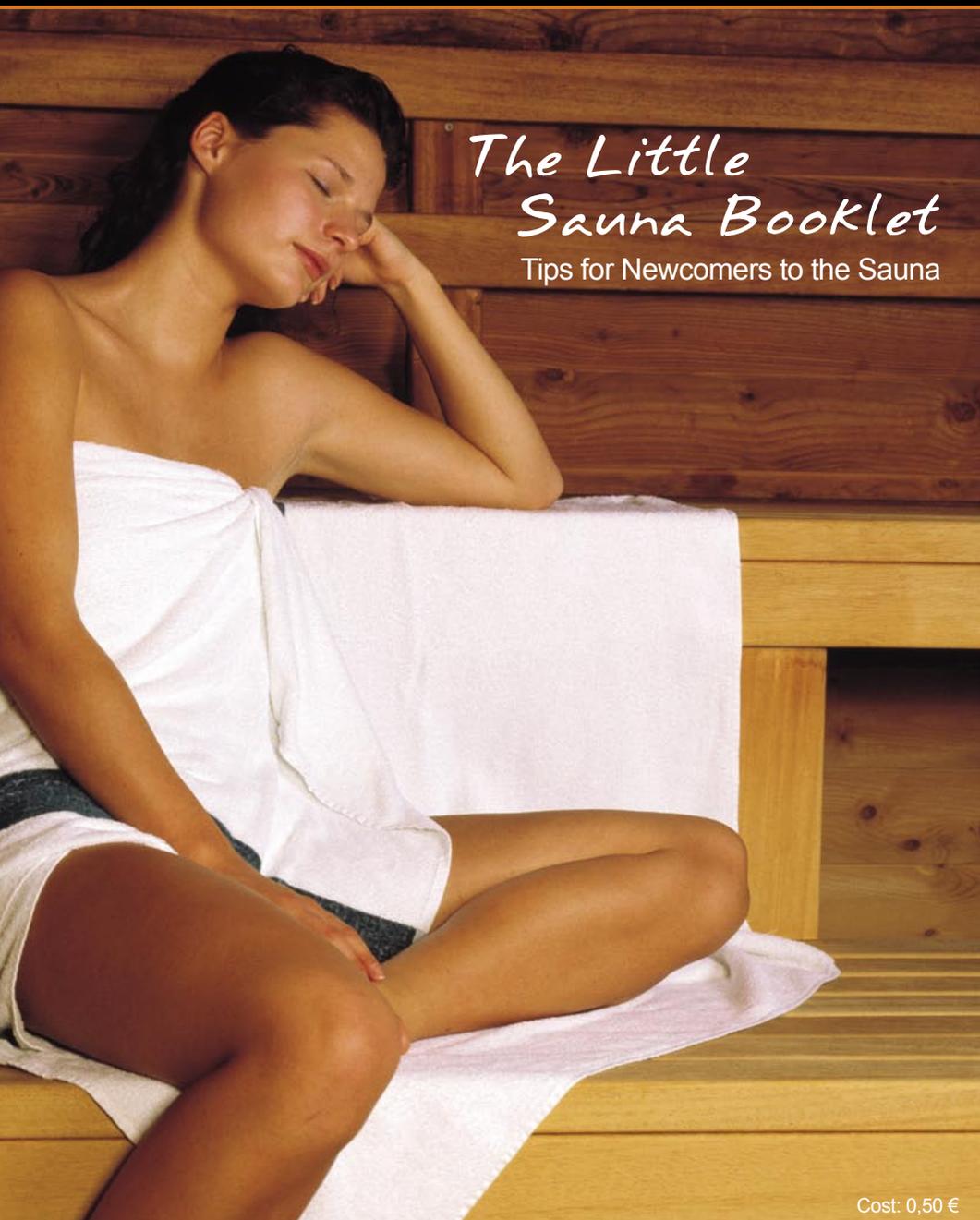


emotion of sauna



The Little Sauna Booklet

Tips for Newcomers to the Sauna



Cost: 0,50 €

*If relaxation is a place,
then you have just arrived.*





The Little Sauna Booklet - Tips for Sauna Newcomers

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The Little Sauna Booklet - Tips for Newcomers to the Sauna

1. Preface:

There are numerous opinions regarding what constitutes the “correct” way to have a sauna. This booklet is designed to inform you of several different methods available. These are only recommendations! In the course of time very individual sauna rituals arise. The main purpose for visiting a sauna is to achieve a feeling of well-being and relaxation for body and mind.

