

spa business

THOMAS KLEIN

on Canyon Ranch's
move into senior living
and family resorts

SPA FORESIGHT™

Vegan spas, blue
light antidotes and
home wellness

SIX SENSES

launches spa circuit
across Bhutan

GENDER PAY GAP

Are spa wages
low because most
therapists are female?

HOT NUMBERS

Global spa
economy worth
US\$119bn

EXPLORER

DAN BUETTNER

TALKS BLUE ZONES & LONGEVITY



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Home sweet home

The Global Wellness Institute says the wellness real estate market is now worth US\$134bn and is forecast to grow to US\$180bn by 2022. This is opening up exciting opportunities for spa and wellness businesses to extend their consumer reach

What does it take to live a well life? For sure, we can go to a spa or to the gym – and grab a green smoothie on the way home – and these are important boosts to our wellbeing, but it's what we do every day that really underpins our vitality: self care is something we need to be mindful of all the time, not just on special occasions or when we can schedule it in.

Rather than being something we do in between the unhealthy stuff as a kind of antidote, a preventative lifestyle needs to be built into our existence, so we can make good choices effortlessly and consistently.

Because our homes are the heart of our world, in order to be well, we need to live in places set up for this purpose.

The market for home wellness is growing fast and the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) has done great work in analysing the trend with its research *Build Well To Live Well*, which shows wellness real estate as a US\$134bn a year market, embracing everything from wellness communities to facilities in single and multiple dwellings.

GWII says the sector is growing at six per cent a year and expects it to top US\$180bn by 2022, with 740 wellness communities built, on-site or planned around the world.

In recognition of this trend, I'm delighted to announce that we're launching a new global consumer magazine, called *Well Home*, which highlights the best of consumer wellness trends for both home and holiday. You can see our first edition at wellhomeglobal.com/digital.

The purpose of *Well Home* is clear – it's to share inspiration and knowledge. It's about empowerment.

We don't see home wellness competing with the industry, but being a validation and extension of it.

The launch of *Well Home* is a passion project from the team at *Spa Business* and we're love to invite you to partner with us to distribute the magazine to your customers.



Well Home magazine was launched at the Global Wellness Summit in Italy

“We're offering to publicise your business to wellness consumers around the world through our new consumer magazine, *Well Home*”

In exchange we're offering to publicise your business through the magazine and its website, so we can build a mutually supportive arrangement to champion wellness lifestyles to consumers all around the world.

We hope you'll join us on this exciting journey and go to wellhomeglobal.com/signup to both order your own personal copy of *Well Home* and to become a distribution and marketing partner of the new magazine.

Liz Terry, editorial director @elizterry

Contact Spa Business: +44 (0)1462 431385 theteam@spabusiness.com
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The key to living longer is reshaping our environment

Dan Buettner, Blue Zones



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There's no other place
in the world like this

Dietmar Mueller-Elmau,
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READER SERVICES

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Denise Adams +44 (0)1462 471930

CIRCULATION

Michael Emmerson +44 (0)1462 471932

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Liz Terry +44 (0)1462 431385

EDITOR

Katie Barnes +44 (0)1462 471925

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Jane Kitchen +44 (0)1462 471929

ASSISTANT PRODUCT EDITOR

Lauren Heath-Jones +44 (0)1462 471927

NEWSDESK

Tom Anstey +44 (0)1462 471916

Luke Cloherty +44 (0)1462 471915

Andrew Manns +44 (0)1462 471902

Tom Walker +44 (0)1462 471916

ADVERTISING TEAM

PUBLISHER/ADVERTISING SALES

Astrid Ros +44 (0)1462 471911

ADVERTISING SALES

Julie Badrick +44 (0)1462 471919

Jan Williams +44 (0)1462 471909

SPA RECRUITMENT & TRAINING SALES

Gurpreet Lidder +44 (0)1462 471914

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

Ed Gallagher +44 (0)1905 20198

WEB TEAM

SPABUSINESS.COM

Michael Paramore +44 (0)1462 471926

Tim Nash +44 (0)1462 471917

Dean Fox +44 (0)1462 471900

Emma Harris +44 (0)1462 471921

DESIGN

Andy Bundy +44 (0)1462 471924

FINANCE

Denise Adams +44 (0)1462 471930

CREDIT CONTROL

Rebekah Scott +44 (0)1462 733477

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THE SPA BUSINESS TEAM

For email, use contact's fullname@spabusiness.com



Editorial director
Liz Terry
+44 (0)1462 431385



Editor
Katie Barnes
+44 (0)1462 471925



Publisher
Astrid Ros
+44 (0)1462 471911



Contributing editor
Jane Kitchen
+44 (0)1462 471929



Assistant product editor
Lauren Heath-Jones
+44 (0)1462 471927



Recruitment
Gurpreet Lidder
+44 (0)1462 471914

CONTRIBUTORS



● Neena Dhillon

Neena Dhillon writes about spas, hotels and travel trends around the world for consumer and business titles. She's also the former managing editor of Great Hotels of the World's *Luxury Spa Collection* directory. Email: ndhillon@spabusiness.com



● Anne Dimon

Anne Dimon has been a travel writer and industry journalist for 20-plus years. She's the founder of online magazine traveltowellness.com and president of the Wellness Tourism Association (see p92). Email: adimon@traveltowellness.com



● Elly Earls

Elly Earls is a hospitality and travel journalist. This year she's travelling around Europe, Asia and the US, writing as she goes. She regularly writes for *BBC Travel* and *Hotel News Now*. Email: elly@ellyearls.com



● Kath Hudson

Kath Hudson frequently writes for *Spa Business* and other Leisure Media titles and has written widely on health and travel for consumer publications. Email: kathhudson@leisuremedia.com



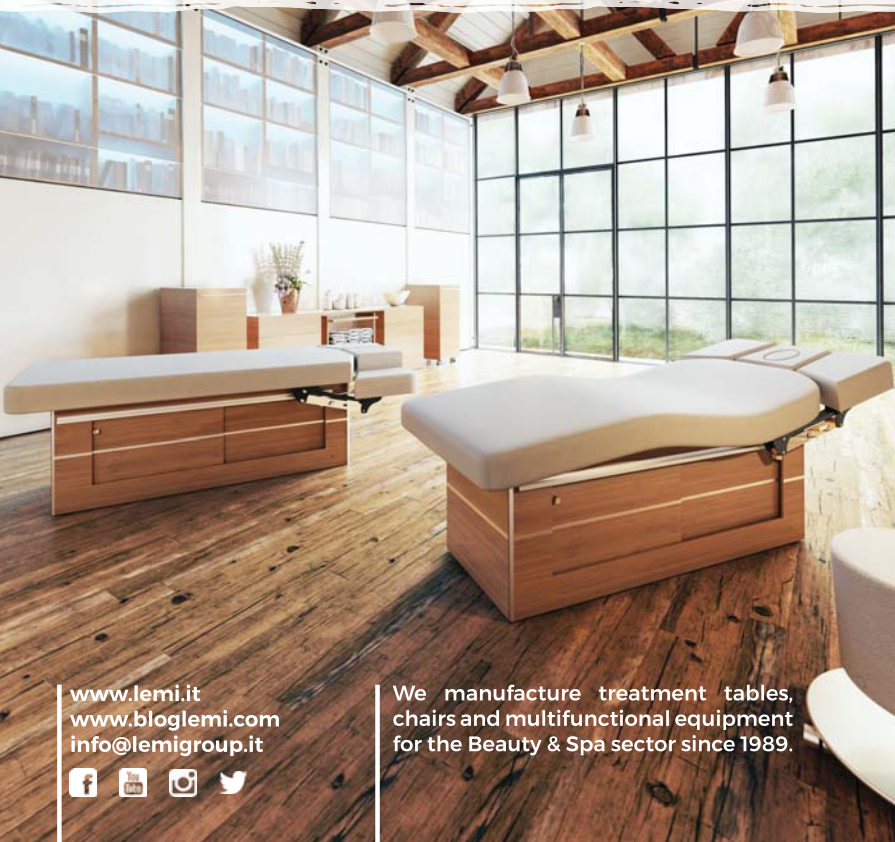
● Lisa Starr

Lisa Starr is a senior consultant at spa management training company Wynne Business and is a regular contributor to *Spa Business*. Email: lstarr@wynnebusiness.com

