

## Restaurant Recommendations List for Fulbrighters

Just as a brief foreword, if it's your first time visiting Helsinki, it's advised to keep in mind that the city may surprise you with how pricy or expensive certain things can be, and this is no different with the city's dining options. Many of the places recommended on this list may seem inexpensive with just a single or double '€' designation, but comparably they still may be more pricy than you're used to at home, even for something of a similar quality or with what they have to offer – it's all relative. Portion sizes in Europe can often be fairly smaller than those typically offered to us back in North America, and it's good to keep this in mind as well.

Other than that, I'm very glad to be able to tell you that one of the things Helsinki does best is quality, and there's no exception with that when it comes to the city's many restaurants. Also, as a tip, many Helsinki restaurants and establishments offer their best deals at lunchtime. Additionally, if you have allergies, please don't be afraid of telling your server – Finns understand that these can be highly serious, and in my experience they are very good about this. This is also a great city to go out and try something new in, especially when it comes to dining!

Bon appetite!

– *Pierce*

**Fulbright Finland Foundation Project Assistant Intern, 2019**

### ***Ravintola Salve***

Hietalahdenranta 5 C, 00180, Helsinki | +358 10 7664280 | € € | <https://raflaamo.fi/en/helsinki/salve/>  
traditional Nordic/Finnish/Scandinavian – seafood – sautéed reindeer

As a personal recommendation to start off this list, when I visited Helsinki for the first time back in 2015 as an exchange student, I asked the hotel concierge for the “most Finnish restaurant in Helsinki” and said that I wanted to dine where all of the Finns would be. He pulled out his map, and with his finger tapping upon it a few seconds later he said “Here. You're going here.” Since then, *Salve* has remained one of my absolute favourites in the city, and it also has a good renown amongst locals for being a respectable and beloved establishment, as well as a historical one! Being right upon the water in the downtown district of Hietalahti, they naturally serve excellent seafood, and the location is an easy and navigable twenty minute walk from the city's central railway station. The tram and bus connections to get there are also great too.

### ***(Ravintola) Mount Everest Nepalese Cuisine***

Vilhonkatu 9, 00100, Helsinki | +09 673 129 | € € | <https://www.everestyeti.fi/>  
Nepalese/South Asian – tandoori – biryanis

Located almost right next door to the city's central railway station, *Mount Everest* is one of Helsinki's most popular Nepalese restaurants, and to the surprise of many, Helsinki has a very impressive number of them! *Mount Everest* also has another location in Kamppi, which is just a few minutes away from the address of the one listed above. If you like South Asian dinners, this is a great place to go.

### ***Vapiano***

Mikonkatu 15, 00100, Helsinki | +09 698 1225 | € € | <https://fi.vapiano.com/en/home/>  
Italian – fast-casual

*Vapiano* is a popular and quick sit-down chain here in Helsinki which offers you good typical Italian food at a very decent price, and it's nice and close to the city's central railway station. *Vapiano* locations tend to

fill up very quickly at lunch and dinner times, so be sure to get there in good time, otherwise you might have to wait a while! There's also another location in the Itäkeskus district of Helsinki, specifically within the very popular Itis shopping center.

### ***Friends & Brgrs***

Mikonkatu 8, 00100, Helsinki | +358 44 2900034 | € € | <https://friendsandbrgrs.com/en/>

Burgers & Fries – fast-casual

Another franchise with a very central location, just south of the railway station, *Friends & Brgrs* is a great place to get a burger, at least according to the 2,800+ reviews from Google which land the place at a 4.3 out of 5 stars! The first location opened up only in 2014, far up in the northwest of Finland in the province of Ostrobothnia, one of Finland's only provinces where the majority do not speak Finnish as their first language, but rather Swedish instead, which is the country's second official language. The chain is doing so well in fact that they're even now opening up other locations across Northern Europe.

### ***Café Bar No. 9***

Uudenmaankatu 9, 00120, Helsinki | +09 621 4059 | € | <http://bar9.net/english/>

soups, pastas, salads, woks, burgers, steaks

About a ten minute walk directly south of the Helsinki central railway station is *Café Bar No. 9*, but don't let the name dissuade you if you're not in the mood for early morning or evening beverages. *Café Bar No. 9* not only finds itself at a 4.4 out of 5 stars from its nearly twelve hundred Google reviews, but many praise it for its delicious dishes, which are said not only to come with great portion sizes, but also at an unbeatable and excellent price.

