes or hobbies to measure and monitor ambient conditions,” Leipälä explains. The Things One is not a mass consumer product, but an innovation platform that liberates its users from having to design an entire customized device. It is a patented product that comes complete with service and connectivity.
Imagine a relaxed movie festival in an exotic setting with a sunlight round the clock. Welcome to The Midnight Sun Film Festival, where top directors, up-and-coming talent, an international audience and everyday folk come together under the midnight sun. No frills, just pure love for cinema. This festival takes place in Sodankylä, a village located in the heart of Finnish Lapland, some 120 kilometers into the Arctic Circle. Films are shown in four venues for 24 hours a day – timeless masterpieces are presented alongside the most engrossing contemporary films, and music films are taken to a new level in the karaoke screenings.

In 2015, a year before turning 30, the festival was acknowledged with the first EFFE Award as ‘one of the twelve trend-setting festivals in Europe’. It was said to boast one of the most unusual atmospheres of any festival in the world, which is understandable when you consider that the famous Kaurismäki brothers are amongst the festival’s founders.

www.msfilmfestival.fi

**UNIQUE FILM LOCATION**

It is not just likeable festivals that Finland offers the international movie industry. As a film location, Finland provides diverse landscapes, four distinct seasons and unique natural conditions; everything within easy reach of cities and accessible. The seasons boast midnight sun and a cold winter with guaranteed snow. But nature is not all what Finland offers. The efficient working culture, problem solving attitude and excellent infrastructure promote smooth creative work, even in the most demanding conditions.

www.filmfinland.fi

**Iron Sky: The Coming Race**

Iron Sky 2 is a dark science fiction comedy inspired by conspiracy theories. It is a sequel to the 2012 cult hit Iron Sky and includes both new and familiar characters. The movie is directed by Timo Vuorensola, who is a firm advocate of crowdsourcing. The film is written and produced together with its future audience, making the production process and outcome one of a kind. The clever crowdfunding campaigns had raised near to one million dollars by the end of 2015. The release of Iron Sky: The Coming Race is scheduled for 2017.

www.ironskyuniverse.com
hen Vogue Italia’s head of talent Sara Maino attended Pre Helsinki fashion week, the seasoned senior fashion editor and scout told Finnish daily Helsingin Sanomat that she was “amazed.” In addition to the bright new talent, what astonished Maino was the exceptional quality of the fashion design programme at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture. In the past five years, graduating Aalto students have been snapped up by leading fashion houses ranging from Lanvin and Maison Margiela to Marimekko and Balenciaga, have won prestigious industry awards, and garnered attention in magazines ranging from W and Wallpaper to Vogue Paris. Yet ten years ago Finnish fashion – with few exceptions – was not a headline-grabbing story in the international design press. What has happened?

“It originated from us,” answers Aalto professor of fashion design Pirjo Hirvonen. “We’ve developed a bold new culture in which we’re constantly renewing and developing the way we think and operate,” says Hirvonen, who was the head of Aalto’s design department from 2003 to 2008 and led the fashion and textile design programmes from 2003 to 2008. In addition to a strong network of alumni who hold key industry positions around the world and work closely with the school, there’s a strong learning-by-doing focus that sets Aalto apart from other high-ranking schools in the field such as New York’s Parsons and London’s Central Saint Martins.

“Our students design and make their own materials whether it’s the printed fabric for a collection or something else,” says Hirvonen. “Students know that if something isn’t available, they can make it. This model is worth gold: not just for this industry, but also as a way to solve problems in any field,” she says. NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

Hirvonen’s vision was born largely out of her own experiences as a young designer. After graduating from the University of Art and Design (a predecessor to Aalto University), Hirvonen worked as an in-house women’s wear designer in the ’80s and ’90s.

“At the time we were trained for creating clothing for the Finnish clothing industry.”

A dynamic new generation of Finnish talent is attracting the attention of top fashion houses, the international press and scouts. Many of the rising stars have one thing in common – they have all been influenced by the pioneering work of Aalto professor Pirjo Hirvonen.

“FINNISH FASHION IS CHARACTERISED BY A DARING TO BE ORIGINAL AND FOLLOWING ONE’S OWN VISION.”

SHAPING THE FUTURE
“AT THE BEGINNING OF A DESIGNER’S CAREER, CREATIVITY AND VISION WITHOUT BORDERS MUST BE ENCOURAGED.”

With globalization, that domestic textile industry has all but disappeared. Yet Hirvonen says that change was actually a blessing in disguise.

“It has forced all of us to think in new ways and understand that this is an international playing field – what’s good in Finland is simply not enough,” says Hirvonen.

As a young creative with many ideas for the international market, Hirvonen was told that her ideas were great, but wouldn’t satisfy domestic customers.

“That response was terribly narrowing and crushing,” she says. But it filled her with resolve to turn that kind of thinking around.

“My core goal when I started with the fashion programme was that the mindset and way of teaching needed to be renewed. Creativity and vision without borders must be encouraged,” she says.

LEARNING HOW TO SELL

But good ideas are not enough. A strong business understanding of the global marketplace is crucial. To that end, Hirvonen has been responsible for instituting business management courses as part of the fashion programme, and taken on significant EU projects with other design schools, initiated multidisciplinary studies within the design department, and paved the way for a new sustainability Masters programme.

“We have many visiting instructors who work internationally in the field – all of our work needs to be strategic and operative,” says Hirvonen. “And it’s important to remember that not only the students are the talent – the teaching staff are, too. Talented teachers who understand this industry are essential.”

