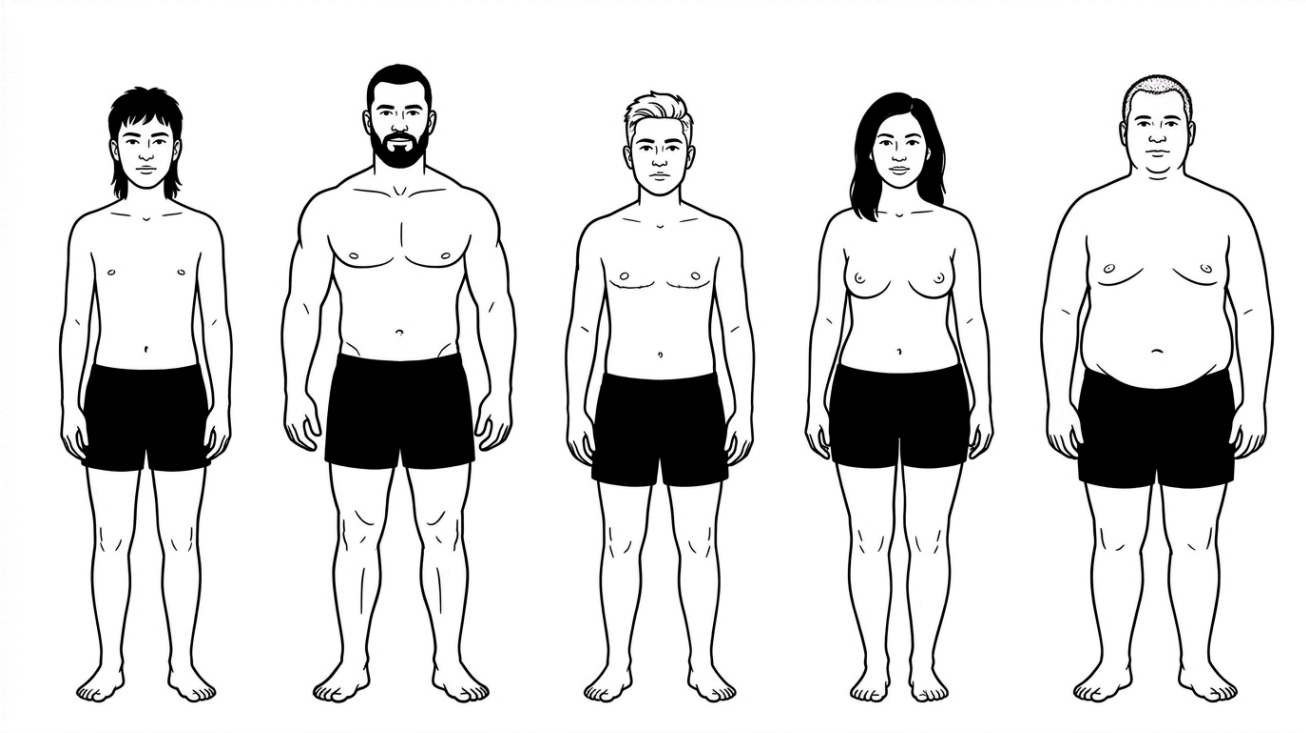


AI-generated illustration.

INVESTIGATION · MONTREAL AND SURROUNDING AREA (UP TO 1.5 HOURS AWAY)

Topless at the spa: a rule for whom?

Accessible version. Same content as the illustrated PDF, laid out for screen readers, magnification and on-screen reading: real headings, tables with headers, described images. Illustrated version and website: kimmaurice.com/sansetiquette.

Can trans people, non-binary people, or anyone whose body doesn't fit the "man" and "woman" categories enjoy a spa without covering their chest? What spas say, in writing.

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION FILE · BY KIM MAURICE · AS OF NOVEMBER 20, 2026 · QUOTES TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH

KEY FINDINGS

18

spa websites checked: **none** specifies whether the chest must be covered

1

single spa confirms the top is **optional for everyone**

5

spas require women to cover their chest (confirmed in writing)

5

spas did not answer: summary based on their website

THE NUMBERS

Establishments contacted by email	**19**
— clarified their policy in writing	**12 (9 fully, 3 in part)**
— policy "under review", according to the spa (Förena)	**1**
— no answer (summary based on their website)	**5**
— not applicable: individual treatments only (Ovarium)	**1**
Websites checked on Nov. 16, 2026 (a separate source: what the spa posts publicly)	**18**
Other places in the online directory, not contacted yet (see the appendix)	**108 (63 in Quebec, 45 in Ontario)**

WHERE IT STARTED

Why I did this investigation

This winter, I'd like to go to the spa. But I feel insecure about showing up without knowing whether they'll ask me to cover my chest.

So I wrote to the spas to know what to expect, and to find a place where I'll feel safe.

The spas answered me, several with real openness. But each spa does things its own way, and these rules aren't written anywhere on their websites. So I wanted to go further: I asked

every spa in and around Montreal the same questions, and gathered their answers in one place.

I'm doing this for queer people, trans people, non-binary people, and anyone whose body doesn't fit the boxes. So we know what to expect before paying and showing up. — Kim

METHOD

The questions. From November 1 to 16, 2026, 19 establishments received an email question on the same point: can you use the facilities topless, depending on whether you are a man, a woman, or someone whose body doesn't fit those categories (a woman without breasts, a man who has them)? So that each answer would be easy to summarize, a follow-up sometimes asked for a yes or no.

Who answered. Each spa profile gives the role of the person who wrote (front desk, reservations, customer service, management) and the date. Employees' names are not published.

Right of reply. On November 16, each spa quoted received the text concerning it, with the opportunity to correct it before publication. This was a fact-checking request: it does not mean the establishments endorse the conclusions of the investigation. To date, Spa William Gray, Balnea and L'Orangerie have confirmed in writing that their text is accurate; the others have requested no corrections. La Source asked that its emails not be quoted: its profile summarizes the rule without quoting them. Spa Bolton and AWU replied after this notice, on November 17 and 18. Amerispa replied on November 19, the day of publication; its reply was added the same evening.

Spas that did not answer. I did not press the spas that chose not to answer: after one follow-up and a notice before publication, I stopped writing to them. For them, this document summarizes what their website says. The data therefore comes from two sources only: what the spas wrote to me, and what they post on their websites. The goal is to inform, not to judge the answers.

Accessibility. On November 19, I also looked for what each spa says about access for people with reduced mobility, on its website and in the assessments of Kéroul, an organization that visits places to measure their accessibility (its rating is the only one recognized by Quebec's Ministry of Tourism). No website says its baths are wheelchair

accessible. Eleven websites do not mention it at all. I did not ask the spas this question: call before your visit.

The websites. On November 16, the websites of 18 spas were also checked, then checked a second time. This is a separate source: what the spa posts publicly, before any question is asked.

Tools. The investigation, the emails, the follow-ups and the editorial choices are Kim Maurice's. Artificial intelligence tools were used to sort the replies, lay out the document, translate it into English and proofread the text. The cover illustration is AI-generated. All quotes were checked against the original emails, which are kept on file.

Caution. The spas wrote in French; their replies are translated as faithfully as possible, and the originals appear in the French version of this document. Each piece of information is marked "confirmed", "inferred" or "not specified". When a spa says nothing about trans or non-binary people, this document says so without guessing on its behalf. Policies may change: check with the spa before your visit.

AT A GLANCE

The short answer

Topless possible for everyone
The same rule for everyone, regardless of sex, gender or body.

Spa William Gray

Free choice of swimsuit, topless not confirmed
A swimsuit is mandatory, but the person chooses which one. None of these spas confirms that going topless is allowed.

