



Villa Lulla and its additional buildings blend seamlessly into the surrounding archipelago. The vast windows that reach from floor level all the way to the ceiling make the sea views an integral part of the building.

## Cabin Lulla

Designed by architect Joanna Maury-Ahola, Villa Lulla is the holiday home of a couple with a school-aged daughter from the capital area and located on its own island in Porkkala, just outside Helsinki.

The modern, effortlessly streamlined archipelago home is made up of a number of separate buildings. The 150 square-metre main villa forms a single, open space; the large living area includes an open-plan kitchen, dining area and sofa group integrated into the floor. The sleeping areas are tucked behind the kitchen, and can be separated from the rest of the space with sliding doors. A sauna building is located along the seafront in front of the villa. A guesthouse behind the villa was constructed from similar materials as the main building but with lighter hues. There is also a separate storage building next to the sauna.

“We have always lived in Espoo by the sea, and a summer cottage or holiday home hasn’t really even crossed our minds. But then my wife happened to come across a newspaper ad of an island of one’s own for sale, and in just a few days we became island owners. We had been admiring buildings designed by architect Joanna Maury-Ahola for some time, and were fortunate to have her as our architect,” owner of Villa Lulla explains.



Architect Joanna Maury-Ahola is renowned for her highly individual buildings constructed to a high standard, many of which are located on an island. Her strengths lie in placing buildings in exacting conditions as a seamless continuum to surrounding nature. The starting points for designing Villa Lulla arose from her clients' wish for a whole that blurs the lines between the inside and outside through the use of large windows. The family and architect have a shared passion for a minimalistic style. The design process progressed rapidly to the construction phase.

"We are fortunate to have found an island of our own and to achieve such an incredibly functional whole. Archipelago life that we love so dearly reveals its different sides in different parts of the island. I get to enjoy the sheltered cliffs in one area, and crashing waves in another," the owner describes.

Materials of wood, steel and stone reflect the surrounding landscape also on the inside. The buildings were constructed on steel stilts to avoid disturbing the natural archipelago habitat. Also the steel columns in the interior spaces were left visible and untreated. Several stunning details were created from corten steel, such as sliding doors and drawers. The quality of the build and details are testament to the painstaking architectural design and craftsmanship.

On the entrance side, the façade of Siberian larch forms a closed, sheltered wall carefully pegged into black cladding. It is not until you step inside that you are met with awe-inspiring views of open seas through the vast windows.

An Africa theme is important to the family, as they have visited the continent often and now even own a share in a nature reserve, which gives them the right to spend as much time there as they wish. Promoting animal welfare is close to the family's heart.

"After reading piles of comics as a little boy, I began dreaming about owning a piece of Africa. Later on in life, I was given the chance to take part in developing the Limpopo-Lipadi reserve. We are the only Nordics involved, most of the other shareholders hailing from other parts of Europe and America. We spend a lot of time in Africa, and have wanted to breathe some of the ambience both in our home in Espoo and here at Villa Lulla. An outdoor shower is one of my favourite details in Villa Lulla, something I got used to in Africa," the owner explains.

Also the name of the villa refers to Africa. The couple's daughter was a baby when the villa was being constructed, and the parents often played African lullabies to her. The seaside sauna was named Limpopo-Lipadi as a reminder of the African heat and inspired by the nature reserve, while the guesthouse is called Huatai, which means heart.







**Architect Joanna Maury-Ahola has designed two of the buildings presented in this book: Cabin Lulla in 2010–2013 and Cabin Hurtti in 2006.**

## Architect Joanna Maury-Ahola

### CABIN HURTTI

“The summerhouse of Hurtti Isomeri is definitely one my personal favourites, as it was my firm’s first commission. It was wonderful to see the plans transform into a house. Hurtti was after a functional and compact space. Every inch was put to optimal use, and the furnishing considered painstakingly. At first, the summerhouse only had one guestroom, but we added another one in connection to the sauna building, as there seemed to be a constant influx of visitors.”

“The design process was effortless, as the client knew exactly what they wanted. With the father and son duo, we were able to go for a slightly more rugged look. The kitchen and cabinets were included in the design, and I also designed the dining table and corner sofa. Naturally, the most rewarding part was having complete freedom in designing the building and interiors. Hurtti and I are friends, so I

get to spend summer days here, which is special. I don’t usually get a chance to spend time at sites I’ve designed once they are completed,” Joanna Maury-Ahola adds.

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“The family was a wonderful, enthusiastic partner, and it was a joy to work with them. From an architect’s point of view, the project was particularly rewarding because it allowed me to realize many ideas and

even unusual solutions, such as the leather sofa group integrated into the floor. Most of the furniture was designed and tailor-made for Villa Lulla.”

“All the buildings on the island blend into the landscape and are connected by walkways constructed from Siberian larch. I wanted to choose materials of a high standard that work well in a natural setting, such as oak, pine, steel, Siberian larch and granite. Instead of separate rooms, the main building forms an open space, although sliding doors were included for the possibility of privacy,” explains architect Joanna Maury-Ahola.