### ***Fafa's***

Asema-aukio 2, 00100, Helsinki | +044 231 3288 | € | <https://fafas.fi>

falafel – gluten free – vegan-friendly – fast food

With the most central location in the city being the *Fafa's* in the Sokos shopping center right across the street from the Helsinki central railway station, the *Fafa's* fast-food locations have been popping up all across Finland with great speed – a testament to how incredibly popular the chain has become in the past few years alone. If you're going to be living in Helsinki, there's certainly no doubt that you'll become familiar with *Fafa's*, and if you'll be elsewhere in Finland for the majority of your stay, fear not! According to the map on their company website, *Fafa's* locations can be found in almost every major city in Finland, and across the water in both Stockholm and Tallinn now too. If you're looking for falafel, this is for you.

### ***Hesburger***

Hämeentie 2, 00530, Helsinki | +358 44 4809232 | € | <https://www.hesburger.fi/>

burgers & fries – fast food

Located very close to your *Scandic Hakaniemi* hotel (and perhaps even visible from your window!) is this particular *Hesburger* franchise – the address of which is listed above – one of nearly three hundred locations from throughout the entire country of Finland! *Hesburger* was founded in Turku in 1980 and has

since expanded to the Baltic countries, Russia, Germany, and a few others with strong success. Some Finns might tell you that's because it's better than *McDonald's*, and maybe it is. There's only one way for you to find out! If you're on the go or in need of a late-night snack, *Hesburger* has your back.

### ***Kuja Bar and Bistro***

Hakaniemenkatu 7, 00530, Helsinki | +35 40 0461008 | € € | <https://www.kujabarbistro.fi/fi/>  
burgers, soups, salads – alternating lunch menus – vegetarian friendly

Another venue very close to your *Scandic Hakaniemi* hotel is *Kuja*, which has lunch and brunch, and which also becomes an over 21 years of age establishment in the evenings. Like many Helsinki restaurants, *Kuja's* lunch menus are very affordable, sitting at a price of just 10 to 15€. This is a popular lunch destination for those of us who work in the Fulbright Finland Foundation office, so you can take our word for it that it's a great place!

### ***Ravintola Kuu***

Töölönkatu 27, 00260, Helsinki | +358 9 270 90973 | € € € | <https://ravintolakuu.fi/en/home/>  
traditional & modern Nordic/Finnish/Scandinavian – fine dining

For those looking to spend a bit more money and to go on a bit of an adventure to the other side of Helsinki, *Restaurant Kuu* is a great and highly recommended place which was established back in the mid-60s, and which offers a range of traditional Finnish and Scandinavian dishes with a modern touch. Its district, Töölö, is also a great area of the city worth exploring, with lots to see and do. As a side note, just thinking about this restaurant from writing this entry gets me hungry. This place is completely stellar and although quite expensive, I do truly recommend it!

### ***Day to Day Restaurant***

Ateneuminkuja 2, 00100, Helsinki | +040 158 9988 | € | <https://eat.fi/en/helsinki/day-to-day-pizza-kebab>  
fast food – pizza – kebab

Located directly behind the Ateneum art museum – one which contains a great many famous European and Finnish classical art pieces, such as those by artists like Van Gogh – *Day to Day Restaurant* is a great place to pick up a pizza or to sit down and have kebab. It's an establishment which is a beloved institution by students of the University of Helsinki, and yet another which scores very positive and high reviews online, most of which praise its inexpensive pricing in particular.

### ***Bar Bronco***

Hämeentie 23, 00500, Helsinki | +09 763 967 | € € | <http://www.barbronco.fi>  
gastropub – pizza – vegan-friendly

With three gastropub locations throughout the downtown core of the city, the *Bar Bronco* chain offers both televised sports (often including NFL and NHL livestreams for those of us from North America!) and great food and drink. In particular, they always offer an interesting imported and craft selection of drinks along with that which one would expect, and they have great selection of impressively delicious vegan pizzas! The information listed above regards their original location, which is conveniently very close to the

Sörnäinen Metro Station – one of the city’s busiest, but with great bus connections as well.

### ***Bryggeri Helsinki***

Sofiankatu 2, 00170, Helsinki | +358 10 2352500 | € € | <https://bryggeri.fi>  
gastropub – beer garden

Another one of my favorite local establishments is *Bryggeri*, which is both a restaurant, and as you might’ve guessed by the name, also a brewery! This beer garden with both excellent food and drink is a mere moment’s walk from the city’s famous and impressive domed cathedral – the one you’ve seen on all of the postcards before – and is perfect for a nice relaxing place to gather with your friends or family. If you’re interested in seeing what Helsinki has to offer on-tap from a local neighborhood place, this is most certainly where I’d recommend doing it!