Rainspa, L'Orangerie, AWU

Depends on the body or identity
The rule depends on whether the person has breasts, or on gender identity.

Bota Bota, Spa Bolton, Spa le Finlandais

Women / men rule
Top required for women, not for men. Nothing about trans or non-binary people.

Balnea, La Source, Spa Carré St-Louis

Rule to be clarified
The spa asks for a “swimsuit” or “appropriate swimwear”, without saying whether bottoms alone are enough.

Spa Nordic Station, Amerispa

WHAT NO WEBSITE SAYS

Having to wear a swimsuit is one thing; having to cover your chest is another.

None of the 18 websites checked specifies whether the chest must be covered, or whether the rule differs for men and for women. Several state that a swimsuit is mandatory; others simply ask you to bring one. Knowing you must wear a swimsuit doesn’t tell you which part of the body must be covered. So someone who doesn’t fit the boxes cannot know the rule before arriving at the spa. Details and links in each spa profile and in the appendix.

ALL SPAS THAT ANSWERED

The table

SPA	A MAN TOPLESS?	A WOMAN TOPLESS?	BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY	THE RULE IS BASED ON	STATUS
Spa William Gray Old Montreal	Yes **CONFIRMED**	Yes **CONFIRMED**	Same rule for everyone **CONFIRMED**	No distinction	■ **OFFICIAL**

SPA	A MAN TOPLESS?	A WOMAN TOPLESS?	BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY	THE RULE IS BASED ON	STATUS
Bota Bota Old Port	Yes **CONFIRMED**	Yes once settled; top when moving around **CONFIRMED**	Depends on breasts; “we would trust you” **CONFIRMED**	Presence of breasts	■ **OFFICIAL**
Spa Bolton Bolton-Est	Yes **CONFIRMED**	No: top or one-piece required **CONFIRMED**	By identity; top if the chest “requires a top” **CONFIRMED**	Presence of a chest, “family setting”	■ **OFFICIAL**
Spa le Finlandais Rosemère	Probably yes **INFERRED**	No: chest covered at all times **CONFIRMED**	Nothing beyond “identifies as a woman” **NOT SPECIFIED**	Gender identity	■ **OFFICIAL**
Rainspa Old Montreal	Probably **INFERRED**	Top “recommended”, then “choice of outfit” **INFERRED**	“We leave the choice of outfit to you” **CONFIRMED**	Identity, then the person’s choice	■ **OFFICIAL**
L’Orangerie Old Montreal	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	Swimsuit “which best matches their identity” **CONFIRMED**	Comfort and identity	◧ **PROVISIONAL**
AWU Brossard	Probably **INFERRED**	Choice of swimsuit; topless not mentioned **INFERRED**	“No distinction” by gender or body **CONFIRMED**	The person’s choice, “decency”	■ **OFFICIAL**

SPA	A MAN TOPLESS?	A WOMAN TOPLESS?	BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY	THE RULE IS BASED ON	STATUS
Balnea Bromont	Yes **CONFIRMED**	No: top required **CONFIRMED**	"Particular situation" to report to the spa **CONFIRMED**	Women / men	■ **OFFICIAL**
La Source Rawdon	Yes **CONFIRMED**	No: top required **CONFIRMED**	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	Women / men	■ **OFFICIAL**
Spa Carré St-Louis Plateau	Probably (shorts required) **INFERRED**	No: "going topless is not allowed" **CONFIRMED**	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	Women / men	■ **OFFICIAL**
Spa Nordic Station Magog	"Swimsuit" minimum **NOT SPECIFIED**	"Swimsuit" minimum **NOT SPECIFIED**	Same rules for all clients **CONFIRMED**	Same rule, details to be clarified	◧ **PROVISIONAL**
Amerispa Morin-Heights	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**	No written policy; wants to "clarify our practices" **CONFIRMED**	"Appropriate swimwear"	◧ **PROVISIONAL**

How to read: CONFIRMED = written by the spa. **INFERRED** = follows from its reply, without explicit confirmation. **NOT SPECIFIED** = the spa did not answer this point. ■ OFFICIAL: clear rule, received in writing. ◧ PROVISIONAL: an important point remains unclear. The table summarizes; details and quotes are in the spa profiles, which alone are authoritative.

Spa by spa

Each profile brings together the rule in brief, what the spa wrote (translated from French) and what its website says.

How to read: CONFIRMED = written by the spa. **INFERRED** = follows from its reply, without explicit confirmation. **NOT SPECIFIED** = the spa did not answer this point. ■ OFFICIAL: clear rule, received in writing. ◧ PROVISIONAL: an important point remains unclear.

Topless possible for everyone

The same rule for everyone, regardless of sex, gender or body.

Spa William Gray

Old Montreal

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Topless allowed for everyone, women and men. The same rule applies to all.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Same rule for everyone **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

No distinction

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “In our thermal facilities, wearing opaque swimwear bottoms covering the genitals and buttocks is mandatory. Wearing a swimsuit top, however, is each person’s choice.”

> “This rule applies to all our clients, without distinction of sex, gender identity or expression, appearance or body type.”

> “Outside the thermal areas and changing rooms, we ask everyone to wear a robe or clothing covering the upper and lower body.”

Marketing management, Gray Collection · email of Nov. 3, 2026 (corrects a first reply of Nov. 1). Text validated by the spa on Nov. 16, 2026.

ON ITS WEBSITE

FAQ: “Please bring your own sandals and bathing suit if accessing the thermal circuit.” **Nothing about the chest.** · spawilliamgray.com/faq

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility. Kéroul (2024) rates Hôtel William Gray, where the spa is located, “not accessible”; the spa was not assessed separately.

Free choice of swimsuit, topless not confirmed

A swimsuit is mandatory, but the person chooses which one. None of these spas confirms that going topless is allowed.

Rainspa

Old Montreal

■ OFFICIAL

IN SHORT · Swimsuit required in the hammam. The spa first recommended a top for women, then wrote that it leaves “the choice of outfit” to each person.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Probably: briefs or shorts “recommended” **INFERRED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Top “recommended” (Nov. 3), then “the choice of outfit” (Nov. 15); topless never mentioned **INFERRED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

“We leave the choice of outfit to you” **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Recommendations by identity, then the person’s choice

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “Wearing a swimsuit is required. For the comfort of all our clients, we recommend that people who identify as women wear a one-piece or a two-piece with a top, and that people who identify as men wear briefs or swim shorts. These recommendations apply regardless of each person’s body type. (Nov. 3)”

> “As stated in our recommendations, wearing a swimsuit is mandatory. We nevertheless leave the choice of outfit to you, according to what suits you best and what you feel comfortable in. (Nov. 15)”

> “Towels and robes are also available so that you can cover up as needed throughout your experience. (Nov. 15)”

Rainspa front desk · emails of Nov. 3 and Nov. 15, 2026 (hammam guidelines).

Note: The Nov. 15 reply leaves “the choice of outfit” to the person, without using the word “topless”.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“A swimsuit is required in the hammam.” For treatments: “You may also wear your own underwear or a swimsuit.” **Nothing about the chest.** · rainspa.ca/fr/page-daccueil/a-propos/votre-visite

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility.

L'Orangerie

Old Montreal

◧ **PROVISIONAL**

IN SHORT · Each person wears the swimsuit they are comfortable in and that matches their identity. The spa does not say whether topless is allowed.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Swimsuit “which best matches their identity” **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Comfort and identity

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “In general, we invite each person to wear the type of swimsuit in which they feel comfortable and which best matches their identity, while respecting our goal of maintaining a welcoming and comfortable environment for all our clients.”

