

# **HOT TUB BUYER'S GUIDE**

## **1. How much should I pay for a hot tub?**

- This would depend on each individual's budget and whether you will be using it for Fun, Social or for Hydrotherapy purposes. It is important that you get it from a well known long established retailer and manufacturer, and it's worth spending that little bit more as the hot tub will last you a minimum of 10 years depending on how well you look after it.

## **2. What warranty/Guarantee do I get?**

- This depends on who you buy the hot tub from and which manufacturer it is. The most reputable companies offer at least 3 years on the parts and 1 year on labour. The shell of the hot tub should have a 5 year warranty and the structure up to 10 years.

## **3. Do I need a social or hydrotherapy hot tub?**

- A Hydrotherapy spa specifically aims for particular parts of the body and each individual seat within the spa has its own structure to concentrate on each muscle group. This comes with a more advanced filtration system than the social spa and an ability to divert water flow to specific seats..

- A Social spa emphasis on fun, hot bubbling water and possible LED lighting, a standard jet's main aim is to produce hot bubbling water which concentrates on the basic massage and comes with basic filtration.

## **4. How much will it cost to run?**

- BISHTA (British & Irish Swimming Pool & Hot Tub Association) state the average 4 person spa costs around 75 pence per day including chemicals. ( note: this will depend on how well insulated the spa is ( see foam fill, See question 9)

## **5. How will I keep the water clean?**

- In order to keep the water clean, each spa manufacturer has its own filtration system, these vary considerably. You will need to ask the individual retailer to explain how the filtration works and the differences in their range. It is also keeping your spa well balanced and sanitized (Chlorine / Bromine)

## **6. What is filtration?**

- Filtration is mainly via paper filter cartridges and the water circulates through them. Some spas will do this up to 4 hours a day, however the more advanced spas will do this up to 24 hours per day at a lower cost.

## **7. What is purification?**

- Water purification is the removal of impurities of concern.
- When chemical disinfectants are used and certain impurities are still present in the water disinfectant by-products (DBPs) can be formed.

**8.      *What is off-gas?***

● The un-dissolved ozonated air collected from the reaction tank (s) or de-ozoning filter which must be safely vented to the outside atmosphere. Ask about the off gas caused by your Ozonator.

**9.      *What is the difference between 100% foam fill & full foam fill?***

● All major manufacturers agree that filling the spa cabinet with polyurethane foam insulation significantly reduces heat loss, thus reducing heating costs. While this process adds to the cost of manufacturing, research has shown that full foam insulation provides substantial savings to the spa owner over time. Some manufactures eliminate full foam insulation in an attempt to provide a less expensive product.

**10.     *How will I get it into my garden?***

● Hot tubs are large and awkward, weighing as much as 690 pounds unfilled. Make sure you know the measurements of the tub you ordered. You're going to need help getting the hot tub from your curb side or driveway to your back garden or your patio. Order your hot tub from a company that undertakes the installation for you.

**11.     *Can I use it all year round?***

● Using your hot tub in winter can be a great way to “ defrost” from the icy weather. If you live in a cold climate, here are a few tips to keep your hot tub working properly and efficiently:

- i. Keep your hot tub covered at all times when it’s not in use.
- ii. Make sure your cover has a good seal.
- iii. Use a floating thermal blanket to help save your energy bill.
- iv. Check the temperature often to make sure the hot tub is working properly.
- v. Set your timer to frequent intervals, cycling the water 2 to 4 times an hour.
- vi. Use it ! Keep your hot tub running and you might use less energy than heating up 200 to 300 gallons of cold water

**12.     *Will it be safe for my children?***

● Check to be sure that the spa you buy is listed by a recognized independent testing agency such as UL or ETL.

- Use a qualified electrician to connect the electrical service to the spa.
- Make sue the cover comes with a locking system to prevent unauthorized use. Many spas feature locking control panels, as well.
- Keep appliances and other electrical devices away from the spa area.
- Always observe the warnings about spa use by small children, pregnant women, people with certain health conditions and people under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

**13.     *Do I need a plumber?***

●*No*—you must have your hot tub installed by a qualified electrician to ensure the best possible connection. The installation team will be the ones that will fully set up your hot tub to make sure that it is functioning properly before they leave.

**14. How do I connect it to my electric supply?**

- Most hot tubs require a 240-volt electrical connection. This is the same type of connection that's made for very large appliances, like an electric washer or dryer. This also means that you can't just plug it in and take a dip.
- Once you have your hot tub properly installed, it's time for your first fill-up. Your hot tub will take up to 12 hours to fully heat, depending on the size. Be sure to read your owner's manual for the proper procedure. Here are some tips to consider:

Turn off the electrical power to the hot tub before filling up.

Clean the interior with mild, non-abrasive cleaning solution, then rinse.

- iii. Be sure to open the air valves.
- iv. Make sure the drain is closed.

Fill the hot tub with a garden hose to the level specified in your owner's manual.

**15. How do I drain the spa?**

- Most spas come with a draining hose which is located on the bottom corner of the hot tub which you just attach a hose pipe to and it drains slowly with gravity. The other option on some different spa's is that the drainage pipe is located behind one of the panels and is central to the hot tub, this drains the same way as the ones located on the corner of the spa.
- The quickest way to drain the hot tub if you are trying to save time, is by using a submersible pump which you connect a hose to and then place in the middle of the spa. This will then drain it to your desired location within 45 minutes of setting up.

**16. Do I leave it on all the time?**

- Your hot tub is designed to be left on all the time, the initial heat up process will take the most energy consumption. Once up to temperature, you're hot tub should be very economical. ( depending on the quality of the insulation, see question 9 for more details).
- The hot tub will only call for heat when the temperature drops below your desired setting; it works very much like a traditional central heating system, the better the insulation, the better running costs.

**17. How often do I change the water?**

- Most manufacturers recommend draining and cleaning your spa no more than 3 or 4 times per year, depending on how frequently you use it and how well you maintain your water. In most cases this simple process will only take about an hour to accomplish.

**18. How is the temperature controlled?**

- Most quality spas have relatively sophisticated digital thermostatic controls. These highly reliable modern systems are capable of keeping the spa water within one degree of any temperature you select. While this is important for comfort, it is also important for safety. You should pay particular attention to the control system if you have children who will be using the spa. Better systems have safety locks and digital readouts. A good indicator of the control system's quality is to read and compare manufactures' warranties.

## **10 KEY FACTORS NOT COVERED IN SALES LITERATURE!**

- 1) Check the seats provide comfortable support. You do not want to scoot down the spa like you do in a bath!
- 2) When sitting in any seat, the water should reach above shoulder level.
- 3) Stay in the spa with the jets on for at least 15 minutes to ensure the seating and jet arrangements are comfortable
- 4) Does the depth of water suit all members of the family?
- 5) Can you relax your head onto the pillows, are they comfortable, and does the spa offer neck and foot massage—which is one of life's great experiences!
- 6) How does the lighting appear? Most of the time spent in the spa will be at night, so insist on seeing the hot tub running in a dark room.
- 7) Are the controls within easy reach and are they easy to operate?
- 8) Consider where you will put the cover while using the hot tub and how will you lift it.
- 9) Can you divert the flow of water around the spa and decrease the pressure of the jets?
- 10) Is there anywhere to put a drink....How important is that!