



EVOLVE
Human Optimization Labs

INFRARED SAUNA

VS.

NORWEGIAN SAUNA

Saunas are an ancient form of wellness maintenance and health restoration. The practice of warming the body while at rest turns out to have major benefits that are backed by science as well as by tradition. Which type of sauna is best for you depends on a few factors; read on to see which type sounds best for you.

INFRARED VS. NORWEGIAN

Yes, they both warm your body, but they do it in completely different ways. While standard saunas use steam to heat up not only your body but also the air around you, infrared saunas emit infrared light which warms your body directly without warming the air and without the high humidity inherent in steam saunas. Standard saunas typically reach an average temperature of about 185°F + whereas an infrared sauna typically stays around 120°F. Because of the lower ambient temperature, infrared saunas can be easier to handle, especially for those with heat sensitivities. You can also safely stay in a bit longer, thereby extending the benefits.

ATHLETIC RECOVERY

Either sauna will produce increased blood flow to sore muscles, will loosen joints and will increase the production of heat-shock proteins (which help repair damaged cells after a hormetic stress - like an intense workout or training session). Research also states that sauna usage of either type post-workout has been shown to help stimulate muscle growth and to improve aerobic capacity / endurance. Since you are able to stay in an infrared sauna longer, a case can be made that it might be more helpful for recovery simply due to increased length of time in the heat.

INCREASED CIRCULATION

Both types of sauna increase blood circulation by vasodilation (your blood vessels get bigger which, therefore, means increased blood flow throughout your body). Though the Norwegian sauna is technically hotter, the infrared sauna heats the body in such a way as to produce an extremely similar level of increased blood flow. So if this is your main focus, it would just come down to personal preference as either sauna would work equally well.

CLEANSING / DETOX

The key here comes down to sweating. In this regard, the infrared sauna tends to heat the body's core temp more and will get your detox pathways moving. Both will definitely make you sweat, but an infrared session might be your best bet if you're looking to help with detox.

RELAXATION

This one depends on your preferences and what you find more relaxing. If you like a more traditional steamy, very hot sauna experience, go for the Norwegian. If you like a drier, not quite as hot sauna, an infrared session might suit you better.

WHICH ONE IS HOTTER?

If you have an intolerance to heat, you'll want to opt for the infrared sauna as it's typically around 50 or so degrees cooler than a Norwegian sauna. Alternately, if you're thinking the hotter, the better, you are made for the Norwegian.

WHICH ONE TAKES LESS TIME?

If time is a consideration, go for a Norwegian sauna session - a solid 15-20 minute session will get you the results you're looking for. If you've got a bit more time, spend 40 minutes in the Infrared Sauna to reap maximum benefits there.

No matter which type of sauna you choose, you're sure to see physical and mental benefits. If you want to try both types, go for it! We recommend doing that on separate days, but it's a great way to see what works best for your body. Both the infrared and Norwegian saunas offer health benefits, relaxation and muscle recovery. Either way, you really can't lose.



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