> “Since our clients are admitted from the age of 16, we place particular importance on maintaining a respectful setting for everyone.”

Reservations team · email of Nov. 10, 2026. Text validated by the spa on Nov. 17, 2026.

Note: The reply does not specify whether going topless is allowed. The spa validated this text on Nov. 17 without adding anything.

ON ITS WEBSITE

FAQ: “What should I bring? A swimsuit.” **Nothing about the chest.** · lorangerie.ca

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility. The former FAQ of Scandinave Spa Vieux-Montréal, at the same address, said the facilities “are not designed for

wheelchair users”.

AWU (ex-Skyspa DIX30)

Brossard

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Each person chooses their swimsuit, with no distinction by gender or body. A “suitable swimsuit” is required; topless is not mentioned.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Probably yes: “the choice of swimsuit is yours” **INFERRED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Choice of swimsuit “with no distinction based on gender or body type”; topless not mentioned **INFERRED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

“Each person can choose the outfit in which they feel comfortable” **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

The person’s choice; a “suitable swimsuit” for all

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “At AWU, the choice of swimsuit is yours. We make no distinction based on gender or body type: each person can choose the outfit in which they feel comfortable.”

> “We do, however, ask all our clients to respect a principle of decency. AWU is not a naturist establishment and we welcome people under 18; wearing a suitable swimsuit is therefore required for everyone, at all times.”

> “This rule applies in the same way to every person, regardless of their identity or their body.”

Operations lead, customer service · email of Nov. 18, 2026, in reply to the publication notice.

Note: The reply does not say whether a “suitable swimsuit” can be bottoms only, for a woman as for a man.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“To plan for: A swimsuit and sandals.” **Nothing about the chest.** · awu.com/pages/preparer-ma-visite

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Website: reception, changing rooms and massage rooms are accessible, but “the thermal cycle is not adapted”.

Depends on the body or identity

The rule depends on whether the person has breasts, or on gender identity.

Bota Bota

Old Port of Montreal

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Men may go topless. So may women once settled, but with a top when moving around. For other bodies, the spa trusts the person.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Yes once settled; top when moving around **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Depends on whether the person has breasts; “we would trust you” **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Presence of breasts

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “[…] we allow people who wish to do so to uncover their upper body when they are settled in the relaxation areas or in the facilities. We do ask, however, that water-

> appropriate clothing covering the upper body be worn when moving between the different areas. (Nov. 3)”

> “To answer simply, no, this guideline does not apply to all clients in the same way. In practice, it generally concerns women more, since men generally do not have breasts and can therefore move around topless in the areas concerned. (Nov. 6)”

> “When a person has questions about their particular situation, whether related to their gender expression, a condition such as gynecomastia or any other personal reality, we invite them to contact us. (Nov. 6)”

Reservations department (Nov. 1) and client experience supervision (Nov. 3 and 6, 2026).

ON ITS WEBSITE

“We accept any swimsuit, including high-coverage styles, made of a material suitable for water.” **Nothing about the chest.** · botabota.ca/questions

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility. Kéroul (2024): “not accessible”. The changing rooms can only be reached by stairs, and there are no adapted toilets.

Spa Bolton

Bolton-Est

■ OFFICIAL

IN SHORT · Topless allowed for men; a top or one-piece required for women. Trans and non-binary people choose by their identity, but a top is required if the chest “requires” one.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

No: top or one-piece required **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Swimwear matching one's identity and comfort, but a top is required for "people with a chest requiring a swimsuit top" **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Presence of a chest, "family setting"

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> "As a mainstream spa welcoming a varied clientele, including families and young children on certain mornings reserved for that purpose, our dress code is in line with the usual standards in Quebec."

> "[Can a man use the facilities topless, with only swim bottoms?] Yes."

> "[Can a woman do the same?] No, wearing a swimsuit top (or a one-piece swimsuit) is required."

> "In practice, each person is invited to wear swimwear (one-piece, two-piece or swim bottoms only) that matches their gender identity and their comfort, while respecting the family setting of the establishment (the upper body must be covered for people with a chest requiring a swimsuit top according to the usual standards in public places)."

> "Our team also remains available, in complete discretion, at the front desk or by phone if a client wishes to get clarification before their visit."

Spa Bolton · email of Nov. 17, 2026, in reply to the publication notice.

Note: The reply does not say who decides whether a chest "requires" a top, or whether a woman without breasts may wear bottoms only.

ON ITS WEBSITE

"You must bring (mandatory): Sandals, Water bottle, Swimsuit." **Nothing about the chest.** · spabolton.com/reservation

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Website: facilities "available to people with reduced mobility, but unfortunately not currently available to wheelchair users".

Spa le Finlandais

Rosemère

■ OFFICIAL

IN SHORT · Women must cover their chest at all times. The spa does not specify the rule for men or for other bodies.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Probably yes (asked on Nov. 10, no answer) **INFERRED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

No: chest covered at all times **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Nothing beyond “any person who identifies as a woman” **NOT SPECIFIED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Gender identity

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “To ensure compliance with our dress code, any person who identifies as a woman must keep her chest covered at all times throughout our facilities, whether she is wearing a one-piece or a two-piece swimsuit.”

Customer relations department · email of Nov. 2, 2026.

Note: The reply does not specify the rule for men.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“Swimsuits are mandatory in the thermal experience areas.” **Nothing about the chest.** · spalefinlandais.com/termes-et-conditions

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility.

Women / men rule

Top required for women, not for men. Nothing about trans or non-binary people.

Balnea

Bromont

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Topless allowed for men; a top is required for women. The spa invites people to tell it about any “particular situation”.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

No: top required **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

“Particular situation” to report to the spa **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Women / men

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory at all times in our thermal facilities, including the baths, saunas, relaxation areas and when moving between the different areas. (Nov. 4)”

> “To answer your question, a man may use the facilities wearing only swim bottoms. (Nov. 10)”

> “As for women, our policy provides for wearing a swimsuit top in our facilities. (Nov. 10)”

> “We understand, however, that each person has their own reality. If you would like to tell us about a particular situation, please do not hesitate to let us know. (Nov. 10)”

> “We are aware, however, that the needs and realities of our clients are evolving. We therefore wish to keep listening to our clients and continue to reflect on ways to evolve our practices in order to offer an ever more inclusive and pleasant experience for all. (Nov. 16)”

Reservations team · emails of Nov. 4, 10 and 16, 2026. Text validated by the spa on Nov. 16, 2026.

Note: On Nov. 4, the spa wrote that its policy “applies in the same way to all our clients”.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory in the facilities.” **Nothing about the chest.** · balnea.ca/politiques

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Website: “our site presents accessibility challenges for people with reduced mobility”. The spa asks guests to contact it before visiting to discuss possible accommodations.

La Source Bains Nordiques

Rawdon

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Topless allowed for men; a full swimsuit, top and bottoms, required for women. Nothing specified for other bodies.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Yes **CONFIRMED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

No: top required **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Women / men

Rule confirmed by email by the spa's team on Nov. 3 and 4, 2026. At the spa's request, its emails are not quoted.

ON ITS WEBSITE

"Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory; sandals and one piece of ID per person." **Nothing about the chest.** · lasourcespa.com/fr/services/1/bains-nordiques

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Website: "Site difficult to access for people with reduced mobility; please contact La Source for details."

Spa Carré St-Louis

Plateau-Mont-Royal

■ **OFFICIAL**

IN SHORT · Women must wear a one- or two-piece swimsuit: they may not go topless. For men, a top is not mentioned.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Probably: shorts required, top not mentioned **INFERRED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

No: "going topless is not allowed" **CONFIRMED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Women / men

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> "Men: Swim shorts are mandatory. Brief- or thong-style swimsuits are not accepted."

