



HISTORY OF THE SNOWCASTLE

World's Greatest SnowCastle 1996

The first SnowCastle was a gift from UNICEF and the town of Kemi to all the children in the world. Everybody in Finland knows what snow is, but the majority of children in the world have never seen or experienced snow. Still, snow is something that stimulates imagination of every children: what does snow look like, feel like, taste like? This was the basic idea of the very first SnowCastle. SnowCastle also earned its place in the Guinness Book Of Records with its 1 100 meters long walls. Astonishing 273 000 people visited the SnowCastle!

- architect Mr Tero Eloranta, architect of the city of Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle 30 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 13 500 m²
- stage with seats for 1500 clients
- services: Chapel, Restaurant, Stage, Adventure land and Playing park for children
- program during the season: concert by the famous soprano Karita Mattila, Ice Fairytale –play, concert competition, international hot-air balloon event, UNICEF-concert, performance by folk dance ensemble Rimpparemmi

New SnowCastle in 1997

The second SnowCastle in Kemi was even more popular than the Castle year before. Exotic IceRestaurant with furnishing made of ice, Art Gallery, Chapel and the Castle itself with its massive towers was an impressive experience –a fabulous cultural centre in the Nordic winter. During the construction 30 000 clients and during the season 317 000 clients came to see Kemi's winter wonder!

- architect Mr Tero Eloranta, architect of the city of Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 20 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 20 000 m²
- highest tower 20 meters, walls around the Castle 400 meters
- services: Chapel, Restaurant, Stage, Art Gallery
- program: Christmas Opera Amal and Nightly Guests, concert by Ms Tamara Lund and mr Alexandru Ionitza, Ice Fairytale-play, concert by Mr Jaakko Ryhänen, SnowCastle-boxing competition

Third SnowCastle 1998 had two floors!

The latest challenge of using snow as a building material was to build a castle with two floors – and they succeeded! The room with area 100 m² rose one floor higher than the rest of the Castle. Winter 1998 continued the triumph of the SnowCastle. More than 300 000 visitors came and so did the media of the world: CNN, Sky Channel, Discovery, Deutsche Welle, BBC... they all have made reports of the SnowCastle, Kemi and Finland!

- architect mrs Eija Anttila from Oulu, Finland
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 15 000 m³
- services: Chapel, Restaurant, Stage, Childrens World, Art Gallery
- program: Ice show by mrs Susanna Rahkamo-Kokko and mr Petri Kokko, Snowqueen-play, Gentlemen-tournament (international football tournament for "old gentlemen"), Kemi Boxing Games, Iiro Seppänen Magic show, Husky sledge competition, Concerts by Finnish bands and vocalists, Finnish Red Cross charity concert
- for the first time SnowCastle was in two floors

SnowCastle 1999 charmed with shapes

The architectonic shapes of the fourth SnowCastle reminded the features of ancient temples of Mayas!



The fantasy ice skating show by Finnish figure skaters Susanna Rahkamo and Petri Kokko was filmed by Americans... The builders of the Castle reached even higher heights than before: the Castle had three floors! The structures rose as high as 14,5 meters! For the first time it was possible to stay overnight in the SnowHotel – during the first season 89 clients experienced this arctic experience! The SnowCastle was again greeted by visitors around the globe, this year 250 000 visitors came to marvel the beautiful SnowCastle of Kemi.

- architect mrs Eija Anttila from Oulu, Finland
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 16 500 m³
- SnowCastle area 1 420 m², area of covered space 840 m²
- services: Chapel, Restaurant, Childrens World, Art Gallery, SnowHotel
- program: Ice show by mrs Susanna Rahkamo-Kokko and mr Petri Kokko, Kemi Boxing Games, Huvitutti concert for children, Concerts by finnish bands, Snow carving Finnish championship competition
- Ice sculptures were designed and carried out by chinese carves from Mantrusia

Millennium SnowCastle 2000

The turn of the millennium was celebrated throughout the world and also in Kemi by the town's fifth SnowCastle. Numerous stars of the entertainment world performed in the SnowCastle. Also Bomfunk MC's, whose single "Freestyler" was number 1 seller in Europe in 2000, had a gig in SnowCastle. And the Castle itself was the most magnificent Castle ever built! SnowCastle had some 100 000 visitors during the season. SnowHotel was built for the second time and 486 clients all around the world came to see and feel the spirit of the snowy room.

- architect Venanzia Rizzi-Piira, italian architect student from Oulu University
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 15 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 17 000 m², area of covered space 1 360 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Art Glass Gallery, Chapel, Childrens World, Art Gallery
- program: International Kemi Boxing Games, variours concerts for children and adults, Night Glow – hot air balloon, event, concert by famous Finnish Bomfunk MC's

SnowCastle 2001

The sixth SnowCastle attracted 108 000 guests all around the world. Several Finnish stars performed on SnowCastle's stage. Danish a capella group Vocapella enchanted SnowCastle's guests with its magnificent singing. SnowCastle tempted some 108 000 visitors and 459 clients to stay overnight.

