



THE URBAN SPA EXPERIENCE

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**BANYA 5 REDEFINES URBAN DAY SPA EXPERIENCE**  
**Russian-Inspired Bath One of a Kind in Seattle**

SEATTLE (November 2004) – When Banya 5 opened in early September in the South Lake Union neighborhood, Seattleites had their first, authentic Russian bath and steam room.

Inspired by the handful of Russian baths in the United States, Banya 5 is an urban spa and health facility which offers a unique blend of Old World wellness rituals and treatments that include Turkish steam and Russian radiant, moist heat, exhilarating pool plunges, salt scrubs and massage – all showcased in a sophisticated new venue featuring such traditional materials as brick, honed concrete floors and cedar benches paired with more modern touches of Italian glass mosaic tiles, Cascade granite details, hand-troweled plaster, hot rolled steel columns and solid plank mahogany lath. The objective, say owners, is a mix of style, tradition and technology that will promote wellness, vitality and rejuvenation of the soul.

“It has more in common with the traditional baths you see in Japan or Bali where whole families bathe for cultural and therapeutic reasons,” says developer and major investor John Goodfellow, who likens the experience more to the medicinal sweat baths of folk medicine than to European luxury spas. The beauty of Banya 5 is that it successfully blends high-tech and environmental design sophistication with an authentic experience of ancient traditions.

John Goodfellow, and his fellow investors who make up Banya No. 5 LLC, have put more than \$1 million into the facility so far and expect there will be other banyas to build if the Seattle project succeeds. Theirs was a partnership forged in the Russian baths of New York City where the Banya became a panacea for winter blues and the communal experience which generated camaraderie beyond the role of business.

“What we’re after is a good ‘schvitz’;” jokes Goodfellow, using the Yiddish word for sweat. “We spent a lot of time working on how the heat feels; making it radiant enough to go deep into you.”

Presently, there are only a handful of public Banyas in major cities across the United States. After studying the New York and Los Angeles baths, the Banya 5 team built an exceptional facility designed to capture the spirit of the Banya experience in a more contemporary, comfortable and hygienic environment.

While the water treatment system uses a sophisticated salt generator to purify the pools, it's the parilka or brick oven that provides Banya 5 with a remarkable centerpiece. So important is the quality of heat emanating from the oven that the owners imported Eugene Edelson of Delaware Planning & Engineering in New York to design and engineer the oven, even to the point of having the rocks analyzed for quality.

Edelson has designed a number of the parilkas in the New York City area including the Spa 88 in Manhattan and Sandoony of USA in Brighton Beach, along with parilkas in Toronto and the former Soviet Union. The materials, design and construction of these ovens – including 20 tons of masonry and stone - are unique and essential to the quality of the heat they provide.

The 3,600 sq. ft. structure houses the Russian Room, featuring 180 to 200-degree radiant, moist heat from the parilka for 20-plus patrons; the Turkish Room, featuring 115-degree steam heat for 12 to 15 guests; a requisite cold-plunge pool; a tepid salt-water pool

and a jetted hot-water pool. Additional services include salt scrubs, platza, as well as a variety of Banya-related products, including bottled waters and Banya attire. Massage, along with a café, will be added at a later date.

In keeping with Banya traditions elsewhere, Wednesdays have been set aside exclusively for women, while Thursdays are men only. Friday through Sunday are coed, with Sunday hours of 10 am to 4 pm set aside for families. Banya 5 is also available on Mondays and Tuesdays for private or corporate events, family or group reunions. Arrangements for private events may be made by calling the Banya at (206) 262-1234.

The fee structure includes single visits at \$25 or the option of purchasing a five-visit punchcard for \$100. Children under age 16 are offered a reduced fee of \$10 on Sundays in the company of their families from 10 am to 4 pm. Access to the Russian Room, the Turkish Room, three plunge pools, showers, locker room, lockbox and towels are included in the fee. Robes are \$3 to rent, while salt scrubs are \$30 for 20 minutes and \$50 for 40 minutes. Shower shoes may be purchased for \$5. Banya 5 also features a variety of personal and skin care products for sale, along with distinctive logo merchandise.

**Interviews may be arranged by calling (425) 451-4387.**

**Photographs available for download at <http://www.banya5.com/gallery/>**

**Banya 5, located in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood at 217 Ninth Avenue North, is open Wednesday from Noon to 9 pm, Thursday and Friday from 2 to 10 pm, Saturday from 10 am to 10 pm and on Sundays from 10 am to 8 pm, with Wednesdays exclusive to women and Thursdays, men only. The facility is closed to the public on Monday & Tuesday. For more information call (206) 262-1234 or log on to the web site at [www.banya5.com](http://www.banya5.com). The establishment accepts Visa, Mastercard or cash.**