

# FOOD'S READY!

Vantaan Tilapalvelut Vantti Oy



## Learning to enjoy food

**A regular daily meal rhythm is the foundation of healthy eating for both adults and children. Eating is a part of learning about well-being, including daily rhythms, sleep, rest and management of screen time. Positive meal experiences and a shared joy of food help the child's food habits develop in the right direction.**

**W**ith daycare meals, our goals are to try out lots of new tastes and different types of foods, and to learn independent eating and good table manners. It is good to encourage the child to taste everything, so that they can develop a sufficiently varied diet from the very beginning. Daycare meals are an important part of a child's daily nutrition, which is then supplemented by the food offered at home.

Mealtimes are part of a daycare center's educational activities. The daycare takes special care to foster an eating situation where no one has to hurry and where good table manners are valued. Children learn to appreciate their own food culture, as well as the food cultures of others. The Eating together food recommendations for families with children puts it very succinctly: "Children eat what they like. They like what they know. They learn to know what they are served often."

We can be proud of having a 70-year-long tradition of enjoying free warm meals in Finnish schools. Another source of pride is the balanced and nutritious meal set that we can serve to daycare children of all ages.

The Vantti catering professionals prepare food for around 120 daycare centers on every weekday of the year. In addition to these, we prepare food for around-the-clock daycare centers on every day of the year. Altogether, Vantti prepares approximately 40,000 portions of food to daycares, schools, services for the elderly and to the Katriina hospital every day.

We would like to warmly welcome your child onto this journey with our catering services!

Wishing you a pleasant autumn,

HARRI KOIVULA  
DIRECTOR OF CATERING  
VANTTI  
TEL. 040 721 6934  
HARRI.KOIVULA@VANTTI.FI



### Daycare menu

The daycares use rotating menus that are made for six weeks at a time. This means that well-liked foods like meatballs and fish sticks come up on average every six weeks. Dishes that have been popular in the daycare children's favorite dish surveys will show up on the menu more often. The Vantti cafeteria menus are available online at [www.vantti.fi](http://www.vantti.fi)

The daycare meals follow the City of Vantaa guidelines, e.g. with the way we choose ingredients. Fish is served at least once a week, and similarly chicken, minced meat and vegetarian foods are served once a week. Food with sausages is served at most twice a week, in accordance with the early childhood education food recommendations.

Our customers' requests and suggestions are very important to us for developing our menus, and our selection of foods is regularly updated based on the feedback. In our menus, we also consider holidays and seasonal foods, for example on Laskiainen, we will traditionally serve pea soup and pancakes.

Daycare meals are designed to provide complete and balanced nutrition, and to follow the quality criteria of the school meal recommendations as much as possible. The daycare meals cover two thirds of the daily nutrition needs of a child in full-day daycare. You can read more about the recommendations at the address: <https://www.evira.fi/en/food-stuff/healthy-diet/>

The food we serve is low-lactose or lactose-free. The meals always include vegetables or fruit, prepared in a variety of ways. The cereal grain products used are primarily high-fiber wholegrain products, and the dairy products used are low-fat or fat-free. We use iodized salt in cooking, in accordance with the recommendations.



## Contents of the meals

Daycare meals are primarily normal, traditional dishes, similar to home-made foods. Along with familiar dishes, we also offer new types of foods and tastes from around the world. The vegetarian option is available every day, and you're free to try it, even if you aren't a vegetarian.

Contents of the daycare meals:

- **Breakfast:** organic porridge, bread, omelette or yoghurt
- **Lunch:** warm main dish with accompaniment, salad and salad dressing, crispbread and spread. With soup dishes, soft bread, sliced meats, vegetables and fruit
- **Afternoon snack:** soft bread with sliced meats and vegetable, berry pudding, yoghurt, whipped porridge, curd, savory pie etc.
- **Dinner:** like lunch
- **Evening snack:** like afternoon snack

All meals include fat-free milk, crispbread and a spread. Now and then, we can serve a treat — fresh bread that we have baked ourselves! Primarily, the selection of bread is high in fiber and low in salt. Lactose-free milk is also available at the parents' request. This requires you to fill out a special diet notification form.

The food is served in the daycare group rooms or in the dining hall serving lines. It's best if the children only take an amount of food they can eat. If they wish, they can always have more. We

are always trying to reduce the amount of biowaste produced with our meals.

## Lunch starts with the plate model

The plate model is a good thing to consider with daycare meals. In the model, one half of the plate is filled with vegetables, and the other is divided equally between the sources of energy and protein. It's important to follow the portion sizes of foods, such as with numbers of meatballs or pancakes, so that there will be enough for everyone. It's good to try at least a little of everything served in order to get a balanced meal.

## Children's nutrition and food preferences

Children's food habits and preferences are developed at an early age and are still largely the same when they reach adulthood. Because of this, childhood is an important time to affect one's future nourishment.

Root vegetables, vegetables, fruit and berries, potatoes, wholegrains and vegetable oils form a solid foundation for a diet that supports the child's growth, development and health. Low-fat dairy products, legumes, fish and meat complement the diet and make it a nutritionally balanced whole. A healthy diet is low in salt and does not include large amounts of added sugar.

