

Tour to Coastal Finland for ScanAdventures

Rosa Lehikoinen



Author(s) Rosa Lehikoinen	
Degree programme Tourism	
Report/thesis title Tour to Coastal Finland for ScanAdventures	Number of pages and appendix pages 32 + 19
<p>This is a product-oriented thesis of planning a product and a small city guide. The product is a summertime tour to the South Coast of Finland to cities Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka. The commissioner is a London-based tour operator ScanAdventures. The goal was to make a selling product for ScanAdventures and to improve their summer product selection especially in Finland. The study was executed between May 2016 and October 2016.</p> <p>The thesis consist on theory part and process part. Theory includes Finland as a travel destination with some tourism facts with the main focus on British tourists. The three cities included in the tour Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka and their tourism are being introduced individually. The thesis also looks into tourism product, its development process as well as special characteristics of tour operator's product planning.</p> <p>The process describes the making of the product as well as the city guide. The research involved going through material related to the destination and product planning, collecting material of the destinations, both pictures and information, contacting the destination management organisations of each cities and creating content for the product and the city guide based on the ScanAdventures clientele.</p> <p>As a result of this thesis came a 6-day tour to coastal Finland that includes flights, 2 nights' accommodation in Helsinki including breakfast, 1 nights' accommodation in Porvoo including breakfast, 2 nights' accommodation in Kotka including breakfast, transportation between the cities by either a rental car or public transportation and a city guide.</p>	
Keywords Product, tour, coast, Helsinki, Porvoo, Kotka	

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
2	ScanAdventures.....	3
3	Southern Finland as a travel destination.....	5
3.1	Finland´s attractiveness	5
3.2	Tourism in Finland	6
3.3	Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka	7
3.3.1	Helsinki	8
3.3.2	Porvoo	9
3.3.3	Kotka.....	10
4	Developing a tourism product.....	11
4.1	The tourism product	11
4.2	A tourism product as a place-oriented product	14
4.3	Product development process.....	15
4.4	Designing a product for a tour operator	16
4.4.1	Tourism product development.....	17
5	Product development process.....	20
5.1	A tour to Coastal Finland.....	20
5.2	The Product	22
5.2.1	The product description.....	23
5.3	Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka City guide	24
5.4	The schedule of the process	26
5.5	Competition.....	28
6	Discussion.....	30
6.1	Conclusions	30
6.2	Challenges.....	31
6.3	Evaluation	32
	References	33
	Appendices.....	39
	Appendix 1. Tour Description	39
	Appendix 2. City Guide.....	42

1 Introduction

Tour to Coastal Finland for ScanAdventures is a 6-day summertime tour to the South Coast of Finland. The tour takes the traveller to experience three cities Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka. The type of the tour is “self-guided” which is why there has been made a city guide that introduces the best of what the coast has to offer. The tour includes return flights, 5 nights’ accommodation including breakfast and transportation between the cities. The customer gets to choose whether they want to rent a car for their trip or to travel from one city to another by a bus.

The commissioner for the thesis is a tour-operator ScanAdventures that is operating in London, organizing tours to Scandinavia and Nordic countries, such as Finland, Iceland, Russia and Sweden. The product is designed for ScanAdventurers, who are usually British, over 35 years of age, earn more than average and appreciate good quality and unique experiences. They are not tourists but travellers. The product aims to be selling, make the commissioner’s summer season product selection more versatile and up to date, introduce more of Finland to the British tourists, give them an image of Finland as an all year around destination and of course bring more tourists to the South Coast of Finland.

The objective for the thesis is to make a summer season tourism product for ScanAdventures including a city guide that contain recommendations of activities, attractions and restaurants in Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka. It is made with the principle of “recommended by a local”. The city guide is meant to be informative and give extra value to the product. The customers can get everything they need for the trip in one place and do not have to search in various places for recommendations on what to do and where to eat. The content of the city guide is chosen based on personal experiences as well as what would suit the ScanAdventures clientele.

The thesis consists of two parts, the theoretical part and thesis-making process part. The first theory chapter introduces Southern Finland as a travel destination. It describes the area and its main attractions, characteristics as well as tourism statistics with the main focus on the British visitors. All three of the cities included in the tour Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka are introduced individually. Their main characteristics, location and tourism facts are being viewed.

The second part of the theory is about the process of designing a tourism product. A tourism product is considered as a service product that includes transportation, accommodation and possibly meals, excursions and activities. It is more than just a service but an experience. The chapter introduces the process of product planning, what is a tourism product, what is a tourism product that is place-oriented as well as special characteristics of planning a product for a tour operator. (Holloway & Humphreys 2012.)

The thesis-making process is described on its own chapter. The overall process, schedule, phases, reasons for decision-making and parties involved are being examined. The product development is looked into using the model of customer-orientated tourism product by Komppula and Boxberg (2005, 21-25) where its core idea as well as the surrounding factors and resources are being viewed. The making of the actual product as well as the making of the city guide are being looked into in their own subchapters. Finally the competition for this tour is also being considered.

The last chapter discussion is in three parts. The first part is conclusions where the successfulness of the product as well as how it reached its goals are being examined. The second part looks into the possible challenges the product might face, such as the visibility and attractiveness amongst other ScanAdventures' products and Britain's decision to leave the European Union. The final part is the evaluation of my overall thesis-making process and learning. The actual product description and the city guide can be found as attachments.

2 ScanAdventures

ScanAdventures is a London based tour operator organising tours to Scandinavia and Northern Europe to countries such as Iceland, Finland, Sweden and Russia. The company was launched in February 2014. The name ScanAdventures indicates where the company organises tours and the brand slogan “your adventure our experience” gives an idea of the company’s special expertise on the area. It is a small company employing three people, from Finland, Britain and Sweden, at the office. Each one of the personnel has their own area of expertise on Scandinavia to make the offering wide and best possible. (Woolgar 2014, 3; Woolgar 2.6.2016; ScanAdventures 2016a.)

The tours and holidays of ScanAdventures are tailor made for each customer according to their wishes. The products are a variety of different types of tours, from summer tours to winter tours, from Father Christmas tours to Moomin tours and from Road trips to Cruises. The company also organises weddings in Finland, Sweden and Iceland. Countries where ScanAdventures organises tours are Baltic States, Denmark, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The customer can see all of the tours in ScanAdventures’ website. They can sort the holiday type by destination, season or holiday type. (Woolgar 2.6.2016; ScanAdventures 2016b; ScanAdventures 2016c.)

One of the most popular destinations of ScanAdventures is Kakslauttanen in Finland. Customers are fascinated on the idea of sleeping under the stars in an igloo, seeing the northern lights and participating in various fun winter activities such as husky and reindeer safaris. The most popular tour is called “Igloo Nights at Kakslauttanen”. It is a 4-day tour that includes return flights to Ivalo with luggage, airport transfers to Kakslauttanen, 3 nights’ accommodation in Cabin-Igloo or 2 nights’ accommodation in a cabin and 1 nights’ accommodation in an igloo, firewood service in cabin, breakfasts and suppers and thermal clothing. The price for the tour is £1399 if staying 2 nights in a cabin and 1 night in an igloo or £200 more if staying in the Cabin-Igloo. The customers can also include safaris, such as reindeer, husky, snowmobile, horse-riding, ice fishing and northern lights hunting, or add extra days if they wish. (ScanAdventures 2016d.)

The company works under an organisation called Finn-Guild, which is a non-profit, member-based organisation that aims to bring the Finnish-British community together through culture, language and community. The organisation was founded in 1965 and today it is the biggest organisation of its kind in Europe. Finn-Guild operates in both Finland and Britain and communicates with its members via newsletter and social media. Members get various benefits, library services, language courses and much more. (Finn-Guild 2016.)

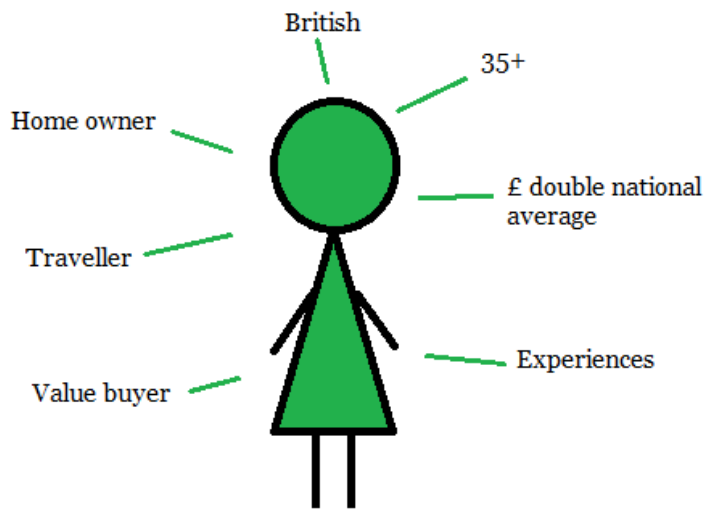


Figure 1. Client of ScanAdventures.

As demonstrated in figure 1 the average client of ScanAdventures would be described as British, usually living in or nearby the London area. They are usually 35+ years old, median income is double national average and they are homeowners. The customers see themselves as travellers rather than holiday makers or tourists. There is a slight difference between a tourist and a traveller. A tourist is usually seen as a person who participates in package holidays and mass tourism. As for travellers they have a free spirit and they are more individual, adventurous and open minded. ScanAdventures' clients are also value buyers instead of price buyers. They are highly interested in experiences and rather like to participate than observe. Travelling to Scandinavia might be a once in a lifetime kind of trip which is why they want the best out of it. (Horner & Swarbrooke 2016; Woolgar 2.6.2016.)

3 Southern Finland as a travel destination

This chapter introduces Southern Finland as a summertime travel destination with the focus on the three destinations, Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka that are part of the tourism product. Tourism in Finland is also being examined with the focus on how British visitors see Finland and what kind of expectations and behaviour they have. Southern Finland as an area is the country's most populated and has the most cultural heritage. The region has many interesting attractions including historically important places. The region reaches from near the Russian border in the East all the way to the coast of the Gulf of Bosnia. (Discovering Finland 2016a.)

3.1 Finland's attractiveness

Finland is a land of lakes and forests (Figure 2) that is an all year round destination with four seasons. Summer time "nightless nights" when the sun does not go down, autumn's beautiful colours with various shades of red, brown and yellow, snowy, dark winters with Nordic lights dancing in the sky and spring when the nature comes back alive. Also what makes Finland a unique destination is the beautiful nature, midnight sun, Finnish sauna, ski resorts, Finnish design and of course the fact that it is the real home of Santa Claus. Finland is an ideal destination for those who seek something new. (Discovering Finland 2016b; Visit Finland 2016a.)



Figure 2. Finland is the land of lakes and forests (Lehikoinen, R. 2014)

According to TripAdvisor the top things to visit in Finland, in right order, are: Fortress of Suomenlinna, The Rock Church, Seurasaari Island and open air museum, Levi Ski Resort, The Helsinki Cathedral, The Esplanadi Park, Olavinlinna Castle, Porvoo old town, The Uspenski Cathedral and Kamppi Chapel of Silence. Six of those are located in Helsinki and others in various locations within the country. These are based on actual reviews of people who have visited the country and its attractions which is why it gives a good idea of what people actually like to see and experience in Finland. (TripAdvisor 2016.)

3.2 Tourism in Finland

Tourism in Finland is growing about 5% per year and the tourism industry has grown faster than any other industry. Of all tourism in the country the amount of Finnish people is still about 70% but there is a greater potential of growth in foreign tourists, whose amount has doubled in 2000s. The amount of foreign tourists in Finland was 7.4 million in 2015 and the income from tourism has been over 13 billion euros and is expected to grow 20 billion euros per year by 2025. The biggest foreign group visiting Finland are the Russians, whose main destination abroad is Finland. Other important inbound tourists are Swedish, Germans, British, Norwegians, Estonians, and also Asians, especially Chinese and Japanese whose tourism Finnair's strategy supports. (Työ ja Elinkeinministeriö 2016; Visit Finland 2016b.)

