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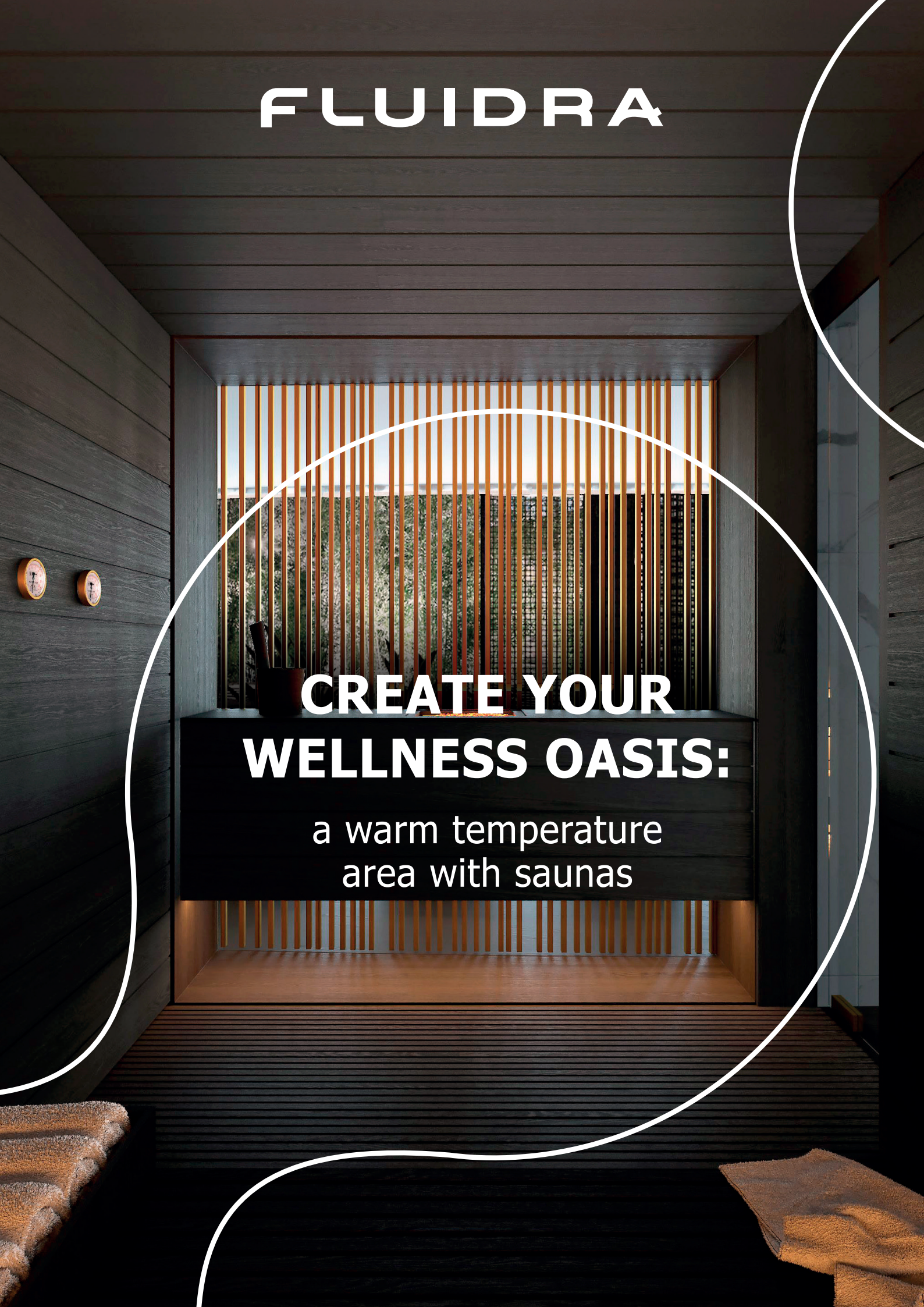

CREATE YOUR WELLNESS OASIS:

a warm temperature area with saunas

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01 INTRODUCTION

Operators at the **wellness industry** are currently experiencing a paradox: on the one hand, and building from an increased consciousness around well-being and health, demand for wellness services has never been higher. However, on the other hand, this booming sector is also attracting a growing number of upcoming and existing operators. In other words, standing out has never been so difficult.

However, there's a proven formula for success in the sector: investing in **customer experience** by means of **outstanding facilities.**

While there are different approaches to wellness centers, the 'warm temperature' section has remained a key area of any such business.

From classic (but still relevant) options such as the Finnish saunas to more contemporary facilities, here's a look at the **current options** for building a warm-temperature area that leaves its mark.

