



ROB LICHT CUSTOM SAUNAS

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24 BALD HILL RD, BROOKTONDALE NY 14817 • A DIVISION OF ROB LICHT STUDIO, LLC
CUSTOM BUILT FINNISH STYLE WOODBURNING, ELECTRIC, AND MOBILE SAUNAS

Lighting and Using Your Trailer Sauna

Lighting the fire

Before you start, make sure the sauna is positioned safely away for other structures, do not let children operate the sauna. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby. Always be aware of the potential for fire and do not fire the sauna unattended. The heat shields are for your safety: do not remove or modify them.

To level the sauna, disconnect it from your vehicle, block the wheels, lower the tongue as far as possible and drop the leveler legs down by removing the pin, loosening the handle and dropping the legs down. Use wooden blocks on soft ground. Tighten the handle and insert the pin in the highest hole possible. Next, crank the tongue jack up so the sauna is level front to rear. If it needs side to side leveling an auxiliary jack is helpful to make adjustments.

The stove burns sticks- not logs. Scrap 2x4s are the perfect size. A mix of softwood and hardwood is best. Make sure your wood is cured (dry). Before lighting, the interior damper, if provided, on the stovepipe should be fully open (the handle turned vertical) and the fresh air vent (if provided) under the bench should be open at least partway. I often leave the sauna door open initially to let it air out as it starts to heat up.

Load the stove with kindling with 2-3 sheets of dry newspaper underneath. Make sure to use the plain black and white sections of the paper only, as the glossy advertisements contain a lot of clay and won't burn well. With the ash drawer open a few inches light the fire. Once the fire is burning add more wood- but nothing bigger than your arm! Leave the ash drawer open for 10 minutes while fire builds. It will smoke during this time. The goal is to get it burning hot quickly. This is a good time to fill the 5-gallon water tank (if included), and get extra buckets of cold water and towels ready.

The location of the trailer will affect the firing. The best location will have exposure to the prevailing winds. If you park in the lee of trees, a building or a hill, it may have a hard time drawing initially as they things can cause down drafts. The help start a fire in such a situation force a wad of burning newspaper up above the kindling and light the paper under kindling when you hear the whoosh of air going up the chimney.



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The stove will smoke initially- the goal is to get it burning hot so all of the particulate is burned, so with a watchful eye, leave the ash drawer open for ten minutes or so until it fires hot. Keep your eyes on the fire at first until you learn how it burns.

Once fire is burning hot and there is little or no visible smoke, you can add more sticks and close the ash drawer and stove door. Leave the front damper with the three holes fully open (*Lämpimämpi* stove) when you don't see any smoke it means the stove is burning efficiently. As the stove goes through this initial firing, check the stove and stove pipe: with the lights off, the top of the stove may be glowing red under the rocks, this is ok, but if the whole stovepipe is glowing red, then it is firing too hot. Close the damper on the stovepipe and or the air intake damper on the outside until the fire calms down. Over firing may cause a fire.

After 30 minutes add a few sticks or one or two small hardwood logs to the fire only if you want it really hot or if it is really cold outside. Otherwise the Initial loading of the wood is more than enough for a good sauna. After a few saunas you will get the feel for it.

After 45 minutes the sauna should be ready. The rocks should be really hot and the fire should be dying down. You can close the front stove damper and the fresh air vent inside. At this point, it's the rocks that heat the sauna. Don't add more wood unless you have many sauna guests coming.

Towels: sitting on towels in the sauna will keep the benches cleaner.

Lights:

The optional solar system charges under normal sunny conditions; after period of cloudy days the battery charge may be low. If it drops below 25% the controller may shut the system off to preserve the battery. It is a good idea to check the battery before you start to sauna. If it is low, it may shut off when you are in the sauna room leaving you fumbling in the dark. Keep a back-up flashlight handy, just in case. Never burn candles in the sauna- they will melt into a messy, flammable puddle, even if not lit! Make the solar panel is kept clear of snow and debris, if it is adjustable, be sure it faces the sun.



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Water:

Throwing water on the rocks to make steam (löyly) is an important part of the sauna experience- it adds moisture to the air and raises the temperature you feel. Use the ladle to avoid steam burns and use only one ladle-full at a time.

Bathing and rinsing off with water is also a part of the sauna experience. Excess water will drain out through the floorboards but try not to use much water inside because if the sauna is not perfectly level, water may collect in the corners. When you are done, it is ok to give the benches a quick rinse.

Don't use any oils directly on the stove. A birch vihta in the löyly bucket or a few drops of sauna oils in the water will produce a subtle and pleasing aroma.

Ash drawer:

Empty the ash drawer only when it is full, it is good to keep a layer of ashes in there as it helps insulate the bottom of the stove from the excessive heat. After the initial lighting, make sure it closes fully.

Traveling with the sauna.

The sauna weighs 1700 lb (5x8) or 2700 lbs (6x10) (without sauna rocks or stove grate and bricks) and should only be pulled by a vehicle capable of that weight. Check with your vehicle manufacturer. This trailer does not have brakes, which means that the tow vehicle has to do all of the braking. Even with proper vehicle, braking times will be greatly increased.

Reduce your speed and use caution at all times—especially in high winds and when cornering.

To travel, you must remove the following:

- Solar panel (unplug wires and lift out of bracket only for adjustable mounts)
- Side bench (if provided)
- Chimney upper sections and cap
- Stove rocks- some of them
- Clean out the ash drawer.



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Make sure the lever legs are fully up and the safety pin is installed in the upper hole to keep it from dropping.

The total gross weight of the trailer cannot exceed 2000 lb (5x8) or 3,000 lbs (6x10 so do not use the trailer to haul extra gear. The above removed items should be carried in the tow vehicle if possible.

Be sure to check the tire pressure if the sauna has been sitting for while. Follow the guidelines on the tire pressure sticker on the trailer.

Always check the trailer lights before towing. The connector may be loose.

Risks while using the sauna:

- Direct body contact with the sauna stove or heater, sauna rocks, steam, stove pipe, heat shields and/or other metal objects in the sauna may cause serious injury; this includes metal jewelry worn in the sauna, which can get very hot and can burn the skin.
- Prolonged exposure to the high temperature in a sauna may cause your body to overheat. Limit yourself to a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes at a time and allow your body to cool down to normal body temperature in between sauna rounds. Overexposure to high temperatures can be dangerous to your health. Exit immediately if nauseous, uncomfortable, dizzy or sleepy.
- Check with a doctor before using sauna if pregnant, diabetic, in poor health or under medical care.
- Do not use the sauna if you have recently consumed drugs, alcohol, or medications.
- The area outside the sauna, including any steps or decking, may become wet or icy and very slippery, care should be taken when entering or exiting the sauna to avoid slipping and falling.
- If the sauna is wood fired, take care in tending the fire: Use leather gloves when loading the fire, do not leave stove door open while unattended, quickly extinguish any embers that fall out of the stove, and empty ash drawer only when ashes are cold. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Wood fired saunas should be located away from other structures and materials including the main house, garages, storage sheds, storage piles and wood piles to minimize the risk of fire spreading.