



Helsinki at its Most Natural





Helsinki at its Most Natural

Helsinki is a green maritime city. As a result of centuries of purposeful efforts, Helsinki has a treasury of fine and versatile green areas. Our green environment shows the styles and ideals of different periods.

The green areas are places where the inhabitants of Helsinki can stop to take breath; they are true oases for relaxation and invigoration. In the green areas, you can walk and hike, play and pursue your interests, or simply sit on a bench and enjoy the peace of nature.

The parks of Helsinki have experiences and events to offer all year round. Some people enjoy the beat of music; others like to observe nesting birds. Many people ski, jog or exercise in groups. Others prefer to have a picnic. The most important thing is to feel good.

This brochure is a collection of examples of what the green Helsinki has to offer. The parks that you know best and are dearest to you may be close to your home. This brochure and map serve as a guide to the exploration of the most invigorating places in Helsinki.

We welcome you to enjoy the green spaces of Helsinki!

📍 *The mouth of the Vantaanjoki River at the Vanhankaupunginlahti Bay is the birthplace of Helsinki.*

Photo Scanfoto





Photo Mikko Koivistoinen

Helsinki at its Most Natural	3
Experiences and Beauties of Flora	6
Alppipuisto Park	6
Esplanade Park	6
Hiidenkivenpuisto Park	8
Ilveskorvenpuisto Park	8
Japanese-Style Park	11
Kaivopuisto Park	11
Karhupuisto Park	13
Laajasuo Park	13
Lenin Park	14
Maila Talvio Park	14
Meilahti Arboretum	17
Ruoholahdenpuisto Park	17
Sibelius Park	19
Military history parks	19
Tervasaari Island	21
Töölönlahti Bay	21
Dog enclosures	21
Peace and Vigour from a Path in the Wood	22
Central Park	23
Uutela	25
Veijarivuori	25
Nature trails	26
Joy of Playing	27
Fields and Gardens	28
Haltiala farm	29
Haymaking for volunteers at Tuomarinkylä manor	29
Allotment gardens and cultivation parcels	30
Manors Breathe Cultural History	32
Herttoniemi Manor Park	33
Natural Wonders in Conservation Areas	34
Viikki-Vanhankaupunginlahti	35
Perpetual Summer in the Winter Garden	37
Green Area Map	39



Experiences and

Alppipuisto Park (Alppiharju) ¹⁰

Streets: Viipurinkatu – Tivolitie – Helsinginkatu

Situated between the Linnanmäki Amusement Park and the railway, Alppipuisto Park, a popular recreational park, dates back to the 19th century. The atmosphere of the park is created by lawns, ponds with fountains, a small dance pavilion, lookout terrace, cherry trees, and bare, rocky nature.

📍 Photo Kikka Niittynen



Esplanade Park (Kaartinkaupunki) ³

Streets: Eteläesplanadi – Pohjoisesplanadi

From the viewpoint of cultural history, Esplanade Park is a valuable protected area in the heart of Helsinki. The 200-year history of the best-known representative park in Helsinki is linked to the city's emergence as the capital of Finland and to the birth of its Empire-style centre.

“Espa” was the place to be and to be seen in the capital, which was becoming internationalised in the 19th century. On Sundays, the Helsinki gentry dressed in their Sunday best and went for an afternoon stroll in Esplanade Park. Today, Esplanade Park with its lines of lime trees and magnificent plantings is popular with the inhabitants of Helsinki and visitors alike as a place for recreation and strolling. Surrounded by cultural buildings, the park brims with colourful life in summer.

📍 Photo Helsinki City Museum's Picture Archives

📍 Photo Jari Lehtonen

Beauties of Flora





Hiidenkivenpuisto Park

Street: Hiidenkiventie (Tapanila)

22

Hiidenkivenpuisto Park, which is situated in an area with detached houses and small blocks of flats, used to be a storage site for scrap and heaps of earth. In 1997, the park got a new, fresh appearance and now is a versatile and popular green space.

Hiidenkivenpuisto Park features a rocky wood with huge pine trees, recreational trails, a kettle-shaped, grassy hillside for spectators, and a variety of games areas and playthings. Park specialities include an area full of dry meadow plants such as daisies and maiden pinks. The beauty of the park is complemented with rose bushes and cherry trees.

