

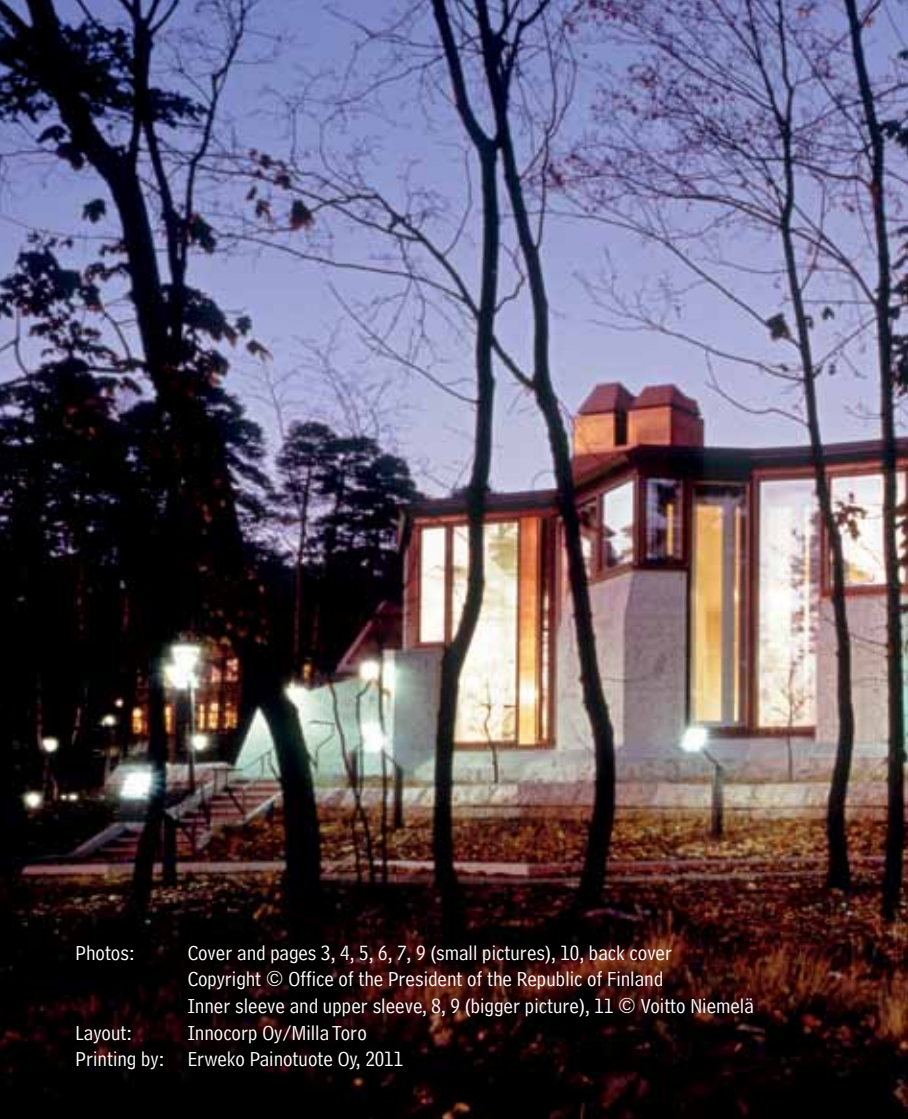


# Mäntyniemi

*Official Residence of  
the President of the Republic*







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*Official Residence of  
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Mäntyniemi is the official residence of the President of the Republic of Finland. Located in the Meilahti district of Helsinki, Mäntyniemi was completed in autumn 1993 and is the first official residence built specifically for the President of the Republic. Mäntyniemi was designed by the renowned Finnish architects Reima and Raili Pietilä. The building and its interior are a showcase for Finnish architecture, construction, crafts, art and design.

The exterior doors are protected by steel-frame glass canopies with copper sheeting. Main entrance.





# History of Mäntyniemi

IN 1983 the Finnish government purchased 2.8 hectares of land in the Meilahti district of Helsinki as the site for a new official residence for the President of the Republic. The site was named Mäntyniemi and an existing building that had been designed by Theodor Decker in 1886, Villa Nybacka, was moved to the western part of Meilahti. An open architectural competition was arranged for the official residence, and the winner among 203 entries was a plan by Reima and Raili Pietilä entitled Mica Moraine. Construction work started in September 1989 and Mäntyniemi was completed in October 1993.

