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LAKE SAIMAA • FINLAND

# EXPLORE LAKE SAIMAA BY BIKE

Cycling route guide



# CYCLING ROUTES



## LAKE PIHLAJAVESI CYCLING ROUTE 65 KM

Experience the beautiful ring route in Finnish national landscapes in Punkaharju. Along the route, you can dip in refreshing Lake Saimaa and take breaks in interesting places.

Halfway along the route, you can relax on a cruise in the ringed seal waters of Lake Saimaa and rest your feet, for example, in a sauna. Complete the experience by staying overnight in the ship or by combining a traditional cottage holiday to cycling the route.



## THE TWO NATIONAL PARKS' CYCLE ROUTE 235 KM

Experience an exotic ferry ride and the Kermankoski Rapids and visit idyllic villages in the countryside. Along the route, you can also stop by the two national parks of the region Linnansaari and Kolovesi. In the national parks, you can hike or paddle either on your own or with a guide. In the little villages along the route, you will find interesting sights and events as well as accommodation and restaurant services. You can, for example, visit Kolovesi Nature Information Hut in Enonkoski or participate in the Heinävesi Music Festival.



## TOUR DE LAKE PURUVESI 127 KM

Cycle around Lake Puruvesi, known for its clear waters, and see the amazing attractions and natural sights on this route that runs in the area of three villages. The route meanders along the famous Punkaharju ridge and goes through the sunny village of Kesälahti. Remember to taste the sweet strawberries in Kesälahti. The route also takes you to admire the world's biggest wooden church in Kerimäki. From there, you can, if you want, make an excursion to Hytermä nature reserve.

Kerimäki



Varkaus

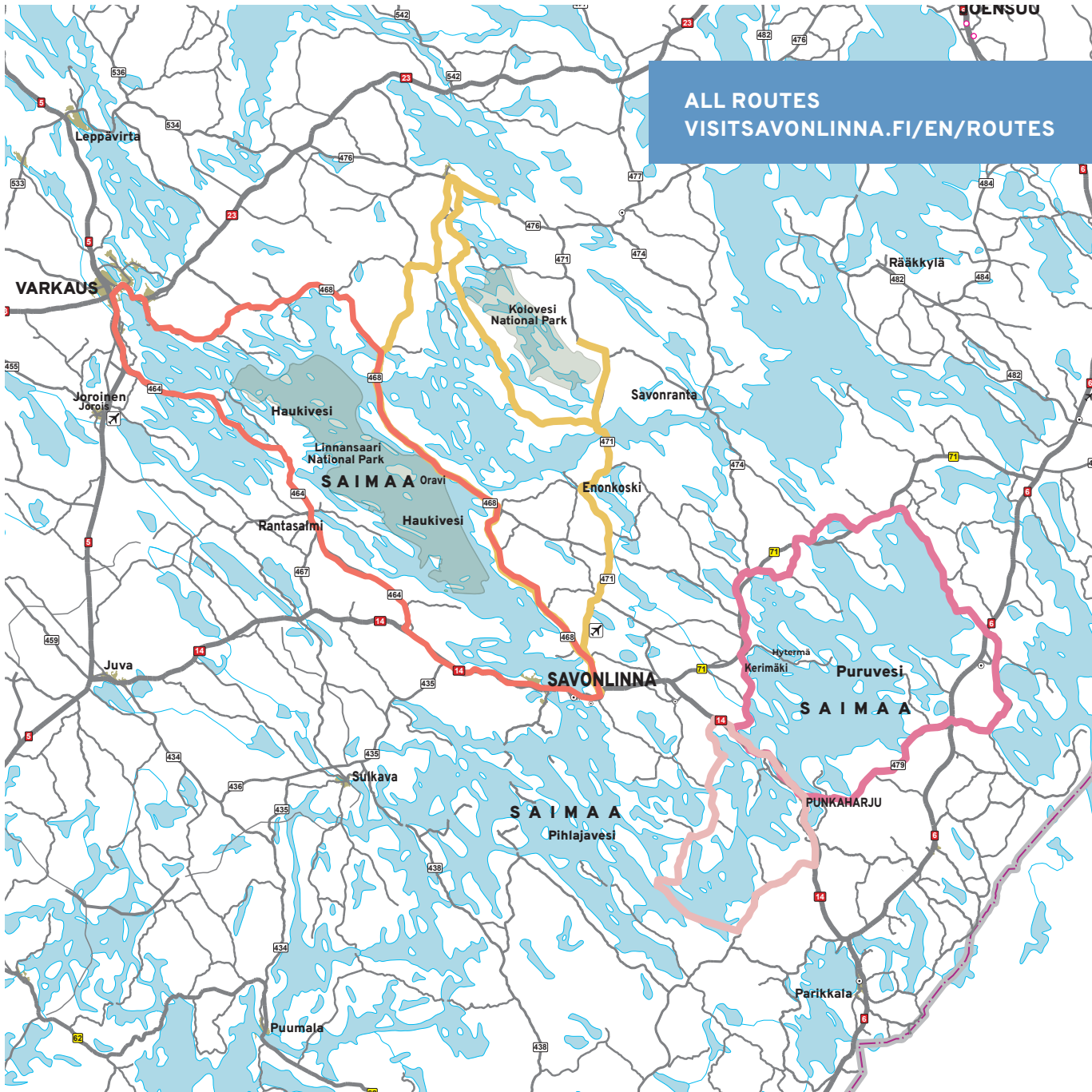


## LAKE HAUKIVESI CYCLING ROUTE 192 KM

Cycle around Lake Haukivesi that surrounds Linnansaari National Park and get to know interesting villages and sights. Along the route, there is the charming Oravi canal village where you find services from a village store to excursions in the national parks.