In 2015 there were 292 000 trips from Great Britain to Finland. Most of these trips were overnight and Finland was the main destination. 40% of the British tourists visited some other country as well. Average time spent in Finland was 3.9 nights and most of the people stayed in a hotel or motel or with friends and family. The main motive to travel to Finland was to go on a holiday, but also visiting friends and family and business (Figure 3). British visitors spent 94 million euros in Finland which is 28 million euros less than previous year. 82 million euros was spent on services and 13 million euros on products. The average amount spent on a single trip was 323 euros, which is 96 euros less than 2014. The most popular way to book the trip was online which 71% of the British visitors used. (Visit Finland 2016c, 12-69.)

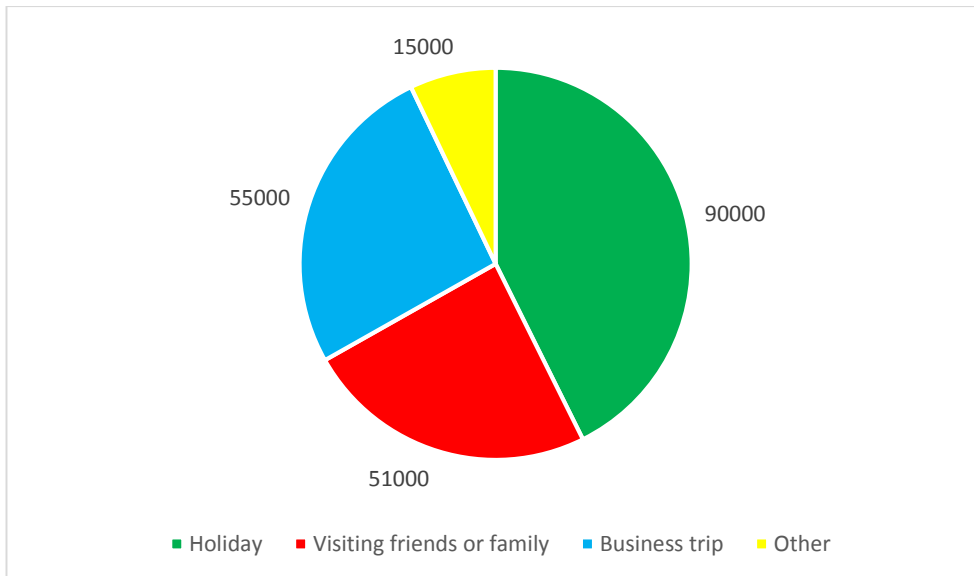


Figure 3. British visitor's purpose of travel to Finland when it is the main destination (Visit Finland 2016c, 22)

As a summer season destination Finland is competing with Norway, Sweden and Iceland in the British marketing. The products Finland can offer are wildlife watching, music festivals, city breaks, Helsinki combined with other Baltic or Scandinavian cities such as St Petersburg, Tallinn or Stockholm, especially visa free cruises to St Petersburg, berry and mushroom picking, wellness and for elderly people activities combined with entertainment such as dancing, hiking and photography. British visitors are expecting high quality, versatile offering, good quality-price ratio, more guided summer products and flexible customer service. Travel trends for the British travellers are beach holidays to Mediterranean, long-distance trips and cruises, but also pampering, food, culture, soft activity, extreme and special products. Nature is also a growing trend which should be advantaged in Finland's offering. (Visit Finland 2016d; Visit Finland 2016e.)

3.3 Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka

The three cities included in the tour are all located on the South Coast of Finland by the Baltic Sea (Figure 4). The distance between the two furthest cities, Helsinki and Kotka, is 136 kilometres leaving Porvoo in the middle between them. Not only are they relatively close to one another but also easy to reach with a car or public transportation. The airport is located in Vantaa which is only approximately 20 kilometres from the city centre of Helsinki. (Finavia 2016a; Kotka 2016.)

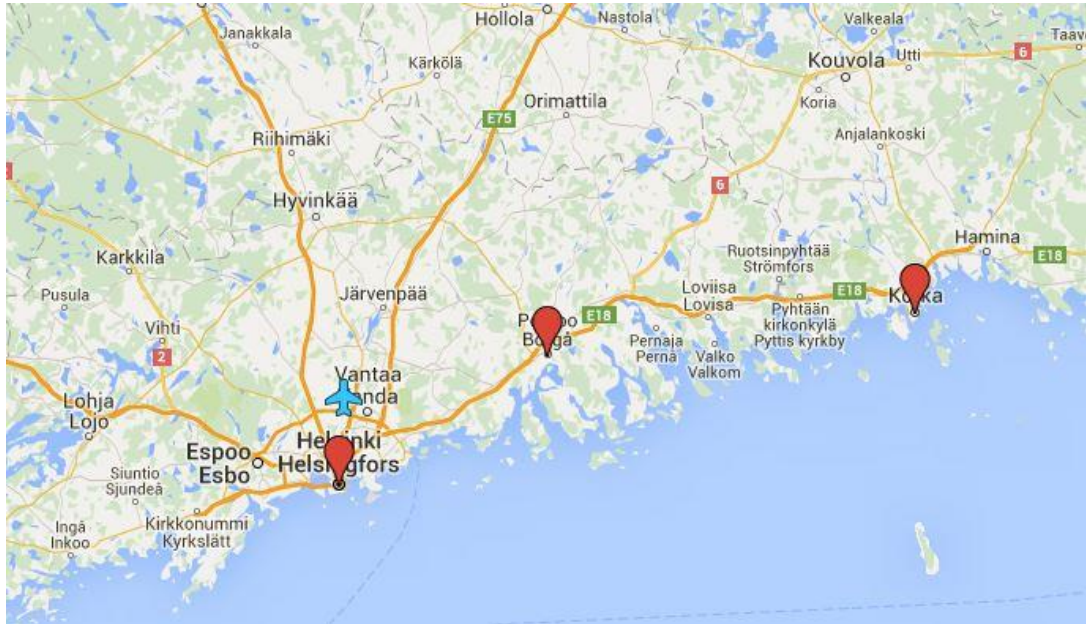


Figure 4 Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka (Google Maps 2016.)

The archipelago of Finland is a truly fascinating area with the key characteristics being strong maritime culture as well as the relaxed islander kind of lifestyle. Attractions that can be found in many of the coastal towns are historical manors, stone churches, lighthouses, old towns built from wood and national parks that cover both land and sea. The season when the coastal towns are the liveliest is summer. People are taking the most out of the warmest months by spending as much time outdoors as possible. (Visit Finland 2016g.)

3.3.1 Helsinki

Helsinki is the capital of Finland with a little over 600 000 inhabitants. The city is located in the South coast of Finland by the Baltic Sea. The modern capital has a lot to offer for its visitors from cultural attractions to various parks. Of all of the 9 capitals of the Baltic Sea, Helsinki is only the 6th largest after St Petersburg, Berlin, Stockholm, Riga and Oslo, leaving Copenhagen, Vilnius and Tallinn behind it. (Helsingin Kaupungin Tietokeskus 2015, 3-5; Visit Helsinki 2016a.)

2015 was a good year for Helsinki's tourism because the nights spent in there increased to a new record of almost 3.5 million nights, of which 47% were Finnish and 53% from abroad. Both business and leisure travel increased. The biggest foreign market was the Germans who passed the Russians. Other important nationalities visiting Helsinki were British, Swedish, Japanese, Americans and Chinese. The busiest months were July, August and June. Most of the visitors arrived by air or cruise ship. 16.42 million People travelled via Helsinki-Vantaa airport while 12 million people travelled via harbors of Helsinki.

To and from UK there are direct flight connections to London Gatwick and Heathrow, Manchester and Edinburgh. More cities can be reached if flying via other cities. (Finavia 2016b; Visit Helsinki 2016a; Visit Helsinki 2016b, 2-5.)

The most popular attractions and activities were Messukeskus Expo and Convention Centre, where many events are held throughout the year, and Linnanmäki amusement park both with more than one million visitors. Other popular places to visit were Suomenlinna fortress which is an UNESCO World Heritage site, Korkeasaari zoo, Helsinki Cathedral, Temppeliaukio Church (Rock Church) and Uspenski Cathedral. In 2012 Helsinki was chosen to be the World Design Capital and in 2014 Helsinki was given UNESCO's Creative Cities network's City of Design recognition. (Visit Helsinki 2016a; Visit Helsinki 2016b, 6.)

3.3.2 Porvoo

Porvoo, or Borgå by its Swedish name, is located about 50 kilometres from Helsinki to east. The city is the second oldest of the cities in Finland and gets yearly about 1.6 million tourists. The town is full of history which is still present nowadays. The charming, picturesque old town with its boutiques, cafés, restaurants, museums and impressive old cathedral which is Porvoo's main attraction. The town has its unique charm that has inspired many Finnish artists in their work. River Porvoo that is floating through the city connects it into the Gulf of Finland and by the river you can find Porvoo's most iconic landmarks, the red shore houses, originally painted in order to honour the arrival of Swedish King Gustav III. (Visit Finland 2016f; Visit Finland 2016h; Visit Porvoo 2016a.)

The main season for Porvoo's tourism is summer and most of the trips are day trips from Helsinki. Other important visitors are people from next towns visiting friends and family, summer house visitors, people who stop in Helsinki when on a cruise and Russians who come to Finland by car. In 2015 there were 110 325 nights spent in Porvoo which was only about 800 nights more than previous year. Most of these nights were spent by Finnish people with the amount of 82 403 nights and 27 922 nights were spent by foreign visitors. (Lopez, Holmberg & Ritalahti 2014, 20-21; Visit Finland 2016h.)

3.3.3 Kotka

Kotka is located by the Gulf of Finland about 130 kilometres from Helsinki and about 80 kilometres from Porvoo to east and is called “the city by the sea”. The city is known for its port, beautiful parks and beaches and of course the annual maritime festival. The city has a long history as a port and the maritime atmosphere can be seen everywhere in the city: there is the maritime centre Vellamo, that includes maritime museum and the museum of Kymenlaakso, Maretarium aquarium, which introduces the local fish species, harbours full different types of boats with a chance of cruises around the city or to one of its islands and of course Kairo, a pub founded in 1935 which was the meeting place for sailors and is still there in the same spot. (Etäisyys 2016; Kerran Elämässä 2016; Kotka 2016.)

The city centre of Kotka is actually an island but can be reached by car, foot, bike or public transportation because there are bridges built from the mainland. There are also lots of things to see outside the city centre. For example Langinkoski is a place by the Kymi River about five kilometres from the city centre. There is a fishing lodge built by the Russian emperor Alexander III that is a popular place to visit. (Kerran Elämässä 2016; Kotka 2016.)

In 2015 there were 133 699 nights spent in Kotka of which 95 049 visitors were Finnish and 38 650 visitors were from abroad. The amount of nights spent has dropped from previous years since there were a bit over 165 000 nights spent in Kotka in 2013 of which 75 591 people were from abroad and almost 154 000 nights spent on 2014 of which 56 806 people were from abroad. (Visit Finland 2016h.)

4 Developing a tourism product

This chapter looks into the characteristics of a tourism product and the process of creating ones especially in the tour operator's point of view. Designing and developing new products is essential for the company to grow and to increase the amount of profit. Especially for tourism related companies new products make the selection more versatile and give the customers something fresh and new to be excited of. New services can either be totally new, when they are created by the company and offered to the customers for the very first time, or improved versions of already existing services. (Bakshi 2012, 20; Garcia 2014, 2.)

