

Tulikivi Soapstone Fireplaces & Bakeovens

Heat your home with 16th century technology and 21st century innovation? You bet! The world's most advanced, wood-fired home heating systems are being embraced by today's homeowners, as they rediscover Northern Europe's unique "stone-age furnaces." Tulikivi fireplaces and bakeovens - made of soapstone instead of steel or iron - combine wood's capacity to give off tremendous amounts of heat with soapstone's capacity to absorb that heat and release it slowly over time...What is their appeal?

These specially designed heaters--born during Europe's 300-year-long "Little Ice Age" (1500-1800 AD)--are manufactured in Finland and warm homes throughout Europe. Their arrival in North America has sophisticated and dedicated wood burners singing their praises. Tulikivi fireplaces are remarkably beautiful. Few architectural elements can compete with the majesty of a soapstone fireplace soaring up in an open cathedral ceiling designed floor plan. Tulikivi fireplaces are a joy to live with, providing a level of radiant comfort and a sense of well-being that is unmatched by any other form of residential heating. This is because, like the sun, these fireplaces heat radiantly. In fact, having a Tulikivi fireplace is like having a bit of the sun in your living room. This may explain why the Finns thrive even during their long, dark winters.

Beyond the radiant heat comfort they provide, Tulikivi fireplaces & bakeovens extract a maximum amount of heat from a minimum amount of wood and nearly eliminate the outdoor air pollution often associated with smoky fireplaces and wood stoves. They routinely burn at firebox temperatures of 1,100 to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, yet the exterior surfaces remain relatively cool and safe, usually in the 80 to 160 degree range. The high firebox temperatures maximize the combustion efficiency and heat output of the burning wood while minimizing smoke production and pollution. The hotter the fire, the greater the heat transfer and efficiency and the lower the level of pollutants produced. The user rests easy in the knowledge that creosote (the ugly stuff that sparks dangerous chimney fires) is not being produced and that the environment is not being polluted. In addition, the fuel used--wood--is a renewable resource.

Unlike traditional fireplaces and wood stoves that send heat and smoke directly up the chimney, these heaters conserve energy by altering the pathway of combustion exhaust gases so that heat from the gases is transferred to, and stored in, the soapstone structure of the fireplace itself. This is done by sending the heat-bearing combustion gases on a circuitous route through specially designed heat exchange channels before exiting out the chimney. Soapstone is the ideal natural material for this purpose. It possesses unrivaled heat storing properties. In fact, by volume, it can retain almost two times as much heat per unit volume as ordinary masonry materials and even more impressively can absorb heat almost seven times faster. Once transferred, the stored heat is gradually radiated back into the home over a twelve- to twenty-four-hour period. This occurs after the fire has burned completely out. A steady even temperature is maintained, without causing unnecessary draftiness or driving the humidity out of the home.