02 THE WELLNESS SECTOR: A BOOMING BUT INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY

Wellness centers have become particularly relevant and popular today as part of spas, hotels, resorts, gyms and other installations.

In an era in which more and more people pay attention to the intersection of **mind and body well-being**, the wellness sector provides the space and services to cater to these needs.

This, in turn, is reflected on **growth** figures around the global health and wellness market: while it was valued at USD 4,886.70 billion in 2022, it is expected to reach over USD 7,656.7 billion by 2030, growing at a CAGR of 5.5% from 2021 to 2030, according to **Precedence Research**.

This has naturally attracted more and more businesses and entrepreneurs towards the wellness sector. The result is an industry in which new and old operators, steering from all directions within the hospitality and leisure areas, must work hard to **differentiate themselves** from competitors.

03

WHY WARM-TEMPERATURE AREAS ARE KEY TO A WELLNESS CENTER

Warm temperature areas (such as saunas and steam baths) represent a key investment for attracting a new but already large type of customers: those focusing on **wellness and natural, holistic health.**

As part of a wellness center or additional facilities in the hospitality industry, warm-temperature areas have become an essential element for clients looking for **improving their well-being** in their leisure time. These areas offer an oasis of peace that users come to searching to disconnect and relax.

This is backed by the strong case for warm environments and health, as both saunas and steam baths have shown well-known **health benefits**, including detoxification processes, improved immune functions, help in decongestion and muscle relaxation and a reduction in stress.

In addition to the well-known water areas, saunas and steam baths represent a key solution for designing a warm wellness area, whether it is a prefabricated cabin or a tailor-made solution. As such, operators adding this type of facility to their installations can build on the **narratives** surrounding wellness spaces and connect with customers interested in improving their health while relaxing.