> "Women: A one- or two-piece swimsuit is mandatory throughout the experience. Going topless is not allowed."

> "For everyone: Underwear is not accepted in place of a swimsuit."

Spa Carré Saint-Louis · email of Nov. 11, 2026.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory on site.” **Nothing about the chest.** · spacarrestlouis.com/reservation

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility.

Rule to be clarified

The spa asks for a “swimsuit” or “appropriate swimwear”, without saying whether bottoms alone are enough.

Spa Nordic Station

Magog

◧ **PROVISIONAL**

IN SHORT · A swimsuit is required, with the same rule for all clients. The spa does not say whether bottoms alone are enough.

A MAN TOPLESS?

“Swimsuit” at a minimum; bottoms alone not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

“Swimsuit” at a minimum; bottoms alone not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

“These rules apply to all our clients” **CONFIRMED**

THE RULE IS BASED ON

Same rule for all, details to be clarified

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> "We ask all our clients to wear at least a swimsuit in our relaxation areas, our baths and our saunas. Sandals are also mandatory for moving around the site [...]."

> "These rules apply to all our clients."

Front desk team · email of Nov. 3, 2026.

Note: The reply does not specify whether swim bottoms alone are accepted.

ON ITS WEBSITE

"Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory on site." **Nothing about the chest.** · spanordicstation.com/fr/termes-conditions

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility.

Amerispa Spa Nordique

Morin-Heights

◧ PROVISIONAL

IN SHORT · No written policy on going topless: the spa asks for "appropriate swimwear". It says it wants to clarify its practices, with respect and inclusion in mind.

A MAN TOPLESS?

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

A WOMAN TOPLESS?

Not specified **NOT SPECIFIED**

BODIES OUTSIDE THE CATEGORIES, TRANS, NON-BINARY

No written policy; the spa wants to "clarify our practices, with respect and inclusion"
CONFIRMED

THE RULE IS BASED ON

"Appropriate swimwear"; no written policy

WHAT THE SPA WROTE (TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH)

> “At this time, we do not have a written policy specifically covering the situations you raise. (Nov. 19)”

> “Under our rules, we simply ask our clients to wear appropriate swimwear in our facilities. (Nov. 19)”

> “Above all, we want everyone to be able to enjoy our facilities in a welcoming, respectful environment where everyone feels comfortable. (Nov. 19)”

> “Your questions are entirely relevant and invite us to reflect on the best way to clarify our practices, with respect and inclusion for all our clients. (Nov. 19)”

Reception, Amerispa Spa Nordique Morin-Heights · email of Nov. 19, 2026, the day of publication.

Note: The reply does not say whether swim bottoms alone count as “appropriate swimwear”, or for whom.

ON ITS WEBSITE

“Bring your swimsuit and enjoy the hotels’ pools or our Nordic spas before or after a treatment.” No dress code. **Nothing about the chest.** · amerispa.ca/faq

ACCESSIBILITY (REDUCED MOBILITY)

Nothing found on its website about accessibility.

BASED ON THEIR WEBSITES

Spas that did not answer

These spas received my questions, a follow-up, then a notice before publication. They did not answer, and I did not press them further. Here is what each website says (checked on November 16, 2026):

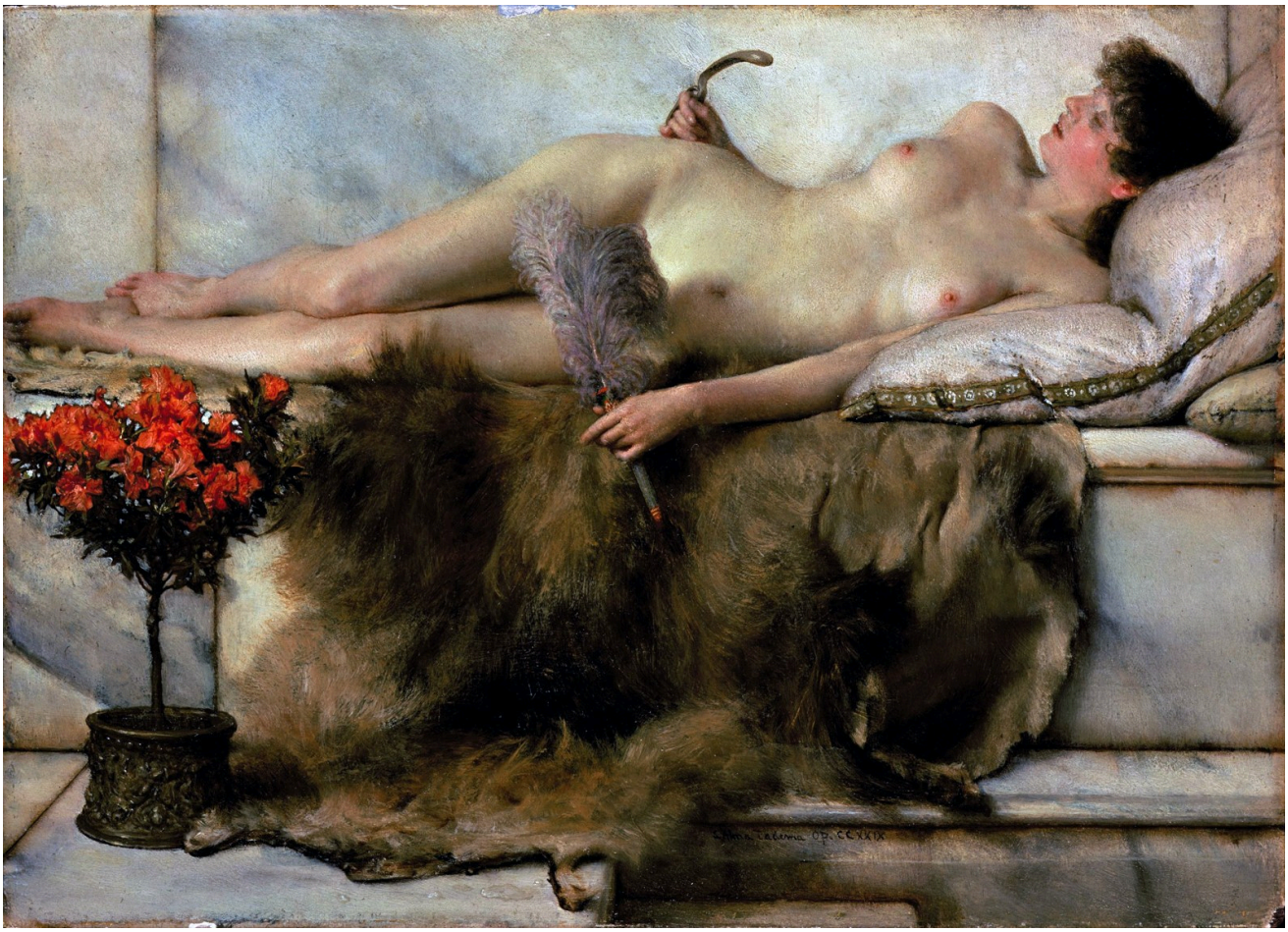
SPA	IN SHORT, FROM ITS WEBSITE	PAGE
Strøm spa nordique (3 spas) Île-des-Sœurs, Saint-Sauveur, Mont-Saint-Hilaire	**Swimsuit and sandals required "for reasons of hygiene and safety". Nothing about the chest.** "Wear sandals and a swimsuit for hygiene and safety reasons." *Accessibility: Website: Nuns' Island and Saint-Sauveur have "no access ramp for wheelchairs". In Mont-Saint-Hilaire, a ramp leads to reception, the restaurant and treatments, but "the thermal experience and the changing rooms are not accessible".*	stromspa.com/pages/preparer-votre-visite
Scandinave Spa Mont-Tremblant Mont-Tremblant	**Swimsuit required, sandals suggested. Nothing about the chest.** "Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory and sandals are suggested." *Accessibility: Website: facilities "not designed for wheelchair users", with "several staircases throughout the experience".*	scandinave.com/fr/termes-et-conditions
Spa Eastman Eastman	**The website suggests bringing a swimsuit. No written dress rule.** List of things to bring: "Your swimsuit (or two, to avoid putting a wet one back on!)". No written rule found. *Accessibility: Website: treatments, restaurant and common areas reachable by elevator, adapted rooms, but "the thermotherapy facilities are not accessible".*	spa-eastman.com/planifier-mon-premier-sejour
Spa Ofuro Morin-Heights	**Swimsuit and sandals required. Nothing about the chest.** "Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory." *Accessibility: Nothing found on its website about accessibility.*	spaofuro.com/faq-reglements
JOY Wellness Club Downtown (rue de la Montagne)	**Swimsuit required in the sauna, cold plunge and warm baths. Nothing about the chest.** Terms and conditions: "[...] bathing suits for sauna cold plunge and warm baths." *Accessibility: Nothing found on its website about accessibility.*	joywellnessclub.ca/en/pages/termes-et-conditions