The beautiful rural landscapes and a ferry ride take you towards Varkaus where you get to experience versatile nature and culture. Along the route, you can also stop by in Rantasalmi and visit Nature Hotel & Spa Resort Järvisydän.





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# SAVONLINNA CITY CENTRE

## OLAVINLINNA CASTLE AND RIIHISAARI

The city of Savonlinna began to form around Olavinlinna Castle in the late 15th century, when craftspeople, masons and others who worked in the castle came to the region. The community stabilized, and in 1639, Per Brahe the Younger granted town rights to Savonlinna. Riihisaari island next to the castle served as a harbour for the castle's boats.

Today, Olavinlinna Castle is the venue for the Savonlinna Opera Festival and the main attraction in Savonlinna. The neighbouring Riihisaari, on the other hand, is a lively meeting place and exhibition centre for culture and nature lovers. Olavinlinna Castle with its surroundings is one of Finland's national landscapes.



## SAVONLINNA – THE CITY OF BRIDGES 18 KM

Cycle along the shores and cross beautiful bridges from island to island. Savonlinna is built on islands, which you will notice, at the latest, on this route. In addition to beautiful landscapes, you will also see most of the city centre's attractions along the route. "Savonlinna – the city of bridges" walking and rowing tours are also available.

## SPOT A BIRDHOUSE

When walking in the city centre, you should look up, because in the trees, you can spot amazing artistic birdhouses made by folk artist Marko Ruuskanen. The best spots for spotting these birdhouses are for example Talvisalo cemetery and Sulosaari island.



# THE BEST BITS ALONG THE ROUTES

## LINNANSAARI NATIONAL PARK

### THE HOME OF THE SAIMAA RINGED SEAL

Linnansaari National Park is Finnish lake nature at its best. The national park consists of over 100 islands and wide, open waters, and is a true paradise for those exploring it by water. Go on a special Saimaa ringed seal excursion or paddle, fish or camp by yourself or with a guide.

There are numerous excursion harbours on the islands of the national park, and on the main island, there is the Sammakoniemi camping area, where you can camp, stay in a wooden barn or a Tensile or rent a sauna. In addition, there is equipment rental and a café-kiosk in the camping area. On the main island, there is also the camping area of Perpulanluhta, as well as marked hiking routes. You can get to Linnansaari island daily by regular boat from SaimaaHoliday Oravi and Nature Hotel & Spa Resort Järvisydän.



Linnansaari



Kolovesi

## KOLOVESI NATIONAL PARK

### A PADDLER'S PARADISE

Kolovesi National Park is one of the most valuable nature reserves in Finland and a well-liked canoeing destination thanks to its sheltered waters and the fact that motorboating is forbidden there. The landscape of the park is dominated by rocky cliffs rising vertically from Lake Saimaa and wild forests, of which most are in their natural state.

One of the national park's attractions are its over 5,000-year-old rock paintings, which you can reach by canoe or kayak. Hikers can explore the national park on the Nahkiaissalo nature trail located on the mainland. Kolovesi is a suitable destination for hikers who don't require modern comforts and diverse services.



Punkaharju



## PUNKAHARJU NATURE RESERVE AN ENCHANTING NATURE AND CULTURAL DESTINATION

The fascinating scenery of Punkaharju has enchanted travellers already for a couple of hundred years. Punkaharju is one of Finland's national landscapes and in addition, a real treasure chest for travellers. In addition to fantastic scenery, there are versatile routes for hikers, bikers, and kayakers, as well as a wide selection of activity options.

There are also many cultural sites in Punkaharju. You can, for example, visit the Finnish Forest Museum Lusto and a wide range of summer exhibitions. Punkaharju can easily be reached by train.

## LAKE PURUVESI NATURE RESERVE AND HYTERMÄ THE CLEAR-WATERED PEARL OF LAKE SAIMAA

Lake Puruvesi is a basin-like area slightly separated from other parts of Lake Saimaa, known for its particularly clear water and Lake Puruvesi vendace, *muikku*. The lake area is also characterized by wide, open waters, sandy beaches and rugged cliffs.

One of the most interesting destinations in Lake Puruvesi is Hytermä, the three islands which were declared a nature reserve already in 1932. Hytermä was the life work of its then owner "Junk Heikki" and his wife. In addition to nature conservation, they built stone art to the island, of which the most impressive is the "Labour Memorial". You can get to Hytermä by renting a rowing boat or booking a guided excursion.

Hytermä



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