

Summer sun in Finland? Åland isles try to attract tourists to cooler climate

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

1 Warmer

a. What is your ideal place for a holiday? Draw and share with a partner.

2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

approaching archipelago campaigns decreased despite

1. There are many _____ to protect animals.
2. The number of tourists _____ in winter because it was really cold.
3. We are _____ the station, so be ready to get off.
4. We visited three different islands in the _____.
5. _____ the cold weather, we decided to visit Finland last month.

co-owner destination landscapes several widely

6. She's a _____ of the business – it's not only mine.
7. This island became _____ popular in just a couple of years.
8. What is your favourite holiday _____?
9. There are _____ restaurants in the area.
10. The _____ in this area are beautiful.

Summer sun in Finland? Åland isles try to attract tourists to cooler climate

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

b. Use the words from task a to complete the following sentences.

1. The country is _____ known for its good food.
2. She loves taking photographs of different _____.
3. They enjoyed their holidays, _____ losing their bags.
4. The temperature _____ last week – it was really cold.
5. Summer is _____ so we expect more tourists to arrive soon.

Summer sun in Finland? Åland isles try to attract tourists to cooler climate

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

Miranda Bryant

2 August, 2024

- 1 Jenny Björklund was on an island in Finland's Åland archipelago with a friend when they saw a boat approaching them. She told her friend that they would be left alone.
- 2 "They won't come here because we are here. This is our island," Björklund, a co-owner of a restaurant on the archipelago, told her friend. And she was right.
- 3 In this region of Finland, there is plenty of space. With 6,757 islands of at least 2,500 square metres – plus 20,000 smaller islands – and a population of around 30,500, there is almost an island per person.
- 4 With direct ferry routes from several Swedish and Finnish ports, Åland has been a popular destination among Swedish and Finnish tourists. But tourists from other countries are also starting to visit.
- 5 Björklund says she has noticed increased visitors from other parts of Europe. "We are getting more people from middle Europe and a lot more from southern Europe. Before, almost all tourists were from Finland and Sweden, about 95%," she said, but that number is going down.
- 6 The regional tourism authority said in May there was a 10% increase in hotel stays, with about 1.3 million people now coming to the islands every year. While Swedish tourists have decreased, Finnish tourists have increased, with many coming from Germany, Latvia and Estonia.
- 7 Kristiina Hietasaari, a senior director at Visit Finland, said it is trying to promote Finland as a summer destination, as well as a winter one. "Finland has so much to offer in summertime," she said. "Today it's easier than ever because of high temperatures in Europe."
- 8 Despite an increase in visitors, it is still difficult for some local businesses that depend on tourists during the short summer season. An ice cream shop owner has had an increase in visitors. "They have been doing many campaigns in Finland, and it shows," she said. But she would like to see it promoted more widely.
- 9 With its cooler climate and nature, Åland has huge potential, but Finland is not promoted as well as the rest of the Nordics. "We don't know how to market ourselves," said Jussi, 38, adding, "Åland is beautiful. Calm, quiet landscapes, great local products and good food."

© Guardian News and Media 2024

First published in *The Guardian*, 2/08/2024

Summer sun in Finland? Åland isles try to attract tourists to cooler climate

Level 1: Elementary / Pre - Intermediate

3 Comprehension check

a. Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

1. Åland receives more visitors **from other countries / during the holidays / who use the ferry.**
2. Tourism authorities said the number of tourists increased by **one million / 10% / 95%.**
3. More tourists are interested in Finland because of **the number of activities available / the high temperatures in the rest of Europe / the local businesses.**
4. There have been **campaigns / local initiatives / advertisements** to promote the area as a tourist destination.
5. Some locals believe the area should be promoted **across the country / in certain European countries / more widely** to continue to increase the number of visitors.

4 Key language

a. Complete the sentences from the article with the past simple form of the verbs in brackets.

Jenny Björklund 1 _____ (**be**) on an island in Finland's Åland archipelago with a friend when they 2 _____ (**see**) a boat approaching them. She 3 _____ (**tell**) her friend that they would be left alone.

The regional tourism authority 4 _____ (**say**) in May there 5 _____ (**be**) a 10% increase in hotel stays, with about 1.3 million people now coming to the islands every year.

b. Look at the complete sentences in task A and choose the correct options below.

1. We use the present simple to talk about **actions and events that happened in the past / habits and general information.**
2. We use the past simple to talk about **actions and events that happened in the past / habits and general information.**

c. Complete the sentences below by putting the verbs in present simple or past simple.

I 1 _____ (**visit**) Finland last summer. I 2 _____ (**love**) the place. The temperature 3 _____ (**be**) perfect for walking around, and the views

4 _____ (**be**) beautiful. I 5 _____ (**enjoy**) my holidays so much that I

6 _____ (**want**) to go back soon!

Summer sun in Finland? Åland isles try to attract tourists to cooler climate

Level 1: Elementary / Pre- Intermediate

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- “Finland has so much to offer in summertime. Today it’s easier than ever before because of high temperatures in Europe.”
- “With its cooler climate and nature, Åland has huge potential, but Finland is not promoted as well as the rest of the Nordics.”

6 In your own words

- a. In pairs or small groups, do some online research to find a holiday destination that is not very popular with tourists.**
- b. Prepare a presentation to share your findings with the group, explaining why you would like to visit this place.**
- c. Listen to your classmates’ ideas and decide which place you would choose to visit on your next holidays.**