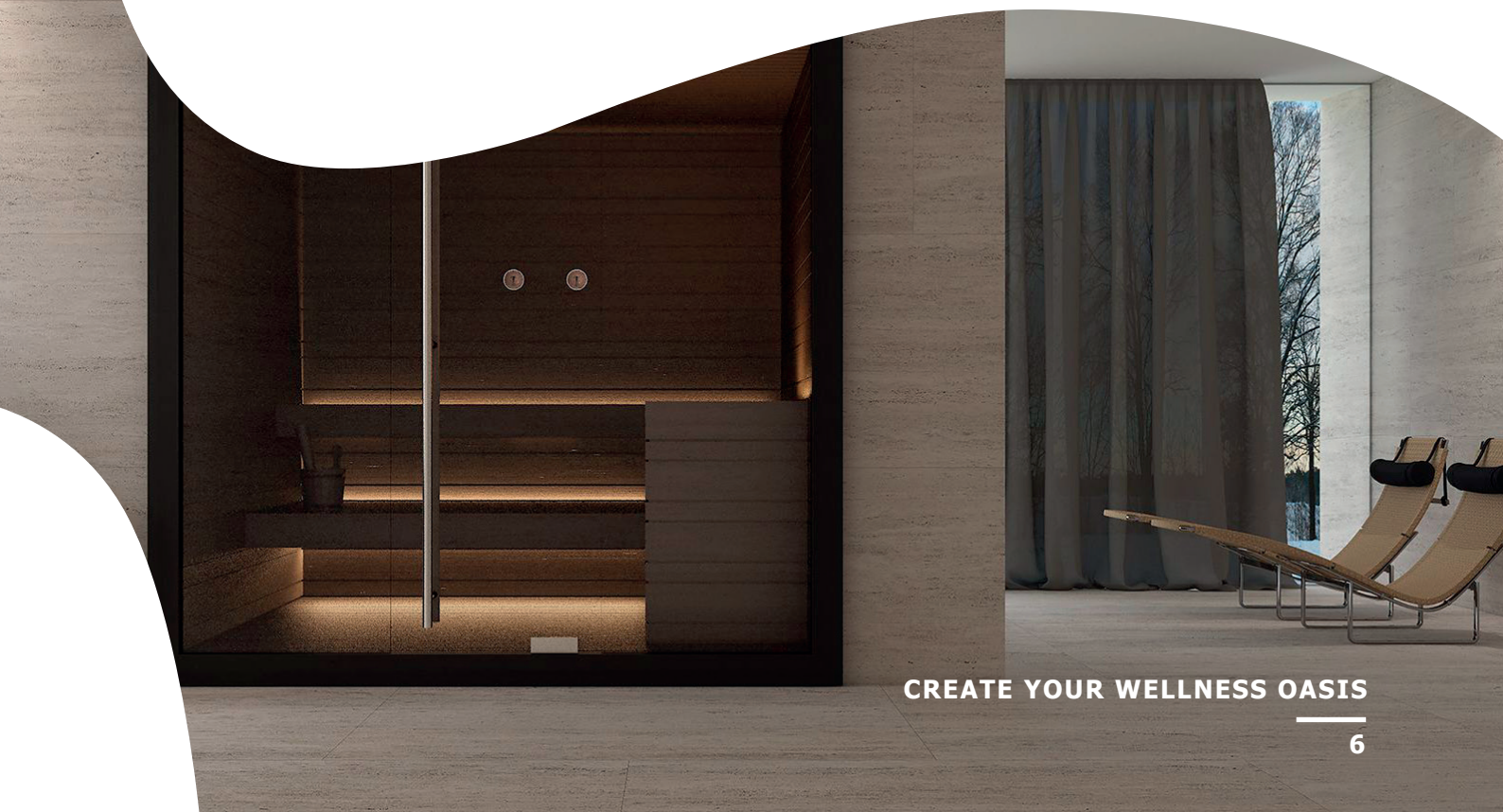
04 WARM TEMPERATURE FACILITIES: A KEY AREA IN YOUR WELLNESS OASIS

The Finnish sauna: the warmest, most classic choice

A Finnish sauna is **a type of sauna that relies** on generating and maintaining **dry heat**. Inside, humidity levels are typically kept around 5-20%, while temperatures are set around 80-90ºC.

They typically include the following elements:

- **Structure:** as wood is the main component in a sauna's structure, there are multiple options within this material: the most common is oak tree, but other popular options include common aspen, western red cedar, Canadian hemlock, common alder or black alder, Scots pine, Norway spruce, American ash, Radiata pine, Poplar and Magnolia. The choice should be guided by professional sauna experts able to understand each project's needs and requirements. Additionally, transparent panels made of **glass and stainless steel accessories** can also be incorporated into a Finnish sauna, creating a visually open space. For doors, automatic hydraulic closing systems are highly recommended to prevent heat losses.



- **Heater:** heaters are in charge of rising the temperature in the sauna to a warm 80-90ºC. The most popular are electric heaters, which warm up the stones that radiate the heat inside the sauna. It's also possible to choose between exposed or hidden heaters.
- **Lighting:** essential to create atmospheres, options for a Finnish sauna are endless: from exposed or recessed lighting, to direct or indirect light, white or colored light, among others.
- **Benches:** benches are a fundamental part of the Finnish sauna, for which the right type of wood must be chosen. Magnolia wood's low heat conductivity is typically preferred to create a comfortable sauna interior with benches that are easier to sit on.
- **Custom elements:** these may include **aroma dispensers** or **music** that further enhance the sauna experience.
- **Technical equipment:** such as **control panels** or **ventilation systems**, which are able to change the air up to five times an hour.

Operators looking to incorporate a Finnish sauna into their centers should make sure they follow advice by experts in the field as well as pick high-quality materials. In a sauna that is intensively used, the **right decisions** will make it not only operate efficiently but also remain clean and attractive in the long run.

"The choice should be guided by professional sauna experts able to understand each project's needs and requirements."

