

Masonry Heaters: Designing, Building, and Living with a Piece of the Sun

By Ken Matesz

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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 "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.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Masonry Heaters* is informational across the board, and shares common, advantageous characteristics to passive solar design. Both methods of heating rely on heat transfer by radiation rather than convection, which gives a more natural feeling while reducing drafts and noise; both utilize thermal mass, which gives greater thermal stability; and both can allow independence from energy shocks and price fluctuations. I highly recommend this book for people-in any field-who are interested in learning about the design, construction, and use of this superior system of heating."**--Ken Haggard, Author of *Passive Solar Architecture***

"Masonry heaters provide a quiet comfort that must be experienced to be believed. In this book, Ken Matesz shares his love of masonry heaters and artfully explains how they work, how to use them to provide efficient and comfortable heat throughout the day, and what it takes to install one in your home. This is a truly delightful book."**--David Bainbridge, Author of *The Straw Bale House*, and *Passive Solar Architecture***

"This book should be on the required reading list for anyone wanting to become a heater mason, or for those who are planning to install and heat with a masonry heater. Matesz has captured the true beauty and user-friendliness of these exquisite heaters, and, with ease, helps guide readers through the process of designing a beautiful, and functional "bit of sun" for their homes. I highly recommend the book, as well as masonry heaters."**--Tom Stroud, Founding Member and Former President of The Masonry Heater Association**

"In *Masonry Heaters*, a rich and wonderful book, Ken Matesz sweeps away the ashes of our ignorance about the right relationship to fire. He argues-with quiet and crystal-clear clarity-that masonry heaters are the most intelligent, gentle, efficient, environmentally friendly and sustainable, beautiful, and healthy form of heating humans have ever known. There is more knowledge and truth about masonry heaters between these two covers than has ever been published before in English."**--Albie Barden, Maine Wood Heat Company**

"When I travel in the Northern states of the U.S.--particularly New England, where most people depend on heating with oil--I fear for these millions of folks for whom depleting, climate-changing fossil fuels are all that stand between winter comfort on one hand, and death by freezing on the other. *Masonry Heaters* explores one of the most promising alternatives, and its message needs to get out far and wide, and fast."--**Richard Heinberg, Senior Fellow, Post Carbon Institute and Author of *The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies***

"This book is a joy! Ken Matesz guides us on a clear path through the woods to getting an heirloom masonry heater, and offers invaluable information on why we should want to traverse it. Readers will learn about many more things than just masonry heaters along the journey, however, including how their house works (or should work), and how to have their own radiating energy source at its center—including exactly what it takes to get their masonry heater designed, built, and burning. Not to mention some wonderful stories of the people who have made masonry heaters a part of their lives! May the sun shine on this book."--**Timothy Seaton, President, The Alliance of Masonry Heater and Oven Professionals**

About the Author
Ken Matesz first learned about masonry heaters in the early 1980s, built his first one in the early 1990s, and opened the Masonry Heater Store, LLC after the turn of the new century. Matesz's first solo heater project in 1994, a Finnish-style heater in his own home, gave his family heating energy independence. Now, with his new book, *Masonry Heaters*, he hopes to show many others how they can achieve the same freedom and a better standard of living using this simple but elegant way of heating. He lives in Swanton, Ohio.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alma Bulger:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be revise about what going on or information even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is certainly always change and move forward. Some of you maybe can update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know which one you should start with. This Masonry Heaters: Designing, Building, and Living with a Piece of the Sun is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Catherine Hudson:

Within this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become one of it? It is just simple method to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time very little but quite enough to get a look at some books. One of the books in the top collection in your reading list is definitely Masonry Heaters: Designing, Building, and Living with a Piece of the Sun. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in getting precious

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