

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION
SUOMI CHAPTER

FINNOVATIONS

PROMOTING FINNISH HERITAGE FROM THE
EVERGREEN STATE TO THE GOLDEN STATE



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Cover Photo: The Three Smiths Statue in Helsinki, Finland has been adorned with face masks, whilst a particle representing the COVID-19 Coronavirus has been placed on top of the anvil, waiting for the blacksmiths to smash it to pieces.



Beautiful white Windflowers (Anemone Nemorosa) photographed in Finland During early spring.

President's Message

My wife Bobbi and I started our annual trip to Europe on February 11th 2020 in order to check up on my parents (who are in their mid-80s). First, we traveled to Rome for 5 days. Rome has been on my bucket list since I studied 7 years of Latin in the Finnish school system back in the 70s.

First thing we met stepping out of the plane in Italy was medical people masked up taking our temperature. Bobbi and I were good. So, Italy was already on high alert then. We were gone for a month and no other airports were interested in Covid-19. Vancouver, London, Helsinki, Denver or Seattle.

Visiting Rome was great in the off season: cooler weather and less crowds. We took 3 guided tours with Roman Guy Tours, just fantastic local tour guides. We heard the Pope do his Sunday Blessing from his window among 10,000 people in Piazza San Pietro. The best thing (besides the great Italian food - the Food Tour was amazing!!) was attending the soccer game between Roma's Lazio and Inter Milan with 70,000 spectators at Stadio Olimpico on February 16th. Lazio won the game and the full stadium of Italians singing their hearts out was the most spectacular choir I have ever heard!

Next day we left for Finland, but what happened in Milan on February 19th was a close call for us. A European Champion League soccer game was played between Italian team Atalanta and Spanish team Valencia.

Atalanta is from town called Bergamo 35 miles north of Milan. Atalanta is a European soccer Cinderella

story: a small team beating some the best teams in soccer. The game was moved from Bergamo into the big stadium in Milan. Half of the population (40,000) of Bergamo travelled to the big game. And Atalanta won again 4-1, beating the powerful Valencia team from Spain. There was no talk about social distancing yet. This soccer game kicked off Italy's Coronavirus Disaster.

Anyway, we got out of Italy just in the nick of time. In Finland things just seemed to be working well. The streets are clean and people don't smile easily. Lack of snow and winter in Finland was disappointing, because I had plans to do some Tour Skating on Finnish lakes. I think it was the warmest winter ever over there. Water in the lakes felt a lot colder than in the salt water. I did not swim at my uncle's river because the water level was too high. Public saunas for winter time swimming were in operation when we were there. They were all shutdown a week after we got back home.

My parents are doing quite well just taking shorter steps. My Dad had a femoral angioplasty done a few days before our arrival in Finland. My Dad's catheter insertion site in the groin area was bleeding a bit five days after the procedure. He was feeling extremely weak and worried about the amount of the bleeding that he wanted me to drive him to the hospital. I was able to be in the room when a young doctor (not older

than 35) was performing an ultrasound to evaluate level of bleeding from the insertion site. My dad had questions about the instructions given to him by the surgeon. The young super doctor immediately was able to get a hold of the surgeon to let him know about the situation (it was 9 pm.) Issues were addressed and taken care of immediately. And the surgeon called my dad personally the following day to make sure things were moving along according to the latest plan. All I'm saying is that Medical System in Finland works. I saw it myself.

My grandmother was in the Old Folk's Home (Vanhainkoti). Nowadays they have 3 different names and systems to take care of their elders in Finland.

#1 is Senioritalo (Home for Seniors). It's a small house or an apartment that you can buy or rent for retired people, there no services or staff on duty. All the services are hired out. Houses are custom built for the needs of the elders.

#2 is Palvelutalo (Home with Services) it's like Senioritalo, but there is staff on duty 24 hrs a day for Care, Cleaning and Food Services if you wish to purchase them. These can also be bought or rented.

#3 is Hoivakoti (Full Care Home) for elders who need care around the clock. In #3 Hoivakoti everybody has their own room, but the doors are locked so dementia elders don't wander off.

My Dad's brother Pertti (83) has a 750 sqft studio apartment in option #2 Palvelutalo (Home with Services). His rent is 325 euros per month. He can come and go as he pleases, except now during the Covid-19 rules he has to stay put like all of us. In his room he has his own furniture and pictures. He is a cancer survivor and doing quite well at the moment. His car has a parking place outside.