- architect Mr Jussi Leppälä and Mr Rauno Ruonansuu, both local
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 15 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 8 000 m², area of covered space 1 055 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens World, Art Gallery and skating rink
- program: several Finnish bands gave concert but the highlight was the concert by Sonata Arctica

SnowCastle 2002

Seventh SnowCastle was build on a new location, in the middle of the town, on the market place. Famous folk dance ensemble Rimppammi performed in the opening ceremony. Nearly 2000 people came to see the excellent show! For the first time the Hotel was two-stories high. 446 people came to experience the wonderful arctic night in the snowy hotel rooms. Children from all over the world fell in love with the new attraction, Snowball Sea. 110 000 visitors came to see the magnificent SnowCastle 2002.

- architects were the same as previous year
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 12 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 4 200 m², area of covered space 960 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel and Childrens World with snowball sea

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- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children, live role play called "Ice Kings sceptre"

SnowCastle 2003

Eight SnowCastle kept its place on the market place, in the middle of Kemi city center. SnowHotel was named as Mammut SnowHotel because of the co-operation with Swiss leisure-time goods seller Mammut. Rooms were beautifully decorated and designed by the students of University of Lapland. Almost 700 people stayed overnight at SnowHotel. Over ten couples tied their knot in amazing SnowChapel, and couple of children got their name in SnowCastle! Total 90 000 people from all over the world came to see spectacular SnowCastle 2003!

- architect Mr Jussi Leppälä
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 15 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 4 500 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens Word and Gallery
- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children, outdoor disco and fire show

SnowCastle 2004 - an icy touch

The Ninth SnowCastle was relocated to the beautiful inner harbour of Kemi and therefore it made possible to arrange many outdoor activities near by. This Castle´s novelty was a pure Finnish smoke sauna and a warm bath in a snowhut. The SnowHotel became more popular and this year guests enjoyed of a new, warm reception building with lockers for luggage. 1 200 people spent an overnight at the SnowHotel. IceGallery culminated to an icy spider-world inside an ice igloo. Norwegian Terje Isungset gave his first concert in Finland in the SnowCastle. Insungset played music with instruments made of ice! For fishermen there was a great icefishing competition Karkauspilkit. Love was in the air in the SnowChapel when twenty couples said "Yes" during the season and three christenings were celebrated. The SnowCastle 2004 attracted over 130 000 visitors.

- architect Mr Rauno Ruonansuu from Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 18 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 8 900 m²
- services: Restaurant, Mammut SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens Word, Gallery, smoke sauna and warm bath
- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children – highlight the visit of Moomins, ice-fishing competition, concert by Terje Isungset

SnowCastle 2005 - the tenth anniversary of the SnowCastle

The tenth SnowCastle opened its doors under a starry sky coloured with fireworks. Plenty of happenings took place during the season giving amusement to both the smaller and the bigger visitors. The finals of the seventh Finlandia Vodka Cup was held in the SnowRestaurant and an ice sculpture competition Blue Ice Arts - The Beholders of Blue Ice started from the SnowCastle. Plenty of domestic performers were met. All together twenty couples tied their knot in the Chapel and two children were baptized. An Italian architect Luca Roncoroni designed the decoration of the Tower hotel, the other part of the SnowHotel and the Restaurant was coloured with glass art by Mr Heikki Ulvi. The SnowCastle 2005 was visited by 115 000 clients and over 1 300 stayed overnight at the SnowHotel!

- architect Mr Jussi Leppälä from Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 25 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 9 000 m²
- services: Restaurant, Mammut SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens Word, Gallery, smoke sauna and warm bath

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- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children, concerts by Finnish famous artists, evening ice-fishing competition

SnowCastle 2006 played with the fire

The eleventh SnowCastle had a burning hot opening with Finnish famous band Remu & Hurriganes. During the season also "Elvis" was on the stage. Pippi Longstockings among with many other domestic favourites entertained the smallest visitors of the SnowCastle. For the first time SnowCastle had a theme - "fire". Colours of fire were seen in hotel decorations as well as in lightning. SnowHotels corridor was the highlight of the Castle – with its length of over 40 meters and all the ice sculptures it caused lot of fascination. SnowRestaurant served some 3500 clients. Children had fun not only in the snowy Children's World but also in Nintendo play hall – which was as famous also among adults! Children from comprehensive school in Kemi designed snow sculptures to the Castle Yard and a wall relief in to one of SnowRestaurants six cabinets. Ice sculptures were designed and done by the Finnish champion Ms Marika Törmikoski with her team. All together 22 couples all the way from Finland, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Russia, Italy and Switzerland got married in SnowChapel. Three children were baptized. The SnowCastle 2006 wished welcome 76 000 visitors and 1 566 guests had sweet dreams at the SnowHotel!

