



The Complete Sauna Buying Guide

INDOOR & OUTDOOR · INFRARED · TRADITIONAL · RED LIGHT

A home sauna is more than a luxury — it's a daily ritual of heat, recovery, and calm that becomes the part of the day you look forward to most. No appointment, no membership, no drive across town. Just step in, let the warmth work, and step out feeling like a different person. This guide covers the real benefits, how to choose between indoor and outdoor, how often to use it for the best results, and exactly what to look for.

The benefits — why a sauna changes your routine

Heat bathing is one of the oldest wellness rituals in the world, and a growing body of research now backs up what cultures have known for centuries. Here's what a regular sauna habit can do for you:

Melt away stress

There's a reason a sauna feels like an exhale for your whole nervous system. The enveloping heat relaxes tense muscles, slows you down, and quiets a busy mind — many owners say it's the most peaceful 15 minutes of their day and the best reset after work.

Recover faster

Warmth opens up circulation and floods tired muscles with fresh, oxygen-rich blood. Athletes and weekend warriors alike use the sauna to ease soreness, loosen stiff joints, and bounce back quicker after training or a long day on their feet.

Train your heart

A good sauna session gently raises your heart rate into the same zone as a brisk walk. Long-term research in Finland has associated frequent sauna bathing with meaningful cardiovascular benefits — your heart gets a workout while you simply sit and relax.

Sleep like a child

A warm session in the evening helps your body temperature rise and then fall, the natural signal that it's time to wind down. Owners consistently report falling asleep faster and sleeping more deeply on sauna nights.

Glowing, healthy skin

A deep, cleansing sweat opens pores and brings circulation right to the surface of the skin. Add built-in red light therapy and your sauna becomes part of your skincare routine, leaving skin refreshed and radiant.

Build resilience

Regular exposure to heat is a gentle, healthy stressor that helps your body adapt and feel more robust. Many people describe simply feeling tougher, calmer, and more energized once the sauna becomes a habit.

A deep, satisfying sweat

Few things feel as cleansing as a full, honest sweat. It's the body's natural release valve — and stepping out afterward delivers that unmistakable light, clear-headed glow.

The ultimate contrast ritual

Pair your sauna with a cold plunge and you unlock the hot-then-cold ritual athletes and biohackers swear by — a rush of energy, sharpened focus, and a mood lift that lasts for hours.

The types of sauna, explained

“Traditional,” “infrared,” “red light” — it really comes down to **how the heat reaches you**. Here’s the plain-English version.

Traditional (Finnish) Sauna

HOT ROCKS · STEAM · HIGH HEAT

An electric or wood heater warms a bed of rocks, heating the **air** to a toasty 170–195°F. Pour water on the rocks for a burst of steam (löyly) and that wave of enveloping heat.

Best for: purists who want an authentic, intense, social sweat and the full ritual of steam and aromatic cedar.

Infrared Sauna

RADIANT LIGHT · LOWER HEAT · EFFICIENT

Infrared panels emit gentle radiant heat that warms **your body directly** at a milder 120–150°F. It feels less intense, so sessions are comfortable and longer, it heats in minutes, and many models plug into a standard outlet.

Best for: everyday use, warm climates like ours, anyone who finds traditional saunas too hot, and the easiest installation.

Hybrid Sauna

INFRARED + TRADITIONAL IN ONE

One cabin with infrared panels **and** a traditional rock heater, so you choose your experience session to session — a gentle infrared warm-up one day, a full steam sweat the next.

Best for: households who can’t decide, or who want one sauna that does everything.

Red Light Therapy

A FEATURE, NOT A SEPARATE SAUNA

Red and near-infrared light (around 650–850nm) is studied for skin, recovery, and cellular energy. In today’s better saunas it’s **built right in** — light therapy and heat in the same session.

Best for: anyone focused on skin health and recovery who wants the most from every session.

Traditional vs. Infrared at a glance

	Traditional (Finnish)	Infrared
How it heats	Heats the air around you	Warms your body directly
Temperature	170–195°F (intense)	120–150°F (gentle)
Heat-up time	30–45 minutes	10–15 minutes
Steam (löyly)	Yes — water on the rocks	No (dry heat)
Energy use	Higher	Lower / efficient
Install	240V hookup (electrician)	Often a standard outlet
The vibe	Authentic, social, intense	Calm, comfortable, everyday

Indoor or outdoor? Picture each one

Both deliver every benefit in this guide — the choice is about the **experience you want** and the space you have. Here's how to imagine each.

The indoor spa retreat

Imagine your own spa, steps from the shower or bedroom. An indoor sauna folds into a bathroom, primary suite, home gym, or wellness room and is ready whenever you are — before work, after a workout, or to unwind at night.

It's private, weather-proof, and used year-round. Infrared models are especially easy indoors, often running on a standard outlet, and a custom-built room can be finished to match your home beautifully.

Choose indoor if you want everyday convenience, privacy, and a sauna that disappears into your home.