His wife Helvi is suffering from Dementia and she has her room in #3 Hoivakoti (Full Care). They are both in the same building, but in the opposing wings. She is always locked up for her own safety.

When Bobbi and I visited Helvi, she remembered my name. She could not remember Bobbi's name but knew that she is from America. She was having a good day and so were we.

Finland just keeps impressing me every visit!

Be Safe!

Pasi Virta



Puu-Käpylä

Puu-Käpylä ['wood Käpylä'] (Swedish 'Trä-Kottby') is well known as the earliest example in Finland of the Garden City Movement. The suburb of wooden buildings, designed by Martti Välikangas, was built between 1920 and 1925 and designed in the so-called Nordic Classicism style prevalent throughout the Nordic countries at the time. Puu-Käpylä was a model workers' housing area, built at a time when there was a bad housing problem for workers in the city. The mostly 2-storey semi-detached timber houses are arranged around sheltered courtyards, where originally the tenants' vegetable gardens were sited. The area is still mostly occupied by working-class families though it has also been a popular residential area for professional types, especially architects – and it also has become a favourite tourist attraction.

Käpylä was incorporated into the city of Helsinki in 1906.



Submitted by Tapio Holma

Adapted from Wikipedia

Editor's Column: The Worst Outbreak on the Planet

As the economy craters, workers and business owners wonder if any stimulus package can save them. 20 million workers in USA are unemployed, over 2 million infected, and some 80,000 plus have died. How long can the world take this? Is there a new normal soon available?

Various medicine factories work 24/7 to try to find new medicines and a vaccine to save us. Waiting in home quarantine is getting difficult for the folks who want to return to work or a profession of their own. A Corona virus quarantine is not easy. It amounts to weeks of house arrest for a disease you may not have.

In Europe, particularly in Italy and Spain the situation has become a nightmare. Borders are closed, assemblies of people not possible and walking too close to another person may give you a fine. In Scandinavia, Sweden (the government allows free movement for the folks, some kind of experiment for others to ponder) is not worried, some 1,300 people are dead compared to its neighbors in Finland and Norway, which have less than 200 folks who have perished.

There is nothing quite like the behavior of panicky humans. From the stores the batteries are disappearing when people are hoarding them. Same with the toilet

paper, bottled water and canned foods. Some stores need to ration the quantity on the same basis as it was during war times when people only could purchase products with special coupons in limited quantities.

As to our own activities, FSC had to cancel the annual Vappu and Juhannus events in the summer. Hopefully after the summer the things and our lives will return to somewhat normal. And we can then plan the Independence Day and other fests.

Meanwhile, be safe, wash your hands and wear the masks.

We are all in this together.

Tapio Holma



Huovinen's Impact on History

In North America there have been many first- and second-generation Finns who have tacitly contributed or left their mark on American technology, science, culture and Finnishness without making a big deal of themselves. One of them was Väinö Huovinen, who later changed his name to Hoover at the time when there was also a namesake President Herbert Hoover and vacuum cleaner industrialist named William Henry Hoover.

The Finnish one founded an old-time high-tech company in Santa Monica, California, through which he made several inventions in the automobile, aviation and submarine industries. Some of his patents were even utilized on the Apollo lunar module's landing system.

Huovinen/Hoover was a self-made man who rose from a poverty-stricken family to riches, but still stayed humble and loyal to his roots all through his life. He was born in 1905 in Wild Horse Gulch just outside of Leadville, Colorado to Finnish immigrant parents. Leadville was a bustling mining town located at the altitude of almost 10,000 feet in the Colorado Rockies where the temperature fell to 35 degrees below zero in winter.

At one point, when famous Doc Holliday



Väinö Hoover (L) with Yrjö Paloheimo. The two men were instrumental in the creation of Finlandia Foundation National.

was a sheriff there, Leadville was proposed to become the state capital with the name Silver City.

Another famous Leadville citizen was Poker Alice Ivers, America's most successful female poker player. She was said to have made \$250,000 in the late 1800's by never cheating. Another lady from town, Molly Brown from the gold fortune family, later became a Titanic survivor. Also, Meyer Guggenheim of the museum-founding family owned a rich gold mine there. Buffalo Bill Cody and Oscar Wilde visited the place with their entourages a few times during the area's heyday.