Förena (policy under review) replied by email: “In our thermal areas, wearing a swimsuit is required.” Customer service · email of Nov. 2, 2026. Policy under review, according to the spa. According to the spa, its policy is under review. Its website asks guests to bring a swimsuit for the thermal experience. *Accessibility: Nothing found on its website about accessibility. Kéroul (2025): “partially accessible”. Elevator, adapted toilets and shower, step-free sauna and steam bath; the pools are reached by steps with a handrail.*

Not applicable: Spa Ovarium (Rosemont) offers only individual treatments, with no shared swimsuit area.

CONTEXT

A bit of history



The Tepidarium, Lawrence Alma-Tadema, 1881. Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight (UK). Public domain. The tepidarium was the warm room of Roman baths, between the cold bath (frigidarium) and the hot bath (caldarium). This is a 19th-century vision, painted by a man, of Antiquity and of the female body, not a document from the period.

Bathing together, hot then cold, is very old. How people cover their bodies, on the other hand, has changed a lot.

Ancient Rome. The baths moved from the cold bath to the warm room to the hot bath. Depending on the period, women and men bathed at different times, in separate sections, or together. Emperor Hadrian banned mixed bathing in the 2nd century, but the ban did not last.

Finland. The sauna has been practised for centuries, and people usually go naked, women and men separately in public saunas. A swimsuit or towel is accepted.

North America, 1890-1930. Men also had to cover their chests. In Ocean Grove, New Jersey, a man was fined as early as 1891 for an “improper” bathing suit, and tops were still mandatory in 1910. In the 1930s, Atlantic City was still resisting topless men; by 1939, 67% of the public approved of shirtless bathing. In Toronto, a bylaw required a “neck-to-knees” suit until 1930.

What to remember from this period: less than a hundred years ago, men’s chests had to be hidden too. The rule changed for them. Not for women.

Elsewhere today. In Germany, saunas are normally mixed and textile-free. In Japan and Korea, people bathe naked, in baths separated by sex. Where baths are separated, other questions arise for trans and non-binary people.

Quebec. Quebec’s first Nordic spa was born in the 1960s in Saint-Sauveur, on the banks of the Rivière à Simon: first a sauna in a private home, it became the Polar Bear’s Club, now Strøm Saint-Sauveur. Nordik in Chelsea, opened in 2005, was inspired by it. Quebec now has more than 100 Nordic spas, the largest concentration in North America according to Tourisme Montréal. It adopted the hot-cold-rest cycle from Scandinavia, but with a mandatory swimsuit.

Sources: History.com; Visit Finland; Lonely Planet; Historical Society of Ocean Grove; Xtra Magazine; IamExpat Germany; Japan National Tourism Organization; CTV News; Strøm spa nordique; Tourisme Outaouais; Vallée Saint-Sauveur; Tourisme Montréal. Links in the appendix.

QUESTIONS THAT REMAIN OPEN

This document does not settle any legal question. It recalls two facts. Since 2016, section 10 of Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms has prohibited discrimination based on "gender identity or expression", in addition to sex. And section 15 prohibits preventing anyone, through discrimination, from accessing public places such as commercial establishments.

A difference in treatment is not automatically prohibited discrimination. That remains to be assessed. These questions deserve to be put to lawyers and to the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ): can a spa require a top for women but not for men? On what basis? And how does such a rule apply to a trans or non-binary person?

Sources: Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (LégisQuébec); Gazette officielle du Québec, 2016. Links in the appendix.

CONCLUSION

What I take away from this

First, thank you. Several spas took the time to answer me, and some were really open. Bota Bota wrote to me: "In the situation you describe, we would trust you to assess what applies to you." Balnea invited me to tell them about my "particular situation", and wrote that it wants to "continue to reflect on ways to evolve our practices". Spa Bolton thanked me for "the initiative of this directory". Amerispa wrote that my questions invite it "to reflect on the best way to clarify our practices". Spa William Gray corrected its first answer, and its rule is the same for everyone. Rainspa thanked me for giving them "the opportunity to clarify" their guidelines.

But the finding is the same. Only one spa, Spa William Gray, clearly says the top is optional for everyone, regardless of sex, gender or body. Elsewhere, it depends: on being a man or a woman, or on having breasts or not. And most replies say nothing about trans or non-binary people. Above all, none of this is written on the websites. To find out, you have to write to the spa.

Me, I don't want to cover my chest. Having fabric on it makes me uncomfortable. And politically, I'm for body equality: the same rule for everyone.

In Germany, people go to the sauna naked, men and women together. Here, we took the hot-cold tradition, but we added the swimsuit. And with the swimsuit came the question of who has to hide what.

What I'm asking spas is simple: write your rule on your website, and make it the same for everyone.

And if you see yourself in this: write to the spa before you go, and keep the answer. — Kim

BEFORE YOU GO TO THE SPA

1. Write to the spa before your visit and ask clearly: can a man go topless? a woman? a non-binary person?

2. Keep its answer in writing, and have it on your phone when you arrive.

3. If the answer isn't clear to you, ask what the rule is based on: sex, gender identity, or having breasts.

4. Share the answer: write to sansetiquette.enquete@gmail.com to add to this document.

APPENDIX · WAITING FOR INFORMATION

The other places in the directory

Besides the 18 spas in the investigation, the online directory lists 108 places in Quebec (63) and Ontario (45): spas with shared facilities, gay saunas, and baths for men or for women. **They have not been contacted yet: their rule is "waiting for information."** The facilities come from their websites, tourism listings or guides, and are still to be confirmed. As of November 20, 2026.

For places for men, the question is not what to wear but who can go in: are trans men and non-binary people admitted? For places for women, the same question applies to trans women.

