BACKYARD CANADA

CANADA SAUNA

BUYER'S GUIDE

The practical questions to ask before you buy a sauna in Canada

TRADITIONAL OR INFRARED | INDOOR OR OUTDOOR | ELECTRICAL PLANNING | SITE PREP AND INSTALL | SHIPPING ACROSS CANADA

CANADA TIP:

The right sauna is not just the one that looks best in a photo. It is the one that fits how you'll use it, the space you have, your electrical or wood-heat plan, and whether you want it built for you or as a kit.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Buying a sauna in Canada is different from buying one in a mild climate. An outdoor sauna has to stand up to winter, sit on a level base, and still heat up on a cold January evening. An indoor sauna has to come in through your doors and down your stairs. Either way, the heater needs its own electrical or wood-heat plan.

Use this guide to work through the questions people most often ask us before they buy, answered by the team at our Calgary showroom. For technical details such as heater clearances, heater sizing, venting, hook-up and care, the manufacturer's installation and owner's manuals are the authority. We can help you get the right manual for your model.

Most important sauna buying filters: *how you'll use it, indoor or outdoor, traditional or infrared, the heater and electrical plan, the base and access route, who builds it, and the all-in budget.*

CANADA AND CALGARY PLANNING NOTES

- **Showroom:** 711 48th Ave SE, Calgary (Mon–Fri 10–6, Sat–Sun 10–5). Many models are on display.
- **Installation:** Our crew builds saunas within about 5 hours of Calgary. Farther away, we support your build with videos, written directions and phone support.
- **Shipping:** Leisurecraft saunas ship flat-rate across Canada, extra charges apply for the Territories. Other brands are quoted for your address.
- **Electrical:** A licensed electrician wires the heater and controller. Get their quote before you order.
- **Permits:** Check with your municipality before you order, especially for a wood-burning heater.
- **Climate:** Our crew doesn't build below −5 °C or in rain, high wind or lightning.

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT SIZE AND LAYOUT

Canada buyer note: *buy for the way you'll use it on a normal week, not the biggest gathering you can imagine. Seats, bench layout and headroom matter more than footprint.*

How many people will use it most of the time?

Count the people who'll use it together most weeks, then add one seat. If you host often, a 4–6 person model such as the Pure Cube Black Neptune makes more sense than squeezing into a 2-person room.

Should it be indoor or outdoor?

Indoor keeps it a few steps away and needs a level floor, enough ceiling height and an access route for the crates; Leisurecraft indoor saunas are electric only. Outdoor makes it a destination in the yard and needs a level base. Will you walk out to it in January?

How big are typical saunas?

From our listings (exterior, width × depth): Element Nook 54.75″ × 54.75″ (1–2 people), Harmony barrel 86.25″ × 79″ (4), and Neptune 87.75″ × 115″ (4–6). Product pages list interior sizes and bench layouts.

Is bigger always better?

No. A bigger room needs a larger heater, takes longer to warm up, and may need more electrical capacity. Heaters are sized to the room; we confirm this in your quote.

TRADITIONAL, INFRARED OR DUAL

Canada buyer note: *there's no "better" type, only the one you'll enjoy and use. They feel different and need different electrical, so try both if you can.*

What's the difference?

A traditional sauna heats the room and a load of stones; you pour water on the stones for steam (löyly). We're not familiar with any 120 V electric heaters that reach the 76+ °C a traditional sauna needs. An infrared sauna warms you directly at a lower air temperature, with no stones or steam. Our 1-person Canadian hemlock infrared sauna lists 35–65 °C.

What is a Dual sauna?

A Dual puts infrared emitters and a traditional heater in one room, so you can choose either. The Saunacore INFRA-CORE Dual is $16,100, made in Canada by Saunacore. Your quote and the manufacturer's manual specify the heater and its electrical needs.

Electric or wood heater?

We usually recommend electric, because you'll use it more: switch it on, or start it from your phone with a Wi-Fi controller. Wood makes sense when you're far from 240 V service, or at a cabin. Most outdoor models offer a wood heater option; see chapter 3 before you choose it.