The Huovinen family was not as lucky, but young Väinö with his tenacity and Finnish

sisu managed to get into Cal-Tech institute in Pasadena, and become an engineer, mathematician and physicist. Also, famous director Frank Capra (known for "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," among others) studied chemical engineering there. Hoover made it so well that he lectured at Cal-Tech and other universities as a visiting professor.

But the beginning of his career was not easy. Huovinen moved for a while to the Finnish Utopian society in Itabo, Cuba. They were people escaped from Tsarist oppression in Finland, but realizing that the original nationalist movement turned into a socialistic co-operative, he returned to the United States. When he finished his studies, the Great Depression began.

Thus he spent a few weeks digging channels with a spade, which probably taught him more humility. Soon, now using the name Hoover, he found his way to industrial plants, in some as a mathematician and industrial designer. He developed cars in auto plants and machinery in others.

When he was strong back on his feet and WW2 was over, in 1946 he founded his own enterprise, Hoover Electric Company. He started with new inventions and patents for car brake and clutch mechanics and also developed a new electric ignition system. Along with that, he created a new kind of electric engine cooling system. Soon this developed into a high-tech design and manufacturing company specializing in aeronautics and navigation technology.

Hoover developed a better horizontal stabilizer for airplane wings and his control system was utilized in the Apollo 11 landing mechanism. Altogether Hoover had 19 patents. And since he had secret projects with the U.S. military manufacturers during the cold war, President Eisenhower invited him to his security advisory team. Because of his name, nobody could guess that he was originally a Finn.

But this is not all; at a young age Väinö Huovinen was a sports enthusiast and he developed into a skilled javelin thrower. Javelin has been one of the best Olympic sports for Finns. Later on, he was sponsoring sports coaching in Finnish communities and also acted as a Chairman for Finnish Olympic fundraising.

Hoover never forgot his roots and when the Winter War erupted he was organizing aid to be sent to Finland. A coincidence was that ex-President Hoover was promoting Finnish aid at a national level; that was naturally before the U.S. allied with the Soviet Union, which was Finland's enemy. Together the campaign raised \$4 million, all badly-needed aid. Also, perhaps surprisingly, the first weekend revenue of the movie "Gone With the Wind" was donated to the Finnish cause.

In 1947 Hoover became a founding member of Finland Foundation. The first chairman was Yrjö Paloheimo, who was the honorary consul of Finland for California. Later, basically with his wealth, Hoover became the chair and personification of the foundation.

They started to support penurious talented students with Finnish roots and soon after offered college scholarships to students from Finland also. The Foundation is still well alive today and the tradition continues.

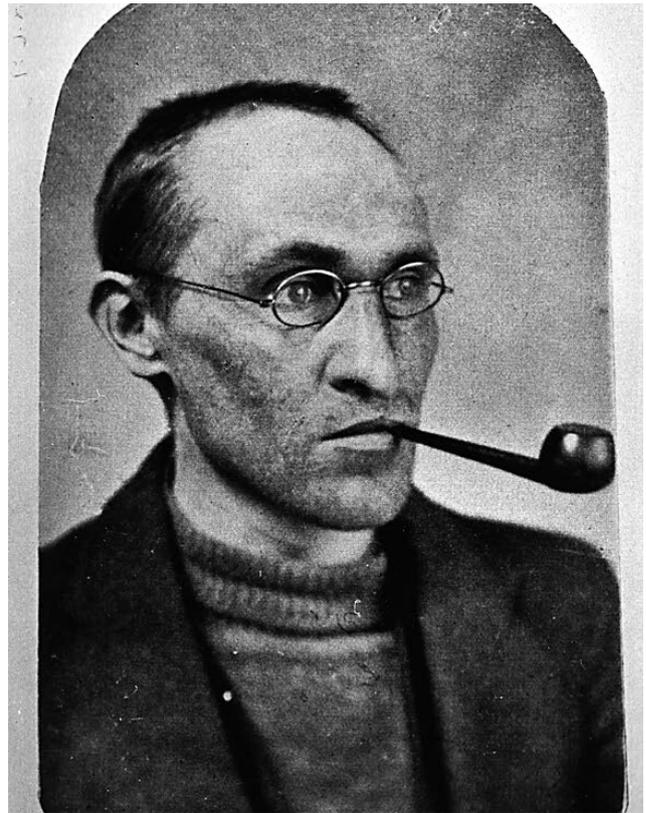
Besides this Hoover became a considerable benefactor to alma mater, California Institute of Technology, establishing the Hoover Foundation which supports able-minded high school graduates from poor families.

