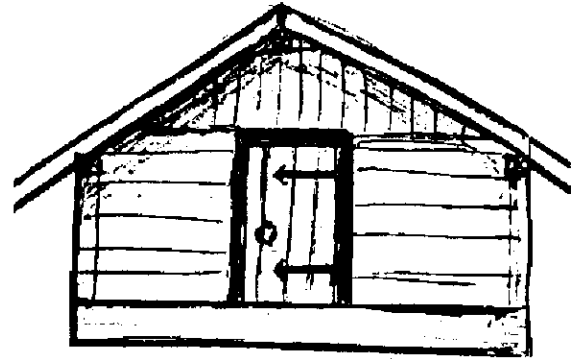


# The Norse "Sweathouse"

*Plans for a permanent, period sauna, from the person who brought you the Norse Loftstue. What better escape from the bitter, driving winters of Scandinavia?*

By R.D. Wertz  
Sharrah of Starwood



Front view: door with draft board

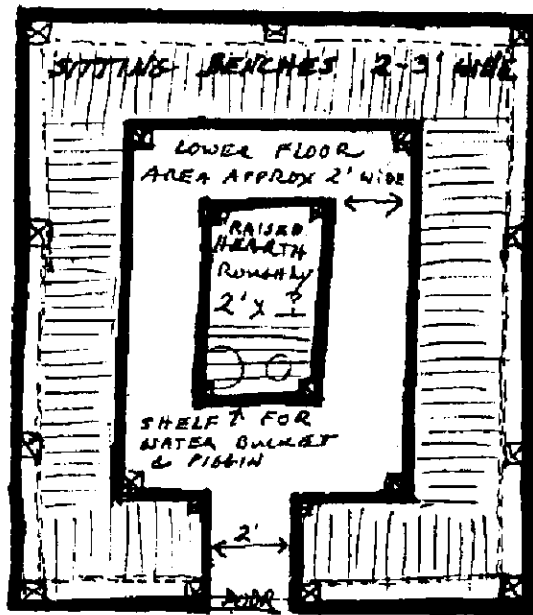
THE NORSE BUILT THEIR SWEAT HOUSES into hills or mountainsides, both because of Norway's terrain and because of the natural insulating qualities of the earth. The selected area would be measured and marked out with a couple of feet extra for workspace. This workspace would later be backfilled.

Inside the house, wide, earth-filled sitting benches surround a raised hearth, roughly 2 feet wide, with an attached wooden shelf that holds the "piggin," a water bucket containing water which is drizzled onto the heated rocks with a ladle.

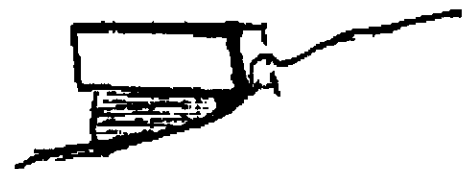
The inside of the entire structure has dimensions of approx. 10 ft. wide by 12 ft. long. The floor can also be dug in to keep building supplies to a minimum and supply extra natural insulation. The interior walls are paneled with vertical (perhaps tongue-and-groove?) boards, and the roof overhang should be fairly significant on the gable ends (about

2 ft.). Ideally, the earth berm should be banked against the back wall and sloped back away from the building for a short distance. Of course, this requires that the wall be protected from water with tar, pitch or a more "piggin" bucket modern equivalent.

The building has a low door, about 2 ft. wide and 4-5 ft. tall, of rough, heavy timber, and you step up over a front draft board to enter the space. The small door keeps in the heat, and the peak of the roof lies only 7-8 ft. from the ground.



Rough sketch showing the general floorplan for the sweat house.



Setting the structure into a hillside provides natural insulation with minimal excavation.