Which heater brands can I choose?

Leisurecraft configurators offer HUUM and Homecraft electric heaters, the Harvia KIP and the Karhu wood heater. We also sell Saunacore heaters. Heater listings show the room volume each one covers, and your Sauna Expert checks the match for your model.

WOOD-FIRED SAUNAS AND HEATERS

Canada buyer note: *wood fire is the traditional Finnish way to heat a sauna. It asks more of you than electric, so know the certification, the mess and the winter lighting first.*

Why choose a wood-burning heater?

It's how saunas have been heated in Finland for generations: the crackle of the fire, the smell of the wood and soft heat with steam off the stones. It needs no power, so it suits cabins and spots far from 240 V. Most Leisurecraft outdoor models offer the Karhu wood heater.

Are wood sauna heaters CSA approved?

No. No wood-burning sauna heaters are CSA approved, so the installation needs a WETT (Wood Energy Technology Transfer) inspection before the first fire. Check with your insurer and municipality too. The heater's manual sets clearances and chimney requirements.

What's different about living with one?

More mess and more time: firewood to store and carry, bark and ash to sweep up, ashes to empty safely and a chimney to keep clean. You light and tend the fire instead of pressing a button.

Is it hard to use in a Canadian winter?

It can be. On a really cold night a cold chimney draws poorly, so the fire is slow to catch and the room slow to heat. Dry wood and plenty of kindling help. For a quick January sauna, electric is easier; for the ritual of the fire, wood is hard to beat.

UNDERSTANDING **SAUNA**

PRICING

Canada buyer note: *the real budget is the sauna plus the heater, controller, stones, options, shipping, base, electrical, build, permits and tax. On Leisurecraft saunas the heater is sold separately, so compare all-in numbers.*

What does the listed price include?

The sauna in its base configuration. On Leisurecraft saunas the heater, controller and stones are sold separately, and options such as insulation, bench layouts, glass and wood upgrades change the price. Read the product page options and your written quote line by line.

Are shipping and installation included?

No, both are separate lines. Leisurecraft saunas ship flat-rate across Canada, extra charges apply for the Territories, to your driveway or our Calgary store; other brands are quoted for your address. Within about 5 hours of Calgary our crew can build it, priced by model in your quote. Travel is included within 50 km of our store, then $3/km one way.

What makes one sauna cost more than another?

The wood and its grade (knotty or clear cedar), insulation, the door and glass, the heater and controller, hardware, warranty and support. A Pure Cube Black Collection sauna with a large glass front costs more than a simple barrel with a similar seat count.

What should I realistically budget?

Budget the whole project, not just the sauna (regular online prices in CAD as of Nov 9 2026, rounded up to the nearest $100):

Budget line	Where the number comes from	Examples
Sauna	Product page	Harmony 6′×6′ barrel $8,900 · Pure Cube CU572 $14,400 · Neptune $19,600
Heater and controller (a matched pair)	Product page	Homecraft Revive 9 kW with TKE2-2 $2,700 · HUUM DROP 9 kW with UKU Local $3,000 · Karhu wood heater $1,700
Stones	Product page	HUUM DROP stones $400 · Homecraft Revive rocks $400
Chimney (wood heat)	Product page	Chimney and heat shield set $1,300
Shipping	Checkout or quote	Leisurecraft flat rate at checkout; other brands quoted
Base	Your contractor or DIY	Road crush base $1,000–$2,000 · concrete pad $4,000+
Electrical	Licensed electrician's quote	Not supplied; a load manager will add $2,000+ if needed
Build	Our crew, DIY or a carpenter	Priced per model in your quote
Permits and tax	Municipality; GST/HST/PST	Varies

Can you show me a worked example?

Sauna, heater and controller, and stones only, before shipping, base, electrical, build, permits and tax (rounded up to the nearest $100):

- **Harmony 6′×6′ barrel** $8,900 + Homecraft Revive 9 kW with TKE2-2 $2,700 + rocks $400 = **about $12,000**
- **Pure Cube Black Neptune** $19,600 + HUUM DROP 9 kW with UKU Wi-Fi $3,300 + stones $400 = **about $23,300**
- **Element Nook indoor** $12,400 + HUUM DROP 4.5 kW with UKU Local $2,600 + stones $400 = **about $15,400**

Heaters are sized to the room; your Sauna Expert confirms sizing in your quote.

