

# Spa or hot tub? Options to suit every taste

The first hot tub in North America appeared in the 1950s in Santa Barbara where some imaginative ex-GIs converted some old wooden wine vats into hot tubs — similar to the hot tubs they had used in Japan. It was the start of the modern hot tub/spa industry which has recently become popular across Canada and the United States.

Today the industry has grown far beyond converted wine tubs, and consumers can find a large number of hot tubs and spas on the market.

## What's the difference?

What's the difference between a spa and a hot tub? A hot tub is a watertight wooden container designed to hold 300 to 1,000 gallons of water and one to 12 people. It may be round, oval or rectangular, with straight or slanted sides. Most hot tubs have a heater, pump and filter — called support equipment — to keep the water hot and clean. Many also have hydrotherapy jets, called hydrojets, or air bubblers to create a bubbly water effect.

A spa is operated and used like a hot tub. It also uses similar heating and filtering systems.

Spa shells are usually manufactured or either a vacuum formed acrylic material or constructed of concrete or gunite on site.

In the acrylic spa models, which are the most popular in Canada, there are a variety of designs, colours and sizes. Design shapes range from squares and rectangles through rounds, pears, kidneys and octagons. Multi-level, seating, recliners and loungers are available features.

Standard colours include blue, brown and black marble, solid blue, bone and sequoia. Spa sizes start with the intimate two person model and go to sizes that will hold 10-12 persons comfortably.

For the hot tubs, you can buy expertly crafted round wooden tubs in a variety of woods — redwood, cedar, mahogany and teak.

## Where can you put them?

Most spas and hot tubs can be installed, inspected and ready to use within a couple of weeks. You can put them indoors or out — below ground, partially below ground or completely above ground. You'll find spas and hot tubs on patios, decks and roofs, in family rooms, basements and greenhouses — almost any location conducive to a relaxing soak.

Increasingly popular are the portable or self-contained spas which can be set in the backyard, on a patio or set up indoors. When the time comes to move or change houses, the portable spas utilize compact equipment packages with pump, filter and heater hidden beneath the spa "skirt."

All the owner has to do is have an electrician safely wire the equipment to a power source, fill the unit with water and then turn it on.

## Automated controls

Today you can buy your spa or hot tub equipped with electronic control panels. These can be set for continuous 24-hour low-speed heating and filtering and for automatic startup and shutdown. Control switches for heater, whirlpool or air blower jets are now mounted on the side of the spa and can be operated while soaking.

A new innovation is a remote control, which can be operated from inside the house or even from a car or plane. Such controls turn on the heater, jets and blower. A simpler control is a time clock which can be set to heat up the system and automatically shut it down at preset times and at preset temperatures.

Advances have also been made in the various chemicals to sanitize spa water and keep it clean and fresh. The most popular are chlorine or bromine-based chemicals developed especially for use in hot water and free from chlorine odors associated with earlier chemicals available.



## Hot tubs provide relaxation and enjoyment.

Today you can also buy automated chemical controllers that monitor and automatically feed the required amount of chlorine, bromine or other pH-controlling chemicals into the spa. Alternative water purifiers include those using ions or ozone to kill bacteria and algae.

Lights set into the walls of the spa are also becoming popular. The latest development is a fibre-optic light that illuminates without any electrical connection to the spa.

## Benefits of soaking

According to some medical authorities, a good soak in a spa or hot tub is a form of preventive medicine — a

means of avoiding illness. Spas and hot tubs offer a drug-free way of reducing stress. They are said to relax muscles, encourage socialization and reduce

anxiety.

Of course, you should consult your doctor before using a spa or hot tub if you have any type of health problem.

### KEEP COLD DRAFTS OUT

Door and window draft guards are available that require no installation.

#### What are they?

They are tubes filled with loose insulating material or sand, and you simply lay them along the door bottom or where window sill meets sash. They vary from two feet long to nearly four feet, cost \$3 to \$7.

### WEIGHING WHICH HAMMER TO BUY

When choosing an all-purpose hammer, make sure the hammer head is the right weight for the work you're doing, say the experts at Stanley too's.

A hammer head that is too light makes the work harder than it has to be, and one too heavy will be difficult to control. An all-purpose hammer, say the experts, should have a hammer head that weighs around 16 ounces.

# Caulk for significant energy savings this fall

Up to 30 percent of a home's heated air can be lost through leaks and cracks, say energy experts. Doors, windows, chimneys and even the foundation of the house offer opportunity for leakage.

The Elmer's Home Solution people recommend a general purpose, good-quality caulk to help prevent heat loss and realize substantial savings.

#### Check problem areas

For do-it-yourself caulk applications, the first step is to identify the main areas of heat loss. Check spaces where pipes, wires, cables or water faucets enter the house, where door and window frames meet walls, under window sills, and between porches and the main body of the house, for example.

Next, select the right caulk. For gen-

eral repairs, look for caulks with high resistance to water, such as Elmer's Sili-conized Acrylic Latex Caulk. It's easy to use, paintable, and a good choice for most uses around the home.

#### When to caulk

Caulk when outside temperature is moderate—as in the fall. Extreme cold weather will produce frost or condensation on the joints; hot weather may close joints through expansion.

Before filling a crack, make sure the surface has been cleaned and the old caulk removed. To fill a crack, push the caulk along the crack with the angled opening running fairly flat along the surface. Do not let the bead get bigger than the tip. On vertical cracks, start at the bottom and push upwards.

To stop the flow, twist the gun slightly as you disengage. Remove excess with a rag dampened with water or a cleaning agent, depending on the product used.

The objective is to join two surfaces of a crack. For gaps over one-quarter inch wide, first use oakum, caulking cotton, sponge rubber, fiber glass or even newspaper as filler before applying caulk.

After caulking, smooth surfaces with a wet finger or spatula to smooth.

## DELREX ALUMINUM LTD.

- Aluminum Siding
- Vinyl Siding
- Soffit & fascia
- Seamless Aluminum Trough
- Custom Made Windows
- Awnings
- Insulated Doors
- Roofing Shingles & Repairs

Get it done right with 20 years warranty on materials & 5 years on workmanship. Call for free information 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

877-5383

## HALTALARM SYSTEMS INC.

### BURGLAR, FIRE & SECURITY SYSTEMS

- ULC APPROVED
- EQUIPMENT & MONITORING SERVICES
- COMMERCIAL — INDUSTRIAL — RESIDENTIAL

THE ALLIANCE SECURITY SYSTEMS  
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FROM INDEPENDENT BROKERS

OUR CUSTOMERS ARE OUR BEST ADVERTISING

873-2500

265 GUELPH ST. GEORGETOWN

### ANY HOME CAN HAVE

**BEAM**

BUILT IN VACUUMS

**NuTone**

INTERCOM SYSTEM

WE SPECIALIZE IN ROUGH-INS AND COMPLETIONS

## COLONIAL TREE SERVICE

FREE PROPERTY ANALYSIS  
18 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

- High Voltage Line Clearing
- Aerial Bucket/Asplundh Lift
- Tree Trimming • Tree Removal
- Brush Chipping • Hedge Trimming
- Stump Removal

FULLY INSURED  
MEMBERS OF:



Brian Butler  
877-8591