Nowadays, various boxes and barrels, tyres and crates are used in order to bring people out in a sweat. But only a real sauna should be called a sauna.

2. General advice:

2.1 Is having a sauna healthy and will I lose weight through using the sauna?

First of all, a few widely mistaken beliefs should be cleared up: People do lose weight through using saunas, but do not become slim as a result of this. The actual weight lost is purely due to the “flushing out” of bodily fluids.

During a sauna, your skin warms up by 2-4 °C. The sensation of heat is relatively strong and your body fights this by producing sweat. Its evaporation cools the skin down. The first production of sweat is, for the most part, not taken seriously, as due to the high temperatures, the sweat evaporates directly on the skin. The temperature inside your body increases steadily; however not too intensely or too quickly. Those with blood pressure problems or heart conditions should consult their doctor before visiting a sauna. From experience, it is known that having a sauna can have an extremely favourable effect on the your well-being; athletes cure their muscle injuries through using saunas and it is said that there is no better cure for “getting rid of a hangover”.

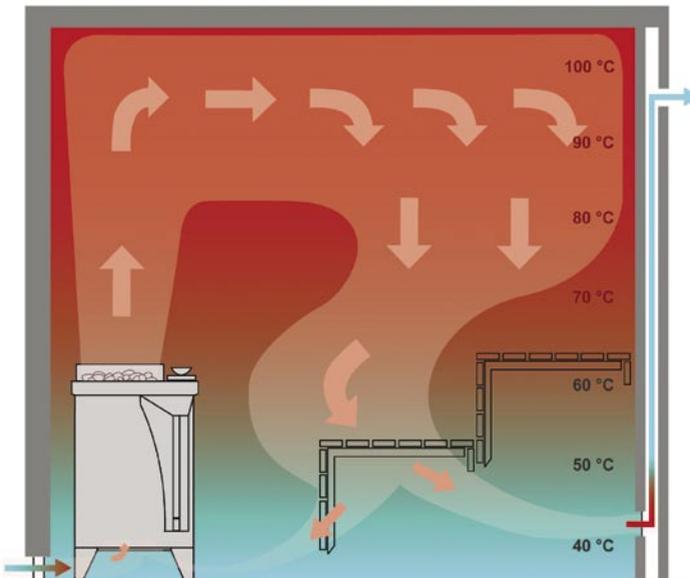
Saunas offer physical and spiritual relaxation, improvement in performance and improved blood vessel function.

2.2 How often should I visit the sauna?

Most sauna-goers visit the sauna once a week, a few go twice a week. Improvement to blood circulation lasts around one week. This means that if you regularly repeat this (on a weekly basis) you can increase your tolerance to colds and flu. During a sauna bath you should repeat the “sweating/cooling off” process 2-3 times. We recommend beginners start by doing this twice.

2.3 Heating the sauna, the sauna oven

The generation of heat generally comes from an electric powered oven which is filled with sauna stones. The exchange of air occurs through convection, which takes place through the fresh air supply below the oven; therefore raising the levels of oxygen. The heating coils warm up the stones and the surrounding area. EOS sauna ovens are stocked with upto 60 kg of stones, according to the design of the oven. This results in a balanced ratio between radiant heat and convection heat. The sauna stones must comply with high standards, they should have a high heat conductivity and be of a high density, and should not be susceptible to cracking. Olivine and peridotite stones are mainly used. In the sauna, the heated air rises upwards under the ceiling, as is shown in the illustration. In order to maintain a typical sauna climate, it is necessary to pre-heat the sauna for 45 minutes to an hour. Only then will the walls and benches have warmed up and be at the ideal climate to the room.



