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#aquanale

## aquanale 2023 X Sauna from Finland: an interview with Carita Harju



aquanale  
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<https://www.aquanale.com>

The Finnish sauna is probably the best-known type of sauna - an ancient tradition of rustic wooden huts where visitors are made to sweat by a wood-burning stove. Finns regard the sauna as a place not only to cleanse the body, but also to calm the mind and relieve stress. A place for health, relaxation and socialising. Founded in 2010, the "Sauna from Finland" initiative is dedicated to promoting and spreading the authentic Finnish sauna and wellness culture, as well as its related products and services, worldwide. For the upcoming event from 24 to 27 October 2023, aquanale, International Trade Fair for Sauna.Pool.Ambience., has agreed on a strategic partnership with "Sauna from Finland". The aim is to provide participating Finnish companies with additional visibility and support for their own export efforts on a special display area. An interview with Carita Harju, founder and managing director of "Sauna from Finland".

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**Ms Harju, you founded the "Sauna from Finland" initiative in 2010. What is the idea behind this brand?**

**Carita Harju:** "Sauna from Finland" is a community of leading Finnish companies offering sauna products and services, from traditional wooden saunas to modern infrared saunas and spa treatments. We - which today are already about 200 member companies - all share one goal: to preserve and promote the unique and authentic Finnish sauna culture and thus make the associated knowledge and skills of Finnish experts accessible to an international audience. We want to spread the Finnish sauna experience to the world and help make hectic lives easier and everyday life more enjoyable. Just as we Finns do it.

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**What makes the Finnish sauna culture so unique?**

**Carita Harju:** The temperature of a Finnish sauna is moderately high if compared to other saunas in the world. It alters between 70 to 100 degrees Celsius. Finnish sauna is heated up with an electric or a wood-burning stove with rocks piled on top. The main practice of the Finnish bathing is throwing water on the rocks to create steam (löyly in Finnish) and to add temporary soft heat. The typical humidity inside the sauna varies from 40% to 60%. Finnish steam increases the feeling of heat and makes you sweat. All these elements - wood, water, air, fire - create a unique atmosphere and also unite one thing: the connection to nature.

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However, the Finnish sauna is not only a place for relaxation and recreation, but also an important part of social life in Finland. People meet with family or friends to

sweat together and spend time together. Rules don't play a role here, it's all about the individual feel-good experience. The sauna is an important part of our identity and a symbol of the Finnish way of life. Fun Fact: It is such an important part of our culture and everyday life that there are even more saunas than cars in this country.

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### **What are the health benefits of regular sauna visits?**

**Carita Harju:** Over the past few decades, Finnish sauna bathing has spread around the world and has become a popular method of self-care. There is nothing dangerous about sauna bathing - on the contrary. It is good for our health and promotes not only physical, but also psychological and social well-being in many ways. Even an occasional visit to the sauna is refreshing. Regular sauna bathing, however, is amazingly helpful for maintaining health thanks to all the holistic benefits - which can lead to a better quality of life and even lengthen life.

### **How does "Sauna from Finland" help promote Finnish sauna culture?**

**Carita Harju:** At "Sauna from Finland" we see ourselves as an important ambassador for Finnish identity and culture. We actively work to spread Finnish sauna culture and expertise, giving everyone in the world the chance to have the best sauna experience by, among other things, sharing information about the benefits of sauna or offering training and certification. To do this, we work closely with Finnish manufacturers and suppliers to ensure that the highest standards of sauna production and equipment are always maintained. The "Sauna from Finland" label stands for quality, authenticity and sustainability. To obtain it, products and services must meet certain criteria, such as using Finnish materials, following sustainable practices and, of course, providing an authentic Finnish sauna experience. We also support our members in their marketing activities and provide networking opportunities. "Sauna from Finland" also promotes research and development of Finnish saunas and sauna products and cooperation between companies and research institutions.

### **You entered a strategic partnership with aquanale this year. How does this contribute to your goals?**

**Carita Harju:** A partnership with aquanale, the leading international trade fair for the pool and sauna industry, offers us a good opportunity to sustainably develop the network's activity and thus bring the purpose and charm of the "Original Finnish Sauna Experience" closer to a broad, international audience. During the cooperation with aquanale, we can quickly and easily address all relevant players on the market - visitors, exhibiting companies and the press -, communicate our topics and concepts and point out possible new potentials. Of course, we also see the opportunity for member companies to develop new customers and markets. We see great potential here, especially with the target group of operators of leisure pools, thermal spas and water parks, to demonstrate our innovative concepts for the sauna and wellness area in their facilities.

**And finally: What can visitors expect in Cologne from 24 to 27 October?**

**Carita Harju:** Visitors to aquanale will have the chance to experience Finland's unique sauna culture up close in October. Our joint stand is designed by a landscape architect and reflects the values of the Finnish sauna experience - with natural materials, greenery and a clear focus on sustainability. The focal point is the lounge "SAUNA FROM FINLAND", the networking and at the same time relaxation area for our participating companies and of course our fair guests. Our members and partners will present themselves around the central lounge area, including "Visit Finland" with the theme 'Travel & Sauna Destination Finland'. From here we will also start our "GUIDED SAUNA TOUR" twice a day, followed by a visit to a sauna truck in the outdoor area between Halls 7 and 8, where interested visitors can test the Finnish sauna experience live. Our daily programme at aquanale also includes small talk sessions and on 25 October 2023 we invite you to the 'Löyly' workshop in the sauna truck and the Happy Sauna Hour after the fair closes.

We look forward to presenting Finland's unique sauna culture and sharing our passion for the sauna with visitors!

**Ms Harju, thank you very much for the interview!**

More information at <https://saunafromfinland.com>

## About aquanale

As the leading international trade fair for the industry, aquanale will present all topics related to the latest products and designs for modern, sustainable and innovative swimming pool and wellness construction from 24 to 27 October 2023. Already registered exhibiting companies include Alukov, Aqua Solar, Aquarena, B+B, Behncke, Bieri Tenta, Binder, BWT Procopi, CF Group, Compass Pool, Diamant, Eichenwald, elbtal, Fluidra, grando, Hayward, Herborner Pumpen, Herget, Hugo Lahme, Klarer, Maitec, Meranus, Midas, Narvi, Niveco, n-tree, OSF, Peraqua, Renolit, Riviera Pool, Rollo Solar, SCP, Softub World, SPECK Pumpen, T & A, TechnoAlpin, Tintometer Lovibond, Trendpool Weinmann, WDT, Whirlcare, Wibre, Wiegand Waterrides and others. The exhibitor list provides an up-to-date overview: <https://www.aquanale.com/aquanale-exhibitors/list-of-exhibitors/>.

aquanale will once again take place in the modern North Halls 7 and 8, which are located directly next to the North Entrance of the Cologne fairgrounds. Hall 7 will present pools and swimming pool technology. The talks venue for the International Swimming Pool and Wellness Forum will also be located in Hall 7. Saunas, whirlpools, wellness and spas as well as the private swimming pool segment, including above-ground pools, will be on display in Hall 8.

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