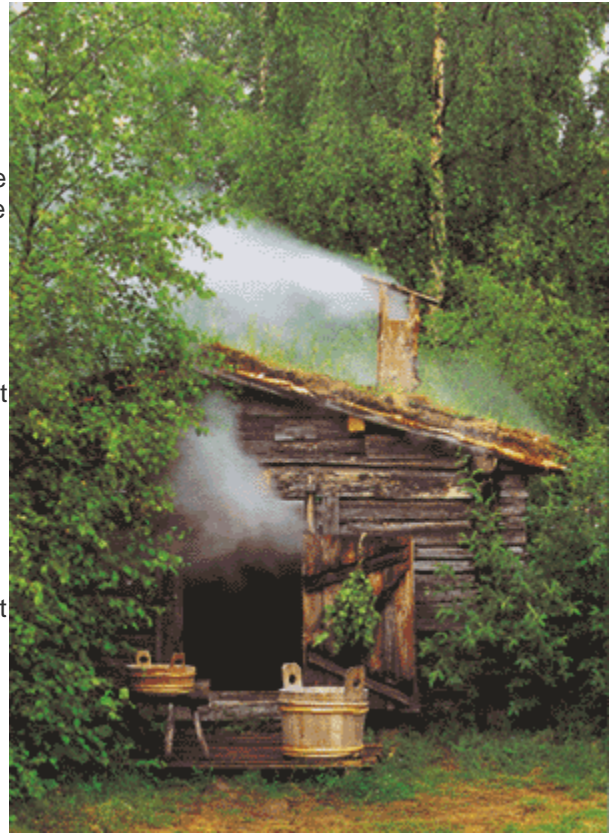


The History of Sauna

SAUNA, correctly pronounced "sow (rhymes with wow!) nah," is the only Finnish word in the English dictionary; it means "bath" and "bathhouse." Sauna has been a way of life in Finland, where it was invented, for over 2000 years. One of the first written descriptions of the Finnish Sauna was in 1112. The earliest Sauna was dug into an embankment in the ground. Later Saunas were built above ground with wooden logs. The rocks were heated in a stone stove with a wood fire until the rocks were super hot. This room did not have a chimney but a small air vent in the back wall. The smoke was allowed to fill the room while it was heating. It was a half-day process to heat this type of room. When the Sauna reached temperature, the bathers entered after the smoke cleared. The walls and ceiling would become dark black. This original Sauna was called "savu" (Finnish for smoke) Sauna. The name Sauna it thought to be a derivative of the word savuna, literally "in smoke". The Sauna later evolved to the more typical metal woodstove heater with the chimney. Wherever Finns traveled they brought their Sauna culture with them. It was first brought to America by Finns who settled in the current state of Delaware in 1638. Modern day life and electricity evolved the Sauna again. Saunas became more accessible in the U.S. after the electric Sauna stove was developed in the 1950s. Some Americans that lived near Scandinavian communities may have been lucky enough to discover Saunas early on. After 360 years in this country, the Sauna has become an established tradition for many Americans as it has been for the Finns.



Sauna Benefits



Soothes and relaxes tired muscles

Athletes use Saunas to improve their range of motion and to help loosen tight muscles after a hard workout.

Helps to relieve mental fatigue

When your body is relaxed your mind feels better and you feel better. The Sauna promotes a wonderful sense of well being.



Relieves tension and stress

You will feel rejuvenated and have increased energy levels. The Sauna helps many get a more restful sleep.

Provides a cardiovascular workout--helps condition the heart

Finnish researchers have reported that the regular use of Saunas helps maintain the blood vessels. Vessels become elastic and pliable longer due to regular dilation and contraction from the process of heating and cooling the body repeatedly. The heart rate increases in the Sauna creating a demand for more oxygen, which in turn burns calories and provides a mild workout for the heart.

Increases metabolic rate

Regular Sauna usage helps speed up the metabolism in a way similar to exercise.