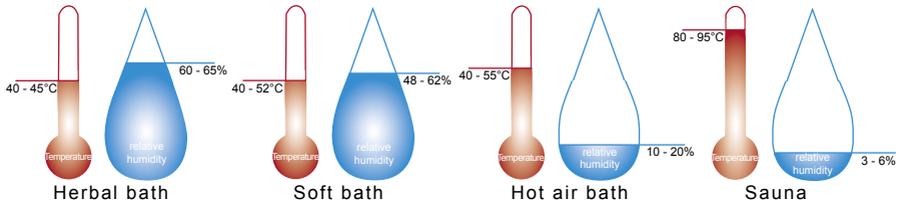
2.4 Coloured light stimulation

Coloured light stimulation is often used in gentle steam baths such as organic and herbal saunas. Colours and lights influence the human organism and support biological functions. The following four spectral colours are said to produce balancing effects:

- Blue calms the organism.
- Red excites and increases physical well-being.
- Yellow strengthens nerves and makes them more alert.
- Green is regenerative, refreshing and calming.



2.5 Uses and types of sauna baths



Source: EOS-Werke, Driedorf

2.5.1 Herbal sauna

The temperature of a herbal sauna is between 40 and 45 °C; the humidity is between 60 and 65%. In a herbal sauna, a basin is occasionally attached above the oven, which contains fresh herbs in a water bath. Essences are slowly released from the herbs and the pleasant fragrance fills the sauna room.

2.5.2 Gentle steam bath

The temperature of a gentle steam bath is between 40 and 52 °C; the humidity is between 48 and 62 %. Gentle steam baths are also known as bio-saunas, above all when they are used in conjunction with coloured lights.

2.5.3 Warm air sauna

The damp hot air bath has a special fresh air supply and which ensures that no drops of mist are produced. The temperature is between 40 and 55 °C; the humidity is 10 – 20%.

2.5.4 Finnish sauna

This is the “standard” sauna, which sauna-goers will find in nearly all sauna facilities. The temperature is generally between 80 and 95, upto even 100 °C, and is sometimes a dry and sometimes an infusion sauna. For example, if birch essence is exclusively used for the Infusion , then the sauna is called a “birch sauna”; if the herbs are used, it is called a herbal sauna and so on. However the basis of the sauna is always the Finnish sauna.

3. Your first visit to the sauna

3.1 Introduction

Allow yourself at least three hours for your first visit to the sauna! A sports bag is best suited as a sauna bag. In your sauna bag you should have:

- A sauna towel (should absorb sweat well and be approx. 2 m in length).
- One to two hand towels for drying off after showering.
- A bath towel.
- Shower sandals.
- Toiletries such as shampoo, shower gel etc.
- Body lotion for after the sauna.

It is probably best to also pack some swimwear in case there is a swimming pool which can only be used if you are wearing swimwear; or you may prefer to wear swimwear during the time you are not in the sauna.

Don't forget to pack your comb, brush and (if necessary) your hairdryer, even if the sauna facilities often have hairdryers available. It is worth taking a pair of thick socks (especially in winter), which are comfortable for during your rest period. If you have enough time and energy, you could also pack something to read as well. Finally a bottle of mineral water completes your sauna bag.

3.2 Eating before having a sauna:

You should not have a heavy meal before having a sauna, only a light snack. Your body is already working hard enough in the sauna and should not be additionally burdened with digestion. If you do not wish to sit on your own in the sweat room or do not want angry looks from the other guests, avoid eating a lot of garlic before visiting a sauna as this smell spreads intensely with excreting sweat.

3.3 How to prepare for a sauna.

Leave all items you don't need for your sauna in the changing rooms. Take your sauna bag with you.