4.1 The tourism product

A product can be either tangible, a good or intangible, a service. A tourism product is rather a service than a physical good. Actually a tourism product is more than just a service. For the customer the tourism product is an experience. Their main purchase might not be a flight or a night in a hotel but a unique and memorable experience. As a matter of fact the core of the tourism product is the customer's experience of the service. A tour company cannot really produce experiences but create the necessary conditions the creation of experiences requires. A service is a type of product that includes activities, benefits and satisfaction that are being put out for sale. As for goods they are physical objects that have an existing demand. They remain as they are over time, exists on their own, can be changed or traded and show the knowledge and skills of the people who made them. Also the ownership of a good can be established or exchanged. But when buying a tourism product instead of getting a physical good, such as a seat on a plane, bed in a hotel or a ticket, a consumer buys a memorable and exclusive experience to enjoy. (Avlonitis & Papastathopoulou 2006; Komppula 2002, 7; Konu 2015; Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 20-23)

A tourism product consists of a business idea and a product description that is tempting enough to attract customers, successful process of serving the customer and a service structure that is both trustworthy and effortlessly working (Figure 5). When it comes to tourism products there are four service characteristics one must consider: intangibility, inseparability, variability or heterogeneity and perishability. (Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 183; Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 97; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 256, 268.)

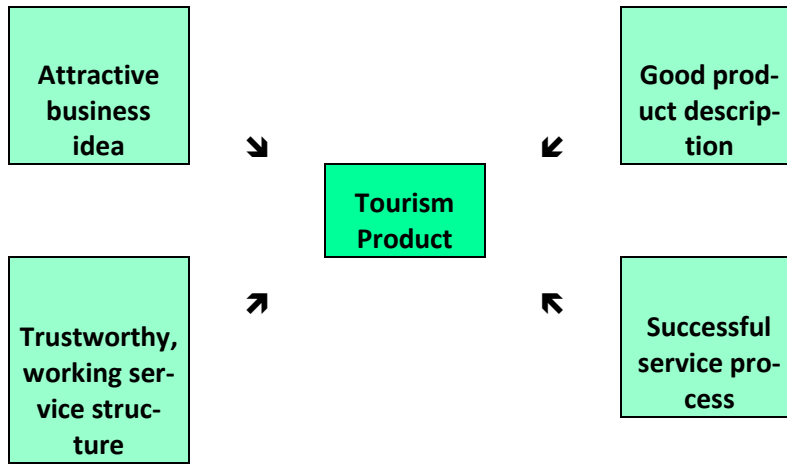


Figure 5 .Tourism Product (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 97)

Service intangibility means that before the service is bought the consumer cannot see, taste, feel, hear or smell it. Purchasing a holiday is a big investment that involves a great trust from the buyer towards the seller because the product cannot be inspected beforehand. It is also more than a bunch of services, such as seat on an airplane, hotel room and a sandy beach for sunbathing put together but it also involves temporarily use of unknown environment, region's culture, heritage and other immaterial benefits such as hospitality and services. Purchasing a tourism product is not just a physical experience but a psychological as well because planning the trip and recalling it afterwards by sharing experiences, pictures and reviews, are important part of the overall experience. (Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 10; Kotler & Armstrong, 269.)

In service inseparability the interaction between the customer and the service provider is in the key role. The customer plays a big part in the delivery of the service as well as the service outcome. The services and the providers cannot be separated and the service employee becomes a part of the service when he or she provides it. For example a customer on a holiday may have purchased a guided tour so in order for the transaction to happen both the customer and the tour guide must be present in the same place at the same time. (Frochot & Batat 2013, 41; Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 11; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 269.)

Service variability, also known as heterogeneity, means that who provides the service, where, when and how they are provided defines the quality of the service. The quality is difficult to control because of the fact that it can considerably vary amongst the producers and the consumers. The challenge of selling tourism products is to match the customer's dream into reality. A delay on the flight, a bad weather or any inconvenience can ruin the customer's holiday experience. With service products, especially tourism products, the risk of change is always present. (Frochot & Batat 2013, 41; Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 10-11; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 269.)

The final service characteristic, service perishability, means that there is no way of storing services for later use or sale. If services are not sold they are a loss for the one selling them. For example a seat on the aircraft cannot be sold afterwards, but have to be sold before a certain due time. In tourism one way to try to sell these is last minute deals, where the price is put lower to lure the customers to purchase the holiday. (Frochot & Batat 2013, 41; Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 11; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 270.)

What makes a tourism product so special is that it is usually put together with several different operators, such as airlines, hotels, heritage sites and conference venues. It is important for all these parties to know the story of the product but also to be involved in the product development. Operators in the tourism field benefit from co-working with one another. For example if someone flies to Helsinki he or she probably needs accommodation and maybe a rental car, meals and wants to go sightseeing so why not make it into a package that everyone can benefit from. Also another party that is involved in the building of product and telling its story is the customer. They can share their experience in the social media and rate the trip on platforms such as Tripadvisor which gives them more active role and power when it comes to the product because some people value these platforms as trustworthy, or even more than the company's own communications. (Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 184; Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti 2010.)

4.2 A tourism product as a place-oriented product

Tourism is based on some action in some location. Its basic element is travelling to a location outside one's normal environment. Physical place where people travel can be seen as the core of the tourism product, surrounding elements being services, hospitality, traveller's freedom to make their own decisions and traveller's involvement. The place references to all of the physical elements that can be found in a destination. It can be a country, an area, a resort or a hotel. Not only that the place also includes the environment's conditions such as the landscape, the weather conditions and the buildings. The place is in such a high position on a tourism product because in many cases a person travels to a certain place to experience its attractiveness or to meet their family and friends. In this way the place determines the person's motive of travel. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 15-17; Smith 1994, 587-590.)

The place itself is not enough but needs services, such as restaurants, accommodation and entertainment, to fulfil the traveller's needs. "In this context, "service" refers to the performance of specific tasks required to meet the needs of tourists" (Smith 1994, 588). Another element of tourism product is hospitality. It means how the locals and the personnel of the service industry welcome the travellers as well as the attitudes shown towards the travellers and willingness to serve them. Traveller's freedom of choice is that the traveller needs a certain amount of opportunities to choose from during the trip. This might be essential for the successfulness of the trip because the traveller can be spontaneous and have pleasant surprises while on the trip. This element can vary quite a lot depending on the traveller, but for leisure travellers this is more important because they might want to make the decisions later according to their mood, budget and weather. Usually the travellers expect to have a choice even if they do not use any of them. The final element is the traveller's involvement. It is the element that the service provider can least have an impact on. The level of the participation depends on the traveller's willingness and capability of participating on the creating of the experience. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 15-17; Smith 1994, 587-590.)

4.3 Product development process

The process of planning a new tourism product has many phases (Figure 6). For companies to find new ideas and developing those into actual products or services should be systematic and customer orientated. Successful product development includes making products of good quality within reasonable time while keeping the development and product making costs down enough to make profit. The company also have to be capable of developing future products preferably more effectively and economically. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 295; Ulrich & Eppinger 2012, 3.)

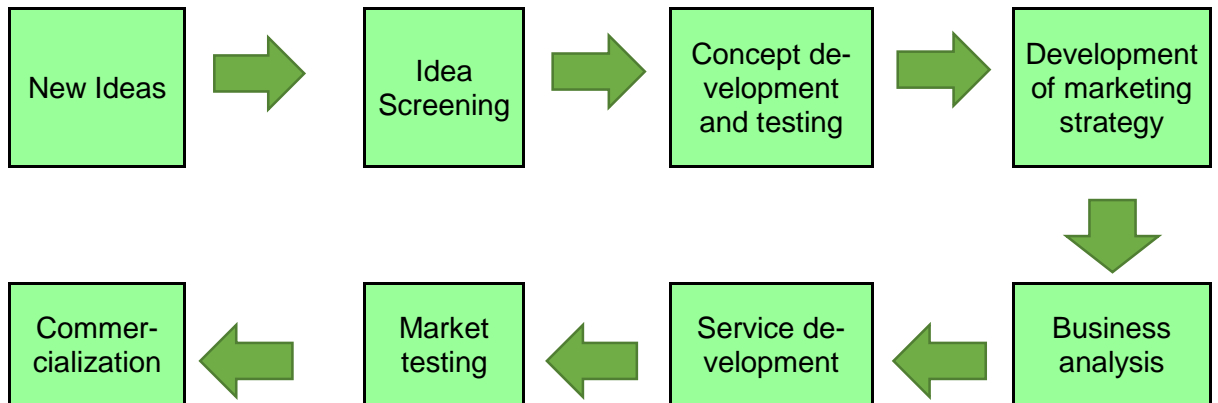


Figure 6. Product planning process (Bakshi 2012, 20-34; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 295-303)

The very first phase in the new product development process is having a good idea. After gathering some new ideas they have to be screened in order to see which ones to start developing into actual products. There is always a risk in idea screening that a good idea gets dropped or a bad idea gets through. In my case I had few different ideas for this project, but the summertime tour to Finland was selected mainly because of my own interests, but also because it was something new for the company. ScanAdventures was really flexible on the subject of the project and let me choose a topic that interests me but is also beneficial for them. (Bakshi 2012, 22-24; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 295.)

After screening the new ideas they have to be put into concepts that are concrete and specific. The concepts then have to be tested by the target consumers and possibly by the company's own employees. A tested concept needs a marketing strategy development that consist on three parts: description of the target market, planning of a value proposition and the first few year's sales, share of the market and profit goals. After that a business analysis is being made in order to find out the products business attractiveness. The analysis includes estimation of the product's sales, costs and profits. That being done the product is being developed and the service is being put into practical execution and the

market is being tested by several consumer groups. Based on the market testing some changes can be made to improve the product. The final phase is commercialization where the new product is introduced for the world and put out for sale. The goal is to get the attention of the target audience. (Bakshi 2012, 22-34; Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 295-303.)

4.4 Designing a product for a tour operator

Tour operators have been a connection between the travellers and the tourism industry suppliers (Figure 7). The job of the tour operator is to collect and combine different elements such as transportation, accommodation and other services and activities into a tour that is then being sold to their own customers or to travel agencies. What separates a tour operator from a travel agent is that the tour operator is the one putting the tour together. They are the ones who book the different elements such as accommodation and flights and are also operating the tour. As for travel agents they are the ones who sell the packages of tour operators for their clients. (Holloway & Humphreys 2012, 557; Tenon Tours 2016.)

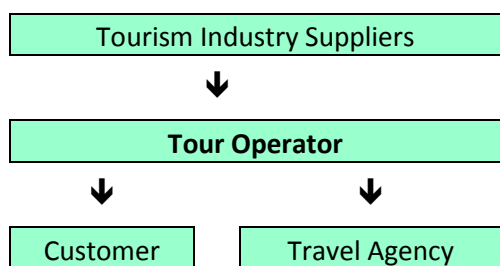


Figure 7. Role of Tour Operator

The word tour, as defined by the United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA), “encompasses a broad and varied array of products, ranging from highly structured escorted packages to a collection of independent components travelers piece together themselves.” Tour packages include at least two of the following elements: transportation, accommodations, meals, entertainment, attractions and sightseeing activities. (Cook, Yale & Marqua 2010, 89.)

