



Leisurecraft Hot Tub Guidelines

Beyond soaking in a natural hot spring, it's difficult to imagine a more soothing outdoor experience than enjoying a Leisurecraft Cedar Hot Tub full of steaming hot water, feeling the crisp air around you with nothing but the sound of a crackling fire and the scent of cedar in the background.

Investing in a wood fired hot tub is an ideal way to make your space feel like a personal sanctuary while getting back to basics.

Simple and timeless with an elemental design, wood fired hot tubs have a rich history of wellness for the mind, body, and soul, and is still a way that many people reconnect to both themselves and nature today.

In these guidelines, we'll explain the history of wood fired hot tubs, how they work, and how to pick the perfect tub for your own oasis, be it a mountain cabin, coastal surf shack, desert oasis, or even simply a suburban backyard.

Whatever your choice, Leisurecraft has plenty of options to find your perfect hot tub!

Leisurecraft wood fired hot tubs are soaking tubs that use an internal wood burning heater to heat the water. They are either made in a barrel shape, like the [Evolution](#) or [The Original Cedar Hot Tub](#) or in a rectangle shape like the [Cascade](#) or the [Starlight](#) hot tubs. Leisurecraft hot tubs are made from Canadian cedar, either western red cedar or eastern white cedar.

The version that we know of today was inspired by the traditional Japanese ofuros – deep soaking tubs crafted from hinoki cypress wood that were intended to be a place of deep spiritual, mental, and physical restoration that cleansed more than just your pores.

Since there is no electricity, no jets or lights, the wood fired hot tub provides a quiet and aromatic experience.

A Leisurecraft wood fired hot tub is made with a series of vertical cedar staves placed tightly together in a barrel shape and secured by aluminum marine grade bands. More modern shapes, like the Cascade or Starlight are made with cedar skirting over an aluminum shell and offer more room to stretch out.

Regardless of the choice, with a naturally durable and decay-resistant material like cedar and some basic care, it's not uncommon to expect Leisurecraft wood fired hot tubs to last for as long as 20 years.



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How does a wood fired tub work?

The back-to-basics design of a wood fired hot tub means that there is no electricity or electric hookups that heat the water. Instead, things get nice and steamy (104-105 degrees F) thanks to a wood fired heater. To operate a wood fired hot tub, you need to chop the wood, stoke the flames, circulate the water with a paddle to evenly distribute the heat, and put logs in the firebox to maintain the heat. If connecting with nature is your thing, and you're up for the task of embracing the ritual of heating a wood fired hot tub, it'll offer you an experience unlike any other.

For many of us, it's the ritual of putting our heart into what we enjoy most, whether a special meal, fancy cocktail, gourmet coffee drink, or pared down wood fired hot tub soak, we know for certain that fast doesn't always mean better, and sometimes the art of slowing down is exactly what we need most. Wood fired hot tubs are not about instant gratification, and in our view - that's the whole point. They allow us to slow down and be still for a moment, requiring a ritualistic labor of love to fill and heat the water to whatever temperature you choose to soak in.

Leisurecraft Hot tubs use a submersible hot tub heater made from durable marine grade aluminum that resists corrosion, and surprise, is submerged in the hot tub. An underwater stove might sound oxymoronic, but what makes it work are the above water stove pipe, chimney, and stove door that allow you to build a fire and control air intake, thus controlling the temperature. Bathers and the stove are kept safely apart by the built in wooden fence. Overall, submersible stoves are often considered the best choice because they heat water twice as fast (which still may be a couple hours depending on the model) by making the transfer of heat more efficient.



How long does a wood fired hot tub take to heat?

To bring your Leisurecraft wood fired hot tub water temperature to 105° F expect a period of three to four hours, depending on the size of your hot tub and the outside temperatures. A smaller tub, like the Cascade or Starlight may take as little as 2 hours, whereas a larger tub, like the Original or Evolution could take 3-4 hours. Its worth noting that the initial heat time is different from the time it takes to heat back up after it's already been heated. Factors that affect the initial heat time include: the temperature of the water, the outside temperature, the quality of the firewood being used for the fire, the amount of water, if lids or covers are being placed on top while the water heats, and whether you stir the tub with a paddle to circulate the water for even heat distribution among other factors.