Quebec

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Bain Colonial **For men**	Montreal (Plateau) Montreal	Russian bath and sauna. Its website says it is “exclusively for men.” Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Venue website
Sauna Centre-Ville **For men**	Montreal (Village)	Gay sauna for men, according to guides. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Sauna G.I. Joe **For men**	Montreal (Village)	Gay sauna; bisexual men are also welcome, according to a guide. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Sauna Oasis **For men**	Montreal (Village)	Sauna for men. No website, only social media. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	—
Noah Spa Venise-en-Québec	Venise-en-Québec Montérégie (South Shore)	Facilities to be confirmed. No link found yet. Same chain as Noah Spa in Scott and Thetford Mines.	—
O’Spa Nordique, Hôtel de la Rive	Sorel-Tracy	Thermal circuit.	Tourism listing
Sauna Carpediem **For men**	Longueuil (Saint-Hubert)	Gay sauna. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	—
Spa Franklin	Franklin	Outdoor baths, eucalyptus hammam, Finnish sauna, cold pool, river access.	Tourism listing
Spa Gallant, Auberge des Gallant	Sainte-Marthe	Facilities to be confirmed. According to Québec Vacances, the spa is for inn guests only.	Tourism listing
Auberge & Spa Nordique Beaux Rêves	Sainte-Adèle Laurentians	Finnish sauna, eucalyptus hammam, hot pool, swimming in the river. The website mentions spa access with lodging: to be confirmed for day visits.	Venue page

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
L'Oasis de l'Île Spa	Saint-Eustache	Hot and cold baths, steam bath, dry sauna, pool in summer. Spa for ages 16 and up.	Tourism listing
Moment Spa, Fairmont Tremblant	Mont-Tremblant	Outdoor pool with thermal circuit, waterfall, hot tub, cold pool; hammams and sauna. Their wellness page says nothing about what to wear.	Venue website
Centre de santé de l'Auberge du Lac Taureau	Saint-Michel-des-Saints Lanaudière	Heated indoor and outdoor pools, saunas, outdoor hot tubs.	Tourism listing
Centre de santé Le Rituel	Saint-Côme	Hot tub, sauna, river. Seems mostly offered as private access for groups: to be confirmed.	Tourism listing
Spa de l'Auberge Aux Quatre Matins	Saint-Côme	Outdoor Nordic baths.	Tourism listing
Spa Natur'Eau	Mandeville	Finnish sauna, Turkish bath, three outdoor hot tubs, Nordic waterfall.	Venue website
Spa Santé Corps et Âme	L'Assomption	Baths in a private room. Exclusive access possible: facilities may not be shared, to be confirmed.	Tourism listing
Spa santé Le Nénuphar	Terrebonne	Urban spa: indoor hot tub and cold pool, dry sauna, float bath.	Tourism listing
Centre de santé Euro-Spa	Saint-Ignace-de-Stanbridge Eastern Townships	Indoor and outdoor pools, indoor and outdoor hot tubs, infrared sauna.	Tourism listing
PAŪS Spa Expérience	Sherbrooke	Four-floor urban spa: Nordic bath, hammam, dry sauna, hot and cold pools, indoor and outdoor hot tubs.	Tourism listing

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Solstice sauna	North Hatley	Social sauna on Lake Massawippi, with a dip in the lake. Public 75-minute sessions, 20 people at most; open October to April.	Tourism listing
Spa des Sables, Manoir des Sables (formerly Spa Villégia)	Orford	Nordic bath, hammam, dry sauna, indoor hot tub, indoor and outdoor pools.	Tourism listing
Spa Nordique, Le Saint-Christophe Hôtel-Boutique & Spa	Granby (Lake Boivin)	Nordic spa (facilities to be confirmed).	Tourism listing
Strøm spa nordique Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Thermal circuit, beach on the Magog River. Same chain as Strøm, which is part of investigation no. 1 and did not answer.	Venue page
Aroma Spa (Village Vacances Valcartier)	Saint-Gabriel-de-Valcartier Quebec City area	Steam bath and Finnish sauna. Their rules page requires a swimsuit at all times and “appropriate swimwear”; thongs and see-through clothing are not allowed.	Venue page
AWŪ urban sanctuary Québec (formerly SKYSPA Québec)	Quebec City	Thermal circuit. Same company as AWU DIX30 (investigation no. 1). The rules page is AWU DIX30’s: to be confirmed for Quebec City.	Venue page
Le Nordique Spa Stoneham	Stoneham-et-Tewkesbury	Nordic baths on the Jacques-Cartier River.	Tourism listing
Le Versant Mont-Sainte-Anne	Saint-Ferréol-les-Neiges	Nordic baths by a lake (to be confirmed).	Tourism listing
Sauna Backboys For men	Quebec City (Saint-Roch)	The only gay sauna in Quebec City. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Sibéria Spa	Lac-Beauport	Nordic baths in the forest.	Venue page
Spa des Neiges	Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré	Outdoor Nordic baths.	Tourism listing
Strøm spa nordique Vieux-Québec	Quebec City	Nordic baths. Same chain as Strøm, which is part of investigation no. 1 and did not answer.	Venue page
Moment Spa, Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu	La Malbaie Charlevoix	Heated pools, indoor and outdoor hot tubs, hammam; women's and men's change rooms.	Venue website
Spa Nordique Le Germain	Baie-Saint-Paul	Finnish sauna, steam bath, hot and cold pools.	Venue website
Adstock Spa Nature	Adstock Chaudière-Appalaches	Public hot tubs, plus private areas with hot tub, sauna and cold pool.	Article
Noah Spa (Scott)	Scott	Nordic spa, hammam, sauna, outdoor pool.	Tourism listing
Noah Spa (Thetford)	Thetford Mines	Outdoor hot tubs.	Tourism listing
Sartiga Spa sur le Lac (formerly NRJ Spa Nordique)	Saint-Alfred (Beauce)	Hot baths, Finnish saunas, hammam, cold pool.	Tourism listing
Sento Spa	Lévis	Hot and cold baths, sauna, hammam.	Tourism listing

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Bioterra Spa Santé urbain	Drummondville Centre-du-Québec	Scandinavian bath, hammam, indoor hot bath and cold pool, cold waterfall, dry sauna.	Tourism listing
Le Sainte-Hélène Auberge & Spa Nordique	Sainte-Hélène-de-Chester	Two hot baths, dry sauna, hammam, waterfall, glass room.	Tourism listing
Spa détente du Lac William, Manoir du Lac William	Saint-Ferdinand	Nordic spa: three hot pools, one cold pool, Finnish sauna; swimming pools.	Tourism listing
Amerispa Spa Nordique Cantley	Cantley Outaouais	Hot tubs, Finnish sauna, eucalyptus steam bath, Nordic waterfall, warm bath. Ages 18 and up. Same chain as Amerispa Morin-Heights (investigation no. 1), whose rule is still to be clarified.	Venue page
Centre de vie	Ripon	Sauna in an old silo, clay lake. Retreat centre (fasting, yoga): to be confirmed whether it takes day visitors.	Tourism listing
Holtz Spa en nature	La Pêche (Wakefield)	Forest spa at the Wakefield Mill; shared facilities to be confirmed.	Venue page
Huma Spa	Gatineau	Rooftop spa: indoor and outdoor hot baths, cold pool, hammam, dry sauna, float bath.	Tourism listing
Koena Spa	Gatineau (Aylmer)	Hot and cold baths, dry saunas, eucalyptus hammam, Himalayan salt room, grotto.	Venue website
Nordik Spa Village Chelsea	Chelsea	10 outdoor baths, 9 saunas; the largest spa in North America. Their Village Code: a swimsuit is mandatory everywhere in the Spa Village.	Venue page

