



# INTERNATIONAL MEDIA TRIPS ABC

## HOW TO WORK WITH INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

This booklet is a helpful checklist for you when organizing events including foreign media. Visit Finland organises unique trips in the beautiful, Arctic land of Finland for foreign media (journalists, digital influencers such as bloggers and Instagrammers) to inspire positive articles about the breathtaking destinations and Finland in general, as well as photographs for foreign magazines, TV and websites. Visits to destinations are an excellent opportunity to experience something truly spectacular and leverage that excitement in media around the world.



Visit Finland



#### **VISIT FINLAND PRESS TRIP PRINCIPLES:**

Visit Finland will arrange the media representatives to your region, but the regional costs and arrangements (accommodation, meals, activities) will be taken care of by the local tourism organization or individual businesses, unless otherwise agreed.

Visit Finland arranges bigger group trips and invites relevant media to those trips and organizes individual press trips for media based on media requests.

#### **VISIT PREPARATIONS AND SCHEDULE**

A preliminary schedule for the visit should be finished three months in advance, in order to facilitate potential changes and additions to the program.

Final program should be ready 2 weeks before the visit.

**Note:** Some of the media requests arrive with a shorter notice. Prepare for ad hoc trips as well.

#### **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN SCHEDULING**

Keep the program simple and let the media explore independently. Different kinds of media require different things, but at least 2-3 hours free time is required each day.

Share the details of the planned itinerary with length of the transportations, durations and level of difficulty, especially for outdoor activities (easy, medium, difficult). Be sure your day isn't full of strenuous activities!



The ideal group is about 6-10 people and single rooms are a must. Keep in mind that the story is the key – not products. If you are meeting people, make sure that they have interesting personalities. Meeting a hotel manager usually doesn't make a good story, unless the hotel has an exceptional story. Let the travellers experience for themselves how unique your location is. Let them feel exclusive.

That doesn't mean that the location shouldn't be open for individual travellers too. Just make sure the staff in different locations know about the media representatives and know what has been agreed with them. Always make sure that you have a stable Wi connection. If not available, carry a portable Wi-Fi device.

Also, it doesn't hurt if you engage with the media representatives by following, liking and sharing their content. And always be flexible with the program.

**Think before:** what makes your destination or business unique and different from other destinations and businesses?

**PLEASE NOTE!** You should give members of the press a different presentation than travel professionals. Travel professionals require more concrete information of the facilities, whereas media need more experiences and a chance to get the feeling of the place.



## MARKET SPECIFIC NOTES

Media from the west expect to have the program very much in advance – you should have the dates and themes of the visit available several months in advance.

Media from big metropolises of the world have a very different experience of outdoor activities, and many typical Finnish outdoor activities (such as skiing or cycling) are sometimes considered strenuous and challenging. Remember to keep the activities easy enough for the visiting media. Consult Visit Finland before confirming the activities.

Media representatives from some markets are more used to independent travel than representatives from other markets (for example mainland China). Remember to consult Visit Finland to determine whether the group needs a host for the whole visit.

All media are used to being treated very well, and expect that from you too. You should treat them as your guests, but don't become their servant.

### Germany

German media are used to being treated very well. The service German media receive should be stellar.

German media plan their upcoming articles in advance (usually already early in the year), so have the itinerary ready as early as possible in order to secure the best media to your destination.

### China

For all activities, advise media on appropriate clothing and footwear for expected weather conditions. Keep in mind that Chinese travellers often have very different gear from the Finnish. Some outdoor activities might be challenging (such as cycling) as the Chinese media might not be that used to it.

Keep in mind that media representatives from mainland China can't rent a car in Finland or drive a snowmobile with their Chinese driver's license. All travel in Finland should include a host for them.

Media representatives from mainland China are not very used to individual travel so they need a hosted program and a host. Media representatives from Hong Kong are usually more used to independent travel and will appreciate chances to explore.

