

# In Estonia, the development of naked vacations got a cornerstone.



**In the summer of 2019 on August 10-12, the first international Estonian Naturism Lake Camp 2019 was held in Lake Tõhela Holiday Village. There were participants from Estonia, Finland, and Russia.**

During the three-day lake camp, there were all sorts of different activities. Participants were engaged in photography, massage, and body art and everyone had the chance to take a ride on the lake with a canoe or a boat. Of course, there were sauna sessions and swimming.

Interesting discussions were apart of all the activities except for swimming maybe, depending on the swimming style :). The sauna house and its surroundings were the most popular places for participants to spend time until early morning hours.

For many Estonians, this was their first experience of being naked socially, outside the circle of their family and friends. During the first hours of the lake camp, there was a bit of anxiety about what to do...

Someone made a funny remark about it and asked, „When can we take off our pants“. Actually the weather was a bit cool during the day, so no one was in a hurry to get naked. In Naturism, being nude is not obligatory – everyone can choose to be the way they feel the most comfortable. However, as the weather got warmer in the evening, the number of naked people grew.

The proposal to organize an international gathering of Naturists was made to lifestyles marketer and event organizer Don Simon Tompel, by the vice chairman of the Luonnonmukaiset Ry board, Heli Rämö and so the impulse for the Estonian Naturism Lake Camp 2019 was given. The Finnish proposed that the event take place at the time when Finnish Naturists are on their traditional yearly vacation in Pärnu.

The original plan was for a grand festival to take place in Pärnu Center, both in public and private space in the city. Before Christmas it became clear that Pärnu City Government would not give us permission to organize sports and art events in Pärnu Naisterand, so we began to look for alternative natural environment an accommodation for our event. This was not easy, as Pärnu is a very popular summer vacation place among tourists and vacant places were scarce.



Finnish women bathing in Tõhela. Author: photographer Risto Rautee. Lake Tõhela Holiday Village was chosen, because they had the best opportunities and exceptionally good customer service. In the second half of December, lot of information requests went unanswered or got some standard answer about collective vacation, but Ville Vulkan, the owner of Lake Tõhela Holiday Village, answered all questions within a day or two, even on weekends and late hours.

The friendly and helpful interaction with Ville, gave the event organizer a sense of security and the operative help

and service was there throughout the event. Whatever was needed, whether it be extra firewood for the sauna, a computer power cable, car start-up help - everything was arranged in 15 minutes.



Evening in Tõhela. Author Hannes Rohtma.

Lake Tõhela Holiday Village is a favorite for birdwatchers, fishermen, friends and naked recreationists. It is located 40 km from the center of Pärnu and 10 km from Tõstamaa, in the village of Männikuste. You need to drive on the Kalli-Tõstamaa mnt and turn in, at the gate from the 15th kilometer post.

Normally, Lake Tõhela Holiday Village is a freely accessible area - visited by anglers, villagers and other people. You can be naked in the sauna house and in its immediate vicinity, which is a little further away from the rest of the territory and the landscape offers privacy, both on land and in the water. In order for the entire area to be intended for naked vacationers, you need to rent the entire Lake Tõhela Holiday Village.

Interest for the Lake camp was worldwide, but due to the short notice, nature tourism associations and Naturism associations had already made their vacation plans. The Brazilian naturism portal, [jornalolhonu.com](http://jornalolhonu.com), showed initiative by translating the Lake Camp information to Portuguese language and so most of the foreign visitors of the Estonian Naturism website were from Brazil.

The Lake Camp and Naked Vacation was on TV Kanal 2's news "Reporter" on two occasions:

- Naked recreationist made history in Pärnu: <https://tv.postimees.ee/6750635/reporter-alasti-puhkajad-tegid-parnus-ajalugu>
- In Pärnumaa the first international gathering of Estonian Naturists community took place: <https://tv.postimees.ee/6774853/reporter-parnumaal-peeti-esimene-rahvusvaheline-eesi-naturismi-kogukonna-kokkutulek>

Naturists usually don't like public's attention, so we made a deal with "Reporter", that we film the people who have given the permission for filming, and the reporters take the interviews.

The campers feared the media would represent things differently from reality to get more clicks but to every one's surprise Kanal 2's "Reporter" made a positive and educative story about the Lake Camp and naked recreation – seen as a gift by the promoters of the field.

For those, unfamiliar with the field, it may seem unnecessary that people should be naked socially in a company with people that they don't know. After all, it is much safer to practice this kind of socializing with family and close friends. This is true, but all people want to broaden their horizons, gain new knowledge, have new experiences and make new friends among people with similar interests to their own. New friendships were also born in the Estonian Naturism Lake camp 2019 and a few Estonians now also participate in Finnish naturist events.

The next Lake Camp will take place in July 31 - August 2, 2020. The ticket sale for the Estonian Naturism Lake Camp has already begun and there is a limited number of tickets available. Buy ticket <https://fienta.com/naturism2020>

The camp is intended for the INF (International Naturist Federation) member associations or/and members of the international web environment Naturism.Network.

Estonian Naturism video about Tõhela:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8scpkrS6Rs>

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