



Sammallahdenmäki, once upon a time located on the shores of the Baltic Sea, offers you an insight into Scandinavian Bronze Age burial sites and the fascinating life of a bygone era.

Sammallahdenmäki was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999 as the first prehistoric relic in Finland. The burial site located in the rugged, rocky landscape of Lappi, Rauma, features nearly 40 burial cairns of different shapes and sizes along a terrain of rocky ridges and heathland.

Sammallahdenmäki was used as a burial site for about 1,300 years, from the Bronze Age to the early Iron Age. During the Bronze Age (1500–500 BCE), the west coast had a milder climate and seafaring brought new settlers from Scandinavia, and with them cremation, bronze-working skills and agriculture.



**VISIT SAMMALLAHDENMÄKI RESPONSIBLY**

- Sammallahdenmäki is a prehistoric relic protected by the Antiquities Act, and damaging the site is prohibited by law.
- Sammallahdenmäki is a burial ground, so please respect the sanctity of the site.
- Climbing on the cairns and moving the stones is prohibited. This helps to protect the cairns, keep visitors safe, and preserve the area.
- Pay attention to safety while outdoors in the area. Please follow the marked paths only.
- Respect everyman's rights and responsibilities. You may pick berries and mushrooms, but open fires and grilling are strictly prohibited.
- Keep pets on a lead.

# Sammallahdenmäki is a great destination for a day trip

## 1 The oldest cairns and Kirkonlaattia

The low, flat quadrangular stone structure in Sammallahdenmäki known as Kirkonlaattia ("Church Floor") was excavated in 1891. A stacked stone wall was revealed in the middle of the cairn. The cairn is unusual in shape and size and has piqued curiosity.

According to an 1880s legend associated with Kirkonlaattia, Christians and Giants were competing as to who would be the fastest to build a church. It was agreed that the first ones to finish would ring the church bell. The Christians raised two poles, placed a bell between the poles and rang the bell. When the Giants heard the bell, they left their work unfinished, and all that remained was a church floor.

The oldest cairn at the highest point of the area dates back to 1400–1040 BCE. During archaeological excavations in 2002, a coffin-like stone structure running from north to south was found in the middle of the cairn. The dating is based on the radiocarbon dating of burnt bones found in the cairn.



## 2 Cairns on the edge of the rocky slope

The view from the cairns is a landscape of open fields where the sea was located during the Bronze Age. As a result of post-glacial land uplift, the landscape has changed as the coastline has moved further and further away. When the oldest burial cairns in Sammallahdenmäki were built, the area was completely devoid of trees and faced an open landscape resembling the current outer archipelago.

At the beginning of the Bronze Age, the sea level at Sammallahdenmäki was about 30 metres higher than today. The burial cairns were built right next to the water. Lake Saarnijärvi, to the west of the site, was a bay. The oldest cairns are located on the highest point of the hill. The most recent cairns dating to the early Iron Age (180 BCE–90 CE) were built in an area that was still under water at the beginning of the Bronze Age.



## 3 Barrows

The large cairns in the middle of the area are shaped like traditional barrows.

The burial cairns vary in size and shape, and were usually built on high ground near the water. The largest and most impressive cairns were built of stone in the early Bronze Age. The more recent ones feature a mix of stone and soil. Remains have been found in only a few cairns. The burial cairns reflect a change in religion and a new attitude towards the dead. The burnt bones indicate that the deceased were cremated. It is believed that in a high place, the deceased was closer to the sky and the sun, and the fire released the soul from the body for the journey to the afterlife. The large size of the burial cairns indicates the increasing importance of community and family. A cairn built on a visible site indicated that the land belonged to a particular community and could also be used to mark a sacred place.



## 4 Spiral cairn

During archaeological excavations in 2002, separate stone circles were found inside the cairn, forming a spiral pattern. The stone circles were made on the rock before placing the stones on top. Cremated bones were found in the middle of the cairn, most of which were identified as human bones. Based on the bone fragments, the deceased was over 20 years old. According to radiocarbon data, the burial dates back to 1320–1000 BCE.