OPERATING COSTS AND ENERGY

Canada buyer note: *we don't publish a monthly operating-cost figure, because it depends on your heater, how often you use it, your utility rate and the season. Here's what drives it.*

How much will it cost to run?

A simple upper estimate for a session: the heater's kW × the hours it's on × your rate per kWh (your utility bill shows the rate). The real figure is usually lower, because a heater cycles once the room reaches temperature.

What makes the biggest difference?

The heater's size, how long you preheat, how often you use it, and, outdoors, the cold and wind. Insulation, a well-fitted door and keeping the door closed while it heats all help. A room sized to how you use it costs less to heat than an oversized one.

Should I leave it on between uses?

No. Unlike a hot tub, there's no water to keep warm. Heat it when you want it and switch it off afterwards. A controller with a timer, or an app-connected controller such as the HUUM UKU Wi-Fi, lets you start it on your way home.

Is wood cheaper than electric?

A wood heater uses no electricity for heat. Its cost is firewood and your time: lighting and tending the fire, clearing ash and keeping the chimney clear. Firewood and power prices vary too much across Canada for us to publish a comparison.

WOOD, STYLE, AND FEATURES

Canada buyer note: *start with the look you'll be happy to see for years, then check that the features you're paying for are the ones you'll use on a normal weeknight.*

Red cedar or white cedar?

Western Red Cedar has the familiar sauna aroma and is used in the Pure Cube and Dundalk collections. White cedar, from Eastern Canada and used in the Canadian Timber Collection, has many of the same mould- and rot-resistant properties, weathers lighter, and usually costs less.

Barrel, cube, cabin or pod?

Barrels are the classic round shape and cope well with uneven ground (Harmony 6′ × 6′, $8,900). Pure Cubes have modern square lines, often with a glass front (CU572, $14,400). The Pure Cube Black Collection adds a black exterior and large glass (Neptune, $19,600). Dundalk and Canadian Timber offer pods, cabins and the Luna (CT MiniPOD, $8,900).

Knotty or clear cedar?

Knotty cedar is rustic and costs less; clear cedar has a uniform, knot-free look (about $3,500 more on the Neptune). It's a choice of look and budget, not a sign of a better build.

Is a Wi-Fi controller worth it?

It's a convenience. The HUUM UKU range runs from about $1,200 (Local) to $2,100 (Mirror or Gold Glass Wi-Fi); the Homecraft TKE2-2 digital controller is about $700. For app control, check that your Wi-Fi reaches the sauna.

COLD-CLIMATE AND WINTER USE

Canada buyer note: *winter is part of the appeal of an outdoor sauna. Plan for the build season, the path from the house, and a longer heat-up when it's cold.*

Can I use an outdoor sauna all winter?

Yes. Leisurecraft's outdoor saunas are cedar, which has a high resistance to moisture and temperature changes and moves less than other woods when the temperature swings. That suits Calgary and the rest of Canada. Place it where you'll actually walk to it in January.

Will it freeze or need winterizing?

A sauna has no water system to winterize the way a hot tub does; just empty the bucket after use. Models with a built-in shower have a water line, so follow the owner's manual for winter care of that model.

Do I need insulation?

For winter use, it's worth considering. Insulation is a listed option on some outdoor models (about $700 on the Neptune). An insulated room holds heat better on cold, windy nights, and our crew's low-voltage wiring is done only on insulated saunas.

Can you build a sauna in winter?

Yes, within limits. Our crew doesn't build below −5 °C or in rain, high wind or lightning, so winter builds move with the weather. The base must be finished and level before build day, which is harder once the ground freezes, so start early.

PLACEMENT AND SITE PLANNING

Canada buyer note: *the right spot is close enough to use on a January weeknight, level enough to build on, and placed for privacy, views and the electrical run or chimney.*

What can a sauna be built on?