An absolute requirement for healthy food choices is that a sufficient amount of tasty and healthy food should always be available at home. The adults affect the development of their children's food habits and attitudes with their own example, affecting what their children eat and what they learn to enjoy. Through different food experiences and learning, our food habits and preferences can develop. Meal times with the whole family are valuable. Having the meal together teaches the children about things like food culture and apportioning their meals, as well as offering a natural time to talk about the day.

## Meal times

Meal times are decided by each daycare center for themselves. Your child's daycare can give you more information. If your child is absent from daycare or a daycare meal, remember to inform your child's group about the absence. This is especially important if your child follows a special diet. This way, we can avoid wasting food.

## Special diets

Our kitchens prepare special diet options for our customers in accordance with the City of Vantaa special diet guidelines: Special diets can be prepared for children in early childhood education based on health reasons, primarily based on a medical statement. A medical statement is not required for low-lactose diets, lactose-free diets, vegetarian diets, nor with diets based on religion or ethics.

The medical statement for a child's special diet should primarily be requested from the doctor/organization that has been their point of care/examination. If the child is not in care with any medical operator regarding their special diet, the family

should be in contact with the doctor at their local health center to receive a statement. The child health center doctor can write a statement at the child's regular health examination. A medical statement may normally not be more than 6 months old at the start of daycare, unless the doctor has defined a longer term in the statement. The special diet will be arranged such that the child will not be served any unsuitable foodstuffs, but they might not be served everything that is suitable for them. The menu for a child following a special diet will be designed to resemble the menus of other children as closely as possible.

A special diet application form is to be delivered annually to the daycare manager. With this practice, we can ensure that our information on the child's diet are up to date, and that the food provider is aware of the special diet if there are any changes to the situation. It is not necessary to provide a new medical statement every year if the doctor writing the statement has defined a longer term in the statement, or if the special diet is permanent (e.g. diabetes, coeliac disease, fish or nut allergies). You can get the form and instructions from a daycare center or from here: <http://www.vantti.fi/ateria/erityisruokavalio>

If you have any questions about your child's special diet arrangements in early childhood education, first contact the daycare's manager. If you need advice on planning or expanding your child's diet, you can contact the nutritional therapist of the City of Vantaa: Mervi Isoherranen, 040 8322734 (Mon 9-10 am, Thurs 2-4 pm).

Current Care guidelines (in Finnish): <http://www.kaypahoito.fi/web/english/home> & Food allergies in children brochure: [www.allergia.fi/in-english/](http://www.allergia.fi/in-english/)

## Vegetarian day

Daycares in Vantaa have a vegetarian food day once a week. The implementation of the vegetarian food



day is primarily motivated by environmental reasons. Vegetarian options are also encouraged in the nutrition recommendations, as increasing the use of vegetables has many positive health effects. The vegetarian food day promotes the varied use of vegetables and familiarizes pupils with different sorts of vegetarian dishes. Vegetarian food days are planned in such a way that the meal is balanced for all nutrients, not just protein. Protein sources used in vegetarian food are beans, chickpeas, lentils, dairy products, egg and quorn.

## Themes

The daycares organize theme days throughout the year. The menus also consider different seasons and holidays. In the autumn semester of 2018, Vantti will have the following food themes:

**20 Nov:** Children's Rights Day – children's choice: lasagnette and chocolate mousse

**30 Nov:** Pikkujoulu porridge

**5 Dec:** Independence day celebration – Karelian hotpot and mashed potato, lingonberry parfait

**19 Dec:** Traditional Christmas meal

In addition to the themes, some daycares will be participating in the Taste Test Week on week 36. On the Taste Test Week, we will be familiarizing ourselves with domestic vegetables and root vegetables. On week 37, all Vantti kitchens will be participating in the Waste Week, with the purpose of starting discussion around food waste in schools and daycares, as well.

## Food groups

Approximately ten Vantti daycares have active food groups. Through the food groups, the children can voice their opinions on the daycare meals. For more information about food groups, talk to the daycare staff or kitchen staff at your daycare center. We are regularly listening to feedback about the children's favorite foods through customer surveys, as well as in the food groups. The favorite foods chosen by the children can be seen on our rotating menus, as well as on the Children's Rights Day on 20 November.

## Feedback

We consider the feedback we receive from customers in developing daycare meals. In practical matters, such as questions related to the day's meals, we ask that you contact the daycare's kitchen directly. You can also leave feedback in writing through a Vantti feedback form at the address [www.vantti.fi](http://www.vantti.fi) > Palaute.

## What is Vantti?

Vantti is a company owned by the City of Vantaa, producing catering, cleaning, property, reception and security services to the City of Vantaa. Vantti employs approximately 970 people, with an annual turnover of approximately 47 million euro in 2017. Vantti operates with inhouse principles, as an independent company and providing services to the Vantaa City Group. Read more at [www.vantti.fi](http://www.vantti.fi)