Väinö Hoover served with Finlandia Foundation until his death in 1983. He was a typical Finn who never made a big deal of himself, but his actions spoke far louder. One can only wonder what he might have done today in Silicon Valley's high-tech industry, in space technology or in the electric car industry. He just happened to be born before that era, but he was a harbinger with many inventions and improvements and industrial calculations he represented and excelled in.

His work didn't go completely under the radar. Huovinen-Hoover was noted for his deeds when President Urho Kekkonen awarded him a high honor, knight of the order of the White Rose of Finland medal.

Article by Jonathan Riikonen from The Finnish American Reporter (April 2020 edition). Printed with permission from David Maki, Assistant Editor. You can subscribe to The Finnish American Reporter by calling (906) 487-7549 or by visiting: www.finlandia.edu/far/subscribe/

Aaro Hellaakoski



Aaro Hellaakoski was a Finnish poet, Ph.D. (in geology), and pioneer of modernism in literature in Finland. He published some twelve collections, but ceased writing poetry from the late 1920s to 1940, concentrating during those years on teaching and researching.

Aaro Hellaakoski was born in Oulu, the first son of Antti Rietrikki Helaakoski, a geography teacher and later Ph.D., and Aina Maria (Lindman) Helaakoski. Hellaakoski studied in Oulu and Turku. Upon graduating he moved to Helsinki, where he added one "l" to his name, thus it became Hellaakoski.

In 1919 he received his M.A. from the University of Helsinki. After the conquest of Tampere during the Civil War (1917-18), Hellaakoski joined the White Army.

He did not serve in the front but as a guard in a prison.

Hellaakoski was married to Lempi Aaltonen, a teacher and the sculptor Wäinö Aaltonen's sister. They had met in 1921 and Hellaakoski fell immediately in love with the beautiful, dark, intelligent woman. The writer Joel Lehtonen witnessed their wedding. According to a story, after the priest had asked "do you want...", Hellaakoski had answered "Yes!" so loud, that the priest took a few frightened steps backwards.

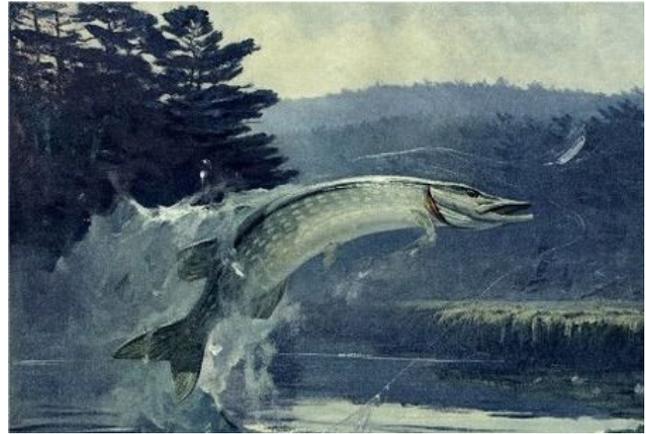
In Helsinki, Hellaakoski associated with artists, including the writer Viljo Kajo, and the young sculptor Wäinö Aaltonen. Aaltonen, who illustrated Hellaakoski's poems, made in 1919 a bronze portrait of his friend.

As a poet Hellaakoski was a visionary. He strove for a personal, powerful poetry, while also seeking spiritual expression. Hellaakoski's first period is characterized by revolt against empty traditions and an assault on the bourgeoisie conformity. In his latter period the poet found his inspiration in the pantheistic acceptance of the unity of man and the world. But for a former image breaker, resignation was not easy.

Besides poems and geographical papers, Hellaakoski published essays, short stories and aphorisms. He was an amateur painter, but destroyed most of his works, sparing only some watercolors.

**"When the early morning sun
first pierced the grayness in the sky,
a pickerel rose from his watery home
to climb a pine tree, singing.
And high in the branches, he looked upon
the morning's glowing beauty -
the wind-blown ripples on the lake,
dew-freshened flowers and fields below."**

-Aaro Hellaakoski, "Hauen Laulu" (Song of the Pike).