Saunas are much lighter than hot tubs, so most level surfaces work. A rectangle framed with 4×4s and filled with tamped, level road crush is an inexpensive and very effective base. A concrete pad or a solid, level deck works too. Barrels need support only under their cradles, which helps on sloped yards.

Can it go on my deck?

Often, yes. The deck must be solid, level and able to carry the sauna and the people using it. Crate weights run from about 1,044 lb (Harmony barrel) to 2,021 lb (Neptune). If you're unsure, have a builder or engineer check it before you order.

How far from the house and panel?

Close is convenient in winter, and a shorter distance to your electrical panel means a shorter wire run, which is one of the biggest drivers of electrical cost. Show your electrician the spot before you commit. For a wood heater, think about smoke near the house and neighbours.

What clearances and permits apply?

Heater and chimney clearances, venting and indoor ventilation are set out in the manufacturer's installation manual; follow it, and we'll help you get the right manual for your model. Your municipality sets permit and setback rules, so check before you order.

ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

Canada buyer note: *a licensed electrician must wire the heater and controller. Get their quote, based on the exact heater you're choosing, before you order.*

Do I need 240 V?

For a traditional electric heater, in general, yes: we're not familiar with any 120 V heaters that reach the 76+ °C a traditional sauna needs. Infrared ranges from a dedicated 120 V plug to 240 V. Far from 240 V service, wood is the main alternative.

Who does the wiring?

A licensed electrician does all high-voltage work, including connecting the heater and controller. Our installers do low-voltage wiring only, and only on insulated saunas. The heater's installation manual is the authority for amps, breaker and hook-up details; we'll send it for your model.

Can my panel handle a sauna if I already have a hot tub?

Maybe. Most homes have 100 A service, and many hot tubs need 50 or 60 A. In most cases it's possible with a load-management device, which decides what gets power when the panel reaches its limit. These will add $2,000+ to your electrical installation.

Can the sauna be built before the electrician comes?

Yes. Decide where the heater and controller go before the build, so your electrician knows where to bring power, and ask them about permits and inspection.

DELIVERY, ACCESS, AND INSTALLATION

Canada buyer note: *saunas arrive as crated kits, not finished buildings. Plan who unloads, how the pieces reach the base, and who builds it before the truck arrives.*

How does the sauna arrive, and why not pre-built?

Leisurecraft saunas ship as prefabricated kits in crates, to your driveway or our Calgary store. Shipping a built sauna is very expensive and generally isn't good for it, and placing one would need a crane, which generally costs about three times what a carpenter charges to build a kit.

Will it fit through my gate?

Because it arrives in pieces, access is much easier than for a hot tub. Measure gates, side yards and corners outdoors, or doorways, hallways and stairs indoors, and tell us if the route is tight.

Can your crew build it for me?

Within about 5 hours of Calgary, yes. At least two technicians unpack and build the sauna following the manufacturer's instructions, and do low-voltage wiring on insulated saunas. Your licensed electrician connects the heater. Install pricing is per model in your quote; travel is included within 50 km, then $3/km one way.

Can I build it myself?

Yes. Two people with basic tools can assemble a Leisurecraft kit in about 6–12 hours. Barrels and Pure Cubes tend to be easiest; the Luna and Pure Cube Black Collection are the most involved. We provide videos, written directions and phone support, and many owners hire a local carpenter.

BRAND, DEALER, AND SUPPORT

Canada buyer note: *you're buying the sauna and the people behind it. Ask who makes it, where, and who answers the phone if a part is missing.*

Which brands do you carry?

Leisurecraft saunas (Pure Cube, Pure Cube Black, Dundalk and Canadian Timber), Saunacore infrared and Dual saunas, and Canadian hemlock infrared saunas, plus HUUM, Homecraft, Saunacore, Harvia KIP and Karhu heaters.

Where are the saunas made?

Leisurecraft saunas are made in Canada by Leisurecraft, a family-owned manufacturer in Melancthon (formerly Dundalk), Ontario, built to order. Saunacore saunas are made in Canada by Saunacore and tested to CSA, UL and CE safety standards. HUUM heaters come from Estonia. For any other model, ask us.