The programme’s rigorous selection process features one week onsite, during which applicants tackle a range of assignments.

“It’s a skill to know how to read the right signals – a student may be tired or nervous – but it’s important to see the overall picture,” says Hirvonen. “This field demands an authentic and passionate attitude, drive, and talent – without those it’s impossible to succeed,” she says.

DARING TO BE ORIGINAL

Finnish fashion is often characterised in broad strokes as bold yet sensible, minimalist, sustainable, and environmentally- and socially-aware.

Hirvonen says that while some of those descriptions hold true, she sees an underlying theme of courage: “Finnish fashion is characterised by a daring to be original and following one’s own vision.”

“This young generation has had it very easy way compared to previous generations. Yet they have seen the dangers of consumerism and are very ecologically and politically aware and think about all of the big questions. This shows in their designs, which are not throwaway clothes but long-term creations not tied to fleeting trends,” says Hirvonen.

When asked to offer up the names of the next set of future stars, Hirvonen is characteristically mum: “I never favour any one of my students over another. They’re like sweet buns baking in an oven: there’s always exciting new talent rising.”

“Finnish fashion is often characterised in broad strokes as bold yet sensible, minimalist, sustainable, and environmentally- and socially-aware,”

Helsinki-based Satu Maaranen graduated from Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in 2012, and her graduate collection won the first prize at the esteemed Hyléres Fashion Festival the following year.

Four years ago Maaranen co-founded Pre Helsinki, a platform that features a five-day international event in Helsinki each spring showcasing and promoting the most interesting names in Finnish fashion. The event also maintains a significant presence at the most important Fashion Weeks around the world.

“We founded Pre Helsinki because we felt that we really needed to have this type of vehicle to promote Finnish fashion and help emerging designers make the right international connections,” says Maaranen, who is also Pre Helsinki’s creative director.

An award-winning freelance designer, Maaranen is known for her elegant, almost futuristic creations that feature colourful hand-painted prints on silk, cotton and viscose in dramatic sculptural forms. In addition to working with design icons such as Marimekko

www.satumaaranen.com

H

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“What sets Aalto’s programme apart is that traditional craftsmanship is taught,” says Maaranen. “There are few places that do that. I know students at top schools such as Central Saint Martins and Parsons who need to use their own bathtubs for dyeing fabrics because those types of facilities simply don’t exist at their schools.”

According to Maaranen, the secret to success is to stand out from the crowd and be true to your own vision.

Three of the much-buzzed-about names in Finnish fashion include Sasu Kauppi, R/H, and Satu Maaranen, freelance designer and Pre Helsinki co-founder.
FINNS BRAVE CHILLY WEATHER IN HI-TECH CLOTHES

“There’s no bad weather, only inadequate clothing”, a Finnish saying that is based on a long tradition of knowing what to wear in a snowstorm or on a bright January day when it’s a crisp minus 35 degrees.

“It’s very easy to tell if you’re properly clad or not. Whatever you do outdoors, if you don’t get sweaty or too cold and if you can move freely, then the clothes are right. The best idea is not to have a thick coat but lots of layers that breathe and create a warm feel on your skin”, clothes designer Mari Talva and Mari Mattila-Kääräinen of the outdoor brand Halti emphasize.

According to Ms Talva there are two main points in the Finnish clothes design: they have to look good and they have to do the job.

“As designers, we always look for the best technical solutions and materials and test them in harsh conditions. We tend to be rather minimalistic. We think of what’s necessary and then put the materials into good use so as to protect you in an extreme weather. Good quality looks good, too.”

Finnish winter clothes manufacturers also have a tradition of cooperation with top sports professionals. Brand Manager Hanna-Liisa Erkheikki of Halti points out that this is an essential part of product development.

“Designers are the best specialists to tell whether a piece of clothing is useful or not. If a material or detail isn’t working, they will tell you”, she laughs.

“What works in sports environment, is also certain to work in demanding everyday use.”

In the early 2000’s Halti sponsored Finland’s Alpine ski team and the Nordic combined team as well as other teams like Norway’s freestyle team. After this, they clothed the whole of Finland’s International Ski Federation team and all the staff as well.

In 2007, Halti was named the International Ski Federation’s (FIS) official clothing supplier and cooperation with FIS has continued ever since.

What about the future for Finnish winter clothes? Mari Talva explains that climate change brings new challenges as manufacturers will create more versatile clothes which will react to the changes in weather. But we’ll employ them only if they prove to be durable, functional and useful”, Mari Talva and Mari Mattila-Kääräinen point out.

“If you don’t get sweaty or too cold, then the clothes are right.”
“MOTHER WAIT”

“I captured this moment at 4 a.m. Photographing elk in the early summer is part of my yearly routine, and these two appeared near my tiny hiding hut that I use when photographing. The doe gave birth to the calf nearby but soon after they left to spend their summer elsewhere,” explains Antti Leinonen, who took this beautiful shot in Kuhmo, near the Russian border.

The picture was magical enough to be chosen as the Finnish Wildlife Photo of the Year 2015. This is the third time Leinonen has won this distinguished award. Leinonen and his camera have roamed Finnish forests since 1974, mostly photographing birds and large mammals, like brown bears, wolverines and wild reindeer. Some of his most renowned pictures are taken on wolverines, and also published in National Geographic.

“Lately, I have been focusing on wild reindeer and I’m preparing for an exhibition on this topic in 2017.”

www.anttileinonen.net
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