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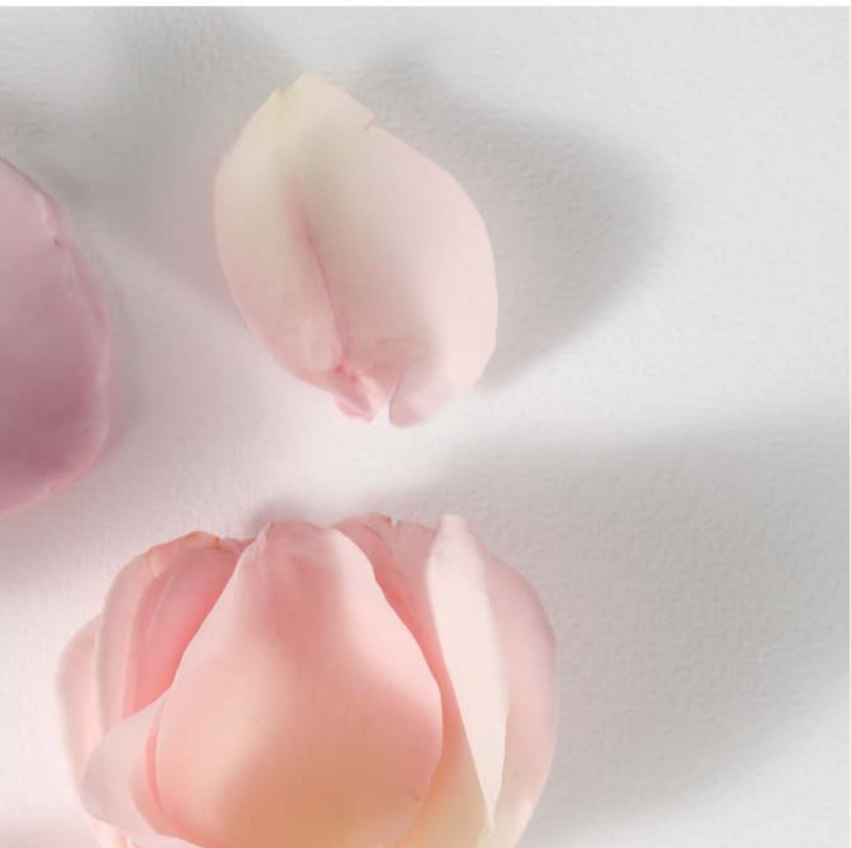


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Letters

Do you have a strong opinion, or disagree with somebody else's point of view on topics related to the spa industry? If so, *Spa Business* would love to hear from you.

Email your letters, thoughts and suggestions to theteam@spabusiness.com

'Well-washing' confusing developers and consumers

Ingo Schweder, managing director, Horwath HTL Health and Wellness

I was interested to see *Spa Business*' latest feature on the growth of wellness rooms in hotels last issue. Although brands from Marriott, to Hilton to InterContinental are increasingly incorporating elements of wellness in their hotels, an all-encompassing offering tends to be overlooked.

To place the health and wellbeing of wellness travellers at centre stage, today's hospitality operators are required to think one step ahead. When developing a wellness-centric property, hospitality experts have to take into account the choice of materials, colour and textures, use of biophilic design standards, incorporation of nature into

overall architecture, and creating social spaces that inspire connections and engagement.

To adhere to the core principles of wellness travel – to proactively maintain or improve personal health and wellness – results-driven, multi-day programmes are also necessary.

The handful of true wellness resorts which do exist, however, demonstrate that there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Some specialise in a single treatment modality, while others offer a multifaceted approach. Some offer general pampering packages, while others focus on serious, health-focused programmes.

In a new white paper – *Wellness-Themed vs Wellness*



Ingo Schweder

Hospitality – the Horwath HTL Health and Wellness team from Bangkok identifies true wellness resorts and compares them to wellness-themed hotels. It also clarifies key industry terms and sets standards for the wellness hospitality

industry because the reality is that merely highlighting healthy features or amenities is 'well-washing' and confuses developers and consumers alike.

● To download a full copy of the report, visit www.horwathhtl.com/publications/

Short cancer therapy courses are concerning

Amanda Winwood, owner, Made for Life Organics

It was great to read *Spa Business*' article on cancer awareness, as the industry needs to be more proactive in this area. The UK's *SpaBreaks*.com says at least 50 people a week are refused treatment.

We've provided treatments and products to people going through cancer since 2003 and insurance isn't an issue. Not 'badging' treatments as 'cancer-friendly' has also ensured that customers don't feel singled out.

In 2008, we launched the Made for Life Foundation which



Amanda Winwood

● **Benchmarks around education may help, but these would need to be regulated by an independent body** ●

offers Cancer Touch Therapy training and this is where we've faced the biggest barriers.

Colleges have a fear-induced, blanket 'no' policy which is challenging. But we're making in-roads and have started work with the London School of Beauty & Make Up and are launching at Clyde College soon.

Like Wellness for Cancer, our biggest concern is cheap, one day courses.

It took 18 months to research, develop, certify and accredit our three-day programme.

All students learn to adapt treatments for individuals, while having clarity around contraindications. They're also coached through medical jargon and get hands-on experience. All crucial elements which you simply cannot cover in just one day.

Benchmarks around education may help, but these would need to be regulated by an independent body. But it's a potential solution for those who want to make a positive change. ●

● www.madeforlife.org

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spa people



Less than 20 per cent of how long you live has to do with your genes – the rest is lifestyle

Dan Buettner founder, Blue Zones LLC

In 2000, based on a WHO report that showed that Okinawans have the longest-disease free life expectancy in the world, explorer Dan Buettner led an expedition to the Japanese island.

A year later, with funding from the NIA and on assignment from *National Geographic*, he set out to find other longevity hot spots, and soon met Dr Giovanni Pes, who had identified an area in Sardinia with extraordinary longevity, and had coined the term 'Blue Zone' to describe it. Dr Pes had hypothesised that he would find a genetic variant supporting longevity in Sardinia, but instead found that close family and social bonds, daily physical activity and a plant-based diet seemed to be key to living a long life.

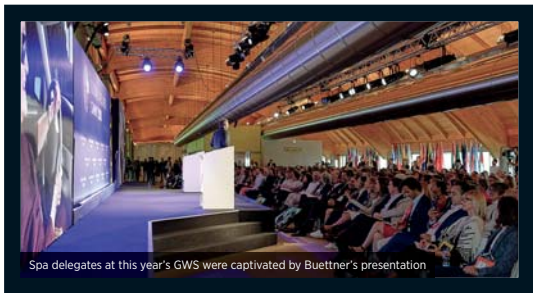


Buettner expanded the term Blue Zones into a concept – a method of identifying the world's longest-lived people and distilling their common denominators – and in addition to Okinawa, discovered three other areas where people live the longest: Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece; and the Seventh-Day Adventist community in Loma Linda, California.

With a team of medical researchers, anthropologists and demographers, Buettner spent eight years studying these Blue Zone populations in an attempt to further discover why they lived so much longer – at least 12 years more than the 71-year global average – and were so much happier.

His work has earned him celebrity status in the wellness world. He's had a *National Geographic* cover story and written four best-selling books. Buettner gets over 300 requests for speaking engagements every year and most recently addressed spa professionals at the Global Wellness Summit in Italy (see p78).

He feels hotels – and by extension spas – are the perfect places to incorporate the lessons of these Blue Zones, by offering some recommendations of the lifestyle characteristics that have produced the world's longest-lived people. By doing this, they could make a real difference. He also says spas should be measuring the



Spa delegates at this year's GWS were captivated by Buettner's presentation



Buettner has identified why people in Blue Zone areas live a much longer, happier life

life expectancy of their clients as an "uber-measure of wellbeing".

So, what are the lessons?

Buettner identified what he calls the 'Power 9' - shared lifestyle behaviours that keep people thriving to the age of 100. These include moderate regular physical activity in the form of natural movement, life purpose, moderate caloric intake, plant-heavy diets, stress reduction, moderate alcohol consumption, social engagement, a strong family life, and engagement in spirituality or religion.