Different tours can highly differ from one another depending on the elements used when making the tour. Most common types of tours are independent tours, foreign or domestic independent tours, hosted tours and escorted tours. The classification tells how structured the tour is and how much the customer can tailor it according to their wishes. For example on independent tours the customer can freely set their own itinerary while taking an escorted tour they are on a very specific itinerary. Companies can also set their own types of tours for example ScanAdventures has 7 different categories to choose from: Festive Fun,

Northern lights, Lightly Guided Tours, Drive & Discover Tours, Self-Guided Tours, Father Christmas and White Weddings. This gives the customer a chance to browse the tours by the classification that tells about the theme or type of the tour. (Cook, Yale & Marqua 2010, 89; ScanAdventures 2016b.)

There are several reasons and benefits for the client to purchase the tour from a tour operator rather than purchase all of the elements separately from tourism suppliers. First of all it is easy and time-saving to purchase the whole holiday in one place. Also the traveller does not have to worry about the details. Especially on escorted and hosted tours there is someone to take care of all of the arrangements while the traveller can just enjoy the tour. Final thing is that the customer might get special treatment and even lower price, since the tour operators have partnerships with the tourism industry suppliers. (Cook, Yale & Marqua 2010, 90.)

Tour operators are not just selling products but experiences, adventures and memories. Traveller's experiences might be physical, social or mental. Physical experiences can be for example wellness or sports related activities, social experiences can be spending time with loved ones or getting known of new people and as for mental experiences they can be fulfilled by having spiritual, cultural or historical experiences. One good way to sell tours is storytelling. Product message is all about what it has to offer for the customer to look forward to. A good story creates a connection involving emotions between the storyteller and the audience. Tour operator's storytelling aims for customer wanting to be a part of the story. It is also important to keep in mind that the customer can also tell stories and it is only for the company's best that they are positive. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 26-27; Smith 2014; von Guenther 2015.)

4.4.1 Tourism product development

When developing a tourism product it must be taken into consideration that it differs from other types of products or services which is why the product development process described in subchapter 4.3 can be questioned. According to Komppula and Boxberg (2005, 21-24) tour operator's product development should have a customer oriented approach. For the customer the product arises from the subjective experience. A tour company is not actually creating a tourism product but the necessary conditions it requires. These requirements can be described in a model that has three components: service concept, service process and service system (Figure 8). These components together with collaborating with the customer's participation in the service development process create the experience.

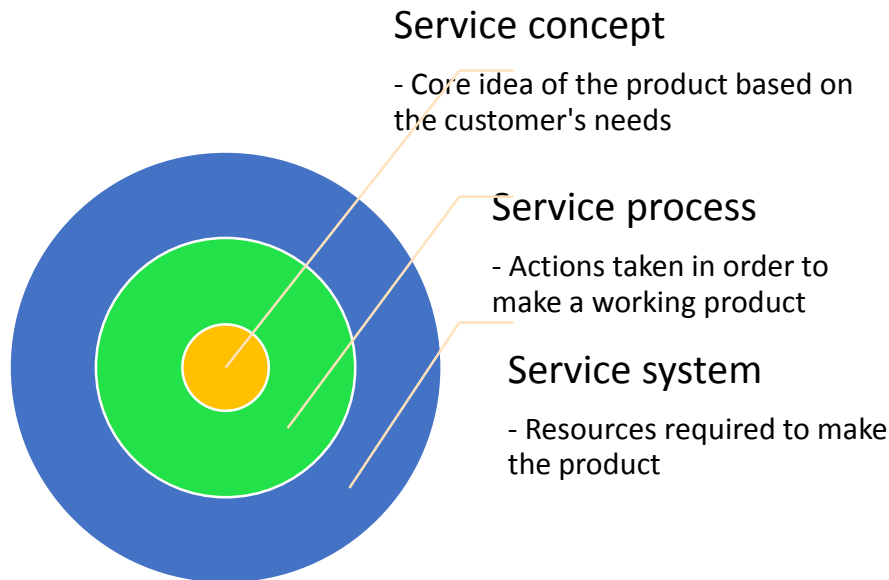


Figure 8. Necessary elements for customer-orientated tourism product (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 21-24)

The service concept means that the tourism product's core idea should be based on what kind of value the customer expects to experience and how the conditions for that to happen are created. It also means that the core product is the benefit and value the service gives to the customer. The whole concept is based on the needs of the customer, which are based on their motives to travel. Primary motive is the reason to travel while the secondary motive is related to how and where to travel and what kind of decisions are made within the limits of what the purpose of the travel allows. For example while a business travellers might not get to choose the destination and wants to focus on smooth and fast travelling and getting enough rest for a leisure traveller the destination might be in the key role. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 22.)

Service process can be viewed from the customer's point of view or of the company's point of view. For the customer the service process is the description of the tourism product, which only includes the processes the customer can see. This can be for example on a flyer or an offer. For the company the service process means the description of the actions required in order to produce the value that the customer is expecting. This can be done as a service blueprint that includes all of the actions and processes that the customer goes through throughout the different parts of the service as well as the actions of the personnel of the service organization. For example when the customer first contacts the tour operator or the tasks required from the personnel that the customer cannot see. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 22–23.)

Finally the service system is about the resources required to make it all happen. This means the resources that aim for creating the value the customer is expecting. These resources are: the environment, or the place, where the customer's participation and actions happen, equipment, personnel participating in the service production, the personnel on the background and of course organizing and controlling these resources. In practice the elements that create the service system are place, services, hospitality, traveller's freedom to make their own decisions and traveller's involvement described on subchapter 4.2. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 23–24.)

5 Product development process

This chapter is about my process of making this thesis, the product and the city guide. It tells about why certain decisions were made, what kind of research it required and what is the competition for the product. The period of time used to make this thesis was 6 months starting from the thesis analysis and ending to finished thesis. The overall process had many phases and as a result a city guide and a tour to the coast of South Finland were created.

5.1 A tour to Coastal Finland

The commission for the thesis came through a work placement at the beginning of 2016. I got to put some new products online and thought it would be interesting to create and plan a new product for the company. I wanted to plan a product for the summer season because ScanAdventures has mainly winter season products to Finland, therefore a product for summer season would make the company's offering more versatile. Also I personally find summertime in Finland very special and unique and think that it is something that people should experience. I wanted to include Helsinki, but also other cities so that people would get a touch of real Finland and different things it has to offer. The three cities were chosen because they are within a good distance from each other's on the coast and I have a good knowledge of all of them to be able to recommend them as travel destinations. Also they all bring out different sides of Finland: Helsinki is the urban capital, Porvoo and its old town are full of history and Kotka has amazing seaside and parks.

I wanted to include a city guide with the principle of "recommended by a local" so that the people visiting the cities would get the most out of it. I myself have lived in Kotka and Porvoo and visited Helsinki many times so I have enough knowledge to make a city guide. In addition I contacted the local destination management organisations in each city; Visit Helsinki, Visit Porvoo and Kaakko 135. Destination management organizations, or DMOs, are the operators who plan, develop and market the destination's tourism. Their task is to coordinate and lead the different stakeholders of the area in order to achieve the goals and vision for tourism. DMOs can operate in national level, these are called National Tourism Authorities, regional level, who are responsible of a specified area such as a state or a province, or local DMOs who are responsible of smaller areas such as cities or towns. In this case all of the DMOs contacted are Local DMOs. The DMOs were contacted in order to find out their recommendations for the specified customer group. Since this product is for the next summer I wanted to know if there would be anything new coming out. I would

say that out of the three destinations Helsinki is the one I have the least experience of because it is the only city I have not lived in. Also it is much bigger and popular destination so there are constantly new things coming out. (Morrison 2013, 5; UNWTO 2007, 2-3.)

In the product planning process I have utilized the model of customer-orientated tourism product of Komppula and Boxberg (2005, 21-25). The service concept, service process and service system (Figure 9) are being considered. The service concept is “experience of Finland as a coastal summertime destination”. The product is place oriented, but also seasonal. Its purpose is to make the ScanAdventures’ customers come to Finland during the summer and experience a different side of it, visit new destinations and learn about the culture. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 22, 25.)



Figure 9. The elements of the summertime coastal tour (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 21-25).

The service process describes the factors that creates more value to the product and what the product includes. These factors are direct flights from the UK, transportation and accommodation including breakfast in the destination and the city guide. Finally the factors that create the service system are cities in coastal Finland, Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka, the hospitality on the destinations, the services available such as restaurants, attractions and activities and finally the fact that it is a self-guided tour. The tour being “self-guided” gives the customer freedom of choice to make decisions concerning the itinerary. It also allows the customers to be spontaneous while on tour. The customer is also highly involved in the creation of their own experiences because they are responsible of planning what to do during the day. They can also effect on the duration of the trip and modify the original itinerary as they wish. (Komppula & Boxberg 2005, 15-17, 21-25; Smith 1994, 587-590.)

5.2 The Product

My tour includes flights from the UK, or wherever the customer want to fly from, to Helsinki, accommodation in Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka including breakfast, the city guide and transportation between the three destinations. Because ScanAdventures is a tour operator who tailors the tours to match the customers wishes the customer actually impacts on the tour they are buying. For example if they prefer a certain airline over another they can fly with the company they prefer. Also they have a choice of the hotel and the type of transportation as well as the activities they want to participate in.

As ScanAdventures has different types of holidays my tour will be in the category “self-guided holidays”. Participating on a self-guided tour the traveller has more freedom when it comes to the itinerary and activities. This allows the traveller to make unplanned stops and experience something they were not expecting. In these types of holidays the outcome of the trip is more on the customer’s responsibility. Although the tour operator has to make sure that the things they are responsible of are carefully taken care of. (ScanAdventures 2016e; Williams & Lew 2015.)

Choosing the accommodation I had to keep in mind what would be the most suitable for the customer and which hotels already have existing contract prices with the company. I wanted to give the customer a choice of accommodation in each destination so that they would get the best possible experience. ScanAdventures has this option in many of their tours. In Helsinki I chose the hotels Seurahuone and Tornio. They both have a good location within the city centre and are already in ScanAdventures’ hotel selection in other tours. In Porvoo there were no hotels that would have an existing contracts with ScanAdventures since they do not have any tours to Porvoo. I wanted to utilize the old town and its atmosphere by choosing accommodation that would fit in the theme and the location. Therefore I chose boutique hotels Onni and Pariisin Ville. They are both charming, elegant, atmospheric boutique hotels in a great location. They give a certain something to complete the Porvoo experience. As for Kotka I wanted to give two options. One is hotel accommodation in the city centre, near all the restaurants and attractions and the other is cottage accommodation within the nature. I wanted to include the chance of staying in a cottage because there is a great place in Kotka, called Holiday Village Santalahti that offers nice and cosy accommodation not too far from the city centre. The place has lots of activities such as minigolf, stand up paddling, bike rental and also café and two restaurants. It gives the customer a chance to experience something very Finnish, since going to cottages or summer houses is very popular.

What comes to the transportation on the tour the customer has the choice of renting a car or using the public transportation. At first I was thinking of including the car rental to the tour because of the distance of the cities and some attractions. It is easier to reach these places by a car and also that way the customer can create their own schedule according to what suits them best. However some people might not want to include the car rental. Especially for British people since the traffic in Finland is on the other side of the road they might not feel comfortable to drive. I also do not want to exclude people who do not have a driver's licence participating this tour. Public transportation is very good in Southern Finland so the customers can smoothly transfer from one place to another almost at any preferred time. Choosing to use the public transportation also makes the trip more inexpensive.

The product's starting price is 925£ if the customer wants to include the car rental and 555£ if the customer chooses to use the public transportation. The currency is of course in British pounds and the rate that was used was 1£ is 1.17€. The costing was made on an excel base that the company uses to price their products. ScanAdventures has contract prices with almost all of the parties which they do not want to publish, therefore the actual costing is not attached to this thesis.