What if something is missing or damaged?

Check your crates on arrival and call us first at 587-855-9938. Some brands set short claim windows: Saunacore requires damage or missing-parts claims within 48 hours of receiving. We'll coordinate with the manufacturer.

What if I'm outside your install area?

You get our videos, written directions and phone support. Many owners hire a local carpenter for the build and a local licensed electrician for the heater.

WARRANTY QUESTIONS

Canada buyer note: *warranty strength is more than the number of years. Ask what's covered, parts or labour, what voids it, and who you call.*

What warranty comes with a Leisurecraft sauna?

Leisurecraft saunas come with a 5-year parts warranty. It covers parts, not labour, so ask us how a replacement part would be installed in your area.

What's the warranty on Saunacore saunas?

Saunacore's limited warranty covers lifetime replacement on ceramic emitters, 5 years on sauna room replacement parts, and 1 year on controls. It covers Canada and the US, excludes shipping and installation charges, and needs registration within 15 days of purchase. Repairs are done only by Saunacore.

What about the heater?

Heater warranties depend on the brand and model, so we'll send the written terms for the heater you choose. For example, the Saunacore Standard heater has a 5-year residential warranty: year 1 parts and labour, years 2–5 heating-unit repairs with a $150 service charge.

What can void a warranty?

Installation or use outside the manual is a common exclusion. Saunacore's heater warranty, for example, is void if the heater isn't wired by a certified electrician, if there's a shower or faucet in the sauna, or if pool or spa water goes on the stones. If the sauna is for commercial use, tell us so we can confirm terms in writing.

TRYING BEFORE YOU BUY

Canada buyer note: *you can't wet-test a sauna like a hot tub, but you can sit in one, check the benches and door, and compare heaters and controllers in person.*

Can I try a sauna before buying?

Yes. Visit our Calgary showroom at 711 48th Ave SE to sit in saunas on display, and ask for a heated demo to feel the difference for yourself.

What should I check in the showroom?

Sit on the upper bench and check headroom for your tallest user. Lie down if someone wants to. Look at the door and its seal, the glass, knotty versus clear cedar, and the heaters and controllers. Bring the people who'll use it most.

What if I can't get to Calgary?

Book a free planning call with a Sauna Expert. Send photos and rough measurements of the spot and your access route, a photo of your electrical panel, and how many people will use it, and we'll talk through size, heater, electrical and timing.

What can I read before I order?

Product pages list exterior and interior dimensions, the recommended heater, wood-heater options and crate weights. Many link to the assembly manual, so you can see the build, and the heater's manual covers clearances, sizing and hook-up.

CHEAP VS. PREMIUM SAUNAS

Canada buyer note: *the cheapest sauna isn't always the cheapest to own. A door that doesn't hold heat, weak hardware and no one to call for parts can cost more over time.*

Why are some saunas so much cheaper online?

Lower overhead, fewer options, lighter components, imported kits and limited support. When we've tested imported saunas, we've found flimsy doors that don't hold heat and barrel straps that buckle when tightened.

What do I lose with a cheaper kit?

Often the wood quality, the door and glass, the hardware, the heater, the warranty, parts availability and support: the things you notice every time you use it.

How do I compare two quotes fairly?

Line them up: the same seat count, wood and grade, heater kW and brand, controller, stones, insulation, shipping, build, warranty and support. A lower sticker price that leaves out the heater or shipping isn't a lower price.

Will a cheaper sauna last as long?

It may not. Any sauna's life depends on its construction, the base, the climate and the care it gets. We don't publish a lifespan figure, and you should be wary of anyone who promises one.

CARE AND LONG-TERM OWNERSHIP

Canada buyer note: *a cedar sauna is low-maintenance, not no-maintenance. Follow the owner's manual for your model; it is the authority on care.*

How much upkeep does a sauna need?

Less than a hot tub: there's no water chemistry. Sit on towels, wipe down the benches, leave the door open afterwards so the room dries out, and sweep the floor now and then. For cleaning products and interior finishes, follow the manufacturer's care instructions.

