

The Hirvijärvi trail is the longest of Laipanmaa trails and also offers the most versatile terrain and the nicest scenery for its hikers. There are rocks, ponds, marshy areas and lots of beautiful Finnish industrial forest along the trail. The trail, about 12 kilometres long, is good for a day trip as you can easily manage it in a day, even if you stop and look at the views a bit longer.

Length: approximately 12 kilometres

Duration: approximately 5 hours

Trail markings: the trail is marked with blue-headed marking poles like all Laipanmaa trails, and partly also with blue fabric bands and paint strokes.

Suitability: suitable also for beginner hikers. Please note that the path is rocky at parts and at the waterfront of lake Iso Hirvijärvi there are two sets of long and steep stairs.

Hirvijärvi Trail Description

The best place to start the trail is at pond Pihtilampi, where there is ample parking space, a lean-to and a camp fire place as well as a tidy composting latrine. The Pihtilampi area is unbelievably beautiful especially at sunset and is worth a visit even if you are not planning on hiking the trail at all.

You can go round the Hirvijärvi trail counterclockwise too, but this description talks you through the trail clockwise. The trail is marked with blue-headed marking poles like all Laipanmaa trails and occasionally also with blue paint strokes.

Duckboards to the Iso Hirvijärvi waterline

The trail starts from the lean-to on duckboards and after crossing a forest road you'll dive into an older forest. The trail runs varyingly on duckboards and forest path. After a short walk you'll reach Sadinlampi pond which is said to be "as deep as it is long".

Moving on from the pond, the path has some steep and rocky rises which can be slippery when wet. About one kilometre into the trail there is a recently logged area and you'll need to pay attention to the marking poles as the path is sometimes hard to see. At the edge of the clearing you can already see lake Iso Hirvijärvi. The path towards it descends through the clearing. When getting closer to the lake the descent gets really steep and there are stairs on the hillside to make going down easier. At the Soukkionlahti bay there is an info post about the area. Here is also the fork for the Haltia Trail, which is about 2,5 km long and ends at the village Haltia.

Rises, falls and versatile terrain

When you leave the bay, there's a steep rise with sturdy stairs. On the top of the hill there's a wonderful view to the lake! From here the trail continues to rise towards Korppivuori hill. On Korppivuori the view of Iso Hirvijärvi is even better, and you can really see far all around Laipanmaa. The trail goes on following the form of the lake. There are rises and descents in the terrain and the forest changes here and there from spruces to leaf trees and ferns on the ground.

About 4 kilometres into the trail you'll reach a marshy area, where the scent is simply stunning when the marsh tea blooms. After that a rockier area will follow and pretty soon after that a young pine forest with lots of heather on the ground. Having passed the young forest you'll cross different aged forest patches until at about 5 kilometres you'll reach the road and go right from there. Walk the road for about 0,5 kilometres and then turn left towards Vähä Hirvijärvi lake. If you like, you can also continue on the road.

The trail follows Vähä Hirvijärvi's shoreline for about half a kilometre and then turns right, rising past Tulivuori hill and coming back to the road you left earlier. Walk on to the crossroads where you'll find another info post about the area.

Halfway break at Ruokojärvi lean-to

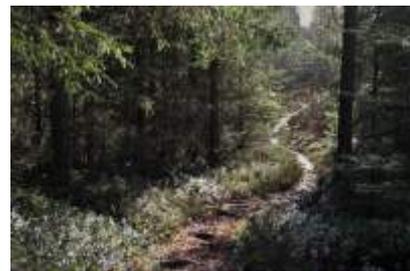
At the crossroads you can choose: go straight across the crossroads and follow the Nature Path towards Rajala's hut, or go right on the forest road. In this description we'll go right, towards the Ruokojärvi lean-to, the halfway break spot. You'll continue a good while on the forest road and then turn right on a path and take it until you reach another road. Go left here and soon you'll find the info post and Ruokojärvi lean-to where it's a wonderful idea to have a break and eat your packed lunch and even make a fire.

Forest roads to Pihtilampi

From the lean-to you'll return to the forest road and go left for about half a kilometre and then go right onto a forest path. This bit of the trail has little rises and falls but also flatter terrain and all kinds of forest types can be seen.

When reaching the next forest road, there's an info post at the crossroads. Go right here and walk on the road for about 1 kilometre. The next path will be on the left hand side. Walk the path for another kilometre, crossing different aged forest parts and marshy spots, until you reach yet another forest road. Go right and stay on the road for about 100 metres before going into the forest again on a path (turn left).

You'll be getting closer to Pihtilampi pond again. This is a really nice part of this trail! Take the duckboards to the waterfront of Pihtilampi and cross the bridge. The trail follows the ponds shore, sometimes on duckboards, sometimes on a stony path. Marsh tea grows all around. There's a bench next to the cliff which invites you for a short rest to admire the views once more. From here it's only about 500 metres of trail left along the pond until you reach the starting point, Pihtilampi lean-to and parking spot.



Suitability and gear

The trail is generally easy: normal forest path and road. There are two steep stairs on the trail though, as well as some other steep rises and descents. The stairs have been made coarse so they are not all that slippery when wet. At parts the path is very stony.

Light footwear is enough, but during rainy or wet weather waterproof shoes are recommended. The grasses and leaves leaning over the paths easily get your shoes and your trouser legs wet. Areas with lots of rock and rootstocks may be slippery when wet – be especially careful in rises and descents with rocks or rootstocks and on the duckboards.

Lean-to's and fire places

There are two lean-to's and fire places on the Hirvijärvi trail. Each rest area also has a latrine. Ruokojärvi lean-to is located a bit farther from the lake Ruokojärvi waterfront and is very suitable for a rest on this trail, as it is about half way through the trail. The Pihtilampi lean-to is close to the starting point of this trail and is suitable for even just a quick visit to Laipanmaa. There is no well in Laipanmaa so remember to bring enough drinking water with you.

You can also stay the night at any of the lean-to's. If you would like to camp in a tent, please do so in the near of a lean-to to protect the terrain from wear and tear.