On the back of this, Buettner founded the Blue Zone Projects, which takes lessons from Blue Zone regions and applies them to communities looking to improve the health and wellbeing of their residents. Blue Zone Project developers work with governments, employers, health insurance companies, schools, grocery stores, restaurants and engineers to help people naturally move more, eat wisely and connect with others.

Since 2010, the organisation has worked with 26 communities - from US states to cities - with impressive results. In Albert Lea, Minnesota, for instance, after five years, the smoking rate plummeted 17 per cent; the average BMI was down 15 per cent; stress was down 9 per cent; exercise was up 9 per cent; and life satisfaction was up 12 per cent.

Buettner has achieved these remarkable numbers by applying

Hotels and spas are the perfect places to incorporate the lessons of Blue Zones



things he's seen in the Blue Zones. In Okinawa, for example, women are born with a moai - a committed social network of friends who support each other throughout their lives. With loneliness shaving eight years off life expectancy, these connections are vital for longevity. In Buettner's Blue Zone Projects, he creates 'moais' for residents around shared interests.

It's these small things that help change a community, along with larger ones, like creating pedestrian-friendly roads and riverfront parks where people can walk and see friends, or working with restaurants to create smaller portion sizes and offer fruit - rather than fries - as the default side item.

The key, says Buettner, is to focus on long-term system changes. "When it comes to longevity, there's no pill, there's no supplement, there's no magic serum that's going to reverse, stop or slow ageing," he explains.

"The best shot is shifting the focus from trying to change people's behaviour to trying to change their environment."

In the US, Buettner reports that a staggering 84 per cent of all medical costs are explained by physical inactivity, food choices and portion size, tobacco and unmanaged stress - all preventable and changeable factors.

"For the first time in human history, people are not dying of overwork and hunger. In fact, over two-thirds of the world population will likely die from largely avoidable chronic disease brought on because we've engineered physical activity out of our lives, and we consume too many of the wrong kind of calories," says Buettner. "The key to improving world health - and living longer lives - is reshaping our environment to make the healthy choice the default for people everywhere." ●

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Our guests are getting both younger and older so with such a broad base, there are different demands

Khun Krip Rojanastien chair & CEO, Chiva-Som



As he talks through the ongoing renovation of award-winning wellness resort Chiva-Som, it's clear that chair and CEO Khun Krip Rojanastien, sees it as much more than a simple update.

Following in the footsteps of his late father Khun Boonchu Rojanastien, a distinguished banker and politician who founded Chiva-Som in Hua Hin, Thailand 23 years ago, he not only decided it was time to refresh the resort's overall look and feel, but also to ensure it keeps pace with global lifestyle and wellness trends well into the future.

The third phase of Chiva-Som's THB800m (US\$24.4m, €21m, £18.8m) overhaul, carried out by local architecture firm Designrealization Siam, involved extensive upgrades to the Thai Pavilion bedrooms, the resort's main restaurant The Emerald Room, public areas including the Library and the Orchid Lounge, the fitness facilities and the Niranalada Medi-Spa.

Once all four phases are complete in late 2019, Chiva-Som will be lighter, brighter and more

contemporary, while retaining many of the core themes of its original east-meets-west design concept, such as the use of natural, renewable materials including bamboo, local teak and silk.

Greenery will also be more integrated and the resort will be better set up for socialising and flexible work.

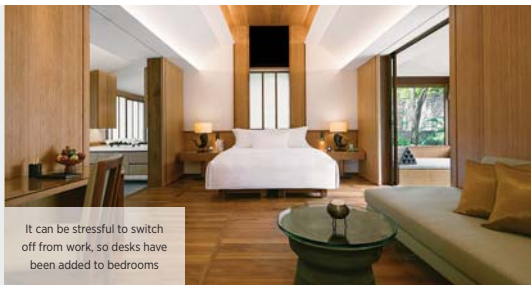
The Thai Pavilion bedrooms, some of which have grown from 36 to 100sq m now include a desk for guests who want to keep up-to-date with work while they're away from the office, for example.

"You may ask them to switch off but people don't actually switch off and to force them to do that increases stress," explains Rojanastien, who took the helm at Chiva-Som in 2007 after his father's death. "If you don't hinder them in any way they can focus on their wellness programmes and treatments. The work stations make us relevant to that lifestyle."

A small private meeting room has also been added. "Lots of our clients are business people and they might want to start partnerships or collaborations with interesting people they've met [at Chiva-Som]," Rojanastien says.

He was brought up to appreciate healthy living and is fascinated by the many facets of wellness. "If you're very chilled, you may approach it via nutrition or meditation, if you're a very active, energetic person, you might come at it from a fitness angle, or if you're not well, it's another way again."

Chiva-Som, which prides itself on inclusive wellness, offers options for every approach – from



It can be stressful to switch off from work, so desks have been added to bedrooms



New fitness options appeal to the resort's widening client base



meditation pavilions to dance studios. As part of the third phase of renovations, a range of modalities have been introduced from three colonic hydrotherapy treatments to a folate assessment for detox and metabolic health (see p39) and an LPG Cellu M6 Alliance cellulite treatment.

Even more fitness options have been added too in response to the resort's - and the wellness sector's - widening client base.

"Our guests are getting both younger and older so with such a broad base, there are different demands," Rojanastien says.

The expanded gym now includes a Re-functional Room for older guests or those who've been

through surgeries or traumas. "If they want to recover or get well, they need a different regime to, say, people in their 20s and 30s who want to maximise their performance," says Rojanastien, who's perhaps an exception to this rule - next year he's planning his fifth marathon at the age of 68.

New equipment will help with rehabilitation, leg mobility and balance, as well as preparing the body for more strenuous exercise.

Other additions include a separate stretching space, state-of-the-art cardio, functional and non-functional training equipment and a private training room.

This year's six-month refurb has seen the Niranlada Medi-Spa

Chiva-Som's design is more modern and it's better set up for socialising thanks to the US\$24.4m overhaul

evolve from its original clinical design to become warmer and more relaxing and the main spa's once-over is set to take place at the same time next year.

"We won't touch the flow," Rojanastien says. "But we will freshen up the design, maybe adapt the colour, improve air flow and bring more green into the rooms."

Meanwhile, an open kitchen at Chiva-Som's ocean-side restaurant Taste of Siam will create more engagement between diners and chefs. "Everything is focused on achieving wellness," stresses Rojanastien, adding that these four phases are far from the end of the story.

Underlying it all, a new technology infrastructure is being laid so that Chiva-Som's personalised approach to wellness can be seamlessly extended to its upcoming 50-acre Bintan project in Indonesia, which is currently in the design stage.

At the flagship Hua Hin resort, the longest a guest has ever stayed is nine months. With the new property set to offer serviced residences as well as resort and wellness facilities, it may be time for a new record. ●

The main spa's once-over is set to take place at the same time next year



“My goal is to infuse the entire guest experience with opportunities for transformative, innovative and extraordinary moments of wellbeing

Emlyn Brown vice president of wellbeing, Accor Luxury

Emlyn Brown has joined AccorHotels as vice president of wellbeing for its luxury portfolio and will work on spa and overall hotel wellness for brands such as Sofitel, Swissôtel, Fairmont and Raffles, among others. He will be based in Paris.

His role will cover everything from design and concepts to facilities and programming – all with a view to helping guests feel more energised and healthier than when they arrived. This is something the group refers to as ‘imperceptible wellness’. It includes working with Accor’s 250-plus spas globally, as well as having a hand in the design and function of guestrooms, the interaction of food and beverage with spa and fitness and the energy levels in public areas.

Brown joins the team at Accor in place of industry veteran Andrew Gibson, who was vice president of spa and wellness from 2014 to May this year, when he left to join the team at Larry Ellison’s Sensei.

Aldina Duarte Ramos and Lindsay Madden-Nadeau will report into him as directors of

wellbeing. Both women have been in the spa industry for a number of years and are well-respected throughout the sector. Duarte Ramos works on wellness for Sofitel, Swissôtel and Pullman, while Madden-Nadeau focuses on Fairmont, Raffles and MGallery.