Will the outside change colour?

Yes, cedar weathers over time, and white cedar weathers lighter than red. To keep a particular look, many Leisurecraft models offer stain options; re-coat as the product directions say.

What care do the heater and stones need?

Use only clean water on the stones, and replace any that crack or crumble as your heater's manual describes. A wood heater needs dry firewood, regular ash removal and a chimney kept clear and inspected. If an electric heater or controller stops working, call us first.

What seasonal checks should I do?

Wood moves a little with temperature and humidity. Walk around the sauna each season, keep snow off the walls and away from the door, and check the door, fittings and, on barrels, the bands as the owner's manual describes. We can help you get the manual for your model.

BEFORE YOU PLACE A DEPOSIT

Canada buyer note: *sauna orders are final sale, so we confirm fit before you place a deposit: the model, heater, options, electrical, base, access, delivery or install, timing and payment, all in writing.*

How much is the deposit?

A 50% deposit secures your order. The balance is due when your sauna ships from the supplier or arrives in Canada. Financing is available through Financeit and Vault Credit.

Is the deposit refundable?

No. Every sauna is custom ordered for you, built to your chosen size, wood, heater and options, so returns aren't possible once it's ordered. That's why we confirm size, heater, electrical, base and access with you before you place the deposit.

Is it in stock or built to order?

Saunas are built to order. Lead time is generally 4–12 weeks after your deposit (an estimate; we confirm timing for your model).

What should the written quote include?

The model and wood, every option, the heater, controller and stones, shipping, installation (or a note that you're building it), travel, taxes, the deposit and the balance. Usually not included: the base, electrical work and any load manager, permits and landscaping.

Who handles delivery?

Leisurecraft saunas ship to your driveway or our Calgary store. Someone must be home to receive the delivery. Plan who will help unload the crates and how they'll get to the base.

What if my site isn't ready on build day?

Tell us as early as you can and we'll reschedule the build. In the meantime, we can store your sauna at our Calgary store for up to a month, or deliver it to your garage.

What documents will I receive?

Your written quote and invoice, the assembly, owner's and heater manuals, and warranty information. Keep them with your serial numbers.



BACKYARD CANADA

FINAL BUYER CHECKLIST

Before placing a deposit, make sure you can answer these questions clearly.

- [ ] Do we know how we'll use it, how often, and how many people will use it at once?
- [ ] Have we chosen indoor or outdoor, and measured the exact spot?
- [ ] Have we chosen traditional, infrared or Dual, ideally after trying them?
- [ ] Do the seats, bench layout and headroom fit our main users?
- [ ] Do we have an all-in budget: sauna, options, heater, controller, stones, shipping, base, electrical, build, permits and tax?
- [ ] Has a licensed electrician quoted the heater and controller and checked our panel capacity?
- [ ] Do we have the installation manual for our heater, with its clearances and hook-up details?
- [ ] Is the base planned (level, the right type) and will it be ready before build day?
- [ ] Have we measured the access route: gates, side yards, doors, hallways and stairs?
- [ ] Do we know whether the Backyard Canada crew builds it (within about 5 hours of Calgary) or we build it with their support?
- [ ] Does our timing allow for the 4–12 week lead time and no builds below −5 °C?
- [ ] Have we checked our municipality's rules, and booked a WETT inspection if we chose a wood heater?
- [ ] Do we understand the 50% deposit, when the balance is due, and that sauna orders are final sale?

Next step: ***book a free planning call*** *with a Sauna Expert, visit our Calgary showroom at 711 48th Ave SE, or browse backyardcanada.ca/saunas/. Send photos of the spot, rough measurements, your access route and how many people will use it, and we'll flag sizing, heater, electrical, base, delivery and winter-build issues before you buy. Call 587-855-9938.*

This guide is written as general buyer education, not as legal, engineering, or electrical advice. The manufacturer's installation and owner's manuals are the authority for heater clearances, sizing, venting, electrical hook-up and care; a licensed electrician handles high-voltage work. Always verify current requirements with your municipality before construction. Prices are regular online prices in CAD as of November 9, 2026, and can change; check the product page.


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