Salt saunas

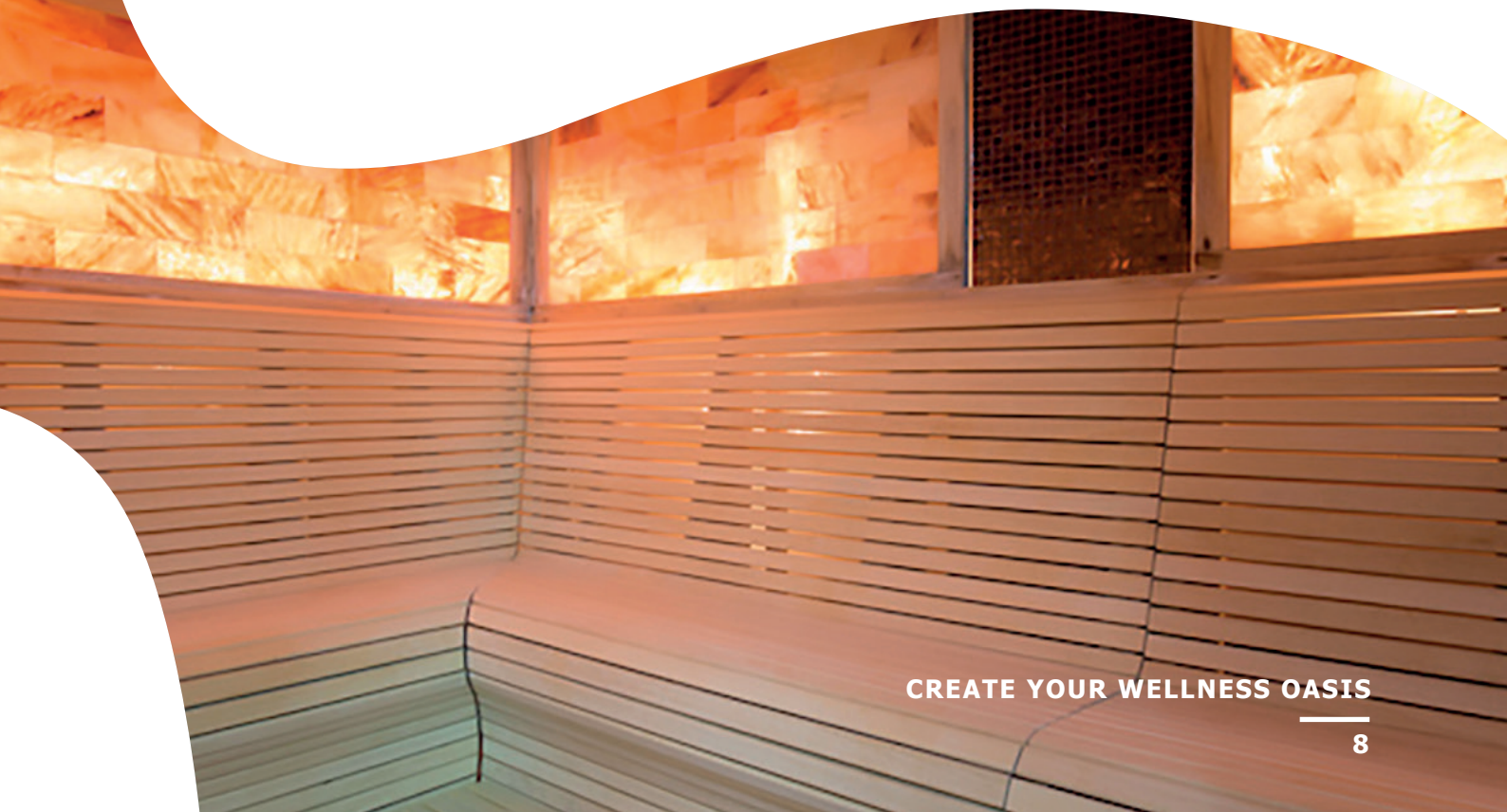
Salt saunas represent a key trend for wellness areas in spas, hotels, resorts and sport clubs. These consist of spaces that have been created using **bricks made of Himalayan salt**, placed on the sauna's walls. Inside, temperatures can range between 48 and 75ºC, while relative humidity is between 20% and 50%.

These conditions stimulate salt's ionization processes, as part of **halotherapy**, which are based on breathing air within salty atmospheres. In a salt sauna, tiny **saline microparticles** are absorbed through the skin and the respiratory tract, providing an aid for people with respiratory issues. It's also been used successfully for dermatological and muscular conditions, as well as for interventions targeting stress.

Lightning tends to be dim and there are usually some benches or beds to lie on. At the center of the sauna there's the salt generator or **halogenerator**. Materials used for designing salt saunas include fir tree wood and their structure tends to include a panoramic glass window, encouraging a relaxing experience from users within.

Aromas and music may also be included to further the positive physical and emotional effects of salt saunas.

"In a salt sauna, tiny saline microparticles are absorbed through the skin and the respiratory tract, providing an aid for people with respiratory issues"



Infrared saunas

Infrared saunas offer the benefits of a Finnish sauna without their extreme heat. Using **infrared lamps** (that use electromagnetic radiation) to warm bodies, they can operate at lower temperatures (typically between 40ºC and 60ºC) than a traditional sauna.

Infrared radiation consists of radiation from the light spectrum, which has a longer wavelength and is not visible to the naked eye. This radiation is shorter than that of microwaves but longer than the visible light wave.

Even if they represent a different approach to conventional saunas, they participate in the benefits of saunas enumerated above, including a reduction in stress, help in muscle recovery, cardiovascular health and great detoxification capabilities. However, and thanks to the use of infrared radiation, warmth is able to **penetrate deep into the tissues**, generating a different but highly beneficial experience from Finnish saunas.

When designing an infrared sauna, operators must know there are a number of customizations available. Additionally, these saunas often include the following elements:

- **Wood**, which spruce, redwood, hemlock, poplar, basswood, or cedar being good options
- **Carbon or ceramic heaters**, with the first option being larger in size, distributing infrared heat more evenly, and producing high quality, long wave infrared heat, but typically, at a weaker level. A combination of the two provides the best of both worlds
- **Electromagnetic fields (EMF)**, which should be monitored so that they stay within the threshold of what is considered safe, as continual exposure to high levels of EMFs can be harmful.