After the Winter War, Hellaakoski joined the leftist Kiila (wedge) group, but remained critical and independent on its politics. Koskenniemi, who had supported the German cause and whose anti-Communist stand was well-known, called him a turncoat opportunist. Kiila was founded in the 1930s. Its members, such as Viljo Kajava and Arvo Turtiainen, favored free verse and were more or less Marxist.

For a period, Hellaakoski served as chief editor of the literary periodical *Näköala*, founded in 1949. Hellaakoski died of cancer on November 23, 1952 in Helsinki.

**Submitted by Tapio Holma,
Adapted from Wikipedia and
authorscalendar.info**

Finland and Coronavirus

STOCKHOLM — As some nations scramble to find protective gear to fight the coronavirus pandemic, Finland is sitting on an enviable stockpile of personal protective equipment like surgical masks, putting it ahead of less-prepared Nordic neighbors. The stockpile, considered one of Europe's best and built up over years, includes not only medical supplies, but also oil, grains, agricultural tools and raw materials to make ammunition. Norway, Sweden and Denmark had also amassed large stockpiles of medical and military equipment, fuel and food during the Cold War era. Later, most all but abandoned those stockpiles. But not Finland. Its preparedness has cast a spotlight on national stockpiles and exposed the vulnerability of other Nordic nations.

When the coronavirus hit, the Finnish government tapped into its supply of medical equipment for the first time since World War II. "Finland is the prepper nation of the Nordics, always ready for a major catastrophe or a World War III," said Magnus Hakenstad, a scholar at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies.

Though year after year Finland has ranked high on the list of happiest nations, its location and historical lessons have taught the nation of 5.5 million to prepare for the worst, Tomi Lounema, the chief executive of Finland's

National Emergency Supply Agency, said on Saturday. "It's in the Finnish people's DNA to be prepared," Mr. Lounema said, referring to his country's proximity to Russia, its eastern neighbor.

In addition, most of its trade goes through the Baltic Sea. That, Mr. Lounema said, is considered a vulnerability because, unlike Sweden, which has direct access to the North Sea on its west coast, Finland has to rely on the security conditions and the running of maritime traffic in the Baltic. "If there is some kind of crisis, there might be some disturbance" in the supply chain, he explained.

Two weeks ago, as the country's coronavirus cases ticked up — by Sunday, the country had recorded more than 1,880 cases and 25 deaths — the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health ordered that stored masks be sent to hospitals around the country. "The masks are old — but they are still functioning," Mr. Lounema said by phone. There is little publicly available information on the number of masks and other supplies that Finland has or where exactly they are stored. "All information considering those warehouses is classified," Mr. Lounema said. But though details are kept a state secret, the authorities confirmed that the stockpiles are kept in a network of facilities spread across the country and that the current system has been in place since the 1950s. That has placed Finland



in a more solid position to confront the pandemic.

As officials in other countries like the United States lament the shortage of masks, ventilators and gowns, tales abound of international skulduggery and domestic price gouging. Nations are competing for medical supplies and racing to create a vaccine.

In Sweden, which has been accused of moving too slowly in its anti-coronavirus measures, supplies were diminished over the past three decades because of a shift in thinking after the Cold War, according to Fredrik Bynander, director at the Center for Societal Security at the Swedish Defence University. “The ‘eternal peace’ had arrived, and we no longer were going to need these stockpiles,” he said, adding that the government saw an opportunity to sell them, including the medical and health supplies. But though Sweden may have neglected the country’s stockpiles, it has encouraged residents to create their own private stores.

Norway used to be more resilient and

equipped to be self-sustaining in a national crisis, according to Leif Inge Magnussen, associate professor of leadership at the University of Southeastern Norway. But a risk analysis last year by the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection concluded that pandemics and medicine shortages were key concerns, he said. Audun Haga, director of the Norwegian Medicines Agency, said the country could exhaust supplies of essential medicine within weeks, since much of it comes from China, which is only just beginning to reopen its factories. “Society has become very dependent on other countries and just-in-time supply chains,” Mr. Magnussen said.