Before this move, Brown previously spent three years at spa consultancy and management company Resense Spas, where he was managing director of Asia, based in Beijing and then global design director, based in Switzerland.

He also did a five-year stint with GOCO Hospitality as director of spa operations, based in Bangkok.

In welcoming him to the team, Accor’s senior vice president of luxury brands, Rick Harvey Lam, says: “Emlyn will direct our global strategy in the pivotal area of wellbeing, enhancing our luxury offering through transformative guest experiences. His experience, skill set and leadership traits also position him well for future success within the group.”

Brown says: “AccorHotels’ discerning, affluent clientele are well-travelled and increasingly



He'll work on wellness design, concepts, facilities and programming

motivated by the opportunity to maintain and even improve their approach to health and wellbeing during their journeys.

“My goal is to surpass the expectations of our guests and to infuse their entire experience with opportunities for transformative, innovative and extraordinary moments of wellbeing.”

AccorHotels acquired FRHI Hotels & Resorts in 2016 for a reported US\$2.7bn (£2.4bn, £2.1bn), making it one of the biggest hotel groups in the world. It has around 4,000 properties globally.

In a previous issue of *Spa Business*, we analysed what the merger and the move to overall wellness meant for group’s spa departments (see SB17/1 p76). ●

Respected spa figures Duarte Ramos (left) and Madden-Nadeau (right) will report directly into Brown



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6 Time is the enemy that has to be dealt with at a molecular level and therefore at the cellular level

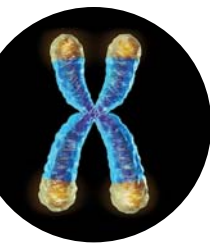
Elizabeth Parrish CEO, BioViva

Elizabeth Parrish is taking a drastic step in wellness by using herself as a guinea pig in an anti-ageing gene therapy trial. Not for aesthetic purposes, but to prevent biological ageing.

The 47-year-old from Seattle, USA, has injected herself with a solution that's believed to repair telomeres - the caps at ends of chromosomes which prevent cells from ageing or malfunctioning. She explains: "Telomeres shorten as we age. Shortened telomeres lead to senescent cells and destabilise our DNA which leads to inflammation and cancer."

What makes her move particularly controversial is that such an experiment had only been tested on mice until she started her trial in 2015. So what results has she seen so far? She says: "We've discovered that the telomeres in my white blood cells have lengthened by over 600 base pairs, which would be the equivalent to a reversal of around 20 years of telomere ageing." Parrish also reports a reduction in inflammation markers and improved metabolic markers.

The therapy is believed to repair telomeres, which are linked to biological ageing



Parrish is a guinea pig in an anti-ageing gene therapy trial



Spas need to learn about the latest medical technologies

"I feel fantastic, but how much of this is a placebo effect we don't know for sure at this point... importantly we've seen no negative effects so far."

Her son's diagnosis as a diabetic in 2013 drove Parrish to make such an unprecedented move. "Ageing is the master disease at the foundation of other conditions associated with ageing like Parkinsons etc and this is because ageing = cellular degradation due to time. Time is the enemy that has to be dealt with at a molecular level and therefore at a cellular level."

On the back of her experiment, she set up BioViva to research more therapies to delay, prevent and reverse the processes behind biological ageing. Its exclusive partner Integrated Health Systems has a network of clinics in South America, plus doctors in the USA, UK and India, to administer the therapies, which reportedly cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Patients so far include those with dementia, sarcopenia, cancer, heart disease and kidney disease.

Parrish also sees potential in the spa sector. "The spa and wellness industry has done an excellent job in changing environmental factors that affect wellbeing and also offers excellent treatments for extrinsic skin repair. But it needs to learn about the latest Nobel Prize-winning medical technologies. Gene therapy is natural and precise. It uses the bodies own genes to manufacture beneficial proteins and compounds that heal and rejuvenate from inside out."

While some might - and do - question Parrish's approach, she's confident that using herself as the first test subject was the right thing to do. She concludes: "I believed the company should take its own medicine first before moving onto patients. Many scientists in the past have made great discoveries through self-experimentation." ●

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The first three Six Senses lodges and spas have opened across the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, a country that's famously strict on development and tourism, with the remaining two set to debut in March 2019



Six Senses launches spa circuit across Bhutan

The collection of boutique lodges, with just over 80 rooms in total, is one of Asia's most anticipated openings and spa facilities at each site create a special wellbeing circuit.

Guests can travel to each location to experience a unique taste of wellness based on Bhutan's gross national happiness (GNH) index. The Buddhist country uses GNH, focusing on the wellness of its people, as a measure of development instead of gross national product.

The spas at each lodge focus on a different domain of GNH. Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, has the largest lodge with the most comprehensive spa which



Six Senses' wellness pioneer
Anna Bjurstam

takes its lead from the GNH strand of physical and mental health. It offers Six Senses' Integrative Wellness Screening to measure biomarkers and pay close attention to mental health. Breathwork and visualisation is also incorporated into each treatment.

In the low-lying valley of Punakha, the spa is based on the 'time use' domain and the balance between work and rest, which is where Six Senses sleep programme comes in. Treatments include medicinal Bhutanese aromatherapy, grounding massages and vedic eye therapy.

Education is the theme behind the spa at Paro, the last location in the circuit, where intentions for the future are written on Bhutanese flag prayers.

When they open, the spas in Gangtey and Bhumtang will focus on psychological wellbeing and culture.

Overall, standout therapies such as traditional Bhutanese hot stone baths, swedana sweat treatments, meditating in a pyramid prayer pavilion and having a massage overlooking ancient stone ruins, have been woven into the offering.

"We take guests on an educational and experiential journey of happiness," Anna Bjurstam, Six Senses' VP spa and wellness, tells *Spa Business*. "Bhutan has a special, magical energy – the spirit of the land, the culture and people, the beautiful nature and the preservation of the country's values – which leaves no one untouched. Our aim is to not only give guests an outside-in journey with all they can explore, but also an inside-out journey working on mindfulness, happiness and brain health."





Spas at each of the six lodges focus on a different strand of Bhutan's unique Gross National Happiness index



“
Bhutan has a special, magical energy which leaves no one untouched
”



Very few hotel companies are granted permission to operate in the country

Moulay Yacoub, a €20m (US\$22.9m, £17.6m) thermal bathing complex near Fez, Morocco, has opened its doors



The complex includes a new 100-bed spa hotel and a public bathing facility which attracts one million visitors a year

Moroccan financial institution backs €20m thermal bathing complex

The development has opened in phases over the past three years, with the final part – a 100-bed hotel and huge 4,000sq m thermal area devoted to health and wellbeing – launching in August. An upgrade of a separate public bathing facility, which attracts up to a million people a year, was completed in 2016.

The project has been backed by Sothermy, a subsidiary of the Moroccan financial institution CDG, which already manages a number of thermal facilities in the area. While Sothermy runs Moulay Yacoub's public baths, it turned to Vichy Spa International, from the famous French spa town of Vichy, to consult on the new hotel and spa and to operate it. Sothermy believes the partnership with Vichy Spa will boost its international profile.



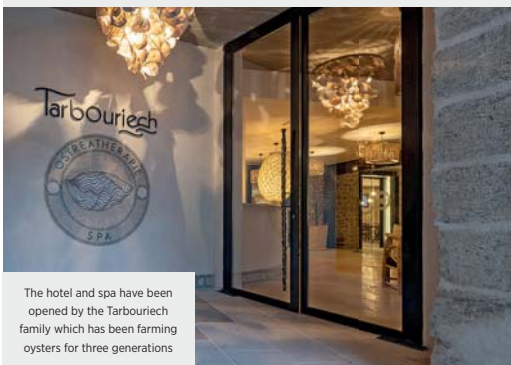
A huge 4,000sq m thermal area is included



At the heart of Vichy Thermalia Spa Hôtel is a large pool with thermal waters sourced from 1,500m underground. The waters are said to be beneficial for rheumatology and joint pain, particularly osteoarthritis and chronic tendonitis.

