



Ask The Sauna Experts

HOW IS A SAUNA DIFFERENT FROM OTHER BATHS?

A Sauna must have a special, insulated room built of softwood, a heater which is designed and built to heat the room to a temperature of about 180° F (measured above heater, 6" below ceiling), and stones which get hot (about 600° F) to produce a good steam when water is poured over them. Anything else is NOT A SAUNA!

IS A SAUNA A STEAMBATH?

No. A steambath has 100% humidity. While the humidity in the Sauna is flexible — it is controlled by the amount of water ladled over the hot stones. Sauna humidity can range from desert dry (12%) to about 40% with the use of water. A Sauna has wooden walls and seats, while a steambath has tile walls and seats. A Sauna is superior to a steam-bath for opening pores and ridding the body of impurities.

IS INFRARED A SAUNA?

No. See page 21 for a comparison of Finnish Sauna vs. Infrared rooms.

ARE VENTS REQUIRED IN THE SAUNA?

They are not required but we recommend them for proper air flow. You may vent directly into your house as the relatively dry air from the vents will not damage any surrounding areas. See page 20.

SHOULD THE SAUNA ROOM BE LINED WITH DRYWALL?

No, the Sauna does not need any drywall unless required by your local building code. Attach paneling directly to wood stud frame, or to 3/8" plywood or 1"x2" wood nailers over drywall if metal studs are used.

DO SAUNAS CAUSE MOISTURE ISSUES?

As the atmosphere in the Sauna is very dry there is no possibility of water condensation to cause damage to any areas outside the Sauna room, such as peeling of wallpaper or paint. Sauna usage does not result in dry rot, mold, or mildew.

ARE ROCKS NECESSARY IN A SAUNA?

Rocks are necessary to store heat and to produce steam when water is poured over them. Heaters that do not heat rocks (such as infrared heaters) are not Sauna heaters.

SHOULD ROCKS BE DIRECTLY HEATED?

Rocks must be placed between, around, and above the elements, to completely cover them. Rocks filter the harsh heat, keep water from direct contact with elements, and produce a soft steam. Rocks should be replaced every 5 years in heavy commercial use and every 8 to 10 years in residential use. They tend to break down, exposing bare elements, making it necessary to replace elements and other electrical parts in the heater.

WHY IS WATER NECESSARY IN A SAUNA?

Bathers can regulate their own humidity to create a more relaxing atmosphere and to aid perspiration and deep cleansing of the pores. One or two dipperfuls of water are ladled slowly over the hot stones as often as the bather chooses.

WHY MUST A SAUNA BE BUILT OF SOFTWOOD?

The humidity must be absorbed to keep the atmosphere dry. Softwoods have this property. Hardwoods become too hot to sit on or lean against. The wood must be kiln dried to within 6-11% moisture content to prevent shrinkage and warpage.

WHY IS THE THICKNESS OF THE WALL AND CEILING PANELING IMPORTANT IN THE SAUNA?

The thicker the lumber and the more growth rings per inch, the less chance there is of shrinkage. *FINLANDIA* uses kiln-dried 1" x 4" material (actual 3/16" thick) because it will not shrink as much and has more stability than

1/2" x 4" material (see pg. 23 and last page). We do not use lower quality, cheaper woods such as 1/2" knotty spruce or knotty pine.

SHOULD A SAUNA HAVE A WATERPROOF FLOOR?

A Sauna must have a waterproof floor so that it can be easily kept clean, sanitary, and free of odor by washing with a disinfectant. Best washable floors are cement, tile (strongly recommended), or vinyl. In new construction, we also recommend a drain, where possible (essential in commercial Saunas).

SHOULD A SAUNA BE INSULATED?

Yes, to prevent heat loss. We recommend R13 fiberglass batt type of insulation between the framing of the walls and ceiling.

HOW HIGH SHOULD A SAUNA CEILING BE?

Sauna ceiling height should be no higher than 7' as it is important to bring the heat down to the bench levels. It is also more economical to heat, and the Sauna will heat faster. 8' is maximum for a Sauna.

WHERE CAN A SAUNA BE INSTALLED?

Anywhere, but it is best to have it close to a shower for convenience. *FINLANDIA* Saunas are found everywhere—from the Arctic to the Antarctic and from Mt. Everest to Death Valley.

WHO CAN USE A SAUNA?

Any healthy person of any age can safely use a Sauna. People with health risks should consult their physician before using a Sauna.

IS A SAUNA EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE?

Heat up time is fast—about 25 to 30 minutes—and the Sauna is only on when being used. The average *FINLANDIA* home Sauna with 6KW heater costs as little as \$7.50 per month to operate, when used 3 times a week.