5.2.1 The product description

According to Macdonald (2016) a product description is not meant to just describe the product but to sell it: the description should be aimed for the targeted customer group, highlight the features and benefits of the product, avoid sentences that makes the customer think "yeah yeah, whatever", use storytelling, sensory words and social proof, prove the point when using superlatives, let the customers use their imagination when thinking of the product and use a clear and appealing layout. My own product description of the tour (Appendix 1. Tour description) is made to match the commissioner's other product descriptions. I used the company's own web site tour template that has the structure of how it should be presented.

The tour description will be put into the website of ScanAdventures. It will appear under destination Finland, season summer and holiday type self-guided tours. The first things the potential customer will see when looking the tour are the name and the picture. The name of the tour is "Helsinki, Porvoo & Kotka coastal adventure" and the sentence to describe it is "summertime fun on the South Coast of Finland". The name is meant to be informative and tell about the character of the tour. It reveals the destinations and even if

the customer has no clue about the location they will know that they are destinations located on the South Coast of Finland. It also tells about the seasonality of the tour. The picture I chose for the tour is naturally of a sea view. I chose a picture that is taken night time in the summer. It is of a sunset with pink sky and its reflection on the sea. It will stand out amongst the other summer tours in Finland. (ScanAdventures 2016f.)

Next there is an itinerary described day by day. Since it is a self-guided type of tour there are suggestions of things to do in different cities and the days when they will be in which city. After the itinerary the customer will see what is included in the tour. This is the flights, accommodation and transportation. Finally there is the departure dates and prices. The time when this tour is available is May 01 – August 31 because it is roughly the summer season in Southern Finland. Departures are daily and the price may vary a bit and is given in two options whether the customer wants to include the car rental or use public transportation.

5.3 Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka City guide

The city guide is made with the principle of “recommended by a local”. It is something extra to be given for the customer who purchased the summer tour from ScanAdventures. The city guide can be either send to someone interested in the tour who does not have much information on the destinations or to a customer who already purchased the product. Helsinki is probably familiar to most of the customers, but Porvoo and Kotka could be names they have never heard of. That is why it is important to give them more information about the two cities with some recommendations on what to do. Also because they are not as popular the customers might not find as much information on TripAdvisor or other social media platforms. Although there is a lot of information of all the cities on their tourism websites run by the destination management organisations, adding a city guide to the tour gives the customers all the information needed in one place.

I have spent lot of time in all three cities, and was living in Kotka by the time of making the city guide, therefore I have a lot of experience and knowledge I could take advantage of when making the city guide and recommending attractions, sights and restaurants to visit. In addition I visited all of the cities, their attractions and restaurants in order to get a better and more recent feel of them. Because of the concept of the city guide it was very important for me that I or someone I know has personally visited these places.

In addition I contacted the destination management organisations of each cities and asked for their recommendations of places to visit for my customer group. I got recommendations from all of the organisations (Table 1). Visit Helsinki replied to me and had a long list of recommendations that included names of places as well as activities to do. They advised that for my customer group there are culture and nature as well as events and wide variety of restaurants. You could really see that they put an effort on making the list. I will not use all of them in my city guide but things that draw my attention were Hernesaaren Ranta, which is a new area with restaurants and various events, Saunas Löyly and Allas to introduce the Finnish culture on its best to the British customers, breweries, street food and museums. Visit Porvoo and Kaakko135's recommendations were pretty much the same as I was thinking of putting into the city guide. In Porvoo the old town plays the key role while Kotka has maritime themed places to visit such as the Maritime Centre Vellamo, Archipelago cruises and Langinkoski. (Halmén 23.6.2016; Jasmin 18.6.2016; Roslakka 5.7.2016.)

Table 1. Recommendations of the Destination Management Organisations (Halmén 23.6.2016; Jasmin 18.6.2016; Roslakka 5.7.2016)

Visit Helsinki	Visit Porvoo	Kaakko153 (Kotka)
Design District	Old Town	Maritime Centre Vellamo
Modern Art Museum	• Boutiques	Maretarium
Helsinki City Museum	• Museums	Katariina Park
Teurastamo	• Restaurants	Sapokka Park
Suvilahti	River Cruises	Langinkoski
Kallio	Haikko Manor	Haukkavuori Lookout Tower
Hernesaaren Ranta	Seikkailulaakso	Kotka Church
Outdoor Cinema		Cruises
Archipelago		Archipelago
Saunas (Löyly, Allas)		Sirius Sport Resort
Paddling		Rafting
Nuoksio & Haltia		Local Delicacies
SUP		
Food festivals		
Street food		
Brewerys		
Michelin Restaurants		

I used Microsoft Word to create the city guide and it will then be saved as a pdf file. I chose to use the Microsoft Word platform because it is familiar to me and simply to use. Also if the company later wants to edit or modify the document they are well able to do so. The city guide can be send to a customer as a pdf file to their email or printed out and mailed. The ScanAdventures logo is presented on the top of the first page and the document borders are green to match the logo's colouring. Also each city has their own colour to separate them from one another. Helsinki's colour is light purple, Porvoo's red and Kotka's blue. The colour is used on the titles as well as on the front page's city names that are on the pictures taken from each city. I wanted the guide to be clear, easy to read and contain lots of pictures. I wanted to take all of the pictures from my own material so it follows the principle "recommended by a local". Therefore the pictures cannot be found anywhere else and are specifically taken for this tour. I have used pictures I have taken before this process but also ones that have been taken just for this tour when visiting the three cities.

The attractions chosen for the city guide where chosen based on the customer group, own experiences and knowledge, uniqueness and accessibility. I also wanted to include different types of attractions so that there would be something for everybody. For example because of the customer group amusement park Linnanmäki and Visit Helsinki's recommended Kallio were not included. Also popular attractions Korkeasaari Zoo in Helsinki and Maretarium Aqurium in Kotka were intentionally excluded because of personal approach on animal welfare in tourism.

5.4 The schedule of the process

The thesis-making process took place between May 2016 and October 2016. The original schedule I planned before starting the thesis was to get it done by the first week of October. This was quite accurate because the thesis was finished in mid-October. Throughout the process I have been making improvements based on the comments and advice of both my thesis-advisor and the commissioner. The monthly schedule is described in table 2 where some activities have been given a specific date while others have been on-going for the whole month.

Table 2. Thesis making schedule

Date		Activity
April		Idea and commissioner
May	5.5.2016	Subject analysis
	24.5.2016	First thesis seminar with thesis advisor Eva Holmberg
	24.5.2016	Contacting ScanAdventures about their clientele
June	17.6.2016	Contacting destination management organisations
		Going through material and doing research
		Writing theory
July		Writing theory
		Making city guide
		Visiting attractions and restaurants in Porvoo and Kotka
		Doing research for the product
August	29.8.2016	Second thesis seminar with thesis advisor Eva Holmberg
		Making city guide and product description
		Visiting attractions and restaurants in Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka
September		Improving thesis according to feedback
		Finishing city guide
		Product planning and description
October	7.10.2016	Maturity Test and meeting thesis advisor Eva Holmberg
	13.10.2016	Sending thesis to my ScanAdvisor contact person for comments
	7-18.10.2016	Making last minute improvements according to feedback
	19.10.2016	Ready thesis

After I got the idea and commission in April I made a subject analysis, where I defined the commissioner, the subject of the thesis, what it aims for, how it is going to be executed, which methods and sources are being used and what are the expected results. After that the date for the first seminar with my thesis advisor Eva Holmberg was decided. For the seminar I made a thesis plan that included more detailed plan of how the thesis is being executed, what are the challenges, what is the structure and schedule and what is the thesis aiming for. Some good points were brought out in the seminar and after that I got more clear idea on where to start and what the structure of the thesis should be. The commissioner's clientele needed to be described in order to start the product planning process and I should contact the destination management organisations of each city in order to get more material. Therefore after the meeting I contacted the commissioner to get more specific description on the clientele. After acknowledging the main characters of the clientele I contacted Visit Helsinki, Visit Porvoo and Kaakko135 to ask their recommendation on each city for the described customer group.

The next step would be to do research for the project. The research involved going through theory related to Finland as a travel destination, product planning and tourism product as well as visiting the places that are in the main role of the product. During the summer I collected material, pictures and information, needed for my city guide as well as did research and planning for the actual product. I also wrote theory about Southern Finland, especially Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka, as a travel destination, tourism product and its development and reported the phases of my thesis-making process.

The second thesis seminar was held in August straight after the summer holiday. I was given advice to give more information about the commissioner. There should be more information on the company's background, such as who owns it and where did the business idea come from. It should tell how large the company is, for example how many packages are being sold per year and what are the sales. Also there could be one example of their existing product of ScanAdventures and what it includes and what the price is. Because of the feedback I got in the seminar I chose to take individual maps out from chapter 3 and replace them with one map that includes all the airport, Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka because it has more value for the reader. I also moved few subchapter under another chapters and wrote more about product planning for a tour operator and my process.

I took the maturity exam on October and had another meeting with my thesis advisor, who advised me to improve my theory part as well as reflect how the theory was used in my own product planning. I also contacted my contact person at ScanAdventures to comment on the thesis. According to the feedback I made last improvements and finalised the thesis. Throughout the thesis-making process I have been in touch with the commissioner ScanAdventures. My contact person Satu Peura or the managing director of ScanAdventures Ian Woolgar has been providing me with company related material and answering my questions concerning my thesis. Satu Peura has also been contacting new suppliers for cooperation partnership.

5.5 Competition

On their website Visit Finland has listed the most important tour operators in a chosen country that organise tours to Finland. It can be noticed that there are several different companies operating in the UK that offer holidays to Finland, others specialised in Scandinavia and Nordic countries while others offering a selection of worldwide destinations. Clearly most of these companies offer holidays to Lapland: northern lights holidays, snow and winter activity holidays, igloo holidays and wildlife watching. These are no doubt competition for ScanAdventures, but not to my product. (Visit Finland 2016i.)

However I found few companies with similar products to Finland. Scandinavian travel, Nordic Experience, Baltic Holidays and Baltic Travel Company all have summer season tours to Finland with the idea of visiting several cities and exploring the country. As seen in Table 3, there are only few tours that include Porvoo and Kotka on their holiday package. As for Helsinki it is very popular due to the fact that it is an easy starting point since it is nearby the only airport in Finland with direct flights to the UK and of course because it is the capital. It can also be noticed that many of the other companies' Finland summer tours include various cities so instead of spending much time in one place the cities change daily. Therefore the characteristic of my tour will be completely different because it is supposed to give the customers something more than just a quick visit. (Baltic Holidays 2016; Baltic Travel Company 2016; Nordic Experience 2016; Scandinavian Travel 2016.)