📷 Photo Roy Koto

Ilveskorvenpuisto Park

Street: Mustalahdentie (Vuosaari)

29

Ilveskorvenpuisto Park, which has been in existence some thirty years, is a green oasis in the midst of a densely built-up area. In the middle of the park is the roundish Kangaslampi Pond, surrounded by a walkway. A small swampy area has been restored on the southern side of the pond.

Ilveskorvenpuisto Park underwent complete overhaul in 1998. Today, it is adorned with stone sculptures and many beauties of flora such as hydrangeas, perennials, aquatic plants, and globose form of crack willows. Young and older children have their own separate play areas in the park.

➡ *Two wooden jetties have been built on Kangaslampi Pond.* Photo Roy Koto







Japanese-Style Park

27

Street: Roihuvuorentie 12-16 (Herttoniemi)

In the Japanese-Style Park at Roihuvuori, you can sense a breath of Far-Eastern exoticism. On a terraced slope in the midst of blocks of flats, there is a 1990s Oriental garden with a bamboo fence, shingle roofs, and rock arrangements. The four different sections of the park are dedicated to mythical animals which rule the cardinal points. In spring, an enchantingly beautiful cherry tree wood is in blossom on the slope.

➡ *Stone is a common building material in Japanese parks.*

Photo Kikka Niittynen

Kaivopuisto Park

2

Streets: Iso Puistotie – Ehrenströmintie – Itäinen Puistotie

Kaivopuisto Park is one of the oldest parks in Helsinki. In the 19th century the park had a famous spa. Both Finnish gentry and foreign visitors to the spa used Kaivopuisto Park as a place of meeting and entertainment. In the late 19th century, the park was transformed from a luxury gentry park to a popular people's park.

Kaivopuisto Park has the longest tradition as an outdoor recreation area used by the inhabitants of Helsinki. Closeness to the sea, rocks, varied terrain, and reaches of grassy areas offer opportunities for recreation and various activities. From the shore of Kaivopuisto Park, commuter boats run to and from the nearby islands of Särkkä, Harakka and Uunisaari.

➡ Photo Kikka Niittynen



Karhupuisto Park

8

Street: Viides linja (Kallio)

Karhupuisto Park is a good example of well-functioning residential co-operation. In summer, the park is embellished with large groups of summer flowers, which are taken care of by the city together with local residents, the "godparents of Karhupuisto Park."

In the early 20th century, Karhupuisto Park was known as Agricolanpuisto Park. True to its present name, which means "Bear Park," the park features a bear in the form of a piece of granite sculpture called "*Mesikämmen muurahaispesällä*" (*Bear on an anthill*) by artist Jussi Mäntynen.

👉 *Neighbours of the park volunteer at early summer planting in Karhupuisto Park.* Photo Roy Koto

Laajasuo Park

14

Streets: Kanukalliontie, Laajasuontie (Haaga)

Laajasuo Park is better known as Rodopuisto Park. The oldest rhododendrons were planted as part of field experiments undertaken by the University of Helsinki in 1975. Now they have reached huge sizes.

The wooded park is at its most splendid in June when the rhododendrons and azaleas are in bloom. You can also admire the splendour of the flowers from three wheelchair-accessible viewing platforms above. Rhododendrons do not always bloom generously. As a rule, generous blooming is followed by a year when blooming is quite modest.

👉 Photo Kikka Niittyinen





Lenin Park

9

Street: Vesilinnankatu (Alppiharju)

Lenin Park was originally built on a bare and nearly treeless slope of rock. This small park, which is not well known to the inhabitants of Helsinki, is exceptionally luxuriant in spite of its scanty habitat. The site's richness in plant species originated from a garden show which was held there from 1961 to 1962. The charm of the site is complemented by a variety of tree and bush species. Just like the adjacent Alppipuisto Park, Lenin Park is worth visiting.

📷 Photo Kikka Niittynen

Maila Talvio Park

12

Street: Seurasaarentie (Meilahti)

Built in the early 1990s, Maila Talvio Park is situated in front of Mäntyniemi, the official residence of the President of the Republic. The park features a sculpture by Laila Pullinen called "*Itämeren tytär*" (*The Daughter of the Baltic*), which was erected in memory of the author Maila Talvio, a resident of Meilahti. It is surrounded by a piece of earthwork art depicting waves. The two pools in the park are called Isonorppa and Pikkunorppa. The pools contain circulating sea water. The aquatic theme is complemented by plantings.

