

## Dipper, Ladle, Bailer — Qalutaq

---

MAQIWIGMI QALUTAT ATURTAAPET. – WE USE DIPPERS IN THE BANYA.

---



Photo: Wooden dipper from the Karluk One site.  
Koniag, Inc. Collection, AM193.

Enter an Alutiiq steam bath and you will find an assortment of tools for bathing. Adjacent to a wood-burning stove fashioned from a fifty-five-gallon oil drum are large metal tubs for storing, heating, and mixing water; tongs for loading the stove and tending the fire; and water dippers made by nailing a coffee can to a slender wooden pole. Archaeologists note that many of these tools have ancient equivalents. Alutiiq people carried hot rocks into the steam bath with specially carved wooden tongs or rock paddles and stored water for bathing in large bentwood boxes where it was retrieved with carved wooden dippers. Water dippers from Karluk One, an ancient village site, are large, finely made pieces, about the size of a small coffee can.

In addition to water dippers, Alutiiq ancestors used a variety of other spoons and scoops. A small spoon carved from bone or antler functioned as a gut scraper. Women used these implements to remove membranes from bear and sea mammal intestine as they processed the material to make clothing; rain gear especially. People also used simple wooden scoops to remove hot rocks from the fire for cooking and steam bathing and served food with large, elaborately decorated spoons made of mountain goat horn. These beautiful spoons had animal and bird carvings on the handle, and many were painted.