There are more than 50 treatment rooms in the new spa, including 33 cabins with baths, jet showers, Vichy showers, underwater showers and special thoracic and lumbar therapy areas. A further 18 cabins include areas for traditional massages, as well as Gharieni MLX Quartz beds, iyashi Domes and Vichy shower rooms. There's also a hammam and facials by Laboratoires Vichy as well as treatments from Moroccan skincare brand marocMaroc.

The MAD880 (US\$93, €81, £72) Trilogie Soins Signature Experience includes repetition of a hydromassage bath, hot vegan-mineral clay wrap with Vichy minerals and Vichy shower massage with two or four hands.



The hotel and spa have been opened by the Tarbouriech family which has been farming oysters for three generations

Oyster spa opens in France

A spa boasting treatments with specially developed ingredients and beauty products from oysters and the sea has opened on the Thau lagoon, south France

The Tarbouriech family has been farming oysters in the area for three generations and now offers Ostreathérapie® at its new Domaine Tarbouriech boutique hotel. Wraps, baths, scrubs, massages (using shells), facials and professional products – created in partnership with the University of Montpellier – are based on aragonite, marine collagen, marine silk and other antioxidants and amino acids to encourage a sense of balance and energy. Treatments from French marine brand Phytomer are also available.

A signature 130-minute ritual, priced at €215 (US\$249, £192), combines a facial with a pearl serum and salicornia mask and a massage where hot stones are replaced with oyster shells. There is, of course, a restaurant serving fresh oysters too. ●



Bringing balance and energy: treatments include marine collagen, silk, aragonite and other antioxidants



Creating Wellness by Design

We talk to Mohammed Ibrahim, CEO of The Wellness about creating wellness and leisure experiences that are sensual, sociable and sustainable

What's the background to The Wellness?

The Wellness was founded in 2007, with its first office in the heart of Dubai, working across the MEA region, Europe and globally. Our expertise is a combination of 30 years' international experience.

Our company has been expanding rapidly, with double-digit growth year on year, and today consists of 60 passionate employees.

We've now successfully furthered our expansion by opening our Asia office in Hong Kong which will cater for the ever-expanding Asian spa and wellness market.

What services do you offer?

We're a full-service wellness company with two main offerings: consultancy and project realisation.

We serve our clients by providing spa and pool conceptualisation, design development, construction and project management through to maintenance.

Why should spas and hotels work with The Wellness?

We pride ourselves on our out-of-the-box thinking for every project we deliver. Our workforce consists of highly skilled and passionate individuals. We've worked hard to foster a spirit of excellence, teamwork and a desire to elevate among all our employees.

We always deliver on time. That's because we're the only spa design and creation specialist offering a whole range of in-house services – from conceptualisation to architectural and technical design, through to project realisation.

Our clients know us as a team of professionals who are dynamic, yet refreshingly fun – with an approach to consultancy that's really quite different from our counterparts.

Can you share an example of this 'difference'?

We make sure what we propose is beyond a client's expectations. We certainly



● Mohammed Ibrahim, CEO, The Wellness

don't consider our business as "just a business about numbers and profits".

We give great attention to what our client needs and might need, and there must also be an exceptional experience and health benefits to their guests.

For instance, if the client asks for a spa, the basic package would be sauna and steam. However, at The Wellness, we would consider the user/guest, area size, location, theme, culture, etc.

We'd offer a customised design that creates a special connection to the guest so they can savour every second of their spa experience and want to return.

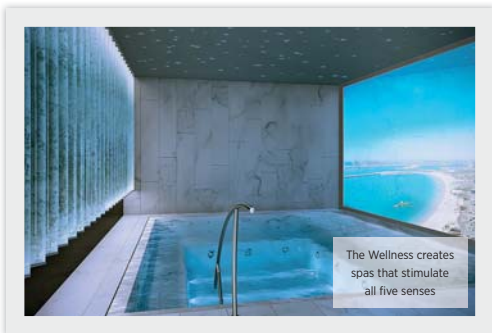
What excites you about the current spa market?

The wellness industry is now five per cent of global economic output, and one of the world's fastest-growing markets.

I'd say The Wellness is successfully part of it, yet always striving to provide more effective and innovative solutions.

Our design concepts focus on a combination of health, sustainability and architectural wellness.

These are the main sources of every experience in a spa, and very relevant to current wellness trends.





The Al Meilha resort's spa blends with its desert environment

We see health in terms of 'lifestyle and social interaction' for the spa guests; 'sustainability' by exerting our efforts to minimise environmental damage; and 'architecture' for comfortable, functional spa design, equipment and materials that affect the mental and physical health of the guest.

What do you see as the challenges for today's spa operators?

Global wellness tourism is now a 'thing' and rapidly growing. Several small (and even some high-end) hotels are adding spa amenities. These could be free of charge or offered at a very affordable cost.

However, the kind of hotels that we're talking about here are not focusing on spa business, such as practices, methods and benefits. Their focal point is to pull in more customers to make more profit for the hotel.

That is the biggest challenge for spa operators; or standalone spa facilities.

A spa must focus on providing quality service and benefits to guests in terms of physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects; not just profit.

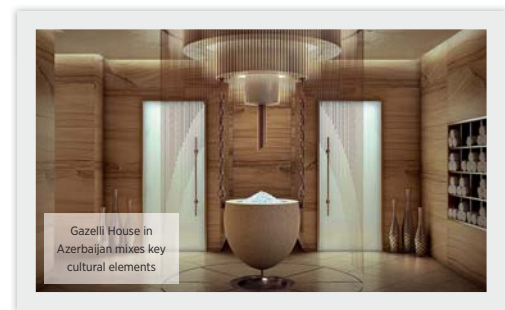
In this current digital age, we must somehow disconnect from our gadgets; and reconnect with ourselves and others physically and mentally.

A spa could be one of the best places to socialise and interact in person and at the same time improve one's health.

How do you define wellness?

Wellness – in layman's terms – is everyday health and fitness, a form of wellbeing through movement.

But for our clients, especially for spa and hotel operators, it's much more of



Gazelli House in Azerbaijan mixes key cultural elements

an experience for their guests. With The Wellness, we ensure that the concept layout, design and materials of the spa area are accessible to all related areas of the hotel.

It doesn't have to be complicated – we always favour simplicity – and it should always be sustainable.

What's next for The Wellness?

The year 2018 has been extremely busy for us. We just launched The Wellness Asia in Hong Kong, increased our in-house services, closed deals on more 5-star projects, and doubled our work force.

We want to expand our contribution of wellness concepts and architectural expertise in the Asia Pacific region.

As the wellbeing-conscious market continues to increase, we're extending our services to consumers who'd like private spa facilities installed in their own homes, or as part of a wellness community initiative.

We'll also focus on providing solutions for all areas of wellness throughout the property.

In Austria we're working on an innovative bio-pool system where the water treatment method consists entirely of plants. We'll be focusing much more on green solutions to maintain and improve the quality of the environment, which also benefits society.

We'll certainly be delivering more eco-friendly, energy-efficient projects like this in the future, as well as working with global chains and boutique brands.

thewellness

Website: www.thewellness.ae

Email: office@thewellness.ae

Phone: +971 4 362 9625

Instagram: [@thewellnessdubai](https://www.instagram.com/thewellnessdubai)

Twitter: [thewellnessdxb](https://twitter.com/thewellnessdxb)

Bill Bensley creating 13th century village with herbal spa

Architect Bill Bensley is working on a national cultural heritage site in Yên Tu Mountain – considered to be the cradle of Trúc Lâm Zen Buddhism in Vietnam – as part of the Vietnamese government's strategic development plan for the area.

Designed with attention to historical detail – Bensley has created the entire Yên Tu Village in 13th-century style and using 13th-century techniques – the village will include a museum, hotel and hostels. The 133-bedroom hotel will include a 2,240sq m (24,111sq ft) wellness centre, set to open in February 2019, which will specialise in Zen meditation, herbal baths and remedies, yoga, meditation and wellness counselling.

The wellness centre has also been designed by Bensley, who worked with spa consultants Dorian Landers and Florence Jaffre. It will include a swimming pool, oversized steamrooms and saunas built inside four large brick kilns.