Take off all jewellery, your watch etc. as the metal will become very hot against your skin. If you really must wear an item of jewellery, make sure that you are wearing it



when you begin your sauna as this way you won't feel the heat so intensely. There is always a convenient place by every sauna cabin where you can store your glasses. If you do require your glasses inside the sweat room, bear in mind that they will become immediately steamed up after you enter the cabin. Contact lenses won't be damaged, but they can however be uncomfortable if they begin to rub or burn. Keep the lenses moist by blinking every now and again, or simply close your eyes. Mobile phones should not be taken into the sauna.

First of all you should take a thorough shower. Cleaning yourself thoroughly is important for sweating as it gets rid of any existing film of fat on the skin, especially any traces of make-up and perfume. Clean and dry skin sweats more effectively. After your shower, dry yourself off well as drops of water on your skin will delay the sweating process. Please avoid putting on your perfume for sake of the other guests, as the heat of the sauna cause it to evaporate quickly and in a relatively small room this leads to an unpleasant cloud of perfume.

After showering, take time to check out the sauna facilities, inside and well as the areas outside the sauna. In some facilities you will also be given a guided tour and the individual areas will be explained to you. If that's not the case, and you have questions, then speak to someone who's an "old hand" at using saunas. Guests are generally very friendly and will gladly explain "their" sauna to you.

4. Your first sauna

This is what happens in the sauna cabin: you enter the sauna cabin with your sauna towel. You will find benches at varying heights: the higher the bench, the warmer you will be. Always sit or lie with your sauna towel beneath you. If in doubt, look at how your neighbour has placed their towel. The main rule in the sauna is “no sweat on the wood!” Don’t feel you have to stay in the cabin for the full duration of the hour glass (they mostly run for 15 minutes). The hour glass serves as a guide, but if you need to leave the sauna after five or seven minutes, then do. As already mentioned: The higher up you sit down/lie down, the hotter the temperature is. At the start of your sauna it is recommended that you lie on the bench and therefore expose your body to an equal amount of heat. When your head becomes hot it could be uncomfortable compared to the rest of your body. The feeling of having “sweated enough” and now being ready for a “good cool down” does not necessarily happen at the same time. In general, this is the case after 8-12 minutes (15 minutes maximum).



4.1 The infusion

In order to enjoy your first infusion, ask the person in charge of doing it how long it will last before they do it. It may be too strenuous for you if you experience a special infusion of between 12-15 minutes on your first visit. If you can not bear the infusion any longer, please leave the sauna cabin straight away. There may be guests who complain and say that the door should remain closed during the Infusion, but your health is more important. Don’t over estimate what you can handle at the beginning, but learn how to have a sauna slowly and carefully, as that way you will continue to enjoy this experience.

What happens during the infusion? For many guests the infusion is the sauna experience: a good infusion can, above all, also considerably contribute to a feeling of well-being. As a rule, the infusion is carried out with water. Recently, however, people have been using crushed ice more and more often. The water or ice is poured on to the stones slowly with a ladle, which temporarily increases the steam and humidity in the sauna. The quality of the infusion naturally depends on the sauna, just as it depends on the sauna attendant who carries out the infusion. A good infusion will be properly commemorated and can last up to a quarter of an hour. This mostly happens in three phases, with a lot of time in between and above all: with the correct technique. This is something which people say has to be learnt, as it changes the distribution of heat in the sauna; this is what provides the guest with the actual enjoyment.



4.1.1 Additions to the infusion

Additions to the infusion are essential oils or aromas which are identical to nature. The guest will smell and feel the difference between the various types. Often the essences/oils are changed hourly: in many saunas you can also find information boards informing you when and where which essence/oil will be used. It is helpful when the sauna attendant explains which aroma is being used and what its effects are before the infusion. Some of the various oils and aromas which are used in the infusion include: eucalyptus, peppermint, rosemary, conifer oil, citrus fruits (orange, lemon or mandarin) and herbs (e.g. lavender, balm and camomile). Increasingly, other fruit aromas such as apple, cherry, plum and strawberry are being used. Each guest will certainly find their favourite aroma from this variety of possibilities.

4.1.2 The honey infusion

After the normal infusion (with or without additional aromas/oils) and the first warming up phase, honey is passed round, which the sauna guests rub into their skin. This is most agreeable and purifying.