Outdoor saunas

Outdoor saunas can be viewed as a conventional sauna with a twist: giving guests the opportunity to **admire surrounding views** as well as combine their sauna session with other outdoor activities, such as lounging or swimming outdoors.

A hot new trend for wellness centers, it can provide a unique experience for guests and make operators stand out from the competition.

In fact, the traditional Finnish sauna used to be built outdoors, so that outdoor saunas represent a **more authentic sauna experience** for customers who also get to enjoy unique, relaxing views: from wintry landscapes to mountains, gardens or the sea, hospitality and leisure operators can make the most of their environments by adding these to their facilities.

Another benefit of outdoor saunas is that they may **double some facilities' capacities**: as conventional, indoor saunas may fill up quickly being a popular choice, having both an indoor and an outdoor sauna means operators can serve more customers in a satisfactory manner.

"A hot new trend for wellness centers, it can provide a unique experience for guests and make operators stand out from the competition."

Steam baths

Steam baths (also known as wet saunas) are a wellness solution in which **humidity** is maintained very high (around 100%), while temperatures do not tend to exceed 60-70ºC.

In order to create such an atmosphere, these rooms use steam from hot water, building from a traditional relaxation and detoxification method known since the arrival of the **Turks** in Anatolia, hence its other name: Turkish baths or hammam.

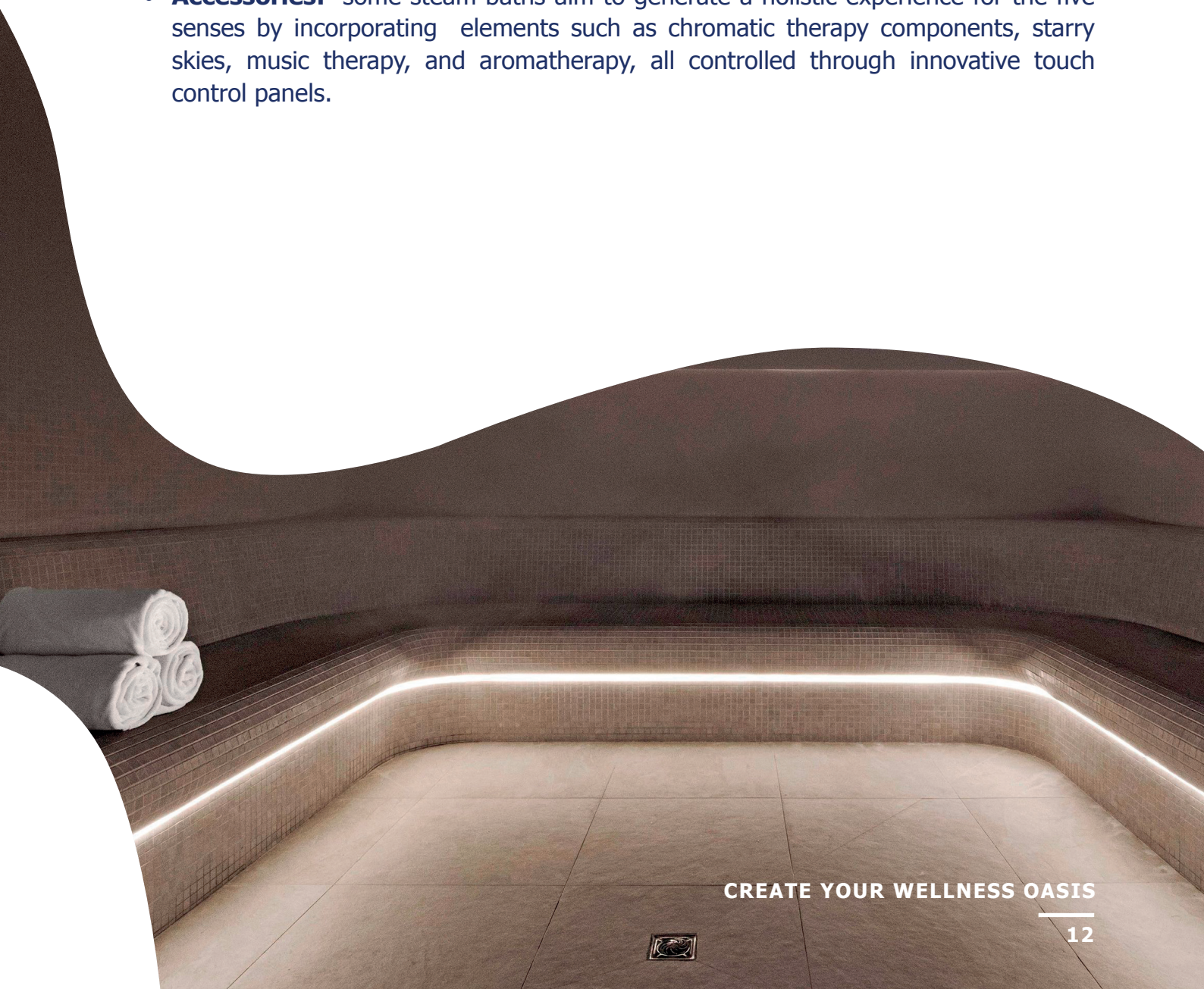
There's an ancient tradition associating the steam bath with both body and soul purification. Additionally, modern science has confirmed steam baths can claim their position as **healthy treatments**, sharing similar benefits to those generated by Finnish saunas.