"As Yên Tu does not have hot natural springs, our idea was to evolve the Japanese onsen concept to heating filtered water and simmering roots, herbs and flowers to make various types of hot baths," says Landers. "Those types of baths were



The spa will include various types of hot baths



“A significant site has a real significant story, so that makes my job all the easier”

Bill Bensley

used in ancient times for therapies and/or relaxation. We added herbal steamrooms and herbal scrubs to widen the spectrum.”

Dedicated meditation rooms are also located inside the wellness centre, and the large outdoor square pool is designed after the ancient 5th century monk bathing pools found in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka, which was a also great centre for Buddhism.

More: http://lei.sr?a=R5V6C_B

QC Terme opens 3,000sq m wellness centre in Chamonix

Italian wellness company QC Terme has opened its first location outside of Italy in the French ski town of Chamonix Mont Blanc.

The 3,000sq m (32,292sq ft) spa features more than 30 multi-sensory wellness practices, including sensory tubs, a Japanese bath, Kneipp path, Vichy forest showers, bio-saunas, steam baths, solariums, whirlpools, chromotherapy, hydromassage baths, salt and olfactory rooms, relaxation rooms as well as massage treatment rooms and a restaurant and bar.

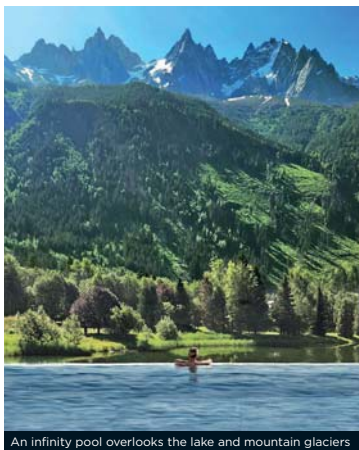
An infinity pool has been designed so that its reflection merges with the water of the adjacent Alpine lake, all with

views of the Bossons Glacier.

The thermal centre has been inspired by the ancient Roman baths of Caracalla, Diocletian and Trajan.

The new QC Terme Chamonix wellness centre also takes into account the beneficial power of mountain environments, drawing on the values of Alpine relaxation and the benefits of being surrounded by nature. An olfactory space includes fragrances designed to awaken energy, while the themed relaxation rooms include an antique sleigh bed.

QC Terme is also working on the upcoming spa in Governor's Island, New York. More: http://lei.sr?a=K6b9P_B



An infinity pool overlooks the lake and mountain glaciers



The project is slated to open in December 2020

Massive six-star thermal resort planned for Australia

A luxury hot springs spa hotel and retreat is planned for Victoria, Australia, with Six Senses, GOCO Hospitality and Banyan Tree Spa all vying for the project.

The AU\$100m (US\$72.2m, €63.8m, €55.6m) project – called Nunduk (which means ‘the bark of a tree’ in the native Gunai-Kurnai language) – will be located

on a 2,480-hectare sheep farm on the banks of the Gippsland Lakes.

Developer Seacombe West says it wants to create “the benchmark premier luxury resort and wellbeing spa facility in Australia”.

The project will have sustainability as a key focus, and will include a hot springs spa hotel and retreat powered

by renewable energy, with a focus on Aboriginal culture through art, songs and stories, along with Aboriginal medicinal experiences. It will include 36 bedrooms in the hotel and 45 villa units.

Thermal waters lie 1,300 metres below the surface of the location, which will provide a source for the thermal bathing pools. The Nunduk Spa Retreat will be purpose-built to the principles of regenerative design. It is the flagship design project with the Thrive Research Hub at the University of Melbourne, and is designed to be a six-star resort that is both off-grid and self-sufficient.

Self-sufficient renewable energy options will include solar panels, biodiesel generators and integrated water cycle management. The main hotel will include a green roof to allow local animals, such as kangaroos, to graze there.

More: http://lei.sr?a=a6t4e_B



Thermal water from 1,300m below will be used in the pools

Six Senses to operate hotel at Bangkok wellness community

Six Senses will operate a 60-bed hotel at The Forestias, a THB90bn (US\$2.8bn, €2.4bn, £2.1bn), 119-acre green development at Bangna in Bangkok being developed by Magnolia Quality Development Corporation Limited (MQDC).

The project is a mixed-use, multi-generational lifestyle project that will also incorporate a large forest ecosystem. Set to open in 2022, The Forestias will include residential housing, retail buildings, offices, a health centre, innovation centre, forest pavilion, community space, learning centre and an extensive natural ecosystem.

“Our company is committed to developing real estate projects to close the gap and bring sustainable happiness with a promise of ‘for all wellbeing,’” says Visit Malaisirirat, CEO of MQDC. “We want to offer the best, and we do that through eco-friendly design, modern innovation and technology, and enhanced space for all four generations – grandparents, parents, children, and great-grandchildren. The

“The whole community can spend time together and interact, creating a happy society”

Visit Malaisirirat



The mixed-use project includes a large forest ecosystem

whole community can spend time together and interact, creating a happy society.”

Foster + Partners has provided consultancy on the architectural master plan for The Forestias; Six Senses will provide hospitality and residential management, as

well as the hotel group’s first membership club in Asia; and the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health will conduct scientific research and data collection on the impact of the project’s landscape and design features on human health.

More: http://lei.sr?a=f5G6t_B

Professor Marc Cohen launches 'extreme bathing' retreats

Marc Cohen, professor at Australia's RMIT University and board member of the Global Wellness Summit, has launched a series of 'extreme' wellness retreats focusing on hot and cold water and breathing techniques.

The retreats – Extreme Bathing and Adventure Bathing – invite participants to explore the limits of hot and cold, breathing and breath retention, and exertion and relaxation at hot springs resorts, including Peninsula Hot Springs in Australia and Maruia Hot Springs in New Zealand.

The first retreat was held during World Wellness Weekend in September at Peninsula Hot Springs, and Cohen plans to bring the programming to Maruia Hot Springs in New Zealand's South Island – where he is a co-owner – this November.

"This retreat comes as the culmination of 30 years' experience studying, researching and teaching western and eastern medicine, herbal medicine, nutrition, organic food, yoga, meditation, breathwork, saunas, hot springs, bathing, martial arts, elite athletic performance, dance, the Wim Hof Method and attending and running festivals, conferences, retreats and treks at venues around the world," says Cohen.



The first retreat was held at Peninsula Hot Springs in Australia this September



“This retreat comes as the culmination of 30 years' experience”

Professor Marc Cohen

The retreat aims to help guests explore the edge of their comfort zones, as well as to discover lifestyle tweaks to overcome pain, inflammation and procrastination. Guests will work on focused breathing and relaxation in order to “access the deep inner-well of your being and hack into your biological operating system”, and will practice mastery over mind and body. The retreat has been designed to

build the resilience of guests and foster self-confidence, and it will feature forest bathing, sauna bathing, adventure bathing and bathing in Maruia's natural geothermal pools, as well as “fantastic feasts”.

Spa Business identified 'extreme bathing' as an industry trend to watch in the 2017/2018 *Spa Business Handbook* (see p17).

More: http://lei.sr?a=u5d5h_B

Turkish wellness project includes hotels, residences, thermal baths

Turkish architects Project Design Group have designed the KentPlus Yalova Wellness Spa Resort in Armutlu, Yalova, Turkey, which is due to open at the end of this year. The project includes three five-star thermal hotels with more than 1,300 bedrooms and more than 1,000 apartments for timeshare and full-time living.

A Physiotherapy Medical Centre will provide thermal water healing, together with detox, physiotherapy and rehabilitation services. The complex will also include open-air swimming pools, a spa centre, Turkish baths, sports centre, beauty centre and recreation rooms.



Thermal water pools have been designed to bring residents and guests together

Situated on around 33 hectares (82 acres) of hilly land with views to the sea, the resort has been created with a focus on nature and incorporates numerous green spaces throughout.

Thermal water resources are designed to bring residents and guests together, and have been embedded in different elevations and hidden in the land.

Historic Turkish baths provided inspiration for the social setup of the baths.

Other social areas appealing to different ages include a biological pond, an amphitheatre, playgrounds, restaurants and gardens.

A health centre, mosque, school and restaurants complete the overall offering.