The importance of the landscape – The movement of the shore due to post-glacial land uplift changed the landscape and influenced the lives and habits of the community.

## 5 The long ruin of Huilu

The long ruin of Huilu was excavated in 1891. Archaeological investigations inside the cairn revealed a carefully stacked perimeter wall almost the entire length of the cairn. A coffin-like structure of large stones was found inside the wall, with stone circles at both ends. Based on these structures, the cairn appears to contain three graves.

## 6 Boulder cairn

During archaeological excavations in 2002, previously unknown burial structures were discovered near Lake Saarnijärvi. These shallow structures, built of soil and stone, differ in appearance from the cairns on top of the hill, which are built solely of stone.

Two separate graves were found in the excavated cairn, connected by a large headstone. The sides of the graves had larger slabs, which formed a coffin-like structure with the headstones. Burnt bones were found in the second grave. A fragment of a bronze bracelet, the only artefact found in all of the excavations in Sammallahdenmäki, was also found from this grave. Based on the bracelet and the burnt bones, the cairn dates back to 180 BCE–90BE.

There are several signposts along the way, which make it easier to find your way around the area. The signs are designed and positioned so that they do not have a significant impact on the landscape, but are sufficiently visible.





The World Heritage Site of Old Rauma invites you to explore a centuries-old, contiguous Nordic wooden town area and its vibrant local community.

Old Rauma was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991. It is the largest and the most contiguous wooden city area dating from the Middle Ages in the Nordic countries. Old Rauma provides a unique environment for living, working, and leisure activities.

Everything is nearby in Old Rauma. Whether you're going shopping, visiting a museum or just exploring the area, you can get around on foot – the shops and sights are all within walking distance of each other. It is easy to be charmed by the atmosphere of this 29-hectare area, which is reminiscent of a bygone era.



Historic layers – Old Rauma's charming built environment contains visible layers of history.

## Interesting museums and local culture in Old Rauma

### 1 The Church of the Holy Cross, Luostarinkatu 1

The Church of the Holy Cross in Rauma was originally built as the monastery church for a Franciscan friary in the late 15th century. As a result of the Reformation, the Franciscan friars were banished from Rauma in 1538. After the Church of the Holy Trinity burned down in 1640, the Church of the Holy Cross became the church of the Lutheran parish.

The Middle Ages are still present today in the church's murals, vault paintings, and numerous valuable items. The white tower of the church has functioned as a landmark for sailors.

The Raumanjoki River flows past the church towards the sea. Further along, around Nortamonkatu street, the river turns into the famous Rauma Canal.



### 2 Market Square and Old Town Hall, Kauppakatu 13

The Market Square is the heart of the city, where people shop and have coffee at coffee stands throughout the year. The edge of the square is adorned by the grand Old Town Hall, which was completed in 1776. The Baroque-style building served as the city's administrative and public order centre until 1902. Today, the Old Town Hall is one of the Rauma Museum's attractions.

The Old Town Hall is currently closed for renovations and will reopen in 2026.



### 3 Naulamäki and Helsingintori

In the olden days, Naulamäki served as a residential area for fishermen and artisans. It used to form the southern edge of the town, and the city dwellers' fields and meadows began around its edges. The gateposts of the Naola house are probably the oldest surviving wooden structures in the city.

The story goes that Helsingintori Square derives its name from the city's burghers who gathered on this site with the purpose of moving to Helsinki. King Gustav I founded Helsinki in 1550 as a competitor to Tallinn, and ordered Rauma's burghers to populate the new city.

Rauma has a long tradition of lace-making. Lace has been made in the city since at least the mid-18th century. The Lacemaker monument, located in Helsingintori Square, is a tribute to the traditional artisan skill that has survived for centuries.



### 4 Tammela, Eteläpitkätie 17

Renovation Centre Tammela is a functional exhibition centre which is open to the public. It showcases the renovation activities in Old Rauma as well as the World Heritage of UNESCO. Tammela is also home to a collection of spare construction components.

The names of houses in Old Rauma are written in the Fraktur style on oval-shaped metal plates that are attached to the outer walls of the houses. The oldest house names date back to the 16th century. The names derive from the inhabitants' professions, first or last names, the homesteads of those who moved in from the countryside, and the names of islands around Rauma, among other things.



