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Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf



Synopsis

Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf is the story of an accomplished nation and her extraordinary people. Pursuing a "Lone Wolf" policy, Finland raised itself from a struggling, war-battered state in 1945 to one of the most developed countries in the world. The exponential rise of Nokia from tire and timbers to leading the world's telecommunication industry is indicative of the Finns and their characteristic business style. These remarkable people speak a language unique in its origins and have kept their cultural identity intact despite the influences of powerful neighbors, Sweden and Russia. Uniquely qualified to write about Finland, best-selling author Richard Lewis traces the fascinating Finnish origins, as well as her history, geography, values and culture. His extensive experience with Finnish business provides him with keen insight on leadership style, negotiation strategies and the uniquely Finnish suomi-kuva (Finland image). And Lewis shines when describing Finnish humor, complete with hilarious jokes and stories. Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf shows a nation and a writer at their best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lewis attributes Finnish achievements in the last century to the culture rather than to political or business prowess. •Reference & Research Book News Richard Lewis brings his extensive knowledge of Finland to a wide audience, capturing the mystery and setting the context for its continued success. Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf is a book of many insights-about Finland and the world beyond. •Matthew Kirk, British Ambassador to Finland

Richard Lewis is the chairman of Richard Lewis Communications, an international institute of cross-cultural and language training with offices in over 30 countries. He founded the quarterly magazine Cross Culture in 1989 and is heavily involved in the intercultural field, lecturing in countries from Finland to Hong Kong and working with companies as diverse as Fiat, IBM, Nokia, Andersen Consulting and Nestle. He lives near Winchester, and is one of Britain's foremost linguists, speaking 12 languages - and spent 5 years in Japan, where he was tutor to the Imperial Family.

Finland is truly a unique place in so many ways and Mr. Lewis captures the spirit of the place with insight and skill. By nature, Finns are very modest people so it takes an outsider to toot their horn. Lewis is well suited to the job as he speaks Finnish (that is quite a job!) and has spent many years consulting there. The author rightly observes that Finland outranks all other advanced democratic nations on practically any important measure of development - literacy, economic competitiveness, equality (economic, social and gender), transparency, lack of corruption, low levels of crime, and high levels of technological innovation. He notes that while they do pay high taxes, they actually support these taxes because they ensure that everyone has high quality health care, education, and social support - no exceptions. But apart from their success in forging a wealthy and egalitarian nation, the Finns stand out in many other ways. For one, they are not really all that Scandinavian. Their origins are obscure, but it is clear that their language and culture has roots outside of the Indo-European group. In some ways, like the Basques perhaps, they are a small and unique nationality with a world view that we should all admire. Among their virtues, Finns are extraordinarily honest, so much so that some see them as blunt. They can also be very taciturn. Indeed, the uninformed traveler to Finland may mistake their parsimonious use of spoken language as a sign of coldness or obtuseness. As Lewis points out, to the contrary, Finns are very intellectually inclined, but are deeply suspicious of wordy or flamboyant people. Also of interest, the author delves into why Finnish women have been so successful and have attained full equality in all spheres of life. Even if you don't have the chance to visit Finland, this is a great book to read if you are interested in learning about a country that is getting it right!

This book is a winner. Richard Lewis writes well and this is a solid book on Finland. His knowledge is broad and goes deep from having lived in Finland for many years, working as an international consultant. I learned important aspects of Finnish history that built the dominant qualities of Finnish character, including among others, the communication style of Finns, a style unlike many other

cultures.

Richard Lewis has written just the kind of book I yearn for when I am about to visit a new country / people. He doesn't settle for the obvious, more superficial experience of a "dish" but explores deeper (succinctly and often with good humour) its hidden ingredients, which have melted and blended together, while cooking... This makes the experience of eating it so much richer !By the way: we shared many of the book's insights with the Finns we met during our two weeks' visit to Finland -- and they were initially intrigued and ultimately AGREED with many of them. They too were impressed with the authors' depth of familiarity and understanding.

This book is for anybody who has been to Finland or has dealt with Finns or plans to do either of the above. The author is an Englishman who has dealt with Finns for years in business ventures. He is also somewhat of a social historian and that makes his book very enjoyable. The book is a fast read filled with anecdotes and jokes and also covers how many other cultures do business in contrast to the Finns including Americans and Japanese. I have dealt with Finns in business and in teaching and this explained a lot of my observations and added some insights. If vacation or business brings you to Finland this is a must read. I immediately lent my copy to a friend who has been mystified by his occasional dealings with this interesting culture.

Great Book, chose this book to do a review on for my European History Class. Reading it was the highlight of the class, and I learned a lot about Finland.

I purchased this book for my dad, he is 100% Finnish and very proud of his heritage. He read the book in 1 day and his words, "It brought tears to his eyes". Not exactly sure why, but he LOVED the book. My husband is also Finnish and now he is reading it, and loves comparing how his grandfather was to how the book describes Finnish people. I wish there were pictures of the geography of the land...other than that, it was a great gift for my dad, who is impossible to buy for!

This was written when Finland and Nokia were at their apex just a few years ago. The ground has shifted and Nokia has come down from the heights. But, it is still an excellent book for anyone who wants to understand Finnish Culture. And it is an interesting culture, indeed.

We are in Finland for a Fulbright grant, and bought this for ourselves before we came. When we got

here, there was another copy as a gift for us from a Finn! This is full of relevant information from history and language to Finnish humor. I would suggest it for anyone planning on being here for more than a short stay.

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