



## The EU Ecolabel awarded to Kurala Manor

Kurala Manor is a countryside tourist destination in Yläne, Southwest Finland. Since 2010 the bed & breakfast has been owned and operated by Matti Koivisto and Laura Naire-Koivisto.

– We wanted to live and raise our kids in the countryside. And if you want to do that, you need to employ yourself, Matti Koivisto says.

A decade's work has now reached one milestone: being awarded the EU Ecolabel as a recognition of environmental excellence. Last year Ecolabelling Finland launched a pilot program for tourist accommodations, offering travel businesses personal guidance through the EU Ecolabel application process, without the usual application fee. At the time there were no EU Ecolabelled tourist accommodations in Finland, while elsewhere in Europe there were over 400.

Applying for an ecolabel had already been talked about at Kurala Manor, so the decision was easy. Now Kurala is the only EU Ecolabelled tourist accommodation in the Nordic countries – and the first since the current criteria were launched in 2017.

### Focus on energy, water and recycling

In addition to the main building, Kurala Manor offers accommodation in an old servant's hall and two picturesque riverside cottages. The manor also includes an indoor agility training hall, converted from a large old garage. Unsurprisingly, Kurala is a popular destination for dog enthusiasts.

Most customers come from southwestern Finland.

– It has been an advantage during COVID, but with the help of the EU Ecolabel, we hope to increase the number of international customers as well.

The EU Ecolabel is the most widely known ecolabel in Europe. The label sets requirements for energy and water use, renewable energy, waste management and staff training, just to name a few.

While applying for the label, water saving nozzles were installed in showers and taps at Kurala Manor. Sorting and recycling waste was also made easier, while 100 percent certified renewable energy has been in use for years.

### Close to nature, with the environment in mind

In recent years the manor has been renovated extensively. A lot of the work is done by the entrepreneurs themselves, to whom environmental matters have always been important. A part of the manor's yard is kept as a pasture and fallen trees are left in suitable places whenever possible, which increases the amount of decomposing wood in the area.

– Paying attention to the environment and biodiversity comes naturally to us. I've done a lot of hiking ever since I was little and Laura is a biologist by training.

Matti Koivisto himself has as a degree in economics and is also a former competitive orienteer. The decision to become a travel entrepreneur in the countryside formed during the 2009 financial crisis. More than a decade later and even during the pandemic, running their own business still feels like the right choice.

Read more at Kurala Manor's website: <https://www.kuralankartanotila.fi/en/>



**Better for the environment ...**

This tourist accommodation is actively taking measures to reduce its environmental impact

- promoting renewable energy sources use
- saving energy and water
- and reducing waste.

**... better for you.**