When exchanging business cards with Chinese guests, use two hands to give and accept the cards. This is a gesture of respect.

Shopping is a big part of Chinese tourism. Your guests will be interested to know what the most popular and typical souvenirs and specialities are from your area.

Chinese media are very flexible with trying local cuisine, and scheduled Chinese meals are not required. If possible, try to schedule a non-Finnish meal every four days to showcase cuisine in Finland.

### France

French media are very interested in Finnish lifestyle, design and gastronomy. Remember to highlight Finnish nature and the relaxed atmosphere (and the cleanest air in the world!) which are big selling points in France.

French media are usually on vacation from mid-July to late August, and getting top tier media to join press trips is very difficult during that time. Bloggers and Instagrammers are usually more flexible with their schedules.

### Japan

Japanese media representatives don't require Japanese meals every couple of days. Only include Japanese food if there is an interesting story behind the chef or restaurant, but otherwise keep the cuisine local.



## WORKING WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA

### Traditional media

Traditional media and journalists are especially interested in the story behind the product, and are always looking for interesting characters to interview.

When planning the itinerary, try to include chances to interview locals to find good story angles.

Some journalists also take photos for their publications, which takes time as well.

Traditional media often require more information after their visit. Be available for pictures or more info (such as prices) after the visit, as stories could go live with very short notice.

The itinerary can be quite set, but try to leave some free time every day so that the journalists have time to catch up on their other work.

When planning the itinerary, try to think of places that will look good on camera.

### TV & Radio

Filming permissions are very important. Make sure you know the permissions and restrictions on filming in your area and local businesses.

Radio journalists often produce most of their content while on the trip, remember to keep the program pretty loose.

TV crews require a loose program and ideally a fixer too to make sure the crew and production get as much out of their visit as possible. Car rental and a driver are usually appreciated. Remember to always discuss these matters beforehand with the crew and VF representatives so that all the necessary arrangements are in order.

TV crews require a lot of people to interview on screen, so think of relevant people who are comfortable being interviewed and filmed.

TV productions often don't have the resources for B-roll or aerial shots, so try to invest in some video material from your destination that the media can use.

When planning the itinerary, try to think of places that will look good on camera.

### Bloggers

Bloggers need free time to explore independently and experience things on their own. They are interested in meeting interesting people behind the experiences, but are mostly interested in publishing their own genuine experiences in different destinations.

The itinerary can be pretty loose, and it can include accommodation, means of transportation and suggestions on what to see. Meeting a local representative at least once is also appreciated.

Remember to make sure the destinations have a stable Wi-Fi connection. Invest in a mobile router for the bloggers to use, if necessary.

Engage with the bloggers on different social media channels as well. Follow them and like and share their content. Remember to add hashtags and the destination's social media channels to the program for the bloggers to use.

Remember that many bloggers are also interested in selling their content (such as photos and videos) for marketing purposes. Keep that in mind if your organization has specific content needs.

### Instagrammers

Instagrammers primarily post photos to their Instagram channels, so their content is very visual.

A very detailed program is often not necessary, and the visit arrangements can consist of accommodation, means of transport, meals and suggestions of photogenic places. The focus on their trip is on very scenic spots and photos, and not on the background information of the locations.

As many Instagrammers are also interested in selling their photos, keep this in mind when discussing the trip arrangements, so that the Instagrammers can also take photos that meet your marketing needs.

Remember to tell the Instagrammers the hashtags of your destination and engage with them on your Instagram channel if you have one.

Remember to discuss your expectations for the visit with Visit Finland.

See separate pdf about working with instagrammers: [www.visitfinland.fi/markkinointi-ja-myynti/pr-ja-mediatyo/](http://www.visitfinland.fi/markkinointi-ja-myynti/pr-ja-mediatyo/)



### HOSTING MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

Provide media with the kind of service you normally offer your customers. You may, however, add something extra to make sure that the experience is memorable. Be prepared to provide background information and history on the surroundings and yourself. Please be prepared for any questions (e.g. how many foreign visitors have you had, from which countries, etc.). Stories are interesting.