Internal wood burning hot tub heaters are known as a “snorkel” stove design. The main distinction is that the internal firebox heats the water by sitting in the tub itself. Internal heaters heat faster because 100% of the heat generated from the firebox transfer directly into the water, making it more efficient to heat. It’s a safer way to heat your wood burning hot tub because the submerged firebox won't burn a person and is also partitioned by a wood fence which prevents contact with the chimney which is very hot and will cause burns.

It is important to use a lid or cover when the hot tub is not in use, as it will reduce heat loss. If you enjoy the process of building a fire and keeping it stoked while anticipating the eventual soak, then a wood fired tub is for you. In other words, it’s about “ the process.”



How to heat a wood fired hot tub

DO not Operate the Wood Heater without filling the Hot Tub with Water!

Operating a Leisurecraft wood fired hot tub is simple, but it takes practice to get the temperature exactly where you like it. Similar to lighting a fire, you'll need matches, kindling, paper, some bigger pieces of wood, and of course, a source of water and a hose to fill it.

Using a hose, fill your hot tub with water. Water isn't always abundant at off-grid properties, and we don't want to see it go to waste, so we recommend filling your tub from a natural water source if you have access to a lake, stream or pond. You can pump it from the source and re-use the water for the garden or watering the grass when your done with it or drain it back into the lake or stream (so long as you aren't using any chemicals)

Always fill the tub before lighting the fire, or you risk the firebox combusting, which can cause property damage, bodily injury, and a broken hot tub and heater. Once the tub is full of water, build a fire in the firebox by placing crumpled paper in the bottom of the heater, placing kindling on top of the paper, then adding small dry logs. Note that the wood should be very dry! Light the paper and leave the lid open to allow airflow. A draft will help establish the fire. Once the fires is established, add larger pieces of firewood, controlling the fire with the lid which acts as a dampener controlling the air intake. Check the temperature of the water and once it reaches 10 degrees within your desired bathing temperature (usually 101- 104 ° F) stop adding wood, put the lid on, and allow the temperature to rise on its own. Some wood fired hot tub heaters are more efficient than others, requiring more or less wood to establish and maintain the fire. Leisurecraft wood burning hot tubs don't face a challenge of getting hot, but rather, of becoming too hot, so stop adding wood before it reaches your desired bathing temperature to avoid overheating. If it does overheat, add some cold water with a hose and stir the water with a paddle to evenly distribute. Maintain the fire to keep the water at the desired temperature. Wood fired hot tubs are designed differently, with some models offering more heat efficiency than others. Leisurecraft wood burning hot tubs are designed to offer superior heat retention and will maintain their temperature throughout the day with just an armful of wood and will drop just 5-10 degrees overnight. Use a cover to help in reducing heat loss at night or when not in use. Put a log on in the morning while you drink your coffee, and by the time your finished eating your toast, it'll be back up to bathing temperature and ready to enjoy for the day. Leisurecraft wood burning hot tubs are designed intentionally with an internal wood heater for optimal heat properties and safety.



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How to clean a wood fired hot tub

Leisurecraft wood fired hot tubs are extremely easy to maintain if your hot tub is being used occasionally, such as weekend use or at the cabin or cottage. It can be used chemically free and with very simple maintenance. Wood fired hot tubs do not require chemical water treatments like electric hot tubs do because they don't stand with hot water in them for weeks and months at a time. Japanese onsen bathing involves showering before entering the tub and soaking in chemical free, natural water. Because Leisurecraft hot tubs are inexpensive to heat and the water can be repurposed for irrigation or back into the natural environment it came from, many of our customers opt for this type of bathing. The marine grade aluminum bands are resistant to algae(that's why its for marine use).

To clean, just empty, wipe down with soap and water, rinse and then refill when you're ready to use it again. (If it is an Original hot tub with no liner, you always want to keep 2-4" of water in the hot tub to prevent the wood from drying out and shrinking leading to leaking the next time you try to use it.) To clean the hot tub heater, you can use our aluminum ash scoop to remove the ash from the firebox.

Cold Plunge and Ice Baths

After enjoying a hot tub or Sauna, many bathers will quickly cool themselves down by getting into a cold plunge tub or ice bath that is around 44-55 degrees Fahrenheit. What the heat does to encourage blood flow throughout the body, the cold-water immersion does to restrict circulation, so it goes directly to the internal organs to help reduce inflammation. Leisurecraft cold plunge tubs are popularly used in tandem with hot tubs and saunas for the ultimate therapy experience.