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## FINNISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

@Columbia University

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Nordic countries are admired for having built ultra-modern, strong infrastructures providing their citizens universal healthcare, free education from kindergarten through university, and a peaceful, international platform for all citizens to fulfil their potential.

Finland bears an intriguing history as the tenacious and stubborn nation nestled between its two dominating neighbors, Sweden and Russia. Having gained their independence just a century ago, Finns have proudly built a model society which is cited as a world-leader across multiple disciplines.

J.R.R. Tolkien said he used Finnish as a base when creating the Elfish language in his writings of Middle Earth. The magical arctic nature combined with the quirky personal characteristics of the people have given Finland a reputation as a fun-loving, somewhat shy, and extremely tenacious nation.

Birthered in Finland, Nokia, Angry Birds, Alvar Aalto and Jean Sibelius have all made their mark in the world. Our studies in the classroom will move deeply through these and other exemplars of Finnish art, politics, and business.

Did you know that if you write a letter this fall to Santa Claus, it is delivered to Finnish Lapland, the official home of Santa and Mrs. Claus? See you in class!

Finnish is offered at Elementary and Intermediate levels.

**Taking courses in Finnish allows you to complete the language requirement at Columbia.**

Students from Yale and Cornell can study Finnish through the Shared Course Initiative.

Please check the [Columbia Directory of Classes](#) for up-to-date information on class times and locations.