The backyard sanctuary

Now picture a cedar barrel or cabin glowing in your backyard at dusk — a destination just steps from your door. An outdoor sauna becomes the centerpiece of your yard and a place friends and family gather.

Built from weather-ready cedar or thermally-modified wood, it pairs perfectly with a cold plunge or pool for the full hot-then-cold ritual, and there's nothing like stepping out into the fresh air to cool down.

Choose outdoor if you want a showpiece, a connection to nature, and room to make it a social experience.

Our Southwest Florida take: infrared is a natural everyday choice here — gentle heat, efficient, no cold-weather worries — while an outdoor cedar sauna by the pool makes a stunning, experiential statement. Many of our clients end up with one of each: an infrared cabin inside for daily use and a cedar barrel outside for the weekend ritual.

How often should you use your sauna?

The single biggest factor in getting results isn't intensity — it's **consistency**. A sauna you use a few times a week will do far more for you than an occasional sweat. The goal is to make it a comfortable, repeatable habit, and to build up gradually.

Find your rhythm

Stage	Frequency	Session length	Tips
Just starting	2–3× / week	10–12 minutes	Sit on a lower bench, keep it shorter, and see how you feel.
Building the habit	3–4× / week	12–15 minutes	Add time and a session as your body adapts. Hydrate well.
Regular routine	4–7× / week	15–20 minutes	Make it part of your day. Many enjoy a session most days.

What the research suggests: a landmark 20-year study of more than 2,300 adults in Finland found that those who used a traditional sauna more often — about 4 to 7 times per week — saw the greatest association with heart health and longevity compared with once a week, with sessions of roughly 15–20 minutes showing the strongest link. More was better, with no clear ceiling. These findings are observational and come from traditional saunas; infrared runs cooler, so many people enjoy it comfortably even daily. As always, ease in and listen to your body.

A few simple habits make every session better:

- **Hydrate** — drink water before and after; you'll sweat more than you think.
- **Cool down** — finish with a cool shower or, even better, a cold plunge for the contrast effect.
- **Don't overdo it** — step out if you feel lightheaded; longer isn't always better, especially at first.
- **Make it yours** — add essential oils, music, or red light, and tie it to a time of day so it sticks.

How to choose — your checklist

- **Size & capacity.** Be honest about who'll use it. Most people are happiest going one size up — a 2-person feels snug for two, so consider 3–4.
- **Heat type.** Traditional for the authentic steam ritual, infrared for gentle everyday use, hybrid if you want both.
- **Wood.** Western red cedar is the prized classic (aromatic, naturally weather-resistant); Nordic spruce and thermally-modified woods are excellent too.
- **The heater.** For traditional saunas, a quality heater (Harvia or HUUM) is the heart of the unit — don't cut corners here.
- **Low EMF (for infrared).** Look for independently low-EMF heaters and safety listings like UL or ETL.
- **Warranty.** Read what's actually covered and for how long — especially on the heater, the part that works hardest.
- **Installation & power.** Confirm whether it's a standard outlet or a 240V hookup, and who handles delivery, assembly, and electrical.
- **Service after the sale.** The most overlooked factor — buy where someone local will actually answer the phone and show up.

Caring for your sauna

Saunas are wonderfully low-maintenance. Wipe the benches down after use, let the cabin dry out, keep it ventilated, and — for traditional units — inspect and refresh the heater stones once or twice a year. With basic care, a quality sauna is a decades-long fixture of your home.

Why buy your sauna from Leisure Wellness Naples

You can buy a sauna in a box online and assemble it yourself. Or you can buy it from the people who'll help you choose it, deliver it, install it, and stand behind it — right here in Naples.

Try before you buy

Sit inside a real sauna in our Naples showroom — feel the difference between infrared and traditional before you decide, alongside our hot tubs, swim spas, and cold plunges.

We service what we sell

Local, in-house delivery, installation, and service. No 1-800 numbers, no freight crate to wrestle alone, no driving out of town for help.

Curated, quality lines

Hand-picked brands: UL-listed, low-EMF infrared with built-in red light, and authentic traditional cedar saunas — quality you can stand behind for decades.

Custom builds

Want a one-of-a-kind sauna room finished to match your home? Our custom program designs it around your space, your wood, and your heater.

A complete wellness destination

Build your whole recovery routine in one place — sauna, cold plunge, hot tub, and swim spa — designed to work together.

Local to Southwest Florida

We know Naples homes and yards, we deliver throughout the region, and we're here long after the sale.

Come feel the difference

Visit our Naples showroom to experience infrared and traditional saunas side by side, and let our team help you choose the perfect fit for your home.

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This guide is provided for general educational purposes about home saunas and reflects common wellness experiences and published observational research; it is not medical advice, and individual results vary. Saunas may not be appropriate for everyone — if you are pregnant or have a heart condition, low blood pressure, or other medical concerns, please consult your physician before sauna use, and ease into any new routine. Product features and specifications vary by model; ask our team for current details.