### THINGS TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO DURING HOSTING

Be a good host: be on time, be friendly, greet the group and introduce yourself. Give business cards, be chatty and act as the group's host. Let the group check out their surroundings, give them time – and provide Wi-Fi. Keep your guests informed: tell them about your product, your destination's accessibility, tell them about the region, its history and culture. Make your guests feel like the centre of your attention and be diplomatic about cultural differences. Don't discuss politics and instead focus on safety issues as well as degrees of difficulty, equipment and so on.



### MEALS

The visit to your destination is one part of a larger entity. Meals during the program are an important part of the experience and should be different each day. This means that you should coordinate any meals with other destinations.



### OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING TO ENSURE THAT YOUR GUESTS ENJOY THEIR MEALS:

- Pleasant surroundings: considerate hosts, aesthetic presentation, clearing used plates away quickly.
- Menu: talk the group through the menu (make note of any locally sourced ingredients).
- Serving alcohol is not absolutely necessary especially over lunch. Media representatives are often not big drinkers, but might enjoy a glass of wine over dinner, so serve both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks for dinner. It is OK to tell that only a certain number of drinks are included in the menu. The rest is on their own expense.
- Make sure that the dishes vary during the trip. Coordinate this in advance with the restaurants / catering included in the program.
- Service: Finns are used to self-service, but providing good service during meals gives a good impression.
- Local facts: invite a representative of the area to give an overall presentation of the services and destinations in the area, if this is not covered in the program.
- Dinner is a great time for an informal presentation or speech about the destination, but remember to keep it very informal and conversational. Media representatives are not interested in heavy presentations with slides.
- Dietary restrictions: find out any dietary restrictions in advance, and discreetly enquire who the special meal is for on the day.
- Religious/ethnic dietary restrictions: find out any religious dietary restrictions and preferences in advance (Chinese people, Indians, Muslims, Jews, etc. in particular).
- Feedback: ask the group to provide feedback on the meal and the overall experience.
- No need for Asian style food unless there is some special story or reason behind it. Japanese and Chinese media want to eat local food during their trips.
- It's recommended to end the dinners by 10 pm, as many journalists have to work in the evenings.

### BROCHURE CONTENT AND PRICING INFORMATION

Provide guests with a media kit that includes up-to-date information in English or some other language (not Finnish, however). (Please note: use English for Hong Kong and Chinese for mainland China). The kit may include: press releases, fact sheets about the company, company history, brochures, mentions of any awards or other acknowledgements, high resolution images and videos of your product, company logo, list of company management and contact details. Offer to mail this material, if necessary. Please pay attention to the quality of your photographs!

If you wish to give your guests presents, please avoid heavy or large objects. Books of different destinations are a nice gesture, but most likely will go unread.

The material should include the prices of your products and/or services (according to target group) or at least approximate prices, e.g. the price spread during the summer season.

You can place the materials on a table, for instance, so it's available for those who want additional information. However, it is more important to reach out to the group participants afterwards to provide links and prices for specific products.

Typically, the articles will be published within a couple of months after the visit, but sometimes the coverage doesn't appear until a year later to target the next season. Visit Finland will send you the articles as soon as they have been published and we encourage you to share online articles in particular to your partners and on your channels.

### POST-TRIP SERVICES AND FEEDBACK TO VISIT FINLAND

If any information requested by the guests is not readily available, you should provide this information afterwards via e-mail or otherwise. You may also use this opportunity to thank the guest for their visit.

Respond promptly to any enquiries by the participants. Visit Finland is glad to receive any feedback on the visit: whether you have had an increase in the number of customers from the target segment in question, etc.



Visit Finland

More information about media trips:  
[www.visitfinland.com/media/](http://www.visitfinland.com/media/)