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Geos Spa Sacacomie	Saint-Alexis-des-Monts Mauricie	Geothermal baths, outdoor dry saunas, steam bath, hot tubs, indoor pool.	Tourism listing
KiNipi Spa nordique & hébergement	Trois-Rivières	Outdoor pools, Finnish saunas, hammam.	Tourism listing
Spa santé Le Baluchon Éco-villégiature	Saint-Paulin	Hot baths, cold pool, sauna, rest areas on the rivière du Loup.	Venue page
Chalets & Spa Lac-Saint-Jean	Chambord Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean	Nordic bath, hot and cold pools, dry sauna. Baths not open to people under 16.	Tourism listing
Hammam Thalassa	Saguenay (Jonquière)	Hammam (Turkish bath) with essential oils; change room and showers.	Tourism listing
L'Éternel Spa	Saint-David-de-Falardeau	Four hot pools, natural cold pool with waterfall, sauna, hammam, yurt.	Tourism listing
PAŪS Spa Expérience (Saguenay)	Saguenay	Outdoor hot tub, Scandinavian bath, hammam.	Tourism listing
Édouard-les-Bains	L'Anse-Saint-Jean	Outdoor hot tubs, hammam, saunas, Nordic waterfall and pools, pool in summer.	Tourism listing
Centre de santé L'Estuaire, Hôtel Levesque	Rivière-du-Loup Lower St. Lawrence, Gaspé, North Shore	Indoor Nordic spa, sauna.	Tourism listing
Ferme 5 Étoiles	Sacré-Cœur (North Shore)	Relaxation corner at a holiday resort: indoor hot tub, sauna.	Tourism listing

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Noah Spa, Hôtel Le Navigateur	Rimouski	Jet pool, Scandinavian bath, hammam, outdoor hot tub.	Tourism listing
Thuya Spa, Le Nordet	Saint-Georges-de-Malbaie (Gaspé Peninsula)	Cedar pools, saunas, hammam.	Tourism listing
UniverSpa Nordik, Hôtel Universel	Rivière-du-Loup	Nordic baths, two hot pools, cold waterfall, saunas.	Tourism listing
Jardin Spa, Le Noranda Hôtel & Spa	Rouyn-Noranda Abitibi-Témiscamingue	Boreal thermal experience: hammam, boreal sauna, hot pool.	Tourism listing
Le Blanc Spa nordique	Val-d'Or	Barrel sauna, two hot tubs, cold-water barrel. 13 people at most per 4-hour session.	Tourism listing

Ontario

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
AIRE Ancient Baths Toronto	Toronto (Fashion District) Toronto area	Hot, cold and warm pools, salt float pool, jets, steam room, sauna.	Venue website
Alter (2 adresses)	Toronto (College West and Leslieville)	Multi-tier sauna, two cold plunges, overhead dunk bucket, tea lounge.	Venue website
Banya Richmond Hill	Richmond Hill	Hydrotherapy cycle, Finnish sauna, Himalayan salt room, tearoom.	Venue website

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Body Blitz Spa (2 adresses) For women	Toronto (Corktown and Entertainment District)	Water circuit: Dead Sea salt pool, Epsom salt soak, cold plunge, infrared sauna, eucalyptus steam room. Women-only spa. In 2017 it turned away a trans woman (see “In the news”). Its current rule is to be checked.	Venue website
Go Place	Markham	24-hour spa: themed saunas, baths, steam rooms, ice room, restaurant. Gendered change-room areas; pyjamas provided, according to Toronto Life.	Venue website
Hammam Spa by Céla	Toronto (King Street)	Hammam (Turkish bath) and treatments. Shared facilities to be confirmed.	Article
Löyly Floating Sauna	Toronto (Queens Quay)	Sauna on a barge in the harbour, cold showers; open or private sessions.	Venue website
Millcroft Inn & Spa	Alton (Caledon)	Indoor pool, outdoor hot pools, Finnish sauna, cold plunge, steam room.	Article
NRG Haus	Toronto	Large cedar sauna (55 people), four cold plunges; DJ nights. Guests mingle in swimsuits, according to Toronto Life.	Venue website
Oasis Aqualounge	Toronto (Mutual Street)	Mixed adult club for ages 19 and up, with a pool and hot tubs; open to all genders according to guides. Reduced price for trans people, according to guides, and nights for women, trans and non-binary people. Xtra has reported complaints from non-binary people about its admission policy.	Guide listing
Othership (2 adresses)	Toronto (King West and Yorkville)	Social sauna and cold plunges, with guided group sessions.	Venue website
Rcvri	Toronto	Cedar saunas, cold plunges, hot tub (shared area for about 15 people). The wet area is done in a swimsuit, according to Toronto Life.	Venue website

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Sana	Toronto (Geary Avenue)	Infrared sauna, wood sauna, large steam room, two cold plunges, restaurant.	Venue website
South-Western Bathhouse and Tea Room	Mississauga	Banya (Russian sauna), cold dunk barrel, tea and food.	Venue website
Spa Excess **For men**	Toronto (Carlton Street)	Men's bathhouse open around the clock, near Church Street. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Splash Steam and Sauna **For men**	Toronto (Little Portugal)	Small gay sauna on Dundas Street West: dry sauna and steam room. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Steamul Sauna	Mississauga	Finnish saunas, steam room, hot tub, cold plunge, salt room.	Venue website
Steamworks Toronto **For men**	Toronto (Church-Wellesley)	Large gay bathhouse open around the clock: dry sauna, steam room, hot tub, gym. A club for men. Speaking to Xtra, its manager said this "does include trans men" and that staff would be trained so trans and gender non-conforming people are no longer turned away. Non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Sweetgrass Spa **For women**	Toronto (Queen Street East)	Ozonated pool, infrared sauna, hot tub. Women-only spa, according to Destination Ontario. Trans women and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Article
Thermëa Spa Village Whitby	Whitby	Outdoor pools, saunas, saltwater float pool, restaurants. Same group as Nordik in Chelsea, Quebec.	Venue website
Tonic Spa (Sweat and Tonic)	Toronto	25-person sauna, pool, hot tub; group sauna sessions.	Venue website

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Club Ottawa For men	Ottawa (Hintonburg) Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley	Ottawa's only gay bathhouse, for men. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Maplestone Ranch and Retreat	Clayton (Lanark)	Warm saltwater pool, hot tubs, saunas, cold plunges. Adults only.	Venue website
Saunoa Ottawa	Ottawa (Ottawa River)	Floating cedar sauna and cold plunge on the river. Shared or private sessions: to be confirmed.	Venue website
Somewhere Inn Calabogie	Calabogie	Finnish sauna, cold plunge, outdoor fire pits, rest areas.	Venue website
Uppliva Nordic Spa	Ottawa (Hintonburg)	Cedar sauna, eucalyptus steam room, cold plunge, rain showers.	Tourism listing
Scandinave Spa Blue Mountain	The Blue Mountains (Collingwood) Simcoe, Grey and Bruce	Outdoor hot pools, cold plunges, Nordic waterfalls, saunas, steam rooms. Same chain as Scandinave Mont-Tremblant, which is part of investigation no. 1 and did not answer. Silence required, no phones.	Venue website
Somewhere Inn Collingwood	Collingwood	Finnish sauna, cold plunge, outdoor fire pits. Shared facilities to be confirmed.	Venue website
Vettä Nordic Spa	Oro-Medonte (Horseshoe Valley)	Six outdoor pools, Finnish sauna, steam room, hot stone room. A quiet zone and a social zone.	Venue website
Elora Mill Hotel & Spa	Elora Southwestern Ontario	Saunas, steam rooms, outdoor hot tub and pool.	Article