➔ *Maila Talvio Park, situated next to Seurasaari Island, is an oasis rich in atmosphere.* Photo Kikka Niittynen





Meilahti Arboretum 13

Streets: Meilahdentie, Johannesbergintie (Meilahti)

The only park-like arboretum in Helsinki is situated close to Seurasaari Island, the Meilahti villa area, Pikku Huopalahti, and Munkkiniemi.

The Meilahti Arboretum has some 140 woody plant species and varieties. The oldest plants in the area were planted in 1967. The arboretum also has an additional collection of some one hundred varieties of old and rare shrub roses, which bloom most abundantly in July. The trees and bushes are equipped with name labels for easy identification.

There are three arboreta in Helsinki: Niskala Arboretum, Viikki Arboretum and Meilahti Arboretum. An arboretum is an area planted with a variety of trees and shrubs primarily for display, instruction and research. Arboreta are also popular recreational areas.

Photo Kikka Niittynen

Ruoholahdenpuisto Park 4

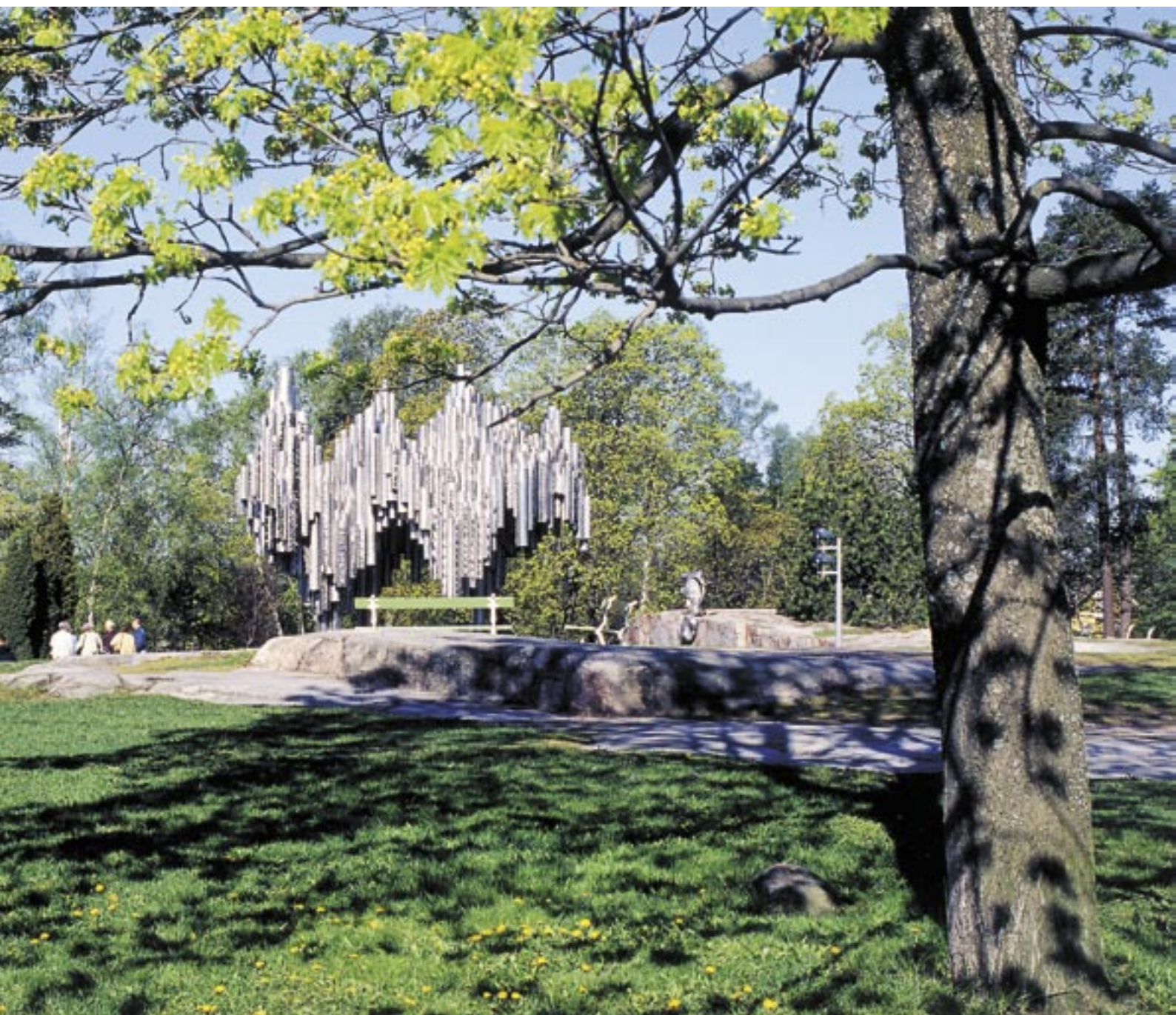
Street: Selkämerenkatu (Ruoholahti)