More: http://lei.sr?a=c8h7r_B



Employees at Kamalaya Koh Samui pose with the signature 'W' hand symbol of W3

More than 400 properties celebrate World Wellness Weekend

World Wellness Weekend (W3) has reported exponential growth, with around 70 countries taking part in this year's event, which was held on 22-23 September.

Founded by Tip Touch International CEO Jean-Guy de Gabriac, W3 was created to help people to adopt healthier lifestyles, as well as foster positive relationships with their bodies and minds. The second edition of W3 was celebrated by more than 400 properties and operators, including Corinthia, GOCO Hospitality, Kamalaya Koh Samui, Langham Hotel's Chuan Spas, Marriott, Sandals and Shangri-La's Chi Spas.

As part of the celebrations, organisers staged thousands of free events to inspire

people to engage in physical activity and try new things. Programming included anti-gravity yoga in Mexico, Taekwondo in Islamabad, Ballroom Waltzing in Cairo, Reflexology and Wine in Acapulco, Chill at the Icehotel in Sweden, Flow with a Ballet Dancer on the Champs Elysées, France, the Augsburg World Championship in Germany, Sunrise Yoga in Malta, Qi Gong at Kamalaya, Goat Yoga at Serenbe, Club Mud at Glen Ivy Hot Springs, Gong Bath in the UK, and Sunrise Ritual with Pre-Hispanic dancers in Cancun.

"Instead of talking about scary statistics, we focus on bringing more joy to the world," says de Gabriac.

More: http://lei.sr?a=h3d5K_B



Organisers staged thousands of free wellness events for W3

DIARY DATES

24-27 January 2019

Les Thermiales

Carrousel du Louvre, Paris
Water and wellness show with a focus on thermal spas and thalassotherapy.
www.thermiales.com

29-31 January 2019

Spatex

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, UK
UK exhibition for the wet leisure sector, including pools and heat experience firms.
www.spatex.co.uk

10-11 February 2019

Professional Beauty GCC

The Meydan, Dubai
Brings together beauty, hair and spa brands in the Middle East.
www.professionalbeautygcc.com

13-15 February 2019

ForumPiscine

Bologna Fiera, Bologna, Italy
Three-day congress focussing on pool systems - from large public facilities to those in spas.
www.forumpiscine.it

24-25 February 2019

World Spa & Wellness Convention ExCeL, London

International spa figures convene for two days of talks and networking, along with an industry conference and the Professional Beauty trade show, which features the latest from spa and beauty product providers.
www.worldspawellness.com

12 March 2019

Women in Wellness

New York, NY
A one-day conference for women in the wellness industry, with speakers, breakout sessions and networking.
www.americanspawill.com

15-18 March 2019

Cosmoprof Worldwide

Bologna, Italy
One of the world's biggest beauty trade fairs, which attracts more than 250,000 visitors.
www.cosmoprof.com



Chinese spa owners and suppliers were recognised in the summit's annual awards ceremony

FINE CHINA

Findings from a new survey revealed at this year's SpaChina Summit indicate the current state of the Chinese spa market. Lisa Starr summarises the results

September saw almost 350 professionals convene in Sanya for the annual SpaChina Summit and this year an inaugural survey provided valuable insights into the state of the country's spa market.

Inspired by a national consumer survey by Meituan, China's equivalent of Groupon, which valued the Chinese beauty market at CNY660bn (US\$95.9bn, €82bn, £73bn), show organiser *SpaChina* magazine conducted its own survey on over 100 high-end spas.

Chinese spa-goers

Customers born in the 70s gravitate to health maintenance and traditional treatments like TCM and massage, while those born in the 80s prefer anti-ageing and body shaping, according to the spa owner survey respondents.

Spa-goers born in the 90s are most interested in newness, and will try everything – especially if it makes them look better in selfies! Yet they don't have much money to buy lots of treatments.

Survey results revealed that 89 per cent of hotel spa menus only target guests born in the 70s, reflecting a need for modernisation.



The Chinese spa market generates US\$3.3bn annually, reports Lisa Starr from the event

Ninety per cent of hotel spa guests are Chinese and tend to favour 'results' rather than relaxation. Overall, it's felt that as GDP grows, so do consumer expectations of the spa facility and experience.

State of the market

China's spa market generates CNY23bn (US\$3.3bn, €2.9bn, £2.5bn), the survey shows – only 3.5 per cent of the reported national beauty market.

Sixty-five per cent of spa owners say business is the same, 21 per cent say growing, and 14 per cent say business down. It's also noted that while 39 per cent of spas are newly opened, the business failure rate is high with just over 1/3 of spas (34 per cent) closing.

In China, hotel spas are seen as clean, safe and professional, but not innovative – many offer the same products, equipment and concepts with little differentiation, much like in western markets. Day spas are seen as being more unique. They frequently upgrade equipment and treatments, are not as constrained by brand guidelines, and owners are typically more involved.

Lack of innovation was flagged up as one of the major challenges Chinese spa owners face. Rising staff costs and recruiting difficulty is another big issue, as is lower than expected revenues.

Additional obstacles include modernisation of business software and hardware for spas, and the integration of mobile pay platforms, as most Chinese consumers pay via the WeChat app.

It is indeed interesting to see how quickly the Chinese spa market is mirroring the professional- and consumer-facing challenges we're seeing globally. ●



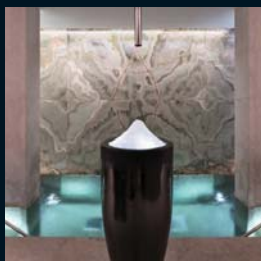
Lisa Starr is a global spa consultant and trainer. Email: lstarr@wynnebusiness.com



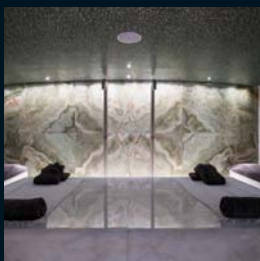
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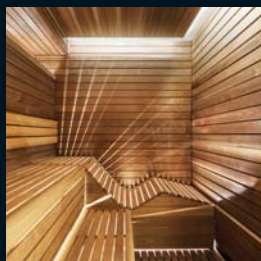
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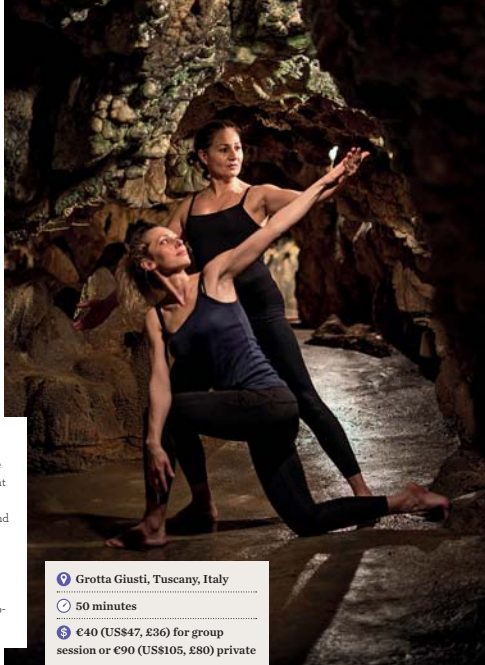
On the menu

Spa Business reveals the tastiest wellbeing treatments, programmes and retreats that spas and wellness resorts are serving up

Yoga in a millennial thermal cave

Grotta Giusti, a historic spa retreat in Tuscany, Italy (see SB18/1 p72), is launching a yoga experience in its ancient cave which is heated by a subterranean hot spring lake. Practising yoga in the natural warmth of the underground labyrinth amplifies sensations, aids concentration and raises body temperature while guests benefit from the therapeutic effects of the cave's thermal vapours.

The waters, rich in salt, sulphate and alkaline earth, are used to treat respiratory, circulatory, osteomuscular, nervous system and skin complaints.



