

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Call 112

Name of the company:

ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT OY

Street address:

Salmenkyläntie 81

Town

NURMES

WELCOME TO MAJATALO PIHLAJAPUU!

[majatalo (n.) = guesthouse, pihlajapuu (n.) = rowan tree]



Brief history of the Guesthouse

The Guesthouse is an old village school of *Salmenkylä*. The school was built in the 30's and hosted two classes, the lower and upper class. Children would travel even 10 km's to get to school and some by skis or by boat over the lake. At the end of the 40's there were nearly 60 pupils but the numbers declined and finally the school was closed in 1999.

In 2000 the school house was bought by *Äksyt Ämmät*. At that time only the 1st floor was furnished. The 2nd floor was used as storage with old schoolbooks, maps, desks etc. Today there are 7 rooms and 2 toilets with showers upstairs. The in-house sauna is also an extension and was built in 2001 re-using very old timber.

The newish sports hall beside the guesthouse is still used by locals for volley ball, archery, badminton and floorball. The friendly guardians of the sports hall is Mr. Teppo and his dog Sergei.

In the yard you will find a bicycle and fire wood shed, an open fireplace and a piece of forest. In the small garden behind the Guesthouse Minna grows berries, vegetables and herbs to be used in the kitchen.



Lake Viemenjärvi is 5 km in length. In the winter you can ski on the lake and in summer you can ride a bike around it or paddle a canoe on the lake. Minna's house is situated on the opposite side of the lake and during the skiing holiday you will have a smoke sauna evening at Minna's.

WHAT IS ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT?

The Activity Adventure Company aka *Äksyt Ämmät* ("the angry old women") was founded in 1995 by Minna and Liisa—two tourism professionals with a *then* novel idea in their minds—to start a guided adventure travel business in Finland!

Äksyt Ämmät has repeatedly been awarded by the Finnish Tourism Board as well as by international travel agents for their uncompromising quality and sustainability work.

Today Minna runs the company with Kirsi but they co-operate with neighbouring guesthouses and employs 4-5 local people in the transfers, kitchen, guiding and house keeping during the busy Guesthouse to Guesthouse Skiing Weeks in February—March.

THE TOWN OF NURMES

- 8 000 inhabitants
- 1 855 sq kilometres
- Modern services and facilities
- One of the densest populations of bears and wolves in Finland

Hundreds of years ago Nurmes was an important trading and marketing village due to its convenient location by the main water route from St. Petersburg to Oulu.

The old village of Porokylä was destroyed by fire in 1891. The wealthy bourgeois were able to re-build their nicely decorated wooden houses in the town centre, Puu-Nurmes area. The wealth of this rural village was highlighted also in the building of cathedral like town church which is among the largest in Finland.

Today Nurmes is renowned for the beautiful birch alleys, tasty pastries and its Karelian pride, the House of Bomba. It is easy find your way to Bomba, just follow the signs "*Kylpylä*" and "*Bomba*".

VILLAGE SCHOOLS — IN THE MIDDLE OF THE VILLAGE

The schools were the real activity centers of the village in the old days. Beside schooling the pupils they hosted seasonal festivities like Christmas and Mother's Day. An important event for schools were the Independence Day celebrations from 1917 onwards. The children were always the protagonists in these parties and gave many the ever lasting incentive to take part in summer theatre plays as an adult.

The teacher was a highly respected figure in the village and it was customary that the teacher had an apartment in or nearby the village school. The teachers carried the torch of enlightenment also outside school hours e.g. teachers experimented with novel plants in the school garden and the children got to know them. A good example of this pro-venience experimentation is *larch* which was introduced to Finland in the late of 19th century and can be found all around the Guesthouse. The teacher was also the responsible person for the school library.

Next to Guesthouse Pihlajapuu by the road there is a house which was once a grocery shop. Now there is no shop but a young family lives there. In the yard you will notice a small red house. It is the wood heated sauna, typical for 1920's - 1950's. Not far from the Guesthouse there is the village Youth House or a Dance Hall. A 100 years old building that hosted dancing evenings on summer Saturdays up until the 1970's. The ladies' association used to be very active as well.

