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Bastu Beats and Cold Dips – Sweden Heats Up Eurovision and Wellness Trends

This year, Sweden is sending more than a melody to the stage in Switzerland for the Eurovision Song Contest on May 17. "Bara Bada Bastu" ("Just Take a Sauna"), the Swedish Eurovision entry by Finnish-Swedish comedy group KAJ, is a loving tribute to the sauna—a cornerstone of Swedish culture, well-being, and national identity.

The performance might be playful, but the sauna trend is serious. Americans are tuning in.

The performance has already sparked a wave of hot collaborations across borders. In one standout moment, Sweden's Life Guards Mounted Band joined forces with the Finnish Dragoon Band (Rakuunasoittokunta) for a truly Nordic take on bara bada bastu. Watch them hit the steam together: @livgardet on Instagram

Wellness Wanderlust Is Rising – and Sweden Has the Steam

Interest in sauna culture is surging worldwide. Between April 2021 and March 2025, global sauna-related searches jumped 108% (MyTelescope Index). In 2024 alone, international Google searches for Swedish saunas rose by 47% – with the US among the top at +60%.

Today, over one in three American travelers seek wellness elements in their trip, from spa retreats to cold plunges. And in Sweden, it's all woven into everyday life.

Sweden's Sauna Culture: More Than a Trend, It's Tradition

Sauna – or *bastu* – in Sweden is a ritual passed down through generations: a place recharge, reflect, or connect, or simply enjoy nature. It's often paired with a cold plunge in a lake or the sea, a **kallbad** – cold bath. Sweden's first cold bathing house (kallbadhus) opened as early as the 1800s, and today, kallbad (cold bathing) is part of a deeply rooted wellbeing practice recognized as part of Sweden's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The sauna even has its own day – National Sauna Day, celebrated this year on June 14. And in 2025, Helsingborg will host the country's first Classic Sauna Aufguss Championship, where aromatic oils and towel artistry meet performance and tradition.

10 must-try Saunas: From Rustic Retreats to Sleek Urban Sanctuaries

Whether you're floating in a glass-walled sauna on a frozen lake or warming up in a design hotel spa, Sweden delivers heat in every form. Here are ten of the most extraordinary places across Sweden to go *bara bada bastu*:

The award-winning sauna in Jubileumsparken, Gothenburg: Overlooking the Göta River, this architectural gem is located in Gothenburg's Frihamnen. The sauna is built from recycled materials and is next door to Hamnbadet with three pools, one of which is open all year round for those who like a refreshing cold swim. The sauna is free of charge and needs to be booked online in advance.

The floating sauna in Stocksund, Stockholm: Marvel at Stockholm´s archipelago while enjoying a wood-heated sauna, combining relaxation and sublime landscapes. A sun terrace with awning and seating allows you to enjoy the fresh air. Drinks and snacks are available on request.

The work of art that is Solar Egg in Kiruna, Swedish Lapland: This golden, egg-shaped sauna and artwork has travelled the world for seven years, now returning to its original home in Kiruna. Designed by Swedish artists Bigert & Bergström, Solar Egg symbolises rebirth and creativity. Enjoy a classic snow roll to cool off after the sauna! Book it by emailing Kiruna Bryggeri.

The NEW sauna with a view of Denmark, Kallbadhus in Landskrona, Skåne: Inaugurated in March 2025 and installed at the end of a 300-metre-long wooden jetty, this cold bath house in southern Sweden includes a sauna with spectacular views of Öresund and Denmark from an elegant glass structure. Press photos HERE.

The eco-certified design experience at Arctic Bath in Harads: A floating spa hotel with a circular outdoor pool at the heart of the building: Arctic Bath combines luxury with magnificent nature. Built floating on the Lule River, this unique building offers waterfront experiences during the summer and is surrounded by ice in the winter, perfect for those looking for a combination of heat and cold. For an extra memorable stay, Arctic Bath hosts the Fire and Ice event, where sauna, cold bathing and carefully selected culinary experiences merge. Press photos: HERE

The sacred space at Kukkolaforsen on the Swedish/Finnish border: In the kingdom of the sauna and whitefish at Kukkolaforsen, on the very border between Sweden and Finland, they celebrate their common sauna tradition. Discover 13 different saunas – from classic wood-fired variants to a traditional smoke sauna. Experience what has long been regarded as sauna´s sacred space — the “church of nature.” Central to the ritual is löyly, the spirit or steam released when water is poured over a stack of heated stones. On 13th-15th June, join the National Sauna Day celebrations.

The underground sauna at Äventyrsgruvan in Dalarna: located at a depth of 80 meters in a former mine. Surrounded by natural rock walls, the warmth of the steam contrasts with the chill of the mine´s clear turquoise water. This unique sauna adventure lasts about three and a half hours and includes a meal.

The Most Beautiful - Kallbadhuset Varberg in Varberg, one of Sweden´s most beautiful: Kallbadhuset Varberg, is a wooden palace in Moorish style that rests on stilts over the sea. Since 1903, this historic gem has offered classic saunas combined with refreshing dips in the sea. With a magnificent view of The Kattegat and nearby Varberg Fortress, Kallbadhuset offers an idyllic coastal experience filled with tradition and charm. Press images: HERE

The underwater sauna in Ästad Vingård, Halland: The sauna is part of the "Sinnenas Spa" (Spa of the Senses) and uses scents, sounds, materials and atmospheres inspired by the nature reserves that surround the Ästad vineyards. It offers a unique view thanks to its bay windows that allow you to observe the rainbow trout and crayfish of the pond. Press images: HERE.

The world's largest sauna in Cape East in Haparanda, Norrbotten: The sauna, inspired by a Mayan temple, has ten rows of benches on different levels that accommodate up to 150 people. On the upper level, relaxing in the heated pool area on the terrace while admiring the Finnish border. Experience ice baths, hot water pools, and a waterfall shower with ice water on the lower level. Take up the challenge of the "torture of the Tornio Valley", trying to stay on the highest bench where the temperature reaches 100 degrees Celsius!

Upcoming Highlight: Aufguss Championship, Helsingborg, May 2025

From May 23–25, Sweden will host its inaugural national *Classic Aufguss* finals at the historic Kallis cold bath house in Helsingborg. Sixteen sauna masters will compete with oil infusions, towel choreography, and immersive storytelling – all in the heat of a traditional bastu. The winners will move on to the Nordic Championships in Copenhagen.

With three cold bathhouses and a thriving sauna culture celebrated annually during Kallbadsveckan (Cold Bath Week), Helsingborg has established itself as one of Sweden’s top destinations for cold bathing.

Press Materials & Contacts

- **Images available for editorial use**: Swedish sauna culture – Image bank selection
- **Explore Swedish saunas on Instagram**: @visitsweden
- **More on wellness and benefits of sauna in Sweden** visitsweden.com/wellness

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*Source: My Telescope Index

**Source: Refers to the development of travel-related Google searches for Sweden & sauna,Bloom Consulting, D2 Digital Demand ©

*** Source: Mågruppsanalys 2024, VisitSweden/YouGov

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