- architect Mr Rauno Ruonansuu from Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 20 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 8 000 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens Word and Nintendo play hall
- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children, concerts by Finnish famous artists and Wedding Fair with a fashion show

SnowCastle 2007 - Seas of the world

The twelfth SnowCastle was built up in extremely short time. Building was started at the end of December and opening ceremony was held on 27th of January. This was possible due to experience in snow building. As earlier there were many activities in the Castle and many of the performances were meant for children. Example clowns and court fools, pirate Jim Pedros and even Santa Claus had time to visit SnowCastle. "Seven crazy brothers" performed in the opening ceremony. The highlight of season was the humorous imitation performance by famous imitator Jope Ruonansuu.

"Sea" -theme was seen in SnowHotel corridor which was decorated with ice sculptures such as pirates and their treasures, cannons, parrots etc. Cabinets of the SnowRestaurant were also named after the seas of the world. In the cabinets there were for example sculptures of Icebreaker Sampo which is another highlight in our destination, sinking Titanic, Ahti – the king of the sea and Harald the viking with his ship. As last year, the ice sculptures were designed and done by Mrs Marika Niittykoski with her team.

16 couples were married in the SnowChapel. The farthest couple came all the way from South-Africa. There were 82 000 visitors and 1 200 sleepers had "sweet dreams" in sleeping bags. SnowRestaurant offered specialities of Lapland and 3 000 people tasted delicious meals.

- architect Mr Rauno Ruonansuu from Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 20 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 5 500 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel, Childrens World and Nintendo play hall
- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children, concerts by Finnish famous artists, ice painting and ropeway along the Castle walls which was really popular event.



SnowCastle 2008 – Tour around the world

The thirteenth SnowCastle opened the gates in scheduled time on 26th of January. December was warmer than averagely. For that reason making of the snow was started on the last day of the year 2007. Despite of the mild weather conditions we managed to finish the constructions in a record time – in 24 days! Probably that is a record which won't be broken never again. This made possible the strong experience in snow building. Throughout the season wasn't very cold and the weather was great especially during the winter holidays in Finland and on Easter. There were 91 000 visitors and in the SnowHotel slept 1400 people from 37 different countries. TOP 5 countries were Germany, The Netherlands, Finland, Belgium and Spain.

Kristian Meurmann, a star from the Idols competition, charmed the audience in the opening ceremony. There were also awesome fireworks on the show. As earlier the SnowCastle events were meant for families and children. The visit of busy Santa Claus was a popular event. Also in the castle performed hilarious and charming musicians Hassu & Massu, clown Onni-Pelle, circus school Taika-Aika, pirate Jim Pedros and mimics Piip & Tuut. The climax of the season was a concert of Finnish famous Danny and D'Voices in the end of March. For the first time guests could enjoy delicious lunches in the SnowRestaurant. In the castle this year it was possible to make a tour around the world. The cabinets in the SnowRestaurant were named after the continentals: Asia, Europe, America, and Africa. Famous tourist attractions were shaped from ice and snow, like Eiffel tower, wall of the China and Sampo Icebreaker from Kemi. The Finnish jewellery brand Kalevala Koru had an exhibition of their collection in hallway of the SnowHotel.

- architect Mr Rauno Ruonansuu from Kemi
- amount of snow used to build the Castle: 20 000 m³
- SnowCastle area 5 400 m²
- services: Restaurant, SnowHotel, Chapel, Children's World and Nintendo play hall
- program: each week different program as well as different performances for children
- Ice and snow sculptures designed by Ms Marika Niittkoski and her team

SnowCastle 2009 - Design

The construction timetable was tight as usual but this winter was historical; the weather was treating the castle very well. The opening ceremony was held as planned on 30.1.2009. In the opening ceremony the audience had a chance to enjoy an unforgettable musical, "Memory Con Te", with amazing pyrotechnic. Design was the theme of the 14th SnowCastle. An impressive ice gallery was built in the castle, and the robust ice slabs were exhibiting the JAUR steel design collection from Lapland. The designer Eero Hyrkäs is international awarded steel designer. JAUR products were also used for serving food in the exotic SnowRestaurant.

The event calendar was planned for children and families as earlier years. The world wide famous Moomins visited the castle on Valentine's Day. Their visit and show was very popular. There was also the SnowLand for children to play. American ABC News -TV company was filming live show "Good Morning America" with Diane Sawyer in the castle. About 1 million viewers were watching the special show.

The SnowCastle had about 87 000 visitors in the end of the season. In the SnowHotel slept 950 people from 35 different countries all over the world. TOP 5 countries were The Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Finland and Belgium. The SnowChapel was designed and built about twice bigger this year. There were about 100 seats. The Valentine's Day was Saturday and there were 5 wedding on that day. In the SnowChapel got married 28 couples. The far most couples were from USA and Japan. The SnowCastle was open historically long, until 10th of April.

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- architect Mr Rauno Ruonansuu from Kemi
 - amount of snow used to build the Castle: about 20 000 m³
 - SnowCastle area 4 650 m² (corresponding about 1,5 football-fields)
 - services: SnowRestaurant, SnowHotel, SnowChapel, SnowLand
 - program: each week different program as well as different performances for children (Moomins, snowtubing competition, Clowns, floor ball tournament, magician, Live Actions Role Plays, musicians playing children´s favorites and the castle mascots Arttu and Terttu daily).