Table 3. Competition for tour package to coastal Finland (Baltic Holidays 2016; Baltic Travel Company 2016; Nordic Experience 2016; Scandinavian Travel 2016)

Scandinavian Travel	Nordic Experience	Baltic Holidays	Baltic Travel Company	
Fascinating Cities and Lakes by train	Images of Western Finland	Finland Highlights Escorted Tours	Finland Circle Fly-Drive	Finnish Lakes & Forests
Helsinki , Hämeenlinna, Tampere, Turku, Helsinki	Turku, Tampere, Hämeenlinna, Helsinki	Helsinki , Koli, Kotka , Kuhmo, Kuusamo, Oulu, Rovaniemi, Savonlinna, Vaasa	Helsinki , Hämeenlinna, Tampere, Vaasa, Oulu, Rovaniemi, Kuusamo, Kajaani, Kuopio, Savonlinna, Lappeenranta, Porvoo , Helsinki	Helsinki , Lappeenranta, Savonlinna, Joensuu, Jyväskylä, Tampere, Turku, Helsinki
Country Life in the Land of a Thousand	The Charms of Finnish Lakeland		Finland - Land of a Thousand Lakes	Finland in a Nutshell
Helsinki , Turku, Urjala, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Mikkeli, Punkaharju, Lappeenranta	Helsinki , Lappeenranta, Vyborg (Russia), Savonlinna, Hirvensalmi		Helsinki , Porvoo , Lappeenranta, Imatra, Punkaharju, Kerimäki, Savonlinna, Rantasalmi, Koli, Kuopio, Tampere, Helsinki	Helsinki , Porvoo , Kotka , Punkaharju, Savonlinna, Kerimäki, Koli, Nurmes, Kuhmo, Kuusamo, Rovaniemi, Oulu, Vaasa, Helsinki
Midnight Sun Finland Self-Drive Tour			Island Hopping in Turku Finland	
Helsinki , Turku, Rauma, Hämeenlinna, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Mikkeli, Lappeenranta, Helsinki			Helsinki , Turku, Tammisaari, Heponiemi, Nauvo, Rymättyl, Naantali, Tampere, Helsinki	

6 Discussion

This chapter looks into the whole thesis-making process as well as the final results of it. The chapter is in three parts: conclusions, challenges and evaluation. The conclusions part looks into the succession of the process as well as how it reached the given goals. The challenges subchapter discusses what the challenges the product might face are. For example how it will stand out amongst the company's other products and will Brexit have an effect on the British people's willingness to travel. Finally in the evaluation part I will discuss how I did in the whole process and what I learned.

6.1 Conclusions

The thesis reached the goal of making a summer season, self-guided tour to South Coast of Finland accompanied by a city guide to give the product some extra value. The tour is a good addition to the company's summer season selection, especially when it comes to destination Finland. For the ScanAdventures' customers this tour will be something fresh and new introducing a different side of Finland. Perhaps it encourages customers who already have participated on a winter tour to travel back to the country to experience its summer. Also completely new destinations in Finland, Porvoo and Kotka, endorse the idea of both the company's special expertise on Finland and of course Finland being an all year round destination. Although the facts that will it be selling and will it bring more British tourists to the South Coast of Finland cannot be known before it is put into ScanAdventures' website and people attend on the tour. Realistically this should be looked into after summer of 2017 and then decided what will be the future of the tour.

The tour fits well for the ScanAdventures clientele. The accommodation options are chosen based on the quality instead of the price. The typical client of the company do not look for the most affordable option but value more good location, comfort and experience. The customers get to choose their itinerary, type of transportation as well as where they want to stay which makes the tour individual. They are not on a tight schedule but instead get to choose the content and timetable for their own tour. Therefore they do not feel like they are on a mass tour, but travellers who are on a tour designed just for them. They have also had a huge influence on the outcome of the tour. They get to participate on the activities they want to and gain new experiences. The city guide includes recommendations targeted for the ScanAdventures' clientele. The fact that it is made by someone local makes it reliable and informative giving the product extra value.

The whole process of making the thesis was successful because it stayed on the schedule and reached most of the desired results. Although what could have been done differently is to directly interview ScanAdventures clients to find out what kind of summer tours they are looking for. During the thesis-making process the content of the thesis was improved according to the received feedback. The ScanAdventures' contact person was happy with the finished thesis. She especially liked the city guide and the fact that it is recommendations from a local. The tour description can be seen on the ScanAdventures website where the tour can be purchased. If successful the first participants on the tour will be arriving to Finland in the summer of 2017. Tervetuloa!

6.2 Challenges

Of course my product, like any other new product, have challenges regarding its future success. One of the challenges is that how is it going to compete in the company's Finland category with destination Lapland? Winter, Santa and Northern Light holidays to Finland are one of the company's most popular tours and at the time I was working at the office from January to March there was more demand for next winter's holidays than next summer's. Finland is the kind of destination that is known as a winter destination and tours to Lapland might be once in a lifetime kind of trips that seem so much more attractive than a summer tour. On the other hand because of the difference in season and most likely more affordable price in the summertime product may not create any competition in the category. It is very important for my product to find the right customers, the ones who prefer cities over beach resorts, who like to see different destinations and are interested in learning about new cultures and trying new things.

Another challenge is that the weather in Finland is very unpredictable. The summer in Finland can be either warm and sunny like in Spain or cold and rainy. The first day you might need your sunscreen and sunglasses when you go out but the next day you will need an umbrella and wellies. One of the country's main things to offer is its magnificent nature so a bad weather might effect on people's willingness to go outside to explore the beautiful environment. To prevent people getting bored on this trip I have included attractions and activities to the city guide that happen indoors.

Another thing that is going to effect on the British people's travelling is the Brexit. On June 2016 the British people voted to leave the European Union (EU) and it is still impossible to name the exact effects that it will have in the future. It is also uncertain how their currency, pound, will go against euro. If the pound is strong more people can afford holidays but if it goes vice versa then traveling will be less affordable for the British people. Another impacts the Brexit might have on the British people's outbound tourism to Europe are: air

fares might get higher because of the disappearance of the EU air service agreements, compensations for delayed flights might get lower due to disappearance of EU directives, health benefits in EU might cost more for British people because of The European Health Insurance Card is no longer valid, mobile roaming charges might get higher and holiday protection poorer. Although it takes two years or more for Britain to actually leave the European Union and the actual impacts of the Brexit can only be speculated because the country might negotiate good deals with EU and European countries. (Ting 2016; Trend 2016.)

6.3 Evaluation

In my own opinion the overall experience of making the thesis was successful and educative. It was a long process that required leadership skills as well as working independently. The process moved ahead throughout the six months and even if the schedule planned before the process had little variation the main targets were accomplished. The goals set for the project at the beginning of the process were achieved and the commissioner was pleased with the final result.

There were challenges, or things I would do differently as well. First of all it was a bit challenging to find time for the thesis-making process during the summer due to the fact that I was working. Also I should have searched for more material at the beginning of the process so I would not have to search for it during the writing process. I also could have asked for comments and opinions from more people than just the commissioner and the thesis advisor in order to improve the thesis. Perhaps it would have been useful to talk to someone British, who would fit into the ScanAdventures' customer group to find out what kind of things people are interested in. Although they might not have much knowledge of Southern Finland and its offering but the kind of activities and attractions they are interested in themselves.

The whole process was educative and I learned about leading a project, goal-setting, independent decision-making, receiving criticism, staying on a schedule and product planning. The overall product planning process taught me how important it is to know the customer group, know the core of the product as well as elements surrounding it, make a product description that is selling and attractive and critically view different sources and try to pick the most reliable ones. I also learned theoretical facts about product planning, what is the tourism in Finland like as well as characteristics of the British tourists.

References

Avlonitis, G. & Papastathopoulou, P. 2006. Product and service management. SAGE Publications Ltd. London.

Bakshi, A. 2012. Service Product Development. URL: <http://www.slideshare.net/akashbakshi/3service-product-development>. Accessed: 5.7.2016.

Baltic Holidays 2016. Finland Highlights Escorted Tour. URL: <http://www.balticholidays.com/holidays/finland-highlights-escorted-tour/>. Accessed: 8.7.2016.

Baltic Travel Company 2016. Finland Summer Holidays. URL: <http://www.baltictravelcompany.com/finland-summer-holidays/>. Accessed: 8.7.2016.

Cook, R., Yale, L. & Marqua, J. 2010. Tourism the Business of Travel. Pearson Education Inc. New Jersey.

Discovering Finland 2016a. Southern Finland and Archipelago. URL: <http://www.discoveringfinland.com/travel/regions-cities/southern-finland/>. Accessed: 20.9.2016.

Discovering Finland 2016b. Tietoa Suomesta: URL: <http://www.discoveringfinland.com/fi/travel/tietoa-suomesta/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Etäisyys 2016. Etäisyys Porvoosta Kotkaan. URL: <http://www.etaisyys.com/etaisyys/porvoo/kotka/>. Accessed: 20.8.2016.

Finavia 2016a. Helsinki Airport. To and From. URL: <https://www.finavia.fi/en/helsinki-airport/to-and-from/>. Accessed: 9.9.2016.

Finavia 2016b. Connections. URL: <https://www.finavia.fi/en/flightconnections/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Finn-Guild 2016. About us. URL: <https://www.finn-guild.org/content/about-us>. Accessed: 30.5.2016.

Frochot, I. & Batat, B. 2013. Marketing and Designing the Tourist Experience. Goodfellow Publishers Ltd. Oxford.

Garcia, R. 2014. Creating and Marketing New Products and Services. CRC Press. Boca Raton.

Halmén, M. 23.6.2016. Tourist Information Advisor. Visit Helsinki. Email.

Helsingin kaupungin tietokeskus 2015. Tilastotietoja Helsingistä. URL: http://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/julkaisut/pdf/15_05_28_Tilastotietoja_Helsingist%C3%A4_2015_Askelo.pdf. Accessed: 30.5.2016.

Holloway, J. & Humphreys, C. 2012. The Business of Tourism. Pearson Education Limited. Essex.

Horner, S. & Swarbrooke, J. 2016. Consumer behavior in Tourism. Routledge. London.

Jasmin. 18.6.2016. Tourist Information Advisor. Visit Porvoo. Email.

Lopez, M., Holmberg, E. & Ritalahti, J. 2014. Matkailun tulo- ja työllisyys selvitys Uudella maalla 2013. HAAGA-HELIA Ammattikorkeakoulu.

Kerran Elämässä 2016. Kotkan nähtävyydet. URL: <http://kerranelamassa.fi/kotimaan-matkailu/kotka/>. Accessed: 21.6.2016.

Konu, H. 2015. Developing a forest-based tourism product together with customers – An ethnographic approach. Tourism Management, 49, p. 1-16.

Kotka 2016. Tietoa Kotkasta. URL: http://www.kotka.fi/tietoa_kotkasta. Accessed: 20.6.2016.

Komppula, R. 2002. Matkailutuotteen markkinoinnin perusteet. URL: <http://slideplayer.biz/slide/1956742/>. Accessed: 11.10.2016.

Komppula, R. & Boxberg, M. 2005. Matkailuyrityksen tuotekehitys. Edita Publishing Oy. Helsinki.

Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. 2016. Principles of Marketing. Pearson Education Limited. Essex.

Macdonald, M. 2016. 9 Simple Ways to Write Product Descriptions that Sell. URL: <https://www.shopify.com/blog/8211159-9-simple-ways-to-write-product-descriptions-that-sell>. Accessed: 12.10.2016.

Macintyre, M. Parry G. & Angelis J. 2011. Service design and delivery. Springer. New York.

Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti 2010. Tuotteen prosessit. URL: <http://matkailu.luc.fi/Tuotekehitys/Tuotekehitys-arjessa/Tuote/Tuotteen-prosessit>. Accessed: 15.7.2016.

Morrison, A. 2013. Marketing and managing tourism destinations. Routledge. Abingdon.

Nordic Experience 2016. The Charms of Finnish Lakeland. URL: <http://www.nordicexperience.co.uk/finland/summer/charms-of-finland-lakeland>. Accessed: 8.7.2016.

Roslakka, R. 5.7.2016. Tourist Information Advisor. Kaakko135. Email

ScanAdventures 2016a. About us. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/about-us>. Accessed: 2.6.2016.

ScanAdventures 2016b. Home. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/>. Accessed: 2.6.2016.

ScanAdventures 2016c. White Weddings. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/white-weddings>. Accessed: 20.9.2016.

ScanAdventures 2016d. Igloo Nights at Kakslauttanen. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/holidays-in-lapland/igloo-nights-kakslauttanen>. Accessed: 20.9.2016.

ScanAdventures 2016e. Self-guided tours. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/self-guided-tours>. Accessed: 25.9.2016.

ScanAdventures 2016f. Finland Holiday Adventures. URL: <http://www.scanadventures.co.uk/holidays-in-finland>. Accessed: 3.10.2016.

