





SUOMI  
FINLAND

# FINNS – NATURAL BORN DESIGNERS



Finland has reinvented itself in just one short century. Our national character has boosted us to the top of all kinds of country rankings. Even though there aren't that many of us, Finland is one of the world's leading countries in design. We have an amazing design history and are now taking this activity to new levels. We see design as a way of implementing technological innovations and creating new business opportunities.

To Finns, design is a way of tackling complex problems. The uses and applications of design have expanded and it now plays an increasingly important role in generating results. Design is a key, strategic element in the activities of the most successful Finnish companies.



SUOMI  
FINLAND

# A KEY ELEMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT



The promotion of Finnish design expertise began as early as 1875, when the Finnish Society of Crafts and Design was founded. Although Finnish design received international acclaim at the Paris World Fair of 1900, it became world-famous in the Milan Triennials of the 1950s and 1960s. This was due to active promotion of design in both Finland and abroad. The concept of ‘Finnish design’ came to mean Scandinavian design traditions enriched by a more down-to-earth, creative and original language of form. This strong heritage has taken Finnish design far and wide: design remains an integral part of Finland’s image.



SUOMI  
FINLAND

# UNIQUE COMBINATIONS



The fame of Finnish design lies in its unique combination of aesthetics, functionality, technological innovations and everyday practicality. Pragmatic problem solving lies at the very heart of Finnish culture. It is about focusing on materials and function, while making objects long-lasting and accessible. Ecological viewpoints and sustainability are fundamental. New areas of design are continuously being sought, not just in tangible products but also in services.

Due to the excellence of design education in Finland, Finnish designers are highly regarded around the world. Finnish design schools attract students from all over the globe, which means good networks for Finnish designers and greater visibility for Finnish knowhow. On the governmental level, design is viewed as a focal tool both in enhancing SMEs and developing the public sector: Finland is one of the few countries with a national design policy. Finns, as consumers, are also accustomed to good design, which makes life easier and better in every Finnish home.



SUOMI  
FINLAND

# DESIGN CREATES GROWTH





One fifth of Finnish companies make use of design in their business activities. In industry in general, design is used by every third enterprise. Such companies are more growth-oriented, on average, than those that make no use of design. Indeed, design can help enterprises to improve their production processes, product quality, customer orientation, product usability and ecological awareness. In 2014, Helsinki was awarded UNESCO City of Design status for its contributions to the international design industry. Other members of the network include Berlin, Beijing, Bilbao, Turin and Montreal.



## **COMPANIES, DESIGNERS AND PRODUCTS**

Alvar Aalto, architect and designer: furniture for Artek, e.g. three-legged stool, lounge chair for Paimio Sanatorium; Aalto Vase

Kaj Franck: Kilta (nowadays called Teema) tableware, Kartio glassware

Eero Aarnio: Ball Chair

Tapio Wirkkala: key figure of the golden era of Finnish design, the 1950s

Harri Koskinen, the best-known contemporary Finnish designer, who created the Block Lamp

Artek, Marimekko, Iittala, Fiskars design companies

Ponsse, Suunto, Kone, Rocla, Konecranes, Planmeca companies have long experience of integrating top design with technology



## **LEARN MORE ABOUT FINNISH DESIGN**

Design Forum Finland: [www.designforum.fi](http://www.designforum.fi)

Finnish Association of Designers Ornamo: [www.ornamo.fi](http://www.ornamo.fi)

Grafia – Association of Visual Communication Designers in Finland: [www.grafia.fi](http://www.grafia.fi)

Design Museum: [www.designmuseum.fi](http://www.designmuseum.fi)

Aalto University: [www.aalto.fi](http://www.aalto.fi) Design District Helsinki: [www.designdistrict.fi](http://www.designdistrict.fi)