

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ***Aqua Ignis Bathhouse Opens in Blackheath***

### ***– A First for the Blue Mountains***

**Blackheath, NSW** – The Blue Mountains now has its first taste of modern bathing culture with the opening of **Aqua Ignis Bathhouse** in Blackheath, on Gundungurra and Dharug country.

A fusion of contemporary architecture, sensory immersion, and ancient wellness traditions, Aqua Ignis is set to redefine relaxation in one of Australia's most beloved destinations.

Perched in the heart of Blackheath village, this thoughtfully designed sanctuary offers **contrast wellness with a 38 degree 'Onsen' inspired magnesium pool, herbal infused steam room, state of the art hot rock sauna, invigorating cold plunge pools and serene Yin/Yang lounging areas** — all wrapped in a striking, design-led space that draws from the textures and tones of the natural Blue Mountains landscape.

"Until now, there hasn't been anything quite like this in the Blue Mountains," said **Taku Kjelgaard**, co-founder of Aqua Ignis. "We wanted to create something rooted in the joy and soul of traditional bathing culture — yet designed for the pace and pressure of modern life. This is a space to exhale, to be still, and to reconnect to the body and spirit."

Latin for *water and fire*, Aqua Ignis pays homage to the elemental forces behind traditional bathing rituals and also the two present energies of Yin and Yang that move within us all. This is a bold new addition to Australian wellness. Crafted to revitalise, renew and return us to balance, the space offers a tranquil counterpoint to the fast pace of everyday life.

Aqua Ignis is built sensitively into an old heritage building and shaped in collaboration with acclaimed designer **Siki Im**. The offering is a deeply considered, design-forward bathing sanctuary.

### **A Story of Soul, Stillness and Start-Up Vision**

In 2023, Lee and Taku, close friends and fathers, found themselves drawn to a shared vision. Taku, who was raised between the UK, Australia and Japan, holds deep memories of his childhood visits to his grandparents in Osaka — and their local neighbourhood bathhouse. "Those visits shaped me," he shares. "I remember the soft tatami, the wooden doors, the quiet rituals — it was a space where I felt a true sense of belonging."

**Lee**, a skilled carpenter, transitioned from the high-energy pub world to a life grounded in wellness and clean living. By embracing wellness practices like breathwork, meditation, and clean eating, Lee discovered a profound love for the restorative power of saunas.

Lee and Taku started building barrel saunas as a side project. Their friendship and shared passion sparked a bigger vision: to create a space that combined traditional Eastern bathing with holistic, modern wellness — here in the Blue Mountains they both called home.

Their dream took shape during a surf trip to the Northern Rivers of NSW, inspired by the likes of Kiva Spa and The Banya. Now, **Aqua Ignis** stands as a physical expression of that vision: an architectural and sensory experience grounded in craftsmanship, community and care.

## **Designed for Locals, Welcoming to All**

With its subtle luxury and slow-living philosophy, Aqua Ignis is already being embraced by locals and visitors alike. Just under two hours from Sydney, it offers a fresh reason to explore the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, beyond its stunning bush walks and lookouts.

Guests can choose between **self-guided 90-minute bathing sessions**, quiet “**Seijaku**” **silent sessions**, or explore the **Yin Flow** (gentle bathing) or **Yang Flow** (contrast therapy) circuits. Seasonal offers, locals’ memberships, and intimate wellness events will roll out over the coming months.

Visitors have been travelling to the Blue Mountains for well over 100 years, to experience the restorative qualities of its natural environment and climate, including as a traditional hydrotherapy destination.

Wellness tourism and experiences are emerging across NSW and Australia, with bathing culture experiencing a welcome resurgence in the Blue Mountains. Aqua Ignis Bathhouse gently meets the need for nurturing and restoration by providing a sublime healing space for locals and visitors alike.

## **Bookings are now open**

### **Opening Hours:**

Tuesday – Thursday: 10am – 8:30pm

Friday – Sunday: 8am – 8pm

“We created Aqua Ignis to give back to the place that shaped us,” say founders **Taku and Lee**.

“It’s a space of restoration, not performance. A place to breathe deeper, sit quieter, and reconnect — whether you’re a local or a traveller, a wellness regular or just starting out.”

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