Today there are many active agriculture and forestry farms in the village and it is a popular residence area for people working in Nurmes. Small-scale rural tourism is also an important source of livelihood for the local people.

WINTER AND SUMMER IN NURMES, FINLAND

To check weather forecast for the up-coming week, go to www.yr.no and type in "Nurmes, Finland".

The winter months are between October and April. Sometimes the first snow comes already at the end of October. In Nurmes area we do not have the so called polar night (sun not rising at all during the day) but indeed, we enjoy day light from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. also in Mid January although the sun does not rise very high.

The lakes freeze over around November-December and by January the ice sheet gets so thick you could drive a car on the ice. At times there is a thin layer of slushy water between ice and the snow covering it. Do not worry! It is still safe to walk on snowmobile routes and ski on ski tracks. Ask us if you are unsure where and when you can walk on ice.

The snow cover gets 50—100 cm thick in the winter and the temperatures can be anywhere between + 5 and - 40 C. The weather can change quickly so better to have a plan B in clothing! When you ski or walk it doesn't get cold but during the breaks it's advisable to have extra clothing.

In summer everything changes. Between the end of April and the beginning of August the polar days allow us to stay active until late hours. The temperature variation in the summer can be dramatic - anything between +5 to +35 C. The warmest months are usually July-August.

SURVIVAL DICTIONARY

Saunaan! = Sauna time!

Sauna on kylmä! = Hey guys, you forgot to add fire wood in the sauna oven!

Löylyä! = Throw more water on the rocks!

Hiitämään! = The skiing tracks are calling, what the heck are you waiting for?

Latua! = You are too slow, step off the track and let me pass you!

Ei luista! = My skies are like sandpaper, they do not slide a bit!

Lipsuu! = Minna, you have done a terrible job waxing my skies. They do not have any grip.

Huono keli! = a lame blame on bad weather as an excuse to not go out

Ketjut irtosi! = Sorry, I was foolish enough to change gear and pedal simultaneously. The chains went off.

Kypärä päähän! = Bike accidents without helmets are far more likely to result in death or brain trauma than ones where the cyclist's head was properly protected. In 2014, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, over 60% of deaths in bicycle crashes were people who were NOT wearing a helmet.

Aamupuuro = the most optimal source of energy at breakfast for a day's outdoor activity
Eväs = For once, it's allowed to take rolls, butter, ham and cheese and make delicious picnic lunch sandwiches out of them

Mustikkasoppa = Norwegians have doping, Finns have mustikkasoppa

Nälkä! = Are we having moose, reindeer or smoked salmon for dinner?

Jano! = Wild herb tea, berry juice, beer, anything! I am thirsty!



ÄKSYT ÄMMÄT LTD - GREEN FINN TOUR OPERATOR

We provide unique well-being holidays with a Nordic twist for active people. Activity by day, comfort by night.

Ms. Minna Murtonen

Tel. 358 400 877 085

Salmenkyläntie 81
NURMES, FINLAND
aksyt@aksytammat.fi
www.aksytammat.fi

Send us feedback: <http://bit.ly/1327NPK>



fb.com/aksytammat



#guesthousetoguesthouse

THE A TO Z OF MAJATALO PIHLAJAPUU!



Alcohol drinks

We are fully licenced; we offer lovely local craft beers and some local liquors. Organic white and red wine are also available. Just ask us! Unfortunately, you are not allowed to drink your own alcohol in our guest-house.

Please, write your purchases on the list and pay them before you leave.

Allergies

Please, provide us information of all your food allergies as soon as you arrive or even well before. We love to plan our menus so that dishes take allergies into consideration but suit most guests.

Aurora borealis

It is possible to see the aurora borealis in winter. But unfortunately we cannot say when and at what time. Usually then when it is dark and there are stars in the sky.