Improves circulation

Blood vessel dilation brings blood closer to the surface of the skin and, as blood vessels expand to accommodate increased blood flow, circulation in the extremities improves.

Provides temporary relief for arthritic pain

Heat therapy benefits joint and muscle pain and helps with range of motion.

Promotes healing and releases natural pain killers

Beta Endorphins and Norepinephrines are released as the body's natural pain killers temporarily raise the body's pain threshold.

Increases resistance to illness

The Finnish Medical Society, Duodecim, has conducted tests that show a 30% less chance of getting a cold when Saunas are taken regularly. Saunas have even been shown to help in preventing a cold from getting worse. Sauna heat puts the body into an artificial fever state (hyperthermia). Fever is part of the body's natural healing process. This "fake fever" stimulates the immune system resulting in an increased production of disease fighting white blood cells and antibodies.

Burn as many as 300 calories during a Sauna session

The Sauna should not, of course, be used as a weight loss aid by itself, but when used with a good diet and exercise program, a Sauna can help burn more calories. Weight is lost in a Sauna, but most of it is water loss from sweating.





Helps maintain clear, healthy skin

Increased blood flow promotes cellular growth and development by bringing important nutrients to subcutaneous and surface tissue. While taking a Sauna, blood flow to the skin increases to as high as 50-70% of cardiac output (normal is 5-10%). Sauna heat relaxes facial tension, skin pores are opened, and heat stimulates the epidermis, thus increasing circulation. Vasodilation (expansion of blood vessels) brings essential fluids to the surface, enhancing collagen production, to maintain skin elasticity and a wrinkle-free complexion.



Sweat out toxins and impurities from the body

Sauna is the deepest cleaning bath in the world. Perspiration induced by a Sauna opens the body's pores and naturally expels impurities and toxins from the body. There are many detoxification programs that use the Sauna daily to rid the body of chemicals. The Sauna has been used to sweat out nicotine, pesticides, and other toxins. Skin is the largest organ of the body and 30% of body wastes exit through the skin. The Sauna elevates the body's ability to rid itself of this waste.



Relieves allergies and sinus congestion

Steam inhalation is excellent for relieving throat irritations and helping the inflammation of upper respiratory mucous membranes. Sauna steam loosens secretions and can stimulate discharge of mucous from the lungs and throat.



Reduces pain from sunburn

Heat from the Sauna soothes sunburned skin as blood rushes to the surface to aid in healing.

Helps with kidney function

Sauna bathing can augment proper kidney function. Perspiration through the skin's pores excretes a good amount of the body's wastes and reduces the load put on the kidneys. Sweating is such an effective detoxifier that some doctors recommend Sauna usage to supplement persons on kidney dialysis.

Requires little maintenance

Saunas are only on when being used, unlike spas and hot tubs. Sauna heaters have very few moving parts so there is less chance of anything breaking. The only maintenance involved is periodically cleaning the floor.



Adds value and luxury to your home

A Sauna is an affordable amenity that adds monetary value to your home. Plus, with its relaxation and health benefits, the Sauna is a sanctuary that creates value for your whole family.

SAUNA is the only bath in the world in which both dry and damp air is present at the same time. It is the body's natural way to cleanse itself through perspiration. The high heat (average of 180° F) and the low humidity (about 25%) create an environment which promotes over-all perspiration and the deep cleansing of pores.

The body's impurities are flushed away (even nicotine from a smoker's body). This total perspiration helps maintain clear, healthy skin and provides a rosy afterglow. Saunas are first and foremost a place of relaxation. The soft heat and humidity soothes and relaxes tired muscles, relieves stress, and promotes a wonderful after Sauna feeling of satisfaction and well being.

The body's natural painkillers, beta-endorphins and norepinephrines, are released to provide a feeling much like the runner's high. During a Sauna, the rate of blood circulation increases, the rate of breathing increases, and the pulse rate quickens. Saunas are like mild exercise, or a cardiovascular workout for your heart. Calories are also burned in a Sauna session. A Sauna should be used in conjunction with a proper diet and exercise program.