Situated on a canal, Ruoholahdenpuisto Park was built in a new residential area in the early 1990s. Park views are kept open by using low plantings. On the south bank of the canal there is a play park.

➔ *Ruoholahti is enlivened by the canal and plantings.*

Photo Kikka Niittynen





Sibelius Park

6

Street: Mechelininkatu (Taka-Töölö)

Earlier called Humallahdenpuisto Park, Sibelius Park was given its present name in 1945 in honour of the master composer Jean Sibelius's 80th birthday.

Sibelius Park is part of the extensive zone of parks in the western part of the old town. Built on hilly terrain, it is a naturalistic landscape park with varied vegetation. One of the specialities of the park is a wood of curly birches, which were planted on the corner of Mechelininkatu and Kesäkatu streets in honour of President Mauno Koivisto's 60th birthday in 1983.

📍 *Sibelius Park features the Sibelius Monument sculpted by Professor Eila Hiltunen.* Photo Kikka Niittynen

Military history parks

15 23 25

During the First World War, the Russians built two land fortifications around Helsinki for the protection of St. Petersburg. Some of these fortifications are located in parkland. You can see land fortifications which are protected under the Protection of Antiquities Act in places such as Nuotiopuisto Park, Pakila; Kurkimäenpuisto Park, Kurkimäki; and Kaivantopuisto Park, Jakomäki.

📍 *Land fortifications in Nuotiopuisto Park.* Photo Kikka Niittynen





Tervasaari Island

1

Streets: Pohjoisranta (Kruunuhaka)

Tervasaari Island is an ideal location for anyone who enjoys sea breeze and varied city views. For its small size, the island has facilities such as a granary restaurant, play area for children, dog enclosure with bathing area, space for performances and events, and a dock for washing carpets.

Tervasaari Island underwent a complete rehaul to become a park in the 1990s. The name Tervasaari (Tar Island) comes from the tar that used to be stored there for tarring wooden ships.

Additional information about islands of Helsinki can be found in the Archipelago Guide at the website of the city's board of sport and recreation: www.hel.fi/sport

Photo Kikka Niittynen



Dog enclosures

Dog enclosures are special recreational areas specifically designed for dogs, where dogs can romp about freely. Some dog enclosures have separate sections for small and big dogs. There are more than 80 dog enclosures in various parts of Helsinki.

On the Internet, there is a list of dog enclosures at: www.hkr.hel.fi/viher

In Herttoniemi, dogs have a bathing area of their own at Tuorinniemi.

Photo Kikka Niittynen

Töölölahti Bay (Töölö)

7

Streets: Mannerheimintie – Helsinginkatu

Töölölahti is the jewel of the Helsinki city centre. The shallow sea bay is surrounded by parks, walkways and bicycle paths. Hakasalmi Park and Hesperia Park are among the best-known parks at Töölölahti. Decorative wooden villas on the Linnunlaulu cliffs are reflected in the water of the bay.

Hesperia Park is a popular recreational park.

Photo Kikka Niittynen





Peace and Vigour from

Woods form the kernel of the network of green areas in Helsinki. In Helsinki, woods are managed keeping the inhabitants' recreation and outdoor activities in mind. In some wooded areas, the emphasis is on nature conservation.

📍 Photo Green Area Division



a Path in the Wood

Central Park

16 17 18 19

The large wooded area of Central Park begins at Laakso and continues through Pirkkola and Paloheinä all the way to Haltiala in North Helsinki. Central Park, which cuts through the city, has woods for outdoor and recreational activities as well as valuable protected areas such as Pitkäkoski, Ruutinkoski, Haltiala primeval area and Niskala Arboretum.

➤ *In winter, Central Park is suited for keep-fit exercises such as cross-country skiing.*

Photo Mikko Koivistoinen

Additional information on the Internet at:
www.hel.fi/keskuspuisto



← Ruutinkoski.

