

Hiking

The marked Alajoki hiking route is about 3 km long one way and 6 km back and forth. The departure points are in Vainikkala, near Korpelantie bridge and Rikkilä, Kiekka rest spot. Both places are accessible by car. There are information boards about local flora and fauna along the route. About 100 bird houses have been placed along the route in order to ease the nesting of the abundant bird population.

Varied forest types, protected forest structures containing decayed wood and small cliffs lead the hikers from one village to another also during flooding, when an alternative route is available. There are two rest spots along the hiking route: Tuhkakangas lean-to-shelter about half way and Kiekka rest spot with a dining shelter. Both places have campfire sites and dry toilets.

The route is medium level difficulty; it has some differences in altitude and rough patches. The route has been well marked with blue painted wooden posts, paint on some trees as well as signposts. Good hiking boots are sufficient all year round.

Canoeing

River Sarvijoki (from Melkkola to lake Kotijärvi) and river Alajoki (from lake Kotijärvi to Vainikkala) create a rare and fantastic opportunity in whole South-Eastern Finland to experience the charm of river canoeing. The length of the canoeing trail from lake Suuri-Pyhäkala in Melkkola to lake Telkjärvi in Vainikkala is about 19 km. The difference in altitude is 21.3 m, there are 5 rapids along the way. The rapids are not suitable for rafting, it is recommended to carry the canoe past them.

The best seasons for canoeing are spring and autumn, when the water level in the river is high. In addition to Tuhkakangas lean-to-shelter and Kiekka rest spot, there are Alakoski and Melkkola lean-to-shelters serving canoers along the route. All places have campfire sites and dry toilets.

By joining the Myötävirtaan association you get free use of the canoes owned by the association along the route. There are canoes in Simola (2 pcs), Rikkilä (1 piece) and Vainikkala (3 pcs) as marked on the map. The mooring points can be used by all paddlers, also those who arrive with their own canoe.

In winter there is a cross country skiing track between Simola, Rikkilä and Vainikkala villages.

Everyman's Rights in Finland

You may

- walk, ski or cycle except in private gardens and land that is in a specific use (for example cultivated fields and plantations)
- stay for a short period in any area where access is otherwise allowed (for example put up a tent, but not too close to people's homes)
- pick wild berries, mushrooms and flowers
- fish with a rod and line, and through a hole in the ice in wintertime
- swim and wash in lakes and rivers and walk on the ice

You may not

- disturb other people or damage the environment
- disturb nesting birds or game
- cut down or damage trees, collect moss, lichen, soil or wood
- litter
- drive a motor vehicle off the road
- fish (except with a rod and line) and hunt without the appropriate permits
- light a campfire or other open fire without the land-owner's permission

Source: Ministry of the Environment



Alajoki Hiking and Canoeing Route



Alajoki

The Alajoki river meanders between Simola and Vainikkala villages in Lappeenranta. The river winds deep in the riverbed, flows peacefully through open landscapes or foams happily in the rapids. The scenic diversity of the river entices people to canoe or hike along the riverside from one village to the other.



Kauniskoski dam



Map legend

1. Myötävirtaan association canoe base at Lake Telkjärvi
2. Korpelantie bridge: parking, canoe mooring point, Myötävirtaan association canoe base
3. The starting/ending point of the marked hiking route (N 60 52.057 E 028 16.479)
4. Tuhkakangas lean-to shelter (N 60 52.505 E 028 15.537): campfire site, dry toilet, canoe mooring point, bridge over the river, parking
5. The starting/ending point of the marked hiking route (N 60 52.857 E 028 14.276) 'Kieikka' rest spot: dining shelter, campfire site, dry toilet, canoe mooring point, parking
6. Myötävirtaan association canoe base at Rikkilä
7. Rapid Myllymäenkoski: length about 125 m
8. Rapid Tulkoski: length about 10 m
9. Alakoski lean-to-shelter (N 60 54.250 E 028 08.849): campfire site, dry toilet, canoe mooring point and Myötävirtaan association canoe base
10. Rapid Alakoski: length about 115 m
11. Rapid Yläkoski: length about 60 m
12. Bird watching tower
13. Melkkola lean-to-shelter (N 60 55.385 E 028 07.429): campfire site, dry toilet, canoe mooring point
14. Rapid Kauniskoski: length about 130 m



To see and do in the area

-  Simola water tower, Simola bombings war memorial
-  Vainikkala Sale-park, minigolf track
-  Vainikkala BBQ gazebo 'Pytinki', 'Hippo'-skiing and tobogganing slope, summer theatre



Tuhkakangas lean-to-shelter

WGS84 coordinate system