

Green Guide

- A sustainable exchange in Vasa



Table of contents

Introduction	1
Travelling to Finland	2
Transportation in Vasa	3
Buying necessities	4
Libraries	5
Eating	6
Restaurants	6
Tap water	6
Grocery stores	7
Recycling	8
Household waste	8
Bottles and cans	8

Introduction

Did you know that the tap water in Finland is one of the worlds purest? Or that Finns recycle yearly more than [2 billion bottles and cans](#), and that this is not only good for the environment but for your wallet too, as you will receive money back of your returned items.

In this Guide, you will find information on sustainable living possibilities for your exchange in Vasa. It provides you with information on sustainable travel possibilities and helps you to attain utilities, clothes, and food in a sustainable way. This guide also provides you with information on recycling. To make your stay easier, we have included a brief vocabulary with both Finnish and Swedish words. We encourage you to use this Guide to ensure a sustainable exchange experience in Vasa.

Enjoy your time here and do it in a sustainable way. Finland offers you with endless opportunities.

Welcome to Finland!

Travelling to Finland

Finland can easily be reached by ferries from Tallinn and Stockholm. [Viking Line](#) and [Tallink](#) operate the route to both Åbo and Helsinki. Another good option to choose is [Flixbus](#), which reaches several cities in Finland from for example, Berlin, Warsaw, and Riga.

If you arrive to Helsinki, you can choose to travel to Vasa by train or bus. The public transport in Finland is usually reliable, safe, and punctual. It is also an ecological and cheap way to travel to or inside any Finnish city.

Trains from Helsinki arrive to [Vasa railway station](#). The journey from Helsinki to Vasa takes approximately 4 hours. You can check the connection on the [website of VR](#). The state owned company, VR, operates all train connections in Finland. A bus company that operates the route is for example [Onnibus](#).

If you decide to arrive to Finland by plane, try to reduce your carbon emissions by booking a direct route with the most energy efficient airline.



Bus – Linja-auto / Bussi
Bus

Train – Juna
Tåg

Bicycle – Polkupyörä / Pyörä
Cykel

Ticket – Lippu
Biljett

Bus stop – Bussipysäkki
Busshållplats

Transportation in Vasa

The distances in Vasa are short and you can easily move by foot or bike. However, the bus company, [Lifti](#), is an also good option for travelling inside the city. Remember that as a student you are eligible for discounts on the bus cards.

There are also dockless electric scooter companies in Vasa, including [Voi](#) and [Tier](#). Note that electric scooters are not available during the winter months, approximately between November-March.



Buying necessities

Second-hand shops are a sustainable and affordable option for buying your utilities and furniture for your new home in Vasa. Second-hand shops can easily be recognized through the Finnish words Kirpputori / Kirppis or the Swedish words Loppmarknad / Loppis.

Second-hand stores selling furniture, tableware, sports equipment etc are:

- [Stormossen](#)
- [SPR-kirppis](#)
- [Hoppets stjärna](#)
- [Combo-kirppis](#)

Online second-hand shops are:

- [Tori.fi](#)
- [Emmy store](#)
- [Facebook marketplace](#)
- [Sellpy](#)

You can also use online second-hand shops to sell your own things you do not need.

You can also google second-hand shops close to you. Bicycle shops sell second-hand bikes as well as new ones. You can also find used bikes at recycling centers for example in [Stormossen](#).

Libraries

The public libraries in Vasa do not only offer books in different languages but also desktop computers, printing, copying, and tools. Familiarize yourself with what the libraries [offer](#). You can obtain your library card at any library in the Vasa region by presenting a valid ID. The library card is free of charge.

The libraries at the campus also provide you with desktop computers, printing, copying, and scanning options. For more information on the libraries of Åbo Akademi University, please see the library [website](#). Students and staff can activate their [digital library card](#) in the [Tuudo app](#).

Library – Kirjasto
Bibliotek

Loan – Laina
Låna

Book – Kirja
Bok

Printer – Tulostin
Skrivare

Card – Kortti
Kort



Eating

Restaurants

The student restaurants usually serve vegetarian food every day. You can also find vegan options. The student restaurants offer affordable and delicious lunches every day. Check the menus of the student restaurants [here](#).

Restaurants in general in Finland offer a wide range of possibilities for vegetarians and vegans. You can also easily find gluten-free and lactose-free options in most restaurants and cafés.

In the [ResQ](#) app, you can find food at affordable prices with sometimes a 50% discount of the original price. Several restaurants and grocery stores use the app to avoid food waste.

Tap water

Note that the tap water in Finland is of excellent quality. Use a refillable water bottle and fill it up anywhere you travel in Finland!



Vegetarian – Kasvis
Vegetarisk

Vegan – Vegaaninen
Vegan

Gluten-free – Gluteeniton
Glutenfri

Lactose-free – Laktoositon
Laktosfri

Tap water – Hanavesi
Kranvatten

Grocery stores

When buying food and other products prioritize locally produced items. Products that have been produced in Finland can be recognized by a label with the Finnish flag. You can also choose to buy organic products, which have green labels on them.

Grocery stores sell discounted products that are near expiration date. These products are marked with red labels that say -30% or -60%. These products can easily be found in the evening or the morning. By buying discounted products, you are not only saving money, but also reducing food waste.

Remember to bring your own bag to the grocery store, to save money and to protect the environment. Plastic bags cost around 0.20 cents. In the fruit and vegetable section, you can choose to pack your items in biodegradable bags as well.

Expiration date – Viimeinen käyttöpäivä Sista förbrukningsdag
Best before – Parasta ennen Bäst före
Domestic – Kotimainen Inhemsk
Organic – Luomu Ekologisk
Sale – Ale Rea



Pictures: Ruokatieto.fi

Recycling

Household waste

Recycling is very common in Finland. We highly encourage you to recycle your trash, as it is one of the easiest ways to protect the environment. The residential buildings usually have their own recycling bins on the yard, typically for paper, glass, metal, cardboard, and bio-waste. Normal mixed waste should be sorted into burnable waste. If your residential building does not have recycling bins, you can usually find them next to bigger supermarkets.

The containers usually have instructions on what you can put where. Make sure that you do not put your garbage in a container where it does not belong. Please see the instructions on how to recycle your waste [here](#).

Note that hazardous waste should never be put in the burnable waste bins. Please recycle hazardous waste correctly and take it to recycling or waste treatment centers. Your nearest recycling centers can be easily found at Kierratys.info. Small electronic devices can be brought to stores that sell electronic devices. Medicines can be brought to the pharmacies for disposal.

Bottles and cans

Note that bottles and cans shall be returned to the grocery stores. The recycling rate of bottles and cans is more than [90%](#) in Finland. Follow our lead and recycle your bottles and cans during your exchange. You will receive around 0.10 – 0.40 cents per bottle.

You can find the bottle recycling usually just outside the entrance of the store. In smaller stores, they are usually found inside the store.

The company that handles the bottle recycling is [Palpa](#).



Picture: Palpa.fi

Bottle recycling – Pullonpalautuskone
Returautomat

Glass bottle – Lasipullo
Glasflaska

Bottle – Pullo
Flaska

Can – Tölkki
Burk

Thank you for reading this Guide.

We hope you have wonderful and sustainable exchange in Finland.