Breakfast

We take things the relaxed way in Guesthouse Pihlajapuu. We normally do not have our breakfast earlier than at 9 a.m. You can sleep longer if there is not anything in the program during that day. If you want to get up earlier you can always go to the kitchen and cook yourself a cup of coffee or tea. In the summer you are free to have your breakfast outside in the garden.

Cleaning

We do not clean your room every day. If you some day want us to clean it, please, inform that to the staff. We are happy to do so and can also change your bed linen and towels if necessary.

Clothing

In the winter take care of how you clothe - layered clothing is advisable. Underwear with long sleeves, pull-overs, woolly hat, mittens etc.

For skiing or walking you do not need a thick coat or thick overalls but for the breaks it is good to have extra pullover or fleece jacket and something warm to drink with you. By the fire take care that your clothes do not burn! Synthetic fibre clothes get holes easily. Beware of the ski wax - it stains your clothes easily.

Doors and keys

You do not have to lock your door. Leave your key to the door or press the little lever in your door lock down and the door will not lock. When the personnel is out of house, the front doors are locked and your things are safe. If you want to go outside after we have gone home and locked the doors, use the door at the sauna department. We'll show you the place where we keep our sauna door key. You can also use the main door, but ask for the key code of the key box.

Equipment

The skies, ski boots, snow shoes, bikes and canoes are at your free disposal. Ask us where to find and how to operate them.

Fire alarms and fire places

We have over 20 fire alarms in the house. They are extremely sensitive and when one gets off so do all the others. Usually the reason for the alarms to go off is that we have forgotten a dish a little bit too long in the oven or the fire wood is not dry enough causing a lot of smoke in the ignition phase.

If you hear the fire signal, go outside and warn others immediately and wait for the instructions from the personnel. If there are no personnel, go outside, **call 112** and Minna!

The instructions for emergency situations will be given upon your arrival.

Fire places and carbon monoxide.

We use the fire places frequently for heating the house. Our fire places are heat restoring and have special features such as a damper. The damper is a iron plate that is used for closing the chimney pipe after the fire is completely died out. If you close the damper too soon, toxic carbon monoxide is build up. **Do not operate fire places on your own!**

The sauna oven is also wood burning and has a damper like all other fire places. The sauna damper can be found in the sauna dressing room. **No not touch the damper in the dressing room!**

We are happy to teach you how the Finnish sauna operates and how to safely heat it up.

Garbage sorting and recycling

You have trash bins in your rooms for small, unsorted stuff. Please, bring empty bottles, tin cans, plastic, organic waste to the recycling boxes in the kitchen. News-papers and other papery material is burned with fire wood in the ovens.

We do not use any tissues in the toilettes for drying out *hands*. Please use the little cloth towels instead.

Guest book

Please, write down memos and stories of your staying in our guesthouse! Your posts provide so much joy to us and plenty of useful information for other guests.

Heating

There are radiators in each room. In winter we maintain the temperature at about 18 to 20 degrees for ecological reasons. Downstairs we have heat restoring fire places and we heat them at least every other day so the mean temperature is often higher.

After a hard day of skiing you might find yourself feeling cold, but please do not put the radiator higher than 20 degrees. After sauna you regain your feeling of warmth.

If you like to have your room colder, please ventilate your room by opening the window for about 5 minutes before going to bed. Shut your window for the night and put the heating lower!

If you want to sleep with open window, feel free to do so in the summer but in the winter remember to close the window after an hour or so. If you keep the window open all night, the water pipes might freeze over and burst! It is safer to just shut the heating off for the night in your room.

In summer it is not a problem to sleep with open windows. The windows have mosquito nets so that you won't get disturbed by any small insects.

Remember to shut your roof windows when you leave your room to prevent rain falling in.

If you go out alone

If you want to go out alone, please tell somebody where you are going and how long are you going to stay! If you get lost, ask the locals *Missä Pihlajapuu?* or *Missä Minna?* They will bring you back to the house.