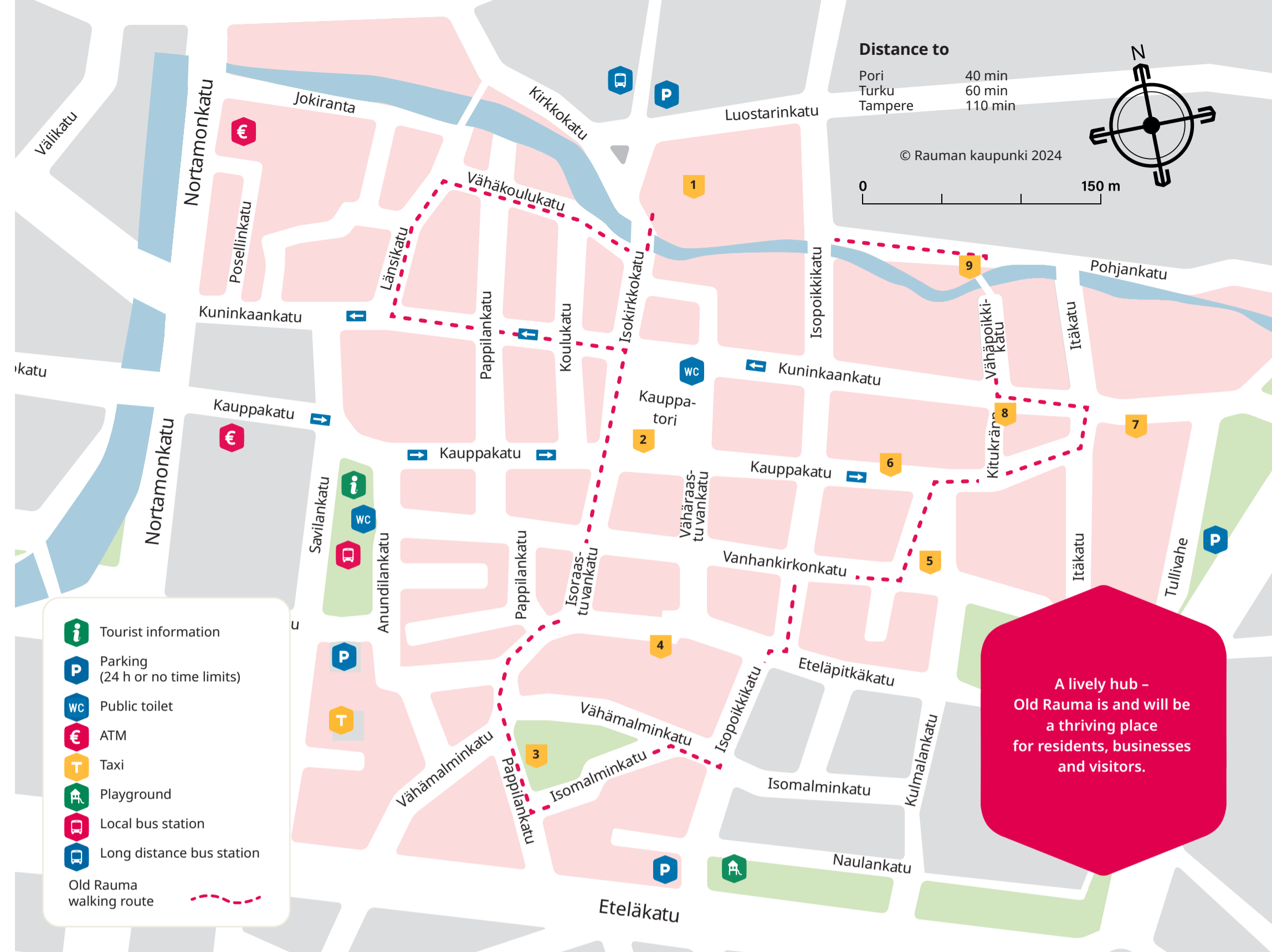
### 5 Kalatori Square, Kalliokatu 34

The oldest settlement in the city is presumed to have been located around Kalatori Square. Sea waves were still lapping over the area in the 14th century, but due to land uplift, the sea has made way to settlement that has spread towards the harbour. The ruins of the Church of the Holy Trinity are located on the southeastern side of Kalatori Square, in the middle of a small park. The grey-stone church, built as the parish church in the 15th century, was destroyed by a fire in 1640.