### ***Restaurant Sunn / Ravintola Sunn***

Aleksanterinkatu 26, 00170, Helsinki | +358 10 2312800 | € € € | <https://ravintolasunn.fi/home/>  
traditional & modern Nordic/Finnish/Scandinavian – fine dining

Just a corner and a mere half-minute walk away from *Bryggeri* lies *Restaurant Sunn*, with its window views looking right out over the magnificent Helsinki Senate Square. With a historic feeling both inside and out, *Restaurant Sunn* offers fine dining in a casual atmosphere. In fact, that historic feeling is because the building which the restaurant resides in is from shortly after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, and from when Finland became an Imperial Russian duchy, which marked the city with a great many construction efforts as the Russian tsar at the time had declared Helsinki as the nation’s new capital.

### ***Café Engel***

Aleksanterinkatu 26, 00170, Helsinki | +09 652 776 | € € € | <https://www.cafeengel.fi/>  
breakfasts – soups & salads – pies and cakes

Located right below *Restaurant Sunn*, *Café Engel* was named in honor of the famous German architect who designed Helsinki’s Senate Square – Carl Ludwig Engel – whose designs include the University of Helsinki’s original main campus, the towering Helsinki Cathedral, and the Government Palace, along with many other buildings within reach. Much like its neighboring restaurant, *Café Engel* also provides a stellar view of the beautiful Senate Square, while also offering a cozy atmosphere inside.

### ***Ravintola Kolme Kruunua***

Liisankatu 5, 00170, Helsinki | +09 1354172 | € € | <https://www.kolmekruunua.fi/en/>  
traditional Nordic/Finnish/Scandinavian – reindeer, fish & potatoes, meatballs

*Kolme Kruunua*, best translated into English as *The Three Crowns* (a reference to Helsinki’s heritage as a city of Swedish origin – the name of Helsinki actually coming from the Swedish ‘Helsingfors’) is much like *Salve*; an establishment beloved by locals, and with a real sense of Finnishness in its menu. Here you can find dishes like Baltic herring, meatballs, and the classic Finnish meal of sautéed reindeer – all of which constitute the quintessential Finnish cuisine diet!

### ***Ravintola Rodolfo***

Kirkkokatu 5, 00170, Helsinki | +09 625 024 | € € | <https://www.ravintolarodolfo.fi>

traditional Italian cuisine – casual/fine dining

When you're in Europe, countries like Italy aren't at all far away, especially when you can enjoy the authentic cuisine right here in Helsinki. *Ravintola Rodolfo* is a nice sit-down restaurant located just on the other side of Helsinki Cathedral, and offers a beloved menu of modern and traditional Italian dishes.

### ***Hard Rock Café Helsinki***

Aleksanterinkatu 21, 00100, Helsinki | +09 4282 6888 | € € | [hardrockcafe.com/location/helsinki/](https://hardrockcafe.com/location/helsinki/)

burgers & fries – steaks – salads & sandwiches

Any good globetrotter knows that no major world city would be complete without a Hard Rock Café. Although the genre of hard rock music was very much invented and mastered by the English-speaking countries of the world, I'm willing to bet that you probably don't know that in Finland, the genre of metal music – one heavily influenced by hard rock – is more popular here than anywhere else in the world. In fact, Finland sports the most metal bans per capita globally, challenged only by its neighboring and fellow Nordic nations in competition for that title!

### ***Viking Restaurant Harald***

Aleksanterinkatu 21, 00100, Helsinki | +044 766 8010 | € € | <https://www.ravintolaharald.fi/en/start/>

variety of fish and meat-based dishes like salmon, herring, reindeer, and elk

If you've ever dreamed of feasting in a Viking hall while clanking your drinking horns together, it's safe to say that *Harald* has exactly what you're looking for, and there's really no better place in the world to have such an experience! Not only do many of the dishes have Viking and Norse mythology related names, but several of them also tell you the histories of the famous warriors, plunderers, and seafarers they're named after, such as Sweyn Forkbeard, Cnut the Great, and William the Conqueror. Although *Harald* has been categorized as being in the '€ €' price range, keep in mind that while not quite at the next level up, it is certainly on the more expensive side of that double-euro mark.

### ***Sandron Kulma***

Kolmas linja 17, 00530, Helsinki | +09 6128 5151 | € € | <https://www.sandro.fi>

Middle Eastern & North African – lunches & brunches – mezze

Known best as simply *Sandro*, this eatery offers Middle Eastern and North African cuisine, and is located conveniently close to the stylistic art-nouveau Kallio Cathedral, making it very easy to find. Judging by the menu, it's also on the less expensive side of its '€ €' designation, which is great for those looking to go out and get something inexpensive. Kallio, the neighborhood, is also a very stylistic and artsy area of Helsinki, which is great for many more inexpensive venues as well!