If you want to spend the whole day hiking in the woods, take your friend with you. And do not forget your mobile.

The Finnish dogs are usually very nice and well behaving. They do bark a lot but do not mean any harm. If they are fastened to a string, do not go near....

The wild animals are afraid of us. So we are sorry but there are not very big possibilities to see any elks unless you wake up very early in the morning in summer (like 4 am!!)

The brown bears winter sleep from October until April. And when they are awake, they are extremely shy of people. Just make sure they have a possibility to detect you i.e. do not attempt to move silently in the woods.

Other guests in the house

As a Guesthouse we might have guests from several groups. We will inform you when other guests arrive before hand. At times local people gather at our Guesthouse to discuss local matters. We do our best to co-ordinate things so that the meetings will not interfere with group timetables.

Our Guesthouse is a renowned guesthouse in Finland. Sometimes travelers just come in and want to see the house or the famous "angry old" hostess...if the personnel is not around, please ask them to call Minna or come back later.

Post

You can get nice, local postcards and stamps from our Guesthouse. If you leave your postcards in the post box in the lobby, we will post them off for you.

Our postal address is
Salmenkyläntie 81 , FIN-75500 Nurmes.

Program

The following day's program will be issued on the black board of the lobby. We will also discuss it in detail over the dinner and over breakfast in the morning so you will have many opportunities to ask questions.

Sauna

We have the original wood burning sauna in our Guesthouse.

In Finland we do not follow any particular "rules" in the sauna. You can sit in the sauna as long as you feel comfortable. You can throw water on the oven stones to produce "löyly" (hot steam) or you can just enjoy the warmth of the sauna as it is.

Between or after the sauna sessions you can cool off by sitting in the sauna veranda or do it the Finnish way—have a roll in the snow! To wash off, take a cold or warm shower. It's up to you. Remember to drink liquids when having sauna.

Please, do not take the big towels with you to the sauna. The small pieces of towel are provided for seat cover. We appreciate if you re-use your towels. Dirty towels can be left in the washing basket and you will be provided with a new towel.

Showers

They operate differently than the ones at home. Make sure you know which valve increases the flow and which increases the warmth.

In the winter it is not advisable to wash your hair in the morning! You would feel yourself very cold when outside. The best way to protect your facial skin from freezing is not washing it in the morning. If you feel like you need to moisturize your skin it is best to use a waterless lotion.

Please notice that our warm water tanks are not very big. So when the house is full of guests, please take a shower only once a day.

Sleeping in the white nights

When it is too light at night draw down the shading curtains to block out light. Sleep tight!

Slippery

In the late winter-early spring (sometimes in the mid winter as well) the temperatures can be around zero C and the snow melts to ice. When the temperature goes down for the night, the yard and roads become very slippery. Take extra care. We have attachable spikes to your shoes. Just request!

Souvenirs

We have t-shirts, herbs, postcards and stamps etc. for sale. The hand knitted socks and mittens are crafted by local women and provide important extra income for rural women. Have a look at the shelf in the living room!

Sports Hall

Ask for the key or the key code to the hall. In the evenings there are local people playing volley ball or having gym etc.

Some guest programs include archery taught by Minna. The lessons take place in the sports hall.

Sunscreen

In the late winter—early spring the sun rays are reflected from the snow thus reinforcing the skin burning effect. Remember to add sun screen! Needless to say that you will need sun screen in the summertime. Even in Finland.

Small and big issues

We would be happy to know if you have any issues or problems concerning your stay be it rooms, heating, food, equipment etc.

Your comfort is our pride and joy but we cannot make things right if we do not know about your concerns.

We would also appreciate your suggestions and tips how we could improve the coziness of our Guesthouse.

You can also leave your comments anonymous in the "Ruusut ja risut" box in the lobby.

WLAN

The password is *pihlajapuu*.

**You are mostly warmly welcome to
Guesthouse Pihlajapuu.**

Feel yourself at home!

Minna and Kirsi