Some Nordic countries that have not prepped like Finland are scrambling for alternatives to reorganize domestic production of medical supplies. In Norway, medical equipment companies have promised to deliver 1,000 ventilators by the end of May, and in Sweden, laid-off employees at Scania, which manufactures commercial vehicles, have been sent to work with a company that makes ventilators.

Article by Christina Anderson, Henrik Pryser Libell, Constant Méheut, and Christopher Schuetze,
[nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com)

Let's Get Pantsdrunk!

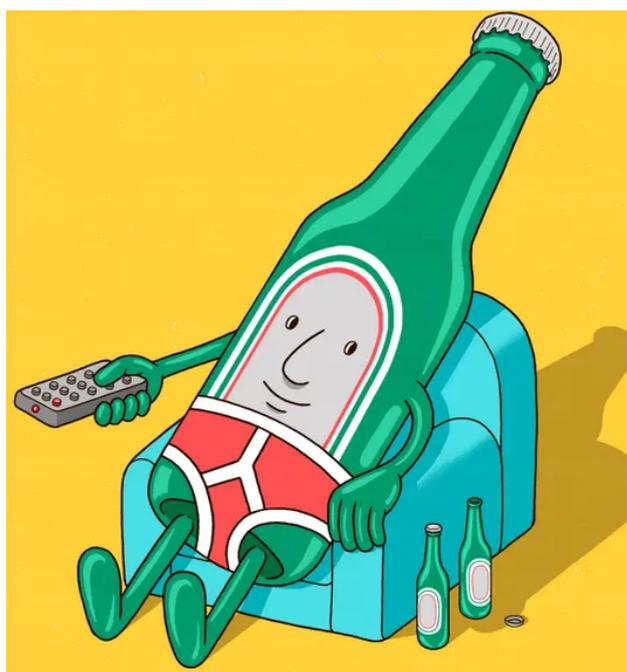
It's been a long day: one meeting after another. You leave your office, happy the working day is finally over. You could head out, network until the early hours, but somehow it doesn't appeal. What you need, more than anything, is to relax and de-stress.

You might be tempted to turn to the popular Scandinavian antidotes to stress, *lagom* and *hygge*. But are they really any good? *Lagom*, a Swedish word, can be translated as "in perfect balance", or "just right". Where *lagom* reigns, all is as it should be. Proportion is maintained: there's neither too much nor too little... which is where the problem lies. Although *lagom* encapsulates nearly all aspects of a well-lived life, its puritanism isn't compatible with the realities of the modern world. The problem with *lagom* lies with its emphasis on being a good person: a good person can never really relax. They're too busy constantly weighing the ethical consequences of every little decision they make. "I could buy a nice pot of hummus to enjoy with dinner, but that plastic pot it comes in is so bad for the environment."

Denmark, meanwhile, is renowned for its *hygge* – embracing ambience and luxuriating in leisureliness. *Hygge* is a mug of hot chocolate sipped near an open fire, soft woollen blankets and a row of leather-bound spines on the bookshelf. It's those images we see in interior design magazines and on Instagram. And this is its failing: not all of us have the means to spend our days wrapped in cashmere,

reclining on an Arne Jacobsen sofa on stormy autumn evenings. *Hygge* is like a Disney movie that leaves no place for the mess of real life.

But there is another Scandi option – the Finnish path to happiness. Unlike our lovely neighbours, the Finn relies not on *lagom* or *hygge* but *kalsarikänni*, a term that literally means "drinking at home, alone, in your underwear". This may sound fanciful but at the heart of this approach lies a democratic ideal. "Pantsdrunk" doesn't demand that you deny yourself the little things that make you happy or that you spend a fortune on Instagrammable Scandi furniture and load your house with more altar candles than a Catholic church. Affordability is its hallmark, offering a realistic remedy to everyday stress. Which is why this lifestyle choice is the antithesis of posing and pretence: one does not post atmospheric images on Instagram whilst pantsdrunk. Pantsdrunk is real. It's about letting go and being yourself, no affectation and no performance.



It's easy to see how pantsdrunk evolved as a response to the harsh Finnish environment, one of perpetual gloom and freezing temperatures for nine and a half months of the year. Look out of a window on a Finnish November day and much of the time it's pitch dark and freezing, a lacerating sleet is falling and the pavements are crusted in ice and slush. Often the streets are deserted and human companionship requires a lengthy and unpleasant trek. And that's at noon, the brightest point of the day. No wonder pantsdrunk came into being.