Photo Vladimir Pohtokari

Uutela

30

Street: Uutelantie (Vuosaari)

In Uutela, you can move in the heart of the woods or look at the horizon from the rocky sea shore. What makes Uutela even more interesting is the Särkkäniemi lagoon bays, which indicate the slow post-glacial uplift. Särkkäniemi is one of the nature conservation areas in Helsinki.

One way to explore Uutela is to hike along the nature trail.



→ Photo Kikka Niittynen

Veijarivuori (Lauttasaari)

5

Streets: Itälahdenkatu – Purjeentekijänkuja

Veijarivuori is a popular wooded area by the sea for outdoor and recreational activities. At the end of the cape, you can refresh yourself with simple things such as admiring the open sea view. Veijarivuori has small summer cabins. The city leases the cabin land to summer cabin associations.



→ Photo Kikka Niittynen



Nature trails

Nature trails give you an opportunity to study nature in a number of ways. There are nature trails in places such as Viikki, Haltiala and Uutela. Kivinkka has a nature trail specifically designed for the physically and visually handicapped for familiarisation with trees. In Viikki, children have a trail of their own called Vuokon vaellus.

Additional information about nature trails can be found on the Internet at: www.hkr.hel.fi/viher

 Environment Centre / Kyösti Huotari



Joy of Playing

Helsinki has more than 60 play parks with outdoor and indoor activities, directed by the social services department, for children and younger youth. Play parks are pleasant meeting places for city dwellers of all ages all year round.

Most play parks have a wading pool, playing field, and various play apparatuses. In winter, many of the play parks have skating rinks.

Besides play parks, Helsinki has some 250 play areas without directed activities.

➤ *Haruspuisto Play Park at Meri-Rastila.*

Photo Vladimir Pohtokari

On the Internet, there is a list of play areas and play parks at: www.hkr.hel.fi/viher.

Additional information about play park activities can be found on the website of the city's social services department: www.hel.fi/sosv

Fields and Gardens



Haltiala farm

20

In the northern part of Central Park, at the bend of the Vantaanjoki River, lies the Haltiala farm, which is owned by the city. It dates back to the 16th century. The present-day Haltiala farm has retained a number of residential buildings that belonged to the former manor as well as a cowshed, which is used for domestic animals.

The farm is surrounded by vast areas of cultivated land – landscape fields. The open, manmade cultural landscape is looked after through the cultivation of the fields. Besides traditional grain plants, some fields are sown with peas and various flowers, which city dwellers can pick to take home.

The Haltiala farm is an interesting destination for visitors and a good example of a working farm, and gives city children in particular an opportunity to get to know domestic animals such as cows, sheep, pigs, and chickens.

📷 Photo Mikko Uro

📷 Photo Kikka Niittynen



Haymaking for volunteers at Tuomarinkylä manor

21

Close to Haltiala is Tuomarinkylä manor. The vast cultivated areas surrounding it are part of the valuable Tuomarinkylä – Haltiala cultural landscape.

In July, traditional haymaking events for volunteers are held in the fields of the manor. Through this event, which takes place every summer, even city dwellers can take part in haymaking.

📷 Photo Paula Hänninen





Allotment gardens and cultivation parcels

The cultivation of a parcel is an important means of recreation for many city dwellers. Helsinki has approximately a dozen allotment garden areas and dozens of cultivation parcel areas in different parts of the city. They are used for growing vegetables and root crops for domestic use and flowers and shrubs to offer pleasure to the eye.