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Flowstate Nordic Spa	Tecumseh	Traditional sauna, cold plunge, hot tub.	Venue website
KW Sauna	Kitchener (Victoria Street North)	Sauna, steam room and cold plunge. A gay guide describes it as a men's sauna; other sources describe it as a sauna open to everyone. To be confirmed.	Guide listing
Langdon Hall	Cambridge	Sauna, steam room, whirlpool. A treatment booking is required; non-guests can visit on weekdays, according to Narcity.	Article
Lungovita Beach Retreat	Harrow	Cedar saunas, lakeview hot tubs; day pass.	Venue website
Terra Nova Nordic Spa & Café	Woodstock	Wood-fired sauna, eucalyptus steam room, hot pool, fireside rest area.	Venue website
100 Fountain Spa, Pillar and Post	Niagara-on-the-Lake Hamilton and Niagara	Indoor saltwater pool, hot tub, outdoor pool, hot-spring-style pool.	Article
Burning Springs Spa & Thermal Pools	Niagara Falls	Three outdoor thermal pools, Himalayan salt sauna, sauna cabin.	Venue website
Club Hamilton (formerly Central Spa) For men	Hamilton (Main Street West)	Gay men's sauna: dry sauna, steam room. Trans men and non-binary people: nothing in writing.	Guide listing
Ste. Anne's Spa	Grafton Eastern Ontario	Steam rooms and hydrotherapy pools.	Article

PLACE	CITY	FACILITIES AND NOTES	LINK
Wander The Spa	Bloomfield (Prince Edward County)	Lakefront thermal circuit: saunas, steam room, pools, cold plunges.	Venue website
Floathaus	Gravenhurst Muskoka and the Highlands	Wood-fired sauna, cold plunge, lake view. Community sessions and private sessions.	Venue website
Grail Springs Retreat for Wellbeing	Bancroft	Hot tubs, Finnish cedar sauna, cold plunge; day passes.	Article
The Spa at Deerhurst Resort	Huntsville	Hot tubs, steam room, sauna, relaxation lounge.	Article
Kangas Sauna	Thunder Bay Northern Ontario	Traditional Finnish sauna house with a restaurant; 90-minute sessions to book. Shared or private sessions: to be confirmed.	Venue website
Spa Grande Nature (Cedar Meadows)	Timmins	Nordic baths, jets, infrared sauna.	Venue website

All websites checked

On November 16, 2026, we checked the FAQ, terms and “plan your visit” pages of 18 spas. **None of the 18 websites specifies whether the chest must be covered, or whether the rule differs for men and for women.** Several state that a swimsuit is mandatory; others simply ask you to bring one.

Knowing you must wear a swimsuit doesn’t tell you which part of the body must be covered. Public guidelines do not tell you whether you can use the facilities in swim bottoms only, or whether the rule varies by sex, gender identity or body type.

Yet several spas confirmed by email that women must wear a top, while men may go topless. This rule is not written on any of the websites checked.

SPA	WHAT THE WEBSITE SAYS	CHEST / TOPLESS	PAGE CHECKED
Bota Bota	“We accept any swimsuit, including high-coverage styles, made of a material suitable for water.”	**Nothing**	botabota.ca/questions
Spa William Gray	FAQ: “Please bring your own sandals and bathing suit if accessing the thermal circuit.”	**Nothing**	spawilliamgray.com/faq
Rainspa	“A swimsuit is required in the hammam.” For treatments: “You may also wear your own underwear or a swimsuit.”	**Nothing**	rainspa.ca/fr/page-daccueil/a-propos/votre-visite
L’Orangerie	FAQ: “What should I bring? A swimsuit.”	**Nothing**	lorangerie.ca
Spa Carré St-Louis	“Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory on site.”	**Nothing**	spacarrestlouis.com/reservation
Spa le Finlandais	“Swimsuits are mandatory in the thermal experience areas.”	**Nothing**	spalefinlandais.com/termes-et-conditions
Förena	List of things to bring: “a swimsuit for the thermal experience”.	**Nothing**	forena.ca/fr/faq
Balnea	“Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory in the facilities.”	**Nothing**	balnea.ca/politiques
La Source	“Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory; sandals and one piece of ID per person.”	**Nothing**	lasourcespa.com/fr/services/1/bains-nordiques
Spa Nordic Station	“Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory on site.”	**Nothing**	spanordicstation.com/fr/termes-conditions
Strøm	“Wear sandals and a swimsuit for hygiene and safety reasons.”	**Nothing**	stromspa.com/pages/preparer-votre-visite

SPA	WHAT THE WEBSITE SAYS	CHEST / TOPLESS	PAGE CHECKED
AWU	“To plan for: A swimsuit and sandals.”	**Nothing**	awu.com/pages/preparer-ma-visite
Scandinave Mont-Tremblant	“Wearing a swimsuit is mandatory and sandals are suggested.”	**Nothing**	scandinave.com/fr/termes-et-conditions
Spa Eastman	List of things to bring: “Your swimsuit (or two, to avoid putting a wet one back on!)”. No written rule found.	**Nothing**	spa-eastman.com/planifier-mon-premier-sejour
Amerispa Morin-Heights	“Bring your swimsuit and enjoy the hotels’ pools or our Nordic spas before or after a treatment.” No dress code.	**Nothing**	amerispa.ca/faq
Spa Ofuro	“Swimsuits and sandals are mandatory.”	**Nothing**	spaofuro.com/faq-reglements
JOY Wellness Club	Terms and conditions: “[...] bathing suits for sauna cold plunge and warm baths.”	**Nothing**	joywellnessclub.ca/en/pages/termes-et-conditions
Spa Bolton	“You must bring (mandatory): Sandals, Water bottle, Swimsuit.”	**Nothing**	spabolton.com/reservation

Excerpts translated from French, except for sites that publish in English. Pages checked on November 16, 2026, then checked a second time the same day: three addresses had changed (Spa William Gray, Förena, Balnea) and were replaced with the current official page. This check covers public pages; a spa may also post its rules on site, in its booking process or in its confirmation emails.

APPENDIX

Sources for the context and the law

Links:

Visit Finland: visitfinland.com/en/things-to-do/sauna

Lonely Planet (Finland): lonelyplanet.com/articles/guide-to-finlands-sauna-culture

IamExpat Germany: iamexpat.de/lifestyle/lifestyle-news/everything-you-need-know-visiting-german-sauna

The Local Germany: thelocal.de/20191018/the-truth-laid-bare-what-you-need-to-know-about-germanys-sauna-culture
Japan National Tourism Organization: japan.travel/en/guide/bathing-manners-and-tips
CTV News (Korea): ctvnews.ca/lifestyle/article/getting-naked-in-the-worlds-largest-department-store
Vallée Saint-Sauveur: valleesaintsauveur.com/en/?p=942
Tourisme Montréal: mtl.org/en/experience/winter-wellness
History.com (Rome): history.com/articles/ancient-roman-baths
Historical Society of Ocean Grove: historicalsocietyofoceangrove.org/exhibits/sun-sand-modesty
Xtra Magazine (Toronto): xtramagazine.com/power/the-wiles-of-the-sea-vamp-48083
Strøm spa nordique (history of the Polar Bear's Club): stromspa.com/en/blogs/strom-news/strom-nordic-spa-saint-sauveur-from-a-private-home-to-a-large-scale-spa
Tourisme Outaouais (Nordik): tourismeoutaouais.com/en/blogue/ambassador-nordik-spa-nature
The Tepidarium, Alma-Tadema (notice): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tepidarium
Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (LégisQuébec): legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/C-12
2016 Act adding gender identity or expression (Gazette officielle, in French): publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/gazette/pdf_encrypte/lois_reglements/2016F/65147.pdf

This document will be updated as spas reply. A correction or an answer to add? Write to sansetiquette.enquete@gmail.com. A French version is available.