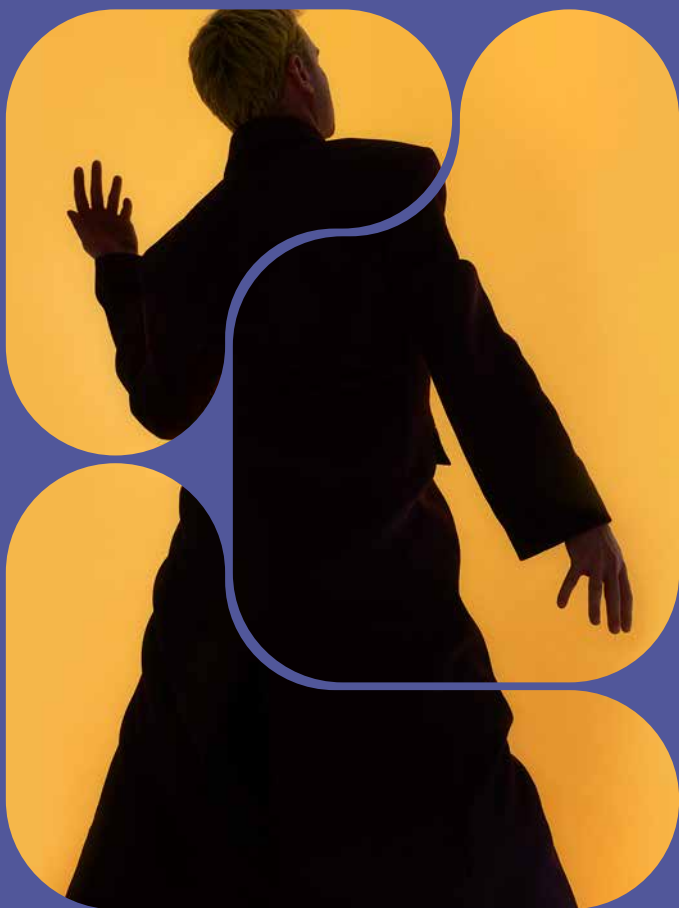




Oulu2026
European Capital
of Culture



Oulu2026

**Must-See in European
Capital of Culture**

Explore programme
→ oulu2026.eu



Thousands of events, works of art and experiences!

**Oulu is European Capital of Culture in 2026,
together with 39 municipalities from Northern
Finland.**

THROUGHOUT history, the most interesting ideas, innovations and art have emerged at the far edges of the world. Oulu2026 embodies and combines them in ingenious and diverse ways. From nature trails to extraordinary performances, from stunning traditional festivals to new dimensions, and from high-end exhibitions to the best saunas in Europe.

Pure Northern flavours invite you on a shared culinary journey. Craftsmanship, artificial intelligence and sports come together in extraordinary ways. We experiment, play and challenge.

Welcome to an inspiring celebration of Northern and European culture!

Throughout the year:

Fotografiska Tallinn x Oulu2026. Exhibition PLAY challenges the idea that play belongs only to childhood. While digital play flourishes today, the exhibition turns to forms that are quietly fading: embodied, face-to-face, unscripted. Through the works of 17 international artists, it presents play as a powerful mindset that shapes how we engage with the world and connect with others.



Layers in the Peace Machine. An immersive media installation blending art and technology at Oulu City Hall. Ekho Collective's interactive artwork portrays peace as a dynamic process that shifts and evolves with participants' interactions.

Earworm – Media Art from Kiasma. A media art exhibition at Oulu City Hall, curated by the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki. Spanning several decades, the video works highlight the close relationship between media art and the technologies and digital culture of their time, from the Internet and television to pop music and video games.





The Logos A new sound art installation by Andrew Melchior, transforming billions-of-years-old radio signals from deep space into sound, making them audible in Oulu Cathedral.

ARToulu Art District Explore Oulu through public artworks that reveal new perspectives, sounds and forms of life across the city.

World-class experiences – near, far and everywhere in between.

Climate Clock A permanent public art series bringing together art, science and nature through works by renowned Finnish and international artists across Oulu's forests, rivers and urban environments.





Helsinki to Oulu
1 hr



Helsinki to Oulu
5.5 hrs

ARCTIC CIRCLE

Oulu

Helsinki

Join us!

By subscribing to our newsletter, you will receive information once a month about what is happening around the Oulu2026.



