

WINTER SWIMMING AT THE BRIGHTON BATHS

SESSION TIMES & DATES

Wednesday mornings 6.30 – 7.30am (with Grant Siedle)

Saturday mornings 8.30– 9.30am (with Matthew Paynter)

SESSION DISTANCES

Sessions will range from 400m – 2km depending on the temperature, the conditions and who may be leading the session. It also depends on YOU and YOUR commitment.



BRIGHTON BATHS
HEALTH CLUB

FITNESS LIFESTYLE WELLBEING

WINTER SWIMMING – RAIN OR SHINE.

The Brighton Baths Health Club, est 1881, has been the home to winter swimming for many years. This was partly due to the fact that the Middle Brighton Baths was the only sea baths open all year round. The swimming group was initially known as the “early morning swimmers” and over time this has grown to become what is now known as “The Brighton Icebergers.” We are a loose, very diverse group, without constitution or rules, except that of having a regular swim, all year round in all conditions and preferably without a wet suit.

Cold-water swimming can be a real tonic for people when they discover the benefits it holds. To the uninitiated it may seem like an extreme activity but once you have tried it a few times and discover for yourself the exhilaration, you will never look back. There are Iceberger clubs/movements all around the world and the benefits are now undisputed.

The **Brighton Baths invites YOU**, this season to experience this cold-water bliss. There will be regular group swims to encourage and support you and there is **NO ADDITIONAL CHARGE**, other than the usual entry costs. All you have to do is turn up, prepare yourself for whatever the Melbourne weather holds and put on a brave, positive and smiling face.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Anyone who is confident enough to swim at least 400m continuously can come to these sessions. You do not have to be a fast swimmer as it is about participation, not competition.

WHAT WILL I GET?

This is not a coached session, but you will have the **support** of feeling safe in a group and being around other more experienced cold-water swimmers. The support of others is not to be underestimated when it comes to getting into cold water on a grey, wet and windy Melbourne morning.

HOW FAR DO I HAVE TO SWIM?

You can swim **as far as you want to**. It all depends on how well you acclimatize to the cold and how comfortable and safe you feel in the cold water. At first you may start with just a lap in the Baths and slowly progress to the reef pole when you feel comfortable and are used to the water temperature.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I SWIM?

The more regularly you are in the cold water, the better your body will acclimatise and the more you will enjoy it. At least **twice a week** is ideal.

CAN I SWIM WITH A WETSUIT?

Yes. You can swim with a wetsuit but you are encouraged not to. Part of the experience is acclimatizing to the temperature and gaining the physiological and psychological benefits that come with the process. Embracing the cold is part of the experience.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET TOO COLD AND IS IT SAFE?

We do not expect or encourage anyone to simply hop into cold water for an extended period of time without gradually building up your tolerance to it. It may be that initially you only swim for a few minutes. This all depends on your own physiological make-up, and will to make it through winter. It also depends on whether you can swim consistently as the water temperature drops (this helps the acclimatization enormously).

It is safe provided you are **initially in good general health**, learn your limitations, swim with other people and warm up properly afterwards. That is why we have a very warm, eucalyptus scented steam room. After each swim you will use the steam room to restore your body's warmth and make sure you do not leave the Baths feeling cold.

We recommend wearing a neoprene hat to keep warmer

WHY BOTHER WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY GOOD POOLS THAT ARE HEATED?

Not often reported, swimming in chlorinated pools is associated with many risks. The skin takes in up to 60 % of **chemicals** you put on it which ends up in your blood stream. Chlorine can irritate the skin and cause rashes, burning itchy eyes, trigger or aggravate bronchial problems and have a bleaching effect on clothing and hair.

Natural sea water swimming is something that provides people with a sense of adventure, a feeling of accomplishment and immeasurable health benefits. The open water is never the same on two consecutive days and overcoming the elements is a big part of the challenge. Through this activity, you will no doubt meet some interesting people, learn more about your own self-imposed boundaries and improve both your mental and physical wellbeing.

SESSION LEADERS

Grant Siedle is a swimmer, swimming coach, kayaker and musician. He coaches at the baths and runs kayak tours. He is currently in training for an attempt on the English Channel in July 2012 through which he plans to raise \$200,000 for Autism Victoria.

Matthew Paynter is the Director of the Brighton Baths Health Club, has a love of open water and is passionate about the healthy benefits of positive lifestyle choices.