However, it's precisely the added steam from this type of room which can be extremely beneficial for certain conditions, such as joint stiffness as well as for aching bodies after long workouts. Moreover, steam helps release mucus and nasal congestion, which can work wonders for people suffering from allergies or colds.

Successful steam bath design must acknowledge the following elements and options:

- **Solid surfaces:** a solid smooth surface design represents a minimalist and valuable choice, which should be made of elegant, high-quality materials that are well-kept in the long-term, easy to maintain and keep clean.

- **Stone line:** an irregularly shaped stone finish provides elegance and a natural appearance to a steam room. This can easily fit within a bigger wellness center, with the possibility of adding other solutions such as a hydrotherapy shower.
- **Ceramic coating:** these options use extruded polystyrene panels with a fiber cement cement finish. The aim is to allow for cladding with the coating, which can present different options in colors and textures (such as mosaics), providing a stylish look. These steam rooms are somewhere in between prefabricated cabins and a built-in room. They are perfectly insulated, retaining the advantages of a prefabricated booth, but with a lower cost than a bespoke built cabin.
- **Steam generator:** the heart of a Turkish bath, they come in different sizes and can provide varied functionalities. Generators must meet the highest safety standards and integrate seamlessly with other potential systems within the facilities as required.
- **Materials:** stone and acrylic materials tend to be a popular option. They represent a very hygienic, easy to clean and durable option. Wood can be considered for a more rustic, nordic appeal. Varieties of soft wood should be used, which are able to soak up the steam and withstand heat absorption without long-term damage (such as eucalyptus, basswood, cedar, and thermo-spruce).
- **Accessories:** some steam baths aim to generate a holistic experience for the five senses by incorporating elements such as chromatic therapy components, starry skies, music therapy, and aromatherapy, all controlled through innovative touch control panels.



