

# Why Nordic White Spruce?



## **Nordic Whitewood: "The Look of the Millennium"**

"Feel the Finnleo difference, every time you step inside." That motto refers not only to the soft feeling created by Finnleo heaters, but also to the feeling of the sauna room itself. Traditionally, saunas are built of Scandinavian, or Nordic, whitewoods. Worldwide, 97% of all saunas are constructed of this wood type. All Finnleo saunas have tongue and groove Nordic White Spruce on the walls and ceiling as standard. All portions of the sauna which the skin touches (benches, backrests, headrests, heater guard, and door handles) are made of African Abachi. This superior combination of the best Nordic woods and Abachi provides characteristics which can't be duplicated by other wood types on the market.

### **Lighter Color**

The most common difference between Nordic whitewood and other sauna woods is the color. The lighter wood gives the sauna a cleaner, more spacious feel, and a contemporary look. Popularized as the "look of the 90's", it remains "the look of the new millennium." When you consider the popularity of the "southwest look", you can see how this lighter color fits into contemporary lifestyles. The lighter wood has the desired feeling of spaciousness, especially for an "in-home" installation (i.e. bathroom or walk-in closet)... helping to dispel a sense of closeness.

### **Less Discoloration**

Stain resistance is another whitewood advantage. Darker wood (especially redwood) can discolor quite quickly in a sauna environment, turning gray... or even black. With only normal cleaning (occasionally wipe down with a mild detergent and water), Nordic whitewood will stay much the same as its original color and condition. The Abachi wood has similar stain-resistant qualities.

### **Arctic Conditions Affect Wood Characteristics**

Because all Nordic White Spruce is grown north of 60° latitude (near the Arctic Circle) it's an unusual softwood without the usual porous characteristics. A Joutsen log, 4.5" in diameter, originates from trees about 80 years old. By inspecting the log ends, one can see the tight growth rings – showing very slow growth. Abachi is very rare, found only on the Ivory Coast of Africa. It makes the ultimate sauna bench because it stays cooler to the touch, has no knots, doesn't splinter, warp or discolor. The Nordic Spruce/Abachi combination used in Finnleo Saunas insures the saunas will smell fresher – as sweat doesn't impregnate the wood as it can with other woods. The sauna emits a subtle, forest scent.

## **Grade A Quality Wood**

Finnleo uses only "A" grade wood (German grading rules), meaning the wood comes from the tops of trees with small, tight, "living" knots. The result is beautiful wood with very subtle knot patterns. Domestically grown softwood often has large, loose knots which can get very hot and excrete a large amount of sap. Abachi has no knots, which means the skin will not come in contact with any excessively hot surface.

## **The Ultimate Combination of Woods**

The end result of the special characteristics of whitewood grown near the Arctic Circle and whitewood from the Ivory Coast is beautiful, contemporary looking sauna that enhances the sauna experience.

## **Other Sauna Woods?**

If 97% of the world's saunas are made of Nordic White Spruce, why are saunas made in the U.S. made of redwood or cedar? These "other" woods are more readily available in the U.S. Redwood and cedar constitute approximately 2% of the world's saunas, primarily found in the U.S.

What about American Spruce? It's great for exterior trim pieces on a sauna to aid cosmetic appearance inside of the home. However, American Spruce is not grown in colder climates and it is not a "tight" wood – knots are bigger and looser than Nordic White Spruce – nor is it cut exclusively from the tops of trees. It is not suitable for the interior of a sauna.

What about pine? It has excessive amounts of resin. Large, loose knots, combined with a high resin content, results in a problem of dripping sap.

Why are redwood, cedar and other darker woods not desirable in a sauna? The main reason is the odor of the heated wood. For those with upper respiratory problems and allergies, why compound problems by using a sauna that smells offensively? Red cedar is a fine wood for that "woody" smell in your closet, but why use it in a sauna when the object is to remove impurities from the body. Darker woods have a tendency to discolor relatively fast in a sauna.... Redwood turning black and cedar turning gray. The lightness of the Nordic White Spruce keeps discoloration to an absolute minimum – thereby keeping the sauna fresh looking and fresh smelling.