Scan the QR code or visit oulu2026.eu/newsletter



Oulu2026 Official



Oulu2026 – European Capital of Culture 2026



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OULU

MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Key Dates for 2026

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIVERSE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROGRAMME

23–26 Sep Arctic Tasting Restaurants and cafés compete to create the most delicious tasting dish. Savoury and sweet treats, mocktails and cocktails are available for €5 or €7, with the winners chosen by customers.

23–27 Sep Cultural Kaleidoscopes – The Irish Festival of Oulu This free, family-friendly street festival combines Irish and Finnish traditional music, storytelling, dance, street theatre and circus. Its spectacular finale is Pegasus by the French company Planète Vapeur, featuring an illuminated, 18-tonne winged horse in a large-scale outdoor performance seen in the Nordic countries for the first time.

Until 30 Sep Pikinen Poloku This environmental art trail winds along the shores and through the woodlands of picturesque Pikisaari in Oulu.

Until 4 Oct I Am the City Portraits of Oulu residents in their personal mental landscapes explore the relationship between the city and its people through digital and traditional collage, 3D-printed pieces and other techniques.



Until 11 Oct Tomorrow's Wardrobe &

YUIMA NAKAZATO – GLACIER Two exhibitions at Oulu Art Museum explore the future of fashion. Tomorrow's Wardrobe brings together bold artistic visions, advanced technology and ecological materials, while YUIMA NAKAZATO – GLACIER presents the acclaimed Japanese designer's creations and creative process.

9–11 Oct Oulu Book Fair Authors, publishers and readers come together for interviews, discussions, music and encounters with established names and new voices. The 2026 theme is the North. Please note that the programme is primarily in Finnish.

Until 30 Nov The Kuutar Garden Danish artist Jakob Kudsk Steensen transforms part of Kivisydän, Oulu's underground car park and civil defence shelter, into an immersive virtual world combining science, nature and digital art.

13–22 Nov Lumo Art & Tech Festival This ten-day international festival brings creative professionals from around the world to Oulu and transforms the city into a northern hub for artistic and technological innovation. Across multiple venues, visitors can experience everything from light and sound art to diverse forms of digital art.

19–21 Nov Beyond the Sky Distant nebulae come within reach in this immersive fusion of art, science and technology. Inspired by Oulu-based astrophotographer Jukka-Pekka Metsävainio, it combines his cosmic imagery with music by Lauri Porra, performed by Oulu Sinfonia and the Oulu Chamber Choir under conductor Dalia Stasevska.

25–28 Nov Festival of Augmented Dance Finland's first festival dedicated to dance and technology presents innovative Finnish and international performances under the theme of the Human Condition.

4–19 Dec Snowball Musical This world-premiere family musical is a fun and exciting story filled with heartwarming characters, Christmas spirit and wonderful new music. The cast includes Kristo Salminen, Saara Aalto, Petra Pääkkönen and Mika Nuojua, with script and music by Douglas Pashley.

12 Dec Winter Classic 2026 Helsinki-based HIFK and Oulu-based Kärpät, two of Finland's most successful ice hockey clubs, face off at Raksila's outdoor ice rink in a unique event combining top-level ice hockey, a wintry atmosphere and a shared sporting experience.

Until 12 Dec Faravid's Land Combining theatre, contemporary circus and dance, Faravid's Land is a journey and a myth about those who search for happiness and those who hide it.

9 Oct 2026–9 Oct 2028 Metallikausi (Metal Era) This exhibition celebrates the powerful sound, distinctive style and northern roots of metal music, highlighting the bands from the North that have helped shape this globally recognised phenomenon.

9 Oct 2026–9 Oct 2028 Aurora Revelare – The Dancing Colours of the Sky Step into the magical spectacle of the northern lights in an exhibition that combines scientific knowledge with stories about the captivating colours of the northern sky.

16 Oct 2026–14 Feb 2027 Adaptation – Time Is Not on Our Side Combining art and science, this group exhibition explores environmental change in the North and around the world.

30 Oct 2026–28 Mar 2027 Out of Time This contemporary art exhibition explores time and a reality composed of parallel and overlapping events. Its international and Finnish artists take visitors from the Middle Ages to the present day.

Discover even more wonderful experiences – both traditional and unexpected → oulu2026.eu

Oulu2026 Info & Shop

Pekuri Shopping Centre, 2nd floor,
Kauppurienväki 10, Oulu

Open daily
Mon–Sat 11–19
Sun 11–18

Buy official Oulu2026 shirts, accessories and gear to celebrate the European Capital of Culture in style!
→ oulu2026.eu/en/shop