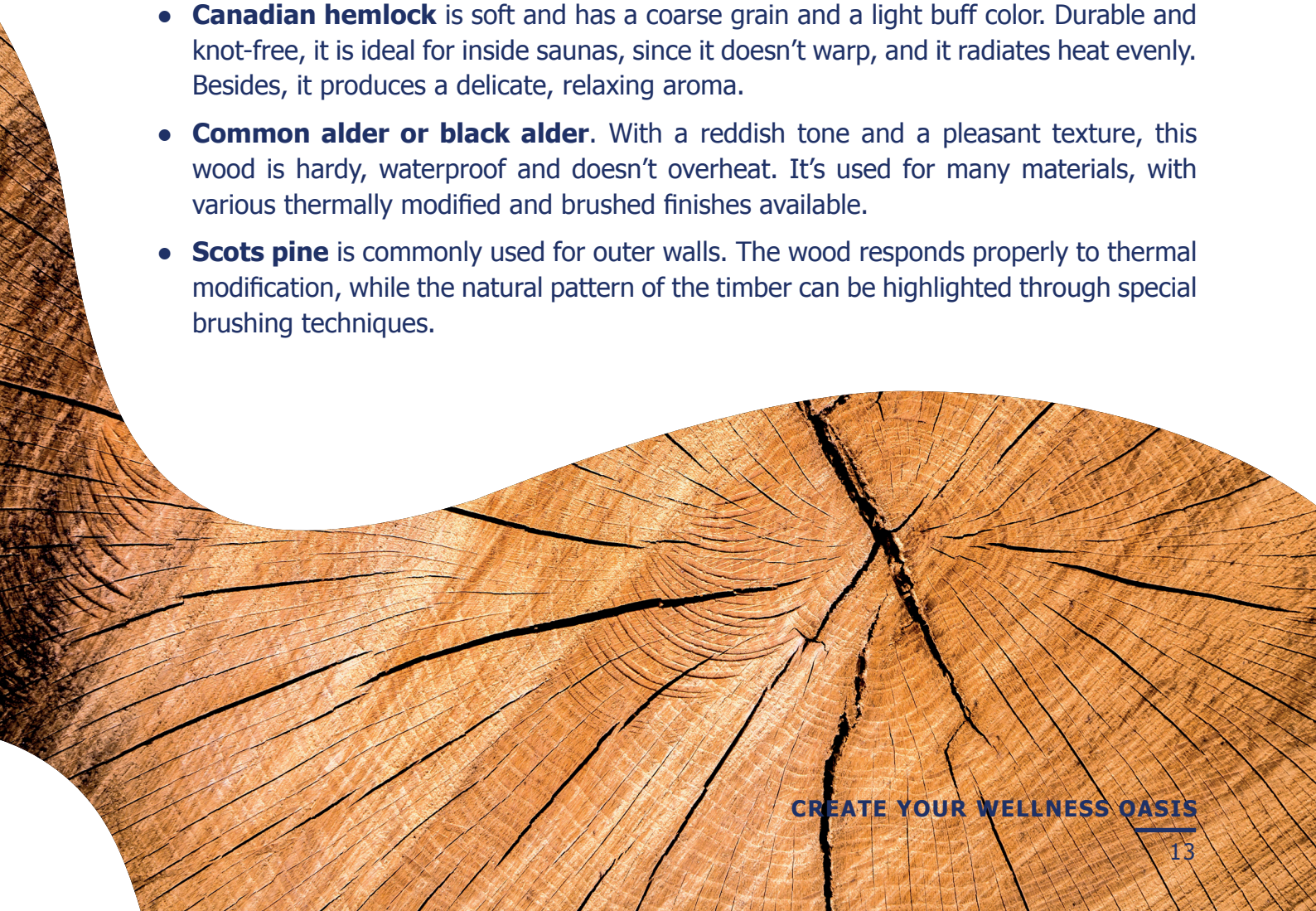
05

WOOD: THE CORE MATERIAL FOR SAUNA INSTALLATIONS

Understanding how to design and maintain a sauna starts with looking at the materials employed to make them: **wood represents the main component in sauna installations**. In order to ensure **proper insulation** and add an **attractive design**, choosing the right type of wood for a sauna is a key aspect.

There are **many types of wood for sauna** installations. The most common and efficient are the following ones:

- **Common aspen** is an ideal material for sauna benches because it doesn't secrete resin, splinter, or overheat. Its light tone and smooth texture are also perfect for painting.
- **Western red cedar** is perfect for sauna benches and interiors for it doesn't secrete resin or overheat, and it is also waterproof. It's also known for its pleasant aroma and its reddish color with a range of natural shades.
- **Canadian hemlock** is soft and has a coarse grain and a light buff color. Durable and knot-free, it is ideal for inside saunas, since it doesn't warp, and it radiates heat evenly. Besides, it produces a delicate, relaxing aroma.
- **Common alder or black alder**. With a reddish tone and a pleasant texture, this wood is hardy, waterproof and doesn't overheat. It's used for many materials, with various thermally modified and brushed finishes available.
- **Scots pine** is commonly used for outer walls. The wood responds properly to thermal modification, while the natural pattern of the timber can be highlighted through special brushing techniques.



- **Norway spruce** is almost white with a light yellowish undertone. Spruce is often used as timber and for saunas, and it is generally preferred for exterior walls.
- **American ash** produces a durable, strong and decorative wood with an attractive texture. Thermally modified ash takes on a dark brown color and brushing can further highlight this distinctive pattern.
- **Radiata pine.** With no exposed knots, this wood doesn't secrete resin, splinter, or overheat, which makes it a fantastic option for sauna benches. Wide boards and the darker hue from thermal modification offer a touch of luxury for interior and exterior paneling.
- **Poplar** has a naturally pale yellow color and a smooth texture. It's ideal for sauna interiors, since the wood has no exposed knots and it doesn't splinter, secrete resin, or overheat. The warm look from and the wide boards make for a cozy, luxurious finish that also suits exterior walls.
- **Magnolia** has a creamy, golden hue with darker areas. Due to its low density and low heat conductivity, it is perfect for sauna benches, interiors, and exterior paneling. The wide boards and the dark shade achieved by thermal modification give this wood a luxurious finish.

06 CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

High temperatures and humidity are the two core components in a sauna. At the same time, these are the two elements that can impair this installation's running in the long term if proper **cleaning measures** are not ensured.

