

SWEATLODGE CEREMONY

Description & Requirements

The sweatlodge is underground and enclosed. It is in the nearby bush and is a hemisphere some 4 metres in diameter. Entry is by a passage leading down to a flap, that serves as a doorway. The design and effect is one that minimises sensory input.

Volcanic rocks in the lodge are heated from a gas burner beneath for 3 hours prior to the ceremony (the gas source is away from the lodge). The lodge is ventilated before entry to allow any accumulated fumes to escape.

The participant changes at the nearby function centre into a sarong, or equivalent, then walks some 25 metres through the bush to the lodge. This garment is usually discarded at the point of entry and used to sit on the sand floor; however, it may be retained as covering, if desired (be aware that others will be naked in the lodge).

You will be asked and should definitely volunteer any health issues; preferably when making the booking. To date, after some fifteen years of operation, we are event-free in this regard and exclusion for health reasons is rare.

The ceremony lasts one hour and is conducted by a ceremonial leader, usually Kennan, although occasionally by Brad Mewburn or Angelique Taylor. It consists of several "rounds" where the lodge is enclosed and a chant undertaken. Heat is then simultaneously applied to the rocks with water, followed by periods when the flap is opened, commonly with silence.

The participants remain silent throughout, unless invited by the ceremonial leader to join in the chants or otherwise speak. Prayers are offered, usually at the opening and conclusion of the ceremony.

The ceremony is based on the Earth Spirit Traditions such as American Indian or Druidry, but is usually modified to a more modern non-denominational spiritual context, unless for a specified ritual purpose. On occasion there are men and women only ceremonies.

The ceremony is not therapeutic or cathartic in origin or intent, except for specific healing rituals; which are usually private and by invitation.

After the ceremony there is a brief period to re-acclimatise and re-hydrate, but no socialising; unless on special occasions to celebrate an initiation or rite of passage.

No water can be taken into the lodge, although small ceremonial items may be.

Note: Please do not email or ring with additional questions, unless absolutely necessary.

It is recommended that you undertake the experience, which usually answers such questioning.