Scandinavian Travel 2016. Finland Tours and Vacation Packages. URL: <http://www.scandinaviantravel.com/country/finland/>. Accessed: 8.7.2016.

Smith, J. 2014. Why you need to stop selling tourism products (and start telling better travel stories). URL: <http://blog.wtmresponsibletourism.com/2014/03/17/tourism-storytelling-responsible-travel/>. Accessed: 21.9.2016.

Smith, S. 1994. The Tourism Product. Elsevier, 21, 3, p. 587-590.

Tenon Tours 2016. The Difference between Tour Operators and Travel Agents. URL: <https://www.tenontours.com/the-difference-between-tour-operators-and-travel-agents/>. Accessed: 12.9.2016.

Ting, D. 2016. What the Brexit Vote Means for the Global Tourism Industry. URL: <https://skift.com/2016/06/24/what-the-brexit-vote-means-for-the-global-tourism-industry/>. Accessed: 5.7.2016.

Trend, N. 2016. What leaving the EU could cost travelers. URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/comment/what-would-brexit-mean-for-travellers/>. Accessed: 5.7.2016.

TripAdvisor 2016. Things to do in Finland. URL: <https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attractions-g189896-Activities-Finland.html>. Accessed: 19.8.2016.

Työ ja Elinkeinoministeriö 2016. Matkailun tiekartta 2015-2025. URL: https://www.tem.fi/yriykset/matkailu/matkailun_tiekartta_2015-2025. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Ulrich, K. & Eppinger, S. 2012. Product Design and Development. McGraw-Hill International Edition. New York.

UNWTO 2007. A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management. URL: http://www.visitkerteminde.dk/sites/default/files/asp/visitkerteminde/KUP/a_practical_guide_to_tourism_destination_management.pdf. Accessed: 17.10.2016.

Visit Finland 2016a. About Finland. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.com/about-finland/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016b. Matkailu on kasvava toimiala. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.fi/tama-on-visit-finland/matkailu-on-kasvava-toimiala/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016c. Visit Finland Matkailijatutkimus 2015. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.fi/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/3-Visit-Finland-matkailijatutkimus-2015.pdf?dl>. Accessed: 30.5.2016.

Visit Finland 2016d. Markkinatietoa. Iso-Britannia. Tuotteet ja kohderyhmät. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.fi/tietoa-kohdemaista/iso-britannia/tuotteet-ja-kohderyhmat/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016e. Kesän 2016 matkailunäkymät Ison-Britannian markkinoilla. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.fi/news/kesan-2016-matkailunakymat-ison-britannian-markkinoilla/>. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016f. Summertown Porvoo. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.com/article/summertown-porvoo/>. Accessed: 20.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016g. Finnish Archipelago. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.com/archipelago/>. Accessed: 12.9.2016.

Visit Finland 2016h. Tilastopalvelu Rudolf. URL: http://visitfinland.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/fi/VisitFinland/VisitFinland__Majoi-tustilastot/020_matk_tau_312.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=27915225-4f3a-4544-a9cb-312b3b7c8a13. Accessed: 20.6.2016.

Visit Finland 2016i. Getting here and around. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.com/getting-around/>. Accessed: 8.7.2016.

Visit Helsinki 2016a. Helsinki ja Suomi lukuina. URL: <http://www.visithelsinki.fi/fi/tule/tervetuloa-helsinkiin/helsinki-ja-suomi-lukuina>. Accessed: 30.5.2016.

Visit Helsinki 2016b. Helsingin matkailutilastoraportti 2015. URL: http://www.visithelsinki.fi/sites/default/files/legacy_files/files/Tilastot/FI/helsingin-matkailutilastoraportti2015.pdf. Accessed: 17.6.2016.

Visit Porvoo 2016. Old Porvoo. URL: <http://www.visitporvoo.fi/old-porvoo>. Accessed: 20.6.2016.

Von Guenther, B. 2015. 4 Storytelling Strategies for Travel and Tourism. URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/4-storytelling-strategies-travel-tourism-brandon-von-guentner>. Accessed: 21.9.2016.

Williams, S. & Lew, A. 2015. Tourism Geography. Critical understandings of place, space and experience. Routledge. Abingdon.

Woolgar, I. 2014. Guild Travel joins in the UK's Scandicrush. Horisontti, 105, p. 3.

Woolgar, I. Managing Director. ScanAdventures. Email.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Tour Description

Helsinki, Porvoo & Kotka coastal adventure

Summertime fun on the South Coast of Finland



The Adventure

Discover the best of what **coastal Finland** has to offer on a tour in the most beautiful summer cities! Enjoying daylight till midnight, visiting islands by a ferry, trying Finnish **sauna** and exploring new cities is what this tour is all about. You will visit three different cities on a **6-day tour** on the South Coast of Finland. Drive yourself or do the city-hopping by a bus – the choice is yours! Start your journey from the capital **Helsinki**, followed by **Porvoo**, a charming town full of history. Your final destination is **Kotka**, known as “the city by the sea”. To help you get the most out of your trip you will receive a **ScanAdventures City Guide** made by a local Finn!

1st Day UK – Helsinki

Fly direct to Helsinki, self-transfer to the city centre and check in to the hotel of your choice. In the evening you can enjoy dinner at one Helsinki’s fine restaurants.

2nd Day Helsinki

Enjoy your full day in the capital. Start your day with a breakfast at the hotel and explore what the city has to offer. You could for example take a ferry to the lovely Suomenlinna Fortress or go swimming in the Allas sea pool. There is also a selection of interesting churches, museums and Cathedrals to see, for example have you ever been on a church that is built into rock?

3rd Day Helsinki - Porvoo

Have breakfast at the hotel and perhaps a last look at Helsinki before transferring to your next destination Porvoo, which is only about 50 kilometres away. In Porvoo you will be accommodated in one of the lovely boutique hotels. Have a wander in the old town and visit its lovely boutiques, interesting museums and taste the famous kisses from the Brunberg chocolate factory.

4th Day Porvoo – Kotka

Start your day with breakfast and head to your next adventure: Kotka. You will travel about 80 kilometres to East to a city that's centre is actually an island. The city has many parks and outdoor areas perfect for a picnic. For example Sapokka Water Garden or Sea Side Park Katariina.

5th Day Kotka

After breakfast why not go to see the Langinkoski rapids or take a ferry to one of Kotka's beautiful islands (there is actually an island called Beautiful Island = Kaunissaari). There are many fun activities to do such as playing minigolf, bowling or if you are willing to go a bit further from Kotka try flying in Sirius Sport Resort! End your day with a nice dinner in one of the city's restaurants.

6th Day Back to the UK

Everything good has to come to an end so head back to the airport and back home, hopefully with lots of great memories from Finland.

What's included in your ScanAdventure

Return scheduled direct flights from London Gatwick/Heathrow or Manchester to Helsinki
All passenger service charges and airport departure taxes
Complimentary beverages & Pay on Board food service
Carriage of luggage (1pc Cabin & 1pc Checked)
2 nights' accommodation in Helsinki including breakfast
1 nights' accommodation in Porvoo including breakfast
2 nights' accommodation in Kotka including breakfast
Transportation between cities by rental car or public transportation
ScanAdventures City Guide of Helsinki, Porvoo and Kotka

Departure dates

May 01 – August 31

Daily Departures

Prices:

With rental car: £925

With public transportation (bus): £555

SCANADVENTURES

Your Adventure Our Experience

City Guide



Helsinki – Urban Capital City



Visit

Helsinki Cathedral

Massive, white Cathedral truly is the symbol of Helsinki. Located in the Senate Square the cathedral is open for visitors every day, except during the ceremonies. It belongs to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and is very popular and active venue for church events.

Uspenski Cathedral

This Orthodox Cathedral is said to be the biggest Orthodox Church in all Western Europe. It is a reminder of the impact of Russia in the history of Finland. The Cathedral is closed on Mondays and during the ceremonies.

Tempeliaukio Church (Rock Church)

Also known by the name Rock Church, Tempeliaukio Church truly is a unique church worth visiting. The church is built into rock which makes the appearance magnificent. It may not look much outside but when you step in you will see what the fuss is all about.

Kamppi Chapel of Silence

The Chapel of Silence is located in the busy Narikkatori Square next to the Kamppi shopping mall. The interesting looking orange building offers a place to calm down and silence in the middle of one of the city's busiest spots.

Ateneum

Ateneum is an art museum that is mainly focused on the Finnish art. They have changing exhibitions that includes art from history to the present. Entry fee is 13€ for adults and free for everyone under 18.



Kiasma

A Museum of Contemporary art – Kiasma is the place to be for all art lovers. It has changing exhibitions but the main focus is on the Finnish art. Tickets are 12€ for adults free for everyone under 18.

Helsinki City Museum

Want to learn about the stories of the city and its residents? Then perhaps you should pay a visit to Helsinki City Museum. Get known of Helsinki and how it has changed throughout decades – for free!

Natural History Museum

Nature, Evolution, Ice Age, Bones and Dinosaurs are all presented at the Natural History Museum. Visitors get to experience the diversity of both Finnish nature and the nature around the Globe as well as how the World and Life has changed throughout time. The permanent exhibitions include: Finnish Nature, World Nature, History of Life, Story of the Bones and Change in the Air. In addition there are changing fascinating temporary exhibitions. Entrance fee is 13 € for adults and 6€ for children (7-17 years of age).



Hernesaaren Ranta

A lovely area by the sea just outside the city centre of Helsinki. It is the perfect place to enjoy sunny summer days by dining in one of the various street food-type of restaurants or sipping a cold drink and just watch boats floating and people having a good time. There is also a dock where people can pull in with their own boats and a stage with events and performances throughout the summer.



Löyly

Located next to Hernesaaren ranta, Löyly is a place you can find your inner Finn! It is a bar / restaurant but also a public sauna! In the public sauna there are separate locker rooms and showers for men and women but the saunas itself are shared. There is a traditional sauna and a smoke sauna and a possibility to go swimming. This truly is a chance to experience an important piece of the Finnish culture! Afterwards you can continue to the bar / restaurant side to enjoy some food and drinks.

Suomenlinna Fortress

Suomenlinna is one of the most popular attractions in Finland and it is in the UNESCO-s World Heritage List. It is located on an island and can be reached by a ferry that depart from the Kauppatori / Market Square. The journey takes about 20 minutes offering great sea view. Walking around the area you will learn interesting facts about its history as well as enjoy lovely sights. There are cafés and restaurants in the area as well as various museums and a brewery! It is definitely worth visiting, just remember to bring good walking shoes!

Kauppatori / Market Square

It is the most popular market in Helsinki offering street food and treats as well as souvenirs and handicrafts. You can enjoy the lively atmosphere, enjoy some Finnish street food and watch the cruise ships and boats sail by. Many other attractions are located nearby in the South harbour, such as Allas Sea Pool, Finnair Skywheel and ferries to Suomenlinna Fortress.

Finnair Skywheel

A Ferris wheel where you have a great view over the city of Helsinki and the Baltic Sea. The round takes about 10 minutes and the tickets cost 12€ for adults and 9€ for children. Remember to bring your camera!

Allas Sea Pool

It is an outdoor pool and sauna area. There are three saunas of which one is for women, one for men and one is used for different special occasions. There are also three swimming pools located in a floating deck: two larger pools of which one is a fresh water pool and one is salt water pool (sea pool, Baltic Sea) and the third pool is for kids. You can spend a day at the Allas Sea Pool for less than 10€ (+ 3€ deposit for electronic wristband) There is also a Terrace café in the area where you can enjoy fresh beverages and snacks, salads or traditional salmon soup!