### 6 Marela – shipowner's home, Kauppakatu 24

Marela, one of the attractions of the Rauma Museum, presents the life of the Granlund family of shipowners who lived in the house at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The museum also features temporary exhibitions. Marela's stately main building originally served as the home of Rauma's wealthiest burgher and shipowner families. In addition to the main building, the site includes the adjacent Jäkäri house and a courtyard with several outbuildings. Most of the buildings date from the early 19th century.

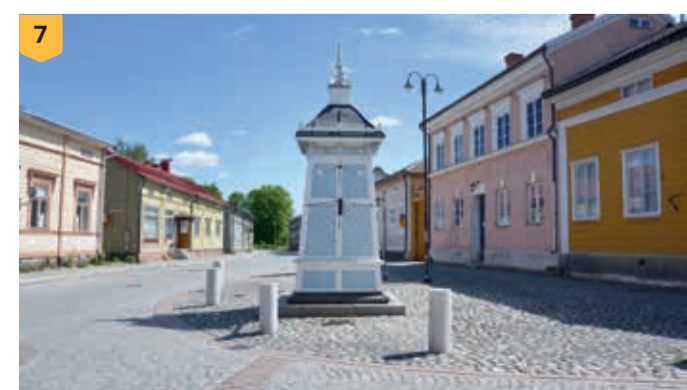


A lively hub – Old Rauma is and will be a thriving place for residents, businesses and visitors.



### 7 Hauenguano and Rauma Art Museum, Kuninkaankatu 37

Hauenguano connects Old Rauma's two main streets, Kauppakatu and Kuninkaankatu. The city was surrounded by a toll fence from the early 17th century until 1808. At the time, entrance to the town was through the Pori Customs, which was located on this site. The south side of the square is the location of the first private stone building in the city, commissioned by Efraim Broman in 1795. Today, this building and the adjacent Pinnala House, constructed in the early 19th century, are used by the Rauma Art Museum. This part of the city boasts several artisans' workshops and boutiques.



### 8 Kitukränn

Rauma's most well-known street, Kitukränn, runs between Kuninkaankatu and Kauppakatu. It is said to be the narrowest street in all of Finland.



### 9 Kirsti – home of seafarers and artisans, Pohjankatu 3

Kirsti, one of the Rauma Museum's attractions, depicts the lives of Rauma's seafaring and artisan families from the early 1900s to the 1970s. The museum is open during the summer season. Kirsti's buildings and fenced courtyard provide a glimpse of Rauma's cityscape in the early 19th century. Some of the buildings at the Kirsti site date back to the early 18th century and are among the oldest in Rauma.



## World Heritage

The World Heritage Convention identifies and preserves the value of the world's key cultural and natural heritage sites and aims to ensure their conservation through international collaboration. World Heritage Sites are considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

They connect the present with the past and underline the importance of conservation work for future generations.

There are currently seven World Heritage Sites in Finland. Six of them are cultural heritage sites and one is a natural heritage site.

Read more: [www.maailmanperinto.fi](http://www.maailmanperinto.fi)

### VISIT OLD RAUMA RESPONSIBLY

- In Old Rauma, distances are short and services are close by. Walking and cycling are recommended as the primary means of transportation within the area. Parking is easy to find outside the area.
- Use local services and products when possible.
- Respect the privacy of the people living in the area. Do not enter private courtyards unless invited.
- Please help us keep the area clean and tidy for everyone by putting your rubbish in the bin.
- Visit Old Rauma all year round, even outside the summer season.
- Please take fire safety into account when visiting Old Rauma. For example, make sure that cigarette butts are properly extinguished in the bin.
- Please note that during the summer, some streets are pedestrianised, with only service vehicles, walking and cycling allowed.