➤ *Planting onions in a cultivation parcel.*

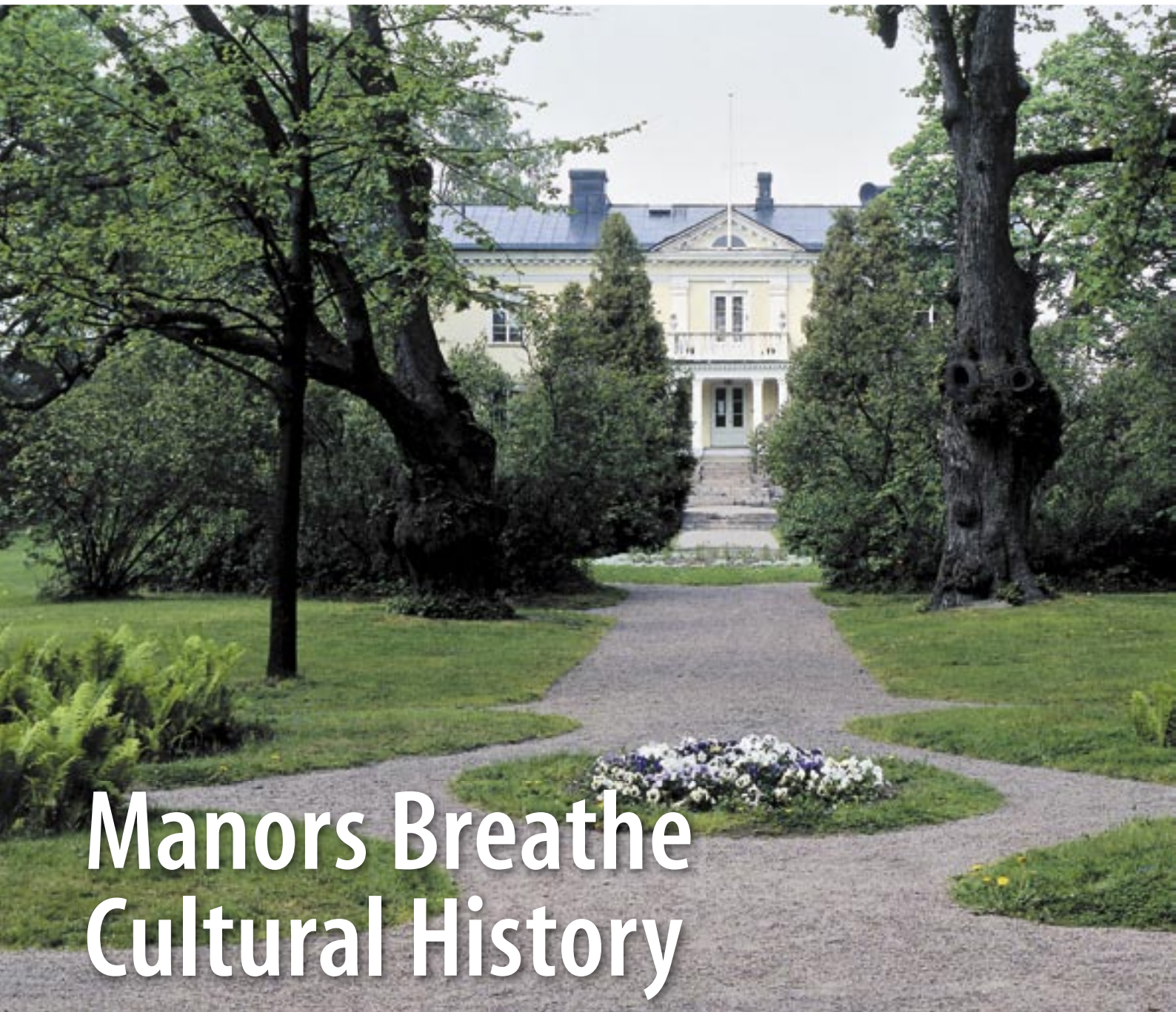
Photo Kikka Niittynen

Cultivation parcel and allotment garden areas are recreational areas open to all, and anyone can stroll along their pathways. The parcels themselves are for leaseholders' personal use.

➤ *The small cottages and manicured yards give an idyllic touch to the city landscape.*

Photo Kikka Niittynen





Manors Breathe Cultural History

More than twenty manor parks have been preserved in Helsinki. Most of them are owned by the city and are an important part of the cultural history of our city. In a continuously changing cityscape, the old broad-leaved trees, abundant varieties of plants, and beautiful old buildings of the manor environment provide a peaceful resting place for inhabitants and visitors alike.

Herttoniemi Manor Park

28

Street: Linnanrakentajantie 12-14 (Herttoniemi)

Herttoniemi manor got its present shape in the early 19th century when the manor's porcelain plant was turned into a new manor house and a formal garden and a landscape park were established around it.

The baroque-style formal garden features long treed walks and low ornamental plantings forming geometrical figures. In the park, there is an abundance of valuable old trees such as lindens, oaks, elms, ashes, larches, and pear trees. The landscape park of the manor has several ponds and two pleasure houses designed by architect Carl Ludvig Engel.

Today, the manor house serves as a museum. The owner of the area is an association called Svenska Odlingens Vänner i Helsingfors, though the city of Helsinki is responsible for its maintenance.

