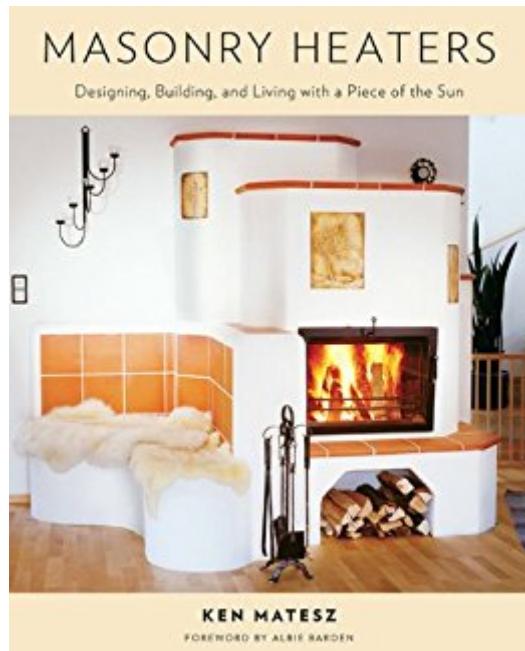


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# Masonry Heaters: Designing, Building, And Living With A Piece Of The Sun



## **Synopsis**

Masonry Heaters is a complete guide to designing and living with one of the oldest, and yet one of the newest, heating devices. A masonry heater's design, placement in the home, and luxurious radiant heat redefine the hearth for the modern era, turning it into a piece of the sun right inside the home. Like the feeling one gets from the sun on a spring day, the environment around a masonry heater feels fresh. The radiant heat feels better on the skin. It warms the home both gently and efficiently. In fact, the value of a masonry heater lies in its durability, quality, serviceability, dependability, and health-supporting features. And it is an investment in self-sufficiency and freedom from fossil fuels. The book discusses different masonry heater designs, including variations extant in Europe, and explains the growth of their popularity in the United States beginning in the late 1970s. For the reader who may be familiar only with open fireplaces and metal woodstoves, Masonry Heaters will bring a new understanding and appreciation of massive heat storage and gentle-but-persistent radiant heat. Masonry heaters offer a unique comfort that is superior to that from convection heat from forced-air systems, and more personal than that offered by ceramic radiant floors. As Matesz demonstrates, the heat from the sun or from a masonry heater is genuine heat instead of just insulation against the loss of heat. Those who are looking to build, add onto, or remodel a house will find comprehensive and practical advice for designing and installing a masonry heater, including detailed discussion of materials, code considerations, and many photos and illustrations. While this is not a do-it-yourself guide for building a masonry heater, it provides facts every heater builder should know. Professional contractors will find this a useful tool to consult, and homeowners considering a new method of home heating will find all they need to know about masonry heaters within these pages.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

There is a centuries old tradition in Europe that is only beginning to be known in North America: the use of masonry heaters. For some reason Americans are entirely familiar with wood stoves and fireplaces, but have only a hazy notion of what a masonry heater is. This is unfortunate because these devices represent the epitome in home heating comfort and efficiency! In his exceptional book, *Masonry Heaters: Designing, Building, and Living with a Piece of the Sun*, published by Chelsea Green Publishing, Ken Matesz explores every aspect of these works of art. Also known as kachelofens, Russian fireplaces, Finnish fireplaces, Swedish stoves, contra-flow fireplaces, radiant fireplaces and mass-storage fireplaces, their basic functional design concepts are all similar, although their appearance can be vastly different. Matesz calls them "a piece of the sun" because the heat that they provide is the same as that given by direct sunlight. This is radiant heat that you can feel being absorbed by your body when you are in the presence of the heater. Wood stoves and fireplaces also radiate this type of heat, but not nearly as efficiently; as soon as the fire goes out the heat quickly dims away. Not so with a masonry heater. The whole idea with masonry heaters is to fire it only once or twice a day, building as big and hot a fire as the firebox will allow, giving it all the oxygen that it can consume, so that every bit of the fuel and the gases that are released are turned into heat. This is the cleanest, most efficient way to burn wood; there is virtually no creosote, hardly any smoke, and no fiddling with the fire over time. These heaters are often allowed in areas that have tight controls on air pollution because they burn so cleanly.

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