Cleaning measures in a sauna are not only important for **hygienic reasons**: they also ensure the installation **lasts longer** and requires **less intensive and expensive maintenance** operations.

Several factors can have an influence on how often to clean a sauna. However, if a sauna is used quite regularly, the recommendation is to **clean it completely at least once a week and perform daily cleaning routines.**

Here are some of the key actions for cleaning a sauna:

1. Sweep and vacuum the superficial dirt.

During this operation, make sure that neither the hoover nor the broom are made of materials that can damage the wood by scratching it.

2. Scrub and remove dirt or sweat stains.

Using a damp cloth or a sponge, drag and remove remaining dirt. Soft detergent or natural products (such as bicarbonate paste or vinegar and warm water) are recommended. Spray the product evenly over the wood surface. Then use a clean cloth to rub stains, rinse the surface and let it dry. Grit sandpaper can be used for specially persistent stains. Afterwards, water rinsing is also recommended. Additionally, as a preventative measure, it's recommended that users employ towels when sitting, thus avoiding sweat stains on sitting surfaces.

3. Disinfect ventilation areas and the rest of the installation.

Interior areas and accessories must also be taken care of. This includes burners, stones or electric heaters. Again, it's advisable to use natural products, such as lemon juice, for this operation: squeeze the juice and use a sponge to rub the desired surface. Then use water to rinse it and let it dry.

4. Consider scents and smell.

Sometimes, the use of chemical products comes with unpleasant, off-putting odors. In order to avoid them, incorporate a final step into the cleaning routine and use pleasant perfumes to generate a welcoming atmosphere.

5. Perform routine maintenance checks.

After the sauna cleaning is finished, it is advisable to perform regular maintenance operations to check everything is in order and works properly.

Wood maintenance tips

As mentioned, most saunas are made of wood, because this material ensures the right insulation needed for a sauna environment.

Since exposure to **high temperatures and moisture can affect its integrity and appeal,** wood **requires specific treatment** and regular maintenance operations. On the one hand, temperature fluctuations may cause cracks on the wood while, on the other, steam may end up darkening some materials over time.

Some key considerations in how to clean a sauna's wood surface include:

- In order to prolong this material's life, it is essential to protect wooden sauna surfaces before using them by employing a breathable **wood preservative** product. This product can be based on oil or wax. Its main duty is to improve wood's resistance to dirt and moisture, making it easier to clean. Moreover, it provides a more vivid tone to the wood.
- As mentioned, saunas must be regularly cleaned, and it's important to note that **disinfectants are not suited for wood** cleaning because they can bleach the wood and cause irreversible damage to its surface. **Pressure cleaning equipment should also be avoided**, as pressure and excessive moisture may permanently damage the wood's structure and surface.
- **Sand the surface to remove difficult stains and dirt.** First, moisten the surface, let it dry and then polish it using a fine sandpaper. Sweep up the dust and then treat the sanded surface with a wood preservative. There are also special products for **dirt-repellent protection** that can be applied longitudinally on the wood.
- Leave heaters on for at least half an hour while the air vent is open, and the door and windows closed. **Let surfaces dry after cleaning** the sauna by ensuring good **ventilation**.
- Advise users to **not wear wet swimsuits** in the sauna, as it will damage the bench. **Seat covers** are a good solution to protect this area.
- If possible, lift up the benches so they can dry more easily.

07

CONCLUSION: THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING A WELLNESS OASIS

As we've seen across this guide, the possibilities within a wellness space based on warm elements are multiple and can help operators align with a new breed of wellness-seeker clients.

While investing in high-quality materials and options is always a good starting point, operators looking to guarantee their investment remains efficient in the long term should be guided by **experts in wellness facilities**, including their design and implementation.

In a context of rising energy costs and a need for sustainability, factors such as **good insulation choices** can play a crucial role in how successful an investment in wellness facilities remains in the short, medium and long term. Additionally, design of these facilities should ensure **maintenance** remains at a minimum and doesn't generate prohibitive costs in the future.

But that's not all: as an investment for attracting a clientele interested in wellness and health, operators should ensure they make the most of their new facilities, and consider all prefabricated, bespoke and **customization opportunities** that expert designers might suggest.

"This information contains general recommendations that must be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. This information is not an instruction manual and cannot be considered as such for any purpose. Any implementation or installation to be made must be made by a professional and under the appropriate guidelines. In this regard, each user is responsible for the application it makes of the information contained herein. Fluidra will not be responsible for its use. Consequently, under no circumstances will Fluidra be liable or responsible for any claim, damages or loss that may arise as a consequence of the use of this information".

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