← *A baroque-style garden in front of the manor house.*

Photo Roy Koto

→ *The romantic arched bridge of the manor park.*

Photo Roy Koto

Additional information about other manors in Helsinki can be found on the Internet at: www.hkr.hel.fi/viher

→ *Wood anemones in bloom in Stansvik manor park at Laajasalo.*

Photo Kikka Niittynen



Natural Wonders in



Conservation Areas

Helsinki has some forty nature conservation areas, almost all of them owned by the city. Some of them are situated on the mainland and others on islands which are not connected with the mainland. The oldest nature conservation area is the islet of Tiiraluoto in Lauttasaari. The decision to preserve it was taken in 1948.

Viikki-Vanhan- kaupunginlahti

24

The Vanhankaupunginlahti nature conservation area is situated in the geographical centre of Helsinki. It is the largest and best-known nature conservation area in Helsinki and a popular destination for hikes in nature. The conservation area has extensive reeds, flood meadows, luxuriant shoreline woods, and open water. This internationally valuable nature oasis is an important resting place for migratory birds and a nesting place for a variety of birds.

Hiking in the conservation area and its immediate surroundings has been directed to manmade trails, paths and bird-watching towers. During open water season, movement in the conservation area is restricted to duckboards.

Additional information about nature conservation areas can be found on the website of the Environment Centre: www.hel.fi/ymk

← *The Viikki area is a favourite place for bird watchers.*

Photos Kikka Niittynen





Perpetual Summer in the Winter Garden

Street: Hammarskjöldintie 1 (Taka-Töölö)

There is perpetual summer in the city of Helsinki's Winter Garden, which is more than a hundred years old. Exotic plant species number some 200. Visitors are also delighted by passionately warbling budgerigars and curious carp.

The Winter Garden is attractive in all seasons. Seasonal decorations make it especially popular at Christmas and Easter. Rose lovers may find it rewarding to visit the rose garden, located at the front of the Winter Garden, in August or September when the roses are at their most beautiful.

The Winter Garden has no entrance fee. The Winter Garden can also be rented for various occasions such as weddings, birthday parties, and picture-taking.

Additional information on the Internet at:
www.hkr.hel.fi/viher

Other winter gardens in Helsinki:

- Gardenia-Helsinki at Viikki,
www.gardenia-helsinki.fi
- The University of Helsinki
Botanical Garden at Kaisaniemi,
www.fmn.helsinki.fi/english/botanicgarden

Photo Kikka Niittynen



26

📍 *The skating area of Kelkkapuisto Park at Kontula is the result of the residents' co-operation. Skateboarders took part in the planning of the skatepark.* Photo Roy Koto

📍 *Summer flowers give a cheerful air to the city.* Photo Vladimir Pohtokari



38

Green Area Map

1. Tervasaari Island
2. Kaivopuisto Park
3. Esplanade Park
4. Ruoholahdenpuisto Park
5. Veijarivuori
6. Sibelius Park
7. Töölönlahti Bay
8. Karhupuisto Park
9. Lenin Park
10. Alppipuisto Park
11. The Winter Garden
12. Maila Talvio Park
13. Meilahti Arboretum
14. Laajasuo Park
15. Nuotiopuisto Park
16. Pitkäkoski
17. Haltiala primeval area
18. Niskalan Arboretum
19. Ruutinkoski
20. Haltiala farm
21. Tuomarinkylä manor
22. Hiidenkivenpuisto Park
23. Kaivantopuisto Park
24. Viikki-Vanhankaupunginlahti
25. Kurkimäenpuisto Park
26. Kelkkapuisto Park at Kontula
27. Japanese-Style Park
28. Herttoniemi Manor Park
29. Ilveskorvenpuisto Park
30. Uutela

Published by: City of Helsinki Public Works Department

Edited by: Kirsi Kivistö, Roy Koto, Studio Poema Oy

Translation: Translator and Interpreter Service Taina Saarinen Ltd.

Layout: Pekka Niemi / Rhinoceros Ltd

Printed by: Frenckellin Kirjapaino Oy, Helsinki 2007



Helsinki at its Most Natural



City of Helsinki Public Works Department

P.O. Box 1520, 00099 City of Helsinki, FINLAND

Street address: Pohjoinen Makasiinikatu 9

Customer Service Tel. +358 (9) 310 39000

www.hkr.hel.fi/viher