4.1.3 Salt scrub

This can be done in the sauna as well as in the steam bath. There are various varieties, but basically you rub mineral salt into your whole body after the heating-up phase. (Avoiding your eyes, genitals or wounds!)

In some saunas you rub the salt into your body inside the sauna room, in others guests do this outside. Following this, more water is poured onto the stones. The result is noticeably smoother skin, as the outer skin cells are scrubbed away.

4.1.4 Sweltering heat

This is what the steam which touches your skin once water is poured on to the stone is traditionally called. Here, however, the following infusion should be used: mineral salt is mixed with mint and, as described in the salt scrub section, it is spread over the body.

4.1.5 infusion alternatives

There are numerous further alternatives, which are often specific to individual saunas; for example in some saunas during the infusion fruit is offered, such as oranges, lemons or pieces of apple. Often there is also ice-cream to cool the body down a bit. It is also pleasant when you come out of the sauna after the infusion and receive a glass of juice.

These are all small gestures, but they are a simple way of making your stay significantly more pleasurable, and thus probably encourage you to return to the sauna.



4.2 Cooling off

After the sauna begins the cooling down period in the fresh air. Your lungs need oxygen. But don't stay outside for too long, as it will then take more willpower to use the cold shower.

The effect of cooling down: this also depends on personal preference, as with nearly everything to do with your sauna experience. Whilst one person may swear that after your sauna you should go outside into the fresh air, another person may insist you should cool yourself down with water. You should cool the areas furthest from the heart first (feet, legs, hands, arms and lastly your torso).

Here we are providing information about the two most popular ways of cooling down. Try them and find out which one suits you best.

4.2.1 Splashing sprinkler head

The sprinkler head can be found in nearly all saunas. A diversified jet of water streams out on to you (a lot of water per unit of time), however the pressure is generally quite low.

4.2.2 The Kneipp hose

The Kneipp hose often takes a lot of willpower to use, but is extremely refreshing. It is recommended that you hose yourself (moving the hose all the time) on the right hand side of your body, beginning with your foot then moving towards your heart in circular motions as described above.

It is important to cool down sufficiently after your last session in the sauna in order to avoid sweating in your clothes afterwards.

4.3 Foot bath

The footbath is to use for stabilization of the biological cycle. Warm the feet 3 - 5 minutes in the only ankle-high warm water until a pleasant heat-feeling appears at the whole body.

4.4 Relaxation

Having a sauna and relaxing go hand in hand for many guests. Sauna facilities provide a relaxation room, as this is considered to be very important. There are often designated relaxation rooms found in various areas of the sauna facilities, which are partly fitted with comfortable couches, sometimes with or without blankets. There are meditation rooms, rooms with heated couches and much more.

A period of rest after your sauna sessions is important: see what possibilities are available to you and use them to relax. After each session in the sauna allow yourself half an hour's time to rest, until you have found your own rhythm. Use what's available to you inside the facilities: the diving pool, the alternating footbaths, the steam baths and much more.



4.5 Drinking

You will lose a lot of fluid having a sauna. There are various theories, one of which is that you should not drink anything during your sauna as otherwise you will sweat mineral water. Another theory is that you should drink a lot so that your body will be optimally purified. As with many things, the truth can be found somewhere in between. If you are thirsty, then drink as much as you need to (mineral water is best). After your sauna you should always drink enough fluids. As to what you should drink, there are many suggestions. Mineral water is the most appropriate choice, but each person can decide what's best for them. Drinking one to two litres after your sauna should supply your body with enough fluids.



5. Summary

In many saunas, events are offered over and above the normal programme. Some examples of this are a Midnight Sauna, Sauna Breakfast, Finnish Night, BBQ Evening and many more offers. When you become a sauna expert after visiting your sauna regularly, you can decide what suits you best and brings you most enjoyment.

Enjoy your sauna experience!

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References:

Sauna baths (Dr. Fritzsche)

Sauna leader (Peter Hufer)



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