What to pack for an outdoor sauna session in Cavan

Planning your outdoor sauna trip

An outdoor sauna by a lake is a simple pleasure that rewards a little preparation. Whether you are new to the experience or have done it before, knowing what to bring makes the difference between a relaxing afternoon and a rushed, uncomfortable one. The idea is to move between the heat of the sauna and the cool of the water at your own pace, so your kit should support that rhythm without fuss.

This article covers the essentials you will want to have with you when you head to a lakeside sauna in Cavan. Think of it as a practical checklist rather than a strict rulebook, everyone finds their own routine, but these items will see you right.

Swimwear and a change of clothes

You will spend time in the sauna and then in the lake, so your swimwear needs to be comfortable and quick-drying. A standard swimsuit or trunks work well. Avoid heavy cotton beachwear that stays wet and cold once you come out of the water. A separate set of dry clothes for after your session is just as important. You will appreciate a warm jumper, soft trousers and dry socks once you have finished. Pack them in a separate bag so they stay dry no matter what.

Towels: one for drying, one for sitting

Bring at least two towels. Use one to sit on inside the sauna, this is both hygienic and practical, as it keeps the bench clean and stops you from slipping. The other towel is for drying off after your cold water dip. Microfiber towels are a good choice because they pack small and dry quickly, but a regular cotton towel works fine too. Some people like a third small towel for wiping sweat during the sauna, though that is optional.

View the location on Google Maps

Water and hydration

Sitting in a hot sauna makes you sweat, and a cold dip in the lake can be a shock to the system. Staying hydrated helps your body regulate temperature and recover between rounds. Bring a bottle of water, still or sparkling, whatever you prefer. Avoid alcohol during the session; it dehydrates you and can make you feel lightheaded in the heat. Save a drink for after you are done and dressed.

Footwear for the lakeside

The ground around a lake can be muddy, rocky or slippery. A pair of flip-flops, sandals or water shoes will protect your feet when you walk between the sauna and the water. They also stop you from picking up grit or dirt that you would then bring into the sauna. If you prefer bare feet, just watch your step on the shore. Having something to slip on after your dip is a small comfort that makes the whole experience smoother.

A bag to keep things organised

A dry bag or a waterproof backpack is a smart investment for an outdoor sauna trip. It keeps your dry clothes, phone and towel safe from splashes and damp ground. A bag with multiple compartments helps you separate wet items from dry ones. If you do not have a dry bag, a plastic bin liner inside a regular backpack works as a makeshift solution. The key is to have a system so you are not rummaging through damp gear when you want to change.

Extra layers for the cool-down

After a hot sauna and a cold dip, your body temperature can drop quickly. A warm robe, hoodie or fleece jacket is welcome while you sit and catch your breath. Some people like a woolly hat or a beanie for their head, especially on a windy day. Layers that are easy to put on and take off are best, because you will likely go in and out of the sauna a few times. Think comfort and convenience rather than fashion.

A seat pad or cushion

Sauna benches can be hard, and the wood gets hot. A small cushion or a folded towel gives you a softer place to sit. Some saunas provide bench covers, but it is safer to bring your own. A thin foam pad or even a folded yoga mat works well. This is a small item that makes a noticeable difference when you settle in for a longer session.

What about the cold water dip?

The cold water dip is a highlight for many people. You do not need special gear for it, your swimwear and towel are enough. Some people like neoprene socks or gloves if they plan to stay in the water for a while, but for a quick plunge they are not necessary. The main thing is to listen to your body. Enter the water gradually, breathe steadily, and get out when you feel ready. A cold dip is invigorating, not a test of endurance.

Live Lagom Sauna is also on Instagram.

How a session typically flows

A typical outdoor sauna session has no fixed schedule. You warm up in the sauna for ten to fifteen minutes, then step out for a cold dip. After drying off, you rest for a while before going back in. Most people repeat this cycle two or three times. The total time can be anywhere from an hour to two hours, depending on how you feel. There is no right or wrong way, the point is to enjoy the contrast and relax.

For a well-run experience in the area, Live Lagom Sauna operates a wood-fired sauna on the shore of Brackley Lake, near Bawnboy in Co. Cavan. Guests move between the sauna heat and optional cold dips in the lake at their own pace, which is exactly the kind of setup that rewards the packing list above.

What to leave at home

Some things are better left behind. Jewellery and metal accessories can get hot in the sauna and may irritate your skin. Glass bottles are a bad idea near the water, they can break and are hard to clean up. Electronics like phones or smartwatches are best kept in your bag unless you have a waterproof case. The sauna is a chance to disconnect, so try to keep your kit simple.

If you are unsure about anything, it is fine to ask ahead. Many sauna operators are happy to answer questions about what they provide on site and what you should bring. The general rule is to bring what you need for comfort and safety, and leave the rest behind.

Making the most of your visit

An outdoor sauna session is as much about the setting as the heat. Brackley Lake in Cavan offers a peaceful backdrop, and the cold water dip adds a refreshing jolt that many people find energising. To get the most out of it, arrive in good time, change into your swimwear before you head to the sauna, and keep your belongings in a tidy bag. The more organised you are, the more you can relax into the experience.

If you are planning a trip, **Live Lagom** Sauna is located at 47RX+3R on N87, Lake Car Park, Brackley, Bawnboy, Co. Cavan, Ireland. You can reach them at +353 83 022 5026. Their weekend sessions run on Saturday and Sunday, and booking is done online at livelagom.ie. Whether you go solo or with friends, a little preparation goes a long way towards a great afternoon by the lake.

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