Eat



Maya Bar & Grill

Mikonkatu 18, 00100 Helsinki
+358 9 666 541

Maya offers delicious Latin American Food, lunch and dinner. The restaurant is located nearby the Railway Station. Enjoy the nice relaxed Latin atmosphere with some great food and refreshing drinks!

Friends & Brgrs

Mikonkatu 8, 00100 Helsinki
+358 44 29 00 034

For all burger-lovers this is the restaurant to visit! Wide variety of fresh, home-made burgers accompanied with nice home-made fries: Yummy! The restaurant is located nearby the Railway Station.

Viking Restaurant Harald

Citykäytävä 2nd floor - Aleksanterinkatu 21, 00100 Helsinki
+358 44 766 8010

At Harald's you get to travel back in time to the era of Vikings! The food is Viking / Scandinavian styled á la carte. There is also lunch menu available. So find your inner Viking spirit and go and enjoy the tasty food!

Trattoria Sogno

Töölöntorinkatu 2, 00260 Helsinki
+358 10 231 67 00

Italian styled restaurant located in Töölö, not too far from the city centre. Great food accompanied with a glass (or two) of nice wine in a nicely decorated restaurant is all you need for a nice night out!

Restaurant Olo

Pohjoisesplanadi 5, 00170 Helsinki
+358 10 320 6250

A Michelin star restaurant Olo is for those who are seeking culinary experiences. The restaurant is quite pricy but worth it. The menus offer tastes of Scandinavia and the best ingredients of each season. Lunch time is from 11.30 – 13.30 (weekdays) and the dinner is served from 18 till 24. The restaurant is closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Restaurant Savoy

Eteläesplanadi 14, 00130 Helsinki
+358 9 6128 5300

Fine restaurant with exciting combinations of different ingredients, organic and delicious dishes. The restaurant is well known in Helsinki and it has long roots serving the people, locals and visitors. The restaurant also offers a great view of the rooftops of the city and the Esplanadi Park.

Hard Rock Café Helsinki

Aleksanterinkatu 21, 00100 Helsinki, Finland
+358 9 4282 6888

Legendary Hard Rock Café, that needs no introductions, is also in Helsinki! Tasty food such as burgers, salads and sandwiches and rock´n roll is what is on the menu!

Café Regatta

Merikannontie 8, 00260 Helsinki
+358 40 0760049

A small, charming old-style café by the sea. There might be a long queue to the small café during the summer because of the popularity. The café also offers SUP, Kayak, Canoe and Rowing Boat rental. Nearby is also Sibelius Park with Sibelius Monument.

Porvoo – Charming town full of history



Visit

The Old Town

The old town is the most popular attraction in Porvoo. The cobblestone streets and old houses in different colours bring you back the olden days. It is full of lovely boutiques where you can buy handicrafts, souvenirs and delicacies as well as cafés, restaurants and museums.

Porvoo Cathedral

The Porvoo Cathedral is located on the top of the old town. The church was built in 1200's and has survived from bombings and burnings. Nationally it is a very important church because that is where Finland's autonomy was declared by the Russian emperor Alexander I.

Porvoo Museum:

- **Holm House** - A chance to experience how the rich Finnish people lived back in the 18th century. You can really sense the history present on the house, the old furniture, portraits and much more.
- **Old Town Hall** - The town hall is an important part of the town's history being the venue for many significant events. Inside you can find many forms of art made by several famous Finnish artists

Brunberg

Visit Brunberg candy shop to get the best sweets in town! The famous Brunberg chocolate factory is from Porvoo and their chocolate goodies has been there since 1871. I recommend to try their truffles or kisses!

Taidetehtas / Art Factory

The art factory is on the other side of the river to the old town, but is easily accessed. As the name suggests, there is an art hall with changing exhibitions. There are also restaurants, café, cinema, tourist information and shops such as H&M, Jack & Jones, Cubus, Seppälä and Dressman.

Linnamäki / Castle Hill

A short walk away from the Old Town there is a hill where used to be an ancient castle. There are no ruins left but the area itself is quite magnificent. You can walk across wooden bridges which takes you to the place where the castle was located and read about its history.



River Cruises

You can take a river cruise from the passenger harbor. They usually run from mid-June till late August and tickets can be purchased on board.

Eat



SicaPelle

Kirkkotori 3, 06100 Porvoo
+358 40 1479933

Located in the old town near the Porvoo Cathedral and Boutique Hotel Onni restaurant SicaPelle, named after local sculptor/ artist Ville Vallgren's pet pig Sikapelle, is a charming restaurant with creative flavours. They offer a weekly changing set menus from 3 to 6 courses.

Zum Beispiel

Rihkamakatu 2, 06100 Porvoo
+358 50 439 6066

Their menus change throughout the seasons and breakfast, lunch, dinner and brunch on Sundays are being served. The restaurant is located in the old town.

Meat District

Gabriel Hagertin Kuja, 06100 Porvoo
+358 20 7705390

Meat District offers delicious meat dishes. Excellent beef, pork and lamb dishes as well as vegetarian options are available in nice surroundings. The restaurant focuses on ecologically produced meat.

Fryysarinranta

Jokikatu 20, inner yard, 06100 Porvoo
+358 400 732038

Would you like to enjoy lunch or dinner in the heart of the old town by the river? Fryysarinranta has a lovely terrace by the river with a great view! Enjoy a fresh salad or a nice reindeer burger from their menu.

Gabriel 1763

Jokikatu 20, 06100 Porvoo
+358 40 1763 126

Located in the heart of the old town, Gabriel 1763 is a lovely restaurant that offers salads, pasta, fish, chicken and beef. But the thing to try there is one of their pizzas! They have amazing pizzas with unique ingredients, for example would you like to try their Runeberg pizza with beetroot, goat's cheese, cashew nuts, balsamic sauce and fresh spinach?

Kotka – City by the Sea



Visit

Sapokka Water Garden

Sapokka is a beautiful area, a must see place when visiting Kotka! It is located near the city centre, next to the small-boat harbour. It is a stunning water garden with flowers everywhere, waterfall and interesting art and details. You can go up the stairs next to the waterfall and enjoy of the amazing view of Kotka! Nearby Sapokka there are few café's to go to and enjoy the summer days.

Islands

Take a boat from the small-boat harbour near Sapokka, not too far from the city centre to one of the islands of the archipelago. Admire the breathtakingly beautiful landscape while floating to your chosen destination. The boats run daily and the price for a round trip is about 8-20 euros depending on which island you are going to.

- **Varissaari** is the closest of the islands, only 10 minutes boat ride away. It is an old fort, nowadays popular place to spend a summer day. There is a small beach and possibilities to barbeque and play beach volley. During summer there is also a restaurant.
- **Kaunissaari** means “beautiful island” and is one of the nicest and most popular islands to visit. A journey to the island takes about 1,5 -2 hours. See the charming fisherman’s village, enjoy refreshing drinks in the café, visit the archipelago museum, go and walk on the sandy beaches and enjoy the islander lifestyle!
- **Haapasaari** is a popular summer destination. People have their summer houses on the island that is easy to reach in hour and a half. There is a shop to buy food and drinks from and an old school and church built in the 1800 to see.



Maritime Centre Vellamo

In Vellamo you can spend a fun day getting to know the history and stories of the sea, the area and the lifestyle. See the sailor lifestyle, what kind of boats and ships were used, style yourself like they did on the 40's and see how would you manage in a sea rescue task. There are several exhibitions to access with one ticket.

Kotka Swimming Pool

Perfect spot to spend a summer day! There are two indoor swimming pools and two outdoor swimming pools. You can also do sun bathing, go to sauna, gym and play volley ball. The price is about 6 euros and includes the use of saunas, swimming pool and gym. Remember to bring some drinks and sunscreen!

Market Square

The Market Square is by the shopping mall and is a meeting place for the locals. Summer time there are cafés and ice cream shops. A must thing to try is the local delicacy posso; sugar covered with apple jam inside. *Yummy!*

Every first Thursday of a month there is a big market organised by the salesmen from all over the country selling their products: clothes, candy, vegetables and everything imaginable.

Sirius Sport Resort (Pyhtää)

Ever dreamt about flying? In Sirius you can fulfil your dream and see what life looks like from above. You can experience flying in a wind-tunnel where you will be taught by a professional so you are in good hands. In Sirius you can also try surfing (indoors) or find your inner adventurer in the rope park! The Sport Resort is located in Pyhtää, about 25 kilometres away from Kotka, and can be reached by a bus.

Sea Side Park Katariina

Fairly new park in Kotka that is an outdoor recreational area few kilometres from the city centre. It is surrounded by the sea and you can actually see **Varissaari** island from there. It is a great place for picnic or barbeque and there is also a small beach, garden and a chance for fun outdoor activities.

Santalahti

An area about 5 kilometers from the centre of Kotka. There is a beach, golf course, hotel and Holiday Resort Santalahti which has a 5-star camping site and rental cottages. There are various summer activities available in the area such as minigolf course, SUP (stand up paddle) rental, which is like a mixture of surfing and paddling where you stand on the board and paddle, nature trails and a beach. There is a café and two restaurants in the area and during summertime there is usually a bus connection to the city centre of Kotka few times a day from Monday to Friday.

Langinkoski Rapids

Langinkoski is a beautiful area by the Kymi River. It is about 6-7 kilometres from the centre of Kotka. In Langinkoski you can enjoy the beautiful nature; river, rapids and nature trails but also a piece of the area's history. Russian emperor Alexander III found the area enchanting and built a fishing lodge there. With his family he spend many summer days there. Nowadays the building has been refurbished and is a museum. There is also a café in the area where you can stop for lunch.



Eat



Canttiini

Kaivokatu 15, 48100 Kotka
+358 5 214 130

Canttiini is a charming restaurant with a good location. They have a menu where you can find something for everyone; meat, chicken, burgers, pasta, salads, soups and fish. The food price includes a salad buffet for starters. Ps. I recommend to try their mixed grill or fajitas, just delicious!

Amarillo

Keskuskatu 21, 48100 Kotka
+358 10 763 5950

Amarillo is located next to the Sokos Hotel Seurahuone and opposite of Restaurant Canttiini. It is a Tex Mex bar/restaurant and their menu has dishes such as burritos, nachos, fajitas, salads, burgers, steaks and chicken.

Tai Hing

Kirkkokatu 9, 48100 Kotka
+358 5 216 858

Tai Hing is an Asian restaurant on the corner of the shopping mall. From Monday to Friday lunchtime they have a buffet which includes salads, soup, rice, six warm Asian dishes and coffee or tea. In addition they have a full menu of Thai and Chinese Food to order from.

Erkan Bistro & Restaurant

Keskuskatu 35, 48100 Kotka
+358 5 215888

Erkan Bistro & Restaurant used to be a pizzeria but was turned into Bistro & Restaurant in 2016. It has been a favourite place for many locals and still continues to be after its renewal. The menu includes pizzas, burgers, salads, kebab and BBQ dishes.

Wanha Fiskari

Juha Vainion katu 2, 48100 KOTKA
+358 5 2186 585

Wanha Fiskari is specialised in local, fresh fish. The restaurant has a nice atmosphere and location by the small boat harbour. It is recommended for anyone who loves seafood, but the menu includes some meat dishes as well.

Players Sports Bar

Keskuskatu 11, 48100 Kotka
+358 10 763 5940

Nice and easy-going place for all sports lovers. Their menu includes burgers, chicken wings, Hot dogs, pizzas and salads - and if you think you are tough enough you can try the Hall of Fame Challenge Burger! If you are able to eat it in one hour you will get your name in the hall of fame (not too many has been able to do this). Also while you are enjoying a nice meal you can watch some sports and afterwards maybe have a game of bowling.