

FINNISH SAUNA

History

Finns think of saunas not as a luxury, but as a necessity; saunas are an integral part of the way of life. They are found on the shores of Finland's numerous lakes, in private apartments, corporate headquarters, at the Parliament House and even at the depth of 4,600 feet in the Pyhäsalmi Mine. The sauna is an important part of the national identity and those who have the opportunity today, usually take a sauna at least once a week. The traditional sauna day is Saturday. The earliest versions are from 7000 BC; Nestor the Chronicler in 1112, wrote of "*hot wooden saunas in which naked bathers beat themselves with branches and finally pour cold water over themselves.*" Finns would and still give birth in their rural saunas, an almost sterile environment.

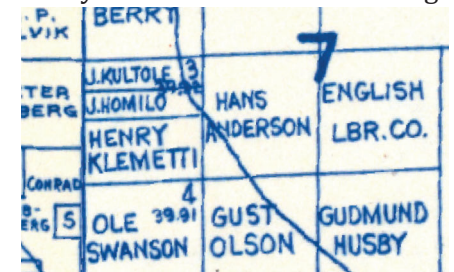


The oldest sauna in North America, residing in the Finnish Historical Park in Cokato, MN



Legends and Lessons

The sauna 1 mile to the east was semi-public; it cost non-Finns a nickel for use. It was a “smoke sauna” built without a chimney. Wood was burned in a large



Sauna on 3rd Ave NE (Klemettii)

stove until smoke filled the cabin. When the sauna was hot enough, the fire was allowed to die and the smoke was ventilated out the two end-doors. The residual heat lasted the duration of the sauna.

When the heat began to feel uncomfortable it was customary to jump in the dammed-up pond on Victoria Creek. Strange you think?

For centuries most Europeans did not bathe; by the Reformation for the rest of Europe, bathing was something ordinary people did rarely (annually) or not at all. Native Americans were using sweat lodges. Whose ancestors, we wonder, were “strange?”

Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant “starts” from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

[illegible]

The Farm Museum and Garden's goal is to provide Wisconsin State public school students a visual, non-urban, introduction to NW Historical agriculture. The Legends are stories our ancestors told (to us), their grandchildren, who are now 75 years of age. "History" (as compared to the *perpetrated on the dead*) is taken from Wikipedia under the Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike Agreement until PFC can develop its unique limited pro. These efforts are now underway with assistance of local school districts and the Stillage-Morse Trust. Plant, probe, and QRT code links, and photos are taken from: www.usda.gov (attribution: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture), Wikipedia, and the UOw's webstore burke.washington.edu/herbarium/webpage/under_educational_use/. URL Links provided by: USDA, NRCS; the PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>) National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA. Visitors enter under the Revised Codes of the State of Wisconsin - EFFC 4.24.200 and 4.24.210 allowing public recreational use, including nature photography.