The liberating effect of this Finnish path to happiness derives from simple elements: comfortable clothes, alcohol imbibed in appropriate amounts and no intention of going out. That's not to say that pantsdrunk needs to be a solo activity. It can also be enjoyed with a good friend, housemate or perhaps a relative. When practised properly, pantsdrunk with one's spouse or significant other expands and deepens the relationship.

As a lifestyle choice, pantsdrunk is not in conflict with *lagom* and *hygge*. They all spring from the same Nordic origins and share the same ultimate goals: optimal peace of mind, comfort and equilibrium. Each has been shaped by its own history, culture and national character. The difference between the three of them lies in their economic history.

When Finland declared its independence from Russia in 1917, it was a poor, agrarian country with a GDP barely grazing the global average. Life expectancy was low and child mortality high.

Yet, in 100 years, Finland has become a post-industrial information society and the third most prosperous country in the world. It also achieved the highest total score in the UN's 2018 World Happiness Report, ranked the most stable, the safest and best governed country in the world. It is also among the least corrupt and the most socially progressive. Its police are the world's most trusted and its banks the soundest. Free healthcare and university education also helps when it comes to happiness. Arguably, pantsdrunk is one more way to celebrate the importance of relaxation.

Humorous as its approach may be, it is very much part of a serious commitment to self-care – even if it's frivolous, we take it seriously. It's also an attitude and philosophy that starts from inner peace. You don't even have to drink alcohol to achieve it – it's about taking time out, indulging in a little of what you enjoy and being authentic.

Ultimately, the Finnish approach is closer to mindfulness than it is to the Nordic notions of *hygge* and *lagom*. A real pantsdrunk pro knows how to be his or her laid-back self, regardless of the circumstances – no styled Scandi interior required. Follow this philosophy and you are immersing yourself in true Finnish culture.

Perhaps Americans could learn something from this Finnish tradition in order to help relieve stress during the COVID-19 crisis.

**Article by Miska Rantanen,
[theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)**

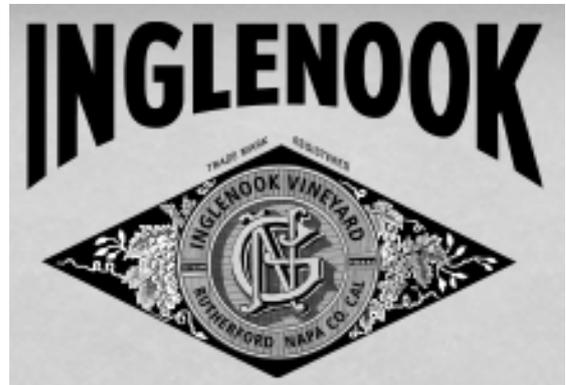
Did you know?

...that there is a Napa Valley winery with Finnish roots?

In 1868, Finnish sea captain and entrepreneur Gustav Nybom - later Gustave Niebaum - arrived in San Francisco and established the Alaska Commercial Company. He became a successful and wealthy fur trader, and married Californian Susan Shingleberger.

Niebaum wanted to bring fine European winemaking to California, and in 1879 purchased Inglenook vineyard and farmland in Rutherford. He constructed a grand chateau and built an award-winning winery.

Niebaum died in 1908, but his widow and then their grandnephew carried on, and the winery remained successful for decades. After changes in ownership and struggles at the winery, in 1975 filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola and his wife Eleanor purchased Inglenook. They revived the winemaking tradition under the name Niebaum Coppola Estate Winery. The Coppolas have since restored the elegant chateau and the Inglenook trademark and name.



Finlandia Foundation Suomi Chapter Membership Form

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We're on the web!
www.ffsuomi.com
ffsuomi@gmail.com

Managing Editor:

Tapio Holma

Contributors:

Tapio Holma, Jonathan Riikonen

Creative Editor:

Cassie Revell

Stay Safe With the National Nordic Museum

Many of us are wearing masks in public these days, and thanks to Seattle designer Madison Leiren, you can show your Nordic pride while staying safe. Madison's hand-made masks are now available at the National Nordic Museum's online store.

They include Danish, Faroese, Finnish, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Norwegian, Saami, and Swedish flag designs. They are completely washable and feature sturdy, adjustable ties.

Get yours at www.nnmstore.org



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