

Design Considerations

Masonry heaters work best in well-insulated homes with open floor plans that allow the heat to radiate freely. They are true radiant heating systems, and there is very little temperature stratification in the house. Since radiant heat warms objects directly, you will feel warmer over a wider range of air temperatures. Imagine a sunny spring day, and the feeling of well-being that your body intuitively recognizes.

A wide range of design options and masonry facings lets you express your unique personal style. Choose from a variety of brick, stone, plaster (stucco), soapstone and tile. You can opt for a small room heater, or a massive hearth that includes a cooktop and bakeoven that will literally become the "heart" of your home.

Your design will need to include a chimney and a foundation. The design and size of the heater must be matched to your climate and your home's heating requirements. Since the heat retention and output of



Kachelofen, Designed and Built by - Ernst Kiesling
Canadian Kachelofen

masonry are mathematically predictable, your heater builder can design a system that fits your needs.

Once you have determined that a masonry heater is the best choice for your home, contact the heater builder whose name appears on this brochure or contact the Masonry Heater Association of North America (MHA) for the name of a heater builder in your area. Check the references of the heater builder you contact to make sure he is the right person for the job. Look at heaters he has built and talk with their owners.



Masonry Heater with Temp-Cast precast modular core
Built by Erik Nilsen, Thermal Mass Inc.



Heat-Kit Designed and Built by Norbert Senf, Certified Heater Mason
Masonry Stove Builders

Masonry heating is not a new concept. The Romans heated their famous baths this way. The Chinese and Koreans have used masonry heat for centuries, often to heat beds or entire floors. Europeans began developing masonry heaters about 400 years ago. Russian and Scandinavian immigrants were building them 100 years ago in the North American prairies, where winters are long and cold fuel is scarce.

Mark Twain, traveling through Europe years ago, discovered the virtues of masonry heat. Here is a little of what he wrote about it:

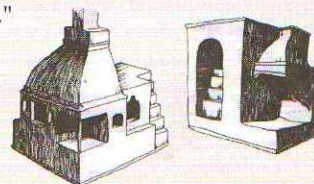
"All day long and until past midnight all parts of the room will be delightfully warm and comfortable...Its surface is not hot; you can put your hand on it anywhere and not get burnt."

"Consider these things. One firing is enough for the day; the cost is next to nothing; the heat produced is the same all

day, instead of too hot and too cold by turns..."

"America could adopt this stove, but does America do it? No, she sticks placidly to her own fearful and wonderful inventions in the stove line. The American wood stove, of whatever breed, is a terror. It requires more attention than a baby. It has to be fed every little while, it has to be watched all the time; and for all reward you are roasted half your time and frozen the other half...and when your wood bill comes in you think you have been supporting a volcano."

"It is certainly strange that useful customs and devices do not spread from country to country with more facility and promptness than they do."



Two early examples of the massive clay stoves built in Northern Europe.