

2. Swimming pools and baths, Global

Making a splash

The 1920s saw a lido building frenzy but many art deco pools fell foul to 1980s austerity. Recently, a recognition of their role as city stress-relievers has inspired a drive to restore them and build new ones. In the UK, fundraising and community action has revamped lidos from Reading to Penzance; in London the done-up London Fields Lido now sees some 200,000 visitors a year. Once threatened, pools are now being venerated as architectural treasures.

Lidos are also key to re-peopling a city's waterfront: Helsinki's Allas Sea Pool, a wooden structure abutting Market Square that opened in 2016, is one of the many new basins that have perched on seafronts across Nordic cities. Sørenga fjord pool in Norway – which opened in 2015 surrounded by grassy lawns and decks – has also been a hit with the public.

But pools also keep us fit. Seaside, walled-off baths can tame a crashing swell and provide inviting turquoise waters for laps. Despite having stunning beaches, Sydney has a plethora of outdoor swimming pools. From Andrew (Boy) Charlton Pool in Woolloomooloo Bay to the North Sydney Olympic Pool, these sites are a reliable spot for sporty types who don't want to dive into unpredictable waves. The city is also building on its stock with projects such as the Prince Alfred Park Pool, which features a structure with a green roof planted with native grasses.

Yet many lidos are much more than just places to launch into breaststroke. From Reykjavik's hot tubs to Budapest's Széchenyi thermal baths, these are places for the kind of pottering and conversation that only a long soak in warm water can encourage.



Ice ice baby: Bondi Icebergs Club was first built in 1929 and takes its name from the swimmers who brave the cold winter waters. To become a member, prospectives must compete three Sundays out of four for five years, even when the water temperature drops to single digits – now that's determination