

EXPERIENCES arise from contrasts at HERRANKUKKARO

Stormy autumn wind and the sweet heat of the smoke sauna. Mid-winter blue dusk and soft candle light. Herrankukkaro is a place where archipelagic nature and first-class service together make a memorable experience.

A group of Japanese city people, wearing thick thermal overalls, trudges on snow-covered ice through freezingly cold wind. Lashes of snow on their faces cannot dispel their excitement. On the contrary, walking on the ice is, for them, an utterly exotic experience, and there is no end to the astonishment when a local fisherman starts pulling the net out from a hole cut in the ice. The guests can also try their hand at hauling fish from the icy water. It is hard for them to believe that there are real fish swimming about under the thick ice.

Unbelievable! This is the word that is repeated many times during the day. When the dusk falls, the group turns back. Storm lanterns show them the way back to their candle-lit lodgings where a traditional islanders' evening meal is waiting for them. At the end of the day, the guests, happily weary from the fresh air and delicious dinner, show their gratitude to their host, Pentti Oskari Kangas.

Exotic experiences of the first class

"We Finns often complain about the dark and cold early winter. For foreigners, however, the darkness and the austere nature are a source of immense admiration. Even the harshest weather becomes enjoyable, if you are equipped with the proper outfit and know that you can, at any time, escape from the cold to the heat of the smoke sauna," says Pentti Oskari Kangas, the proprietor of Herrankukkaro.

"Conference participants coming from Central Europe, for instance, do not have to carry their own hiking outfit. We have a stock of thermal overalls, caps, boots, and raincoats to dress a



group of a hundred people. The lodgings are also equipped to meet the expectations of our European guests."

"Most of our guests come from business enterprises. They often have a meeting or workshop during their stay here, and for this purpose we have full-scale conference facilities. Exotic experiences is what we want to offer our guests, not primitive living conditions," says Kangas.

At Herrankukkaro, combining the traditional and the new is the red line in all activities. There is no hurry, and the fabulous nature and carefully cherished islanders' traditions are the



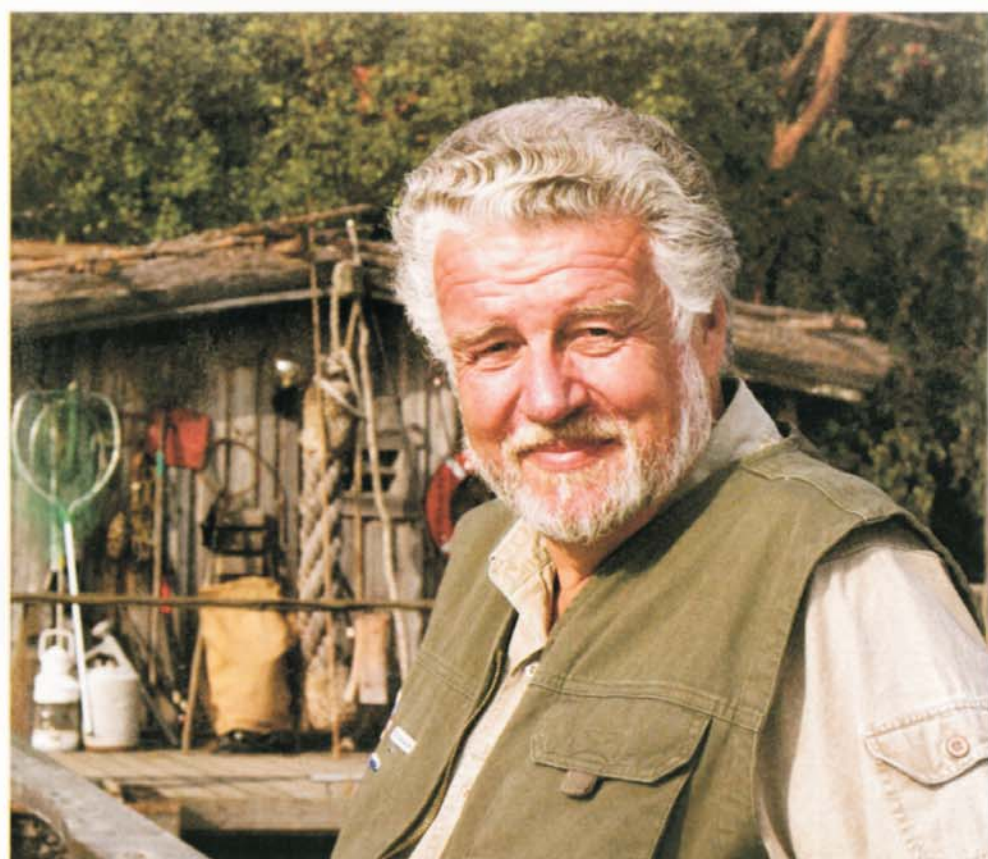
integral elements of this unique experience.

"Moments of peace and quiet are required to counterbalance today's busy lifestyle. You should be able to slow down for a day or two. Increasingly aware of this demand, companies are willing to offer their employees or customers an opportunity to quiet down for a while. We strongly believe that nature and peaceful silence are the best "rechargers" for people tackling with stress.

Fish seasoned to all tastes

Herrankukkaro is actually an old fishing farm. It is located on an island in Rymättylä, right in the middle of the largest single area of wilderness in Europe. Rymättylä is the most famous fishing community in Finland, and the fishing traditions are cherished in Herrankukkaro, too.

"We employ two professional fishermen, who see to it that we have freshly caught fish to serve our guests every day. They haul, among others, salmon, powan, Baltic herring, pikeperch, perch, flounder and eel. The fish are prepared in a number of different ways: smoked, grilled, marinated or stewed. Our record is a dinner table serving a total of



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24 differently prepared fish dishes," says Kangas smiling.

"Not only the raw materials, but also the recipes are local. Guests can participate in fishing, and also follow the cleaning and smoking of the fish. There are not so many places where you can actually see where your dinner comes from and how it ends up on your plate!"

Spa under the stars

With its five smoke saunas, Herrankukkaro is sometimes also called a sauna paradise. The most exotic of the smoke saunas is the earth sauna. Seating up to 120 people, it is the largest smoke sauna in the world. The benches are arranged at five different heights, so all bathers can find the temperature that suits them best. The rocky walls and earth floor moisturize the sauna and keep the air rich in oxygen.

In winter, swimming in a hole in the ice is an integral part of the sauna experience. For those who do not have the courage to swim in the ice-cold sea water, the new Spa in Nature offers a variety of refreshing options.

The Spa in Nature means seven pools right on the sea, all full of purified, crystal clear sea water. Every pool has a special

treat to offer. You can take a bath in a hole-in-the-ice pool, peat pool, hot-water pool or herbal bath. To complete the sauna and bath experience, you can indulge in a relaxing treatment.

"There are no walls or ceiling in our Spa in Nature, and in the dark season you can bathe under the stars. This is for many one of the most memorable experiences," Kangas concludes.