**THERE ARE THREE BUILDINGS** on the property. The main building covers about 3,000 square metres, with the actual living quarters occupying about 700 square metres. It also includes reception rooms with service and kitchen facilities, an office wing and a maintenance floor. A small gatehouse and a caretakers' house are also located on the property.





## Architecture

**THE POINT OF DEPARTURE** in Mäntyniemi's architecture was the Finnish soil, shaped by ice and water. The name of the winning entry in the architectural competition, Mica Moraine, refers figuratively to the soil deposited by the retreating glacier in the last Ice Age.

The main building does not form a single facade but takes shape continually section by section. It has 212 corners, 300 windows of different sizes and 190 doors, 180 of which are different.

**THE MAIN BUILDING** follows the contours of the bedrock and site vegetation, adjusting to them and drawing motifs from them. The building does not form a single facade but takes shape continually section by section. The verticality of the high windows contrasts with the tree



trunks in the surroundings; the windows facing different directions pick up the reflecting branches. Each room in the private residence opens onto its own terrace, which is adjoined to the underlying ground by supporting natural stone walling. The principal reception room leads directly out onto a wide waterfront terrace. The exterior doors are protected by glass canopies.

**THE GENERAL** colour used inside the building is white. The folding suspended ceilings and wall surfaces carry the light deep into the building. A major principle for the design was the idea of a winter house where the low winter light is faceted and gains new directions, creating new forms. Thus the interior of the building changes throughout the day, throughout the seasons where the natural surroundings are visible through the shadows of moving branches reflected and penetrated deep within the building.

**THE ELEVATION** is in Finnish granite, glass and copper sheeting. Granite is also used inside, along with concrete and birch veneer. In decorating the interior, criteria were domesticity and durability.

**THE FLOORS** in the private rooms and the receptions rooms are made of oak and the floors in the entrance halls are Viitasaari granodiorite. In the sauna section the floors, walls and part of the ceiling are Sotkamo migmatite.







## Decoration

**THE INTERIOR** forms a harmonious whole: the furnishings, light fixtures, textiles, tableware and other items were designed specifically for the building.

**INSIDE THE BUILDING** the scale varies from the large and high reception rooms and entrance halls to the cosier parts of the living quarters. The furniture in the reception rooms and living quarters as well as bathrooms, toilets and kitchen facilities was designed by Antti Paatero. The original textiles – curtains, carpets and upholstery – were designed by Irma Kukkasjärvi. A pine cone motif has been used in textiles and tableware. Timo Sarpaneva designed the silver candelabras, serving dishes and part of the glassware.



**MANY SIGNIFICANT WORKS** of art were acquired for Mäntyniemi. In the entrance hall is the relief Lemminkäinen's Travels by Reijo Paavilainen, which was procured in an art competition during the building stage. Commissioned works include a wall hanging by Irma Kukkasjärvi called Gobelin, a ceramic relief in the entrance to the living quarters by Rut Bryk called Icy Stream and a rya rug in the corridor leading to the sauna by Maisa Kaarna called Amidst Old Pines. The Presidents who have lived at Mäntyniemi have subsequently added to the art collection.







## Surroundings

**MÄNTYNIEMI'S MODERN** timeless architecture does not contain traditional symbols of power. This principle has also been observed in landscaping, with Mäntyniemi forming a harmonious whole in which the natural vegetation has been preserved as far as possible.

**THE TREES** on the property include birch, pine, rowan and oak. The twisted pine after which the headland is named is located at the foot of the steps leading down from the waterfront terrace off the main reception room. Typical Finnish plants have been set out, such as heather, lingonberry and bilberry for ground cover. Flowering plants include meadowsweet and wood anemone, for example. The landscaping was designed by Maj-Lis Rosenbröijer.

Mäntyniemi is the last major work designed by Reima and Raili Pietilä in their architectural career.





OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

Mariankatu 2, FI-00170 Helsinki, Finland

Telephone: +358 9 661 133

Telefax: +358 9 638 247

[www.president.fi](http://www.president.fi)