Grotta Giusti, Tuscany, Italy
50 minutes
€40 (US\$47, £36) for group session or €90 (US\$105, £80) private



Neil Parikh

Napping oasis opens in New York City

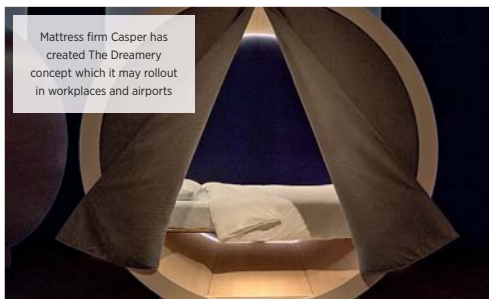
Mattress innovator Casper has opened The Dreamery, an on-demand napping facility in New York City's SoHo neighbourhood.

Customers can book 45-minute sessions of downtime in one of nine private, cosy nooks – outfitted with Casper's mattresses, pillows and sheets. They can also borrow constellation-print pyjamas from Sleepy Jones, and freshen-up afterwards with a face wash from Sunday Riley.

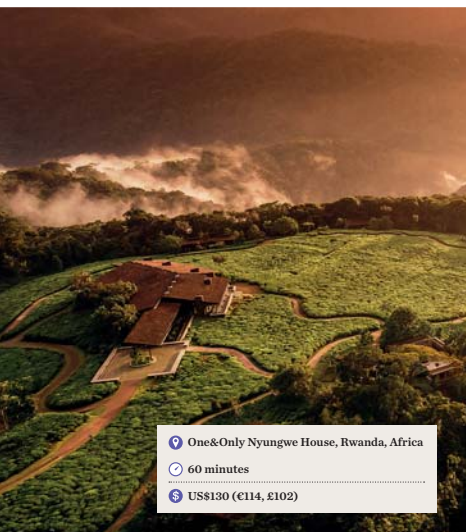
The Dreamery is designed with a starlit entryway and 'dream-enticing' mural. It will also be available to the community for events focused on sleep and wellness.

"The Dreamery is about making sleep and rest a part of our regular wellness routines – similar to how many people prioritise a workout class," says Neil Parikh, co-founder and COO at Casper. "The concept enables us to pilot new ways of bringing better sleep to more people and more places – whether that's here, the workplace, airports or beyond."

The Dreamery, New York City, USA
45 minutes
US\$25 (€22, £19)



Mattress firm Casper has created The Dreamery concept which it may rollout in workplaces and airports



📍 One&Only Nyungwe House, Rwanda, Africa

🕒 60 minutes

💰 US\$130 (€114, £102)



Holistic African therapies at One&Only Nyungwe House

The One&Only Nyungwe House in Rwanda opened in October with a spa embracing nature and local traditions.

The signature Intoga Amasatchi treatment is a 60-minute, deep tissue massage using hands and different sized sticks to stretch tight muscles and relieve toxic overload from daily stress. Traditionally the sticks, recognised as a valuable 'energy of the earth' tool, represented wisdom and direction to healers.

Additional treatments from organic South African brand Africology include an intuitive herbal oil massage designed to boost energy.

The 23-room resort is set in a tea plantation on the edge of the ancient Nyungwe rainforest and activities such as treehouse yoga and jungle bootcamp workouts take advantage of the location, alongside exciting experiences such as chimpanzee trekking, a canopy treetop walk and jungle stargazing.

Wellness programming for senior living

Innovative wellness programmes such as equine and horticultural therapy are being created for Watermark Retirement Communities across the USA.

The company has retained Under a Tree Health and Wellness Consulting to develop the offerings which will be trialled at its newest community, The Hacienda at the River in Arizona, before



Amy McDonald

rolling them out across its 52 existing sites and 10 pipeline projects as and when they open.

Under a Tree owner and CEO Amy McDonald says: "Watermark is transforming ageing, taking what we know of the best destination spas and their approach to caring for guests and integrating it into each community."

McDonald will work on the concept, design and pre-opening for each new Watermark property as the company's hospitality wellness expert.

📍 Watermark Retirement Communities, across the USA



Equine therapy will be offered at 50-plus retirement communities

Chiva-Som adds metabolic health assessment

Thai destination spa Chiva-Som has revealed a range of treatments ahead of its November reopening (see p18), including a comprehensive assessment for metabolic health and detox.

The assessment hones in on cellular levels of folate - a vitamin which is essential for metabolism and detoxification, as well as a promoting a healthy nervous system.

It also tests for an MTHFR gene mutation which reduces a person's ability to convert folate or folic acid. It's estimated that up to half the population may have this

common gene mutation which can ultimately impact how the body metabolises food, balances hormones and eliminates toxins.

The tests, carried out in collaboration with a local hospital, will be used to provide insights into treatment recommendations, diet and potentially a prescription of folic acid (a synthetic form of folate).

📍 Chiva-Som, Thailand

💰 THB3,000, (US\$90, €79, £71)



Tests focus on levels of folate and how the vitamin is absorbed

Niyama Private
Islands, the Maldives

45 minutes-1 hour

Price start at
US\$250 (€214, £190)

IV therapy launching at Niyama Private Islands

Drift Spa at Niyama Private Islands in the Maldives has teamed up with Beverly Hills IV Therapy to offer nine wellbeing-focused formulations.

Under the supervision of medical staff, nutrients, vitamins and antioxidants - designed to help with anything from jet lag, hangovers and anti-ageing to boosting the immunity - will be delivered into the bloodstream. Pricing starts at US\$250 (€214, £190) for the Happy Hydration treatment with its revitalising blend of IV fluids and electrolytes.

"After 16 hours of travelling to paradise, the last thing you want is to lose days of enjoyment because you're too exhausted," says Beverly Hills IV Therapy CEO Deborah Alessi, who's a frequent guest at the resort. "Guests can spend an hour at the spa getting a manicure and IV at the start of their stay and get all of the vitamins they need to strengthen the immune system, clear toxins and hydrate. It's the perfect jump start to any vacation."



The heated tenshoh seki bed is made of lava rock

Mandarin Oriental embraces Japanese hot stone therapy

A new 3-hour Eastern Experience journey at Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong is based on the Japanese hot stone practice of ganbanyoku.

During their spa journey, guests lay on a tenshoh seki bed which is made of natural lava rock heated to just over 44°C. The

rock is said to radiate far-infrared rays and emits negative ions to rebalance the body's equilibrium.

The treatment continues with a soothing sakura (cherry blossom) or yazu (citrus fruit)-infused anti-oxidant shower, azuki bean scrub and Chinese meridian massage.

Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, China

3 hours

HK\$7,560 (US\$967, €829, £739) Fri-Sun;
HK\$6,750 (US\$864, €740, £659) Mon-Thur

Extreme fitness at Anantara Al Jabal Akhdar

Oman's Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar is pushing the mental and physical boundaries of its guests by taking on the very mountain it sits on. Perched on the cliff top overlooking the Al Hajar Mountain Range, the hotel offers an exhilarating approach to health with activities like local high altitude treks, traversing a 20m-long steel cable route at the side of the mountain and even abseiling down it.

A Two-Day Adventure & Fitness package incorporates mountain activities plus a Thai massage, sauna session and wellness breakfast.

Anantara Al Jabal Akhdar, Oman

2 days

£378++ (US\$498, €424)

A close-up, artistic photograph of a person's back. The skin is a warm, golden-brown color. Several dark, greenish-black seaweed strips are draped over the upper back and shoulder blades. The lighting is soft and directional, creating a sense of depth and texture.

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► SPA PROGRAMMES

Mythology treatments at Grand Hyatt Bogota

Treatments at Zaitania Spa at the newly-opened Grand Hyatt in Bogota, Colombia have been influenced by the mythology of the local Muisca people.

Zaitania was the era in which the world was created, when the god Chibchacum breathed life into a quinoa seed and another of corn, creating Sua, the sun god, and Chie, the mood goddess.

Sua and Chie have inspired a morning and evening package. The longer 4-hour Sua treatment begins with a drink of chia and lemon

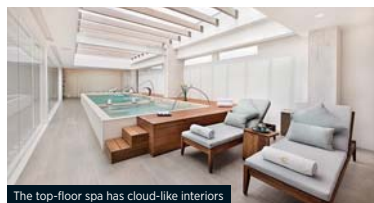
Grand Hyatt Bogota, Colombia

4 hours

COP550,000
(US\$183 (£156, £139))

water, followed by reflexology, a Turkish bath session and a water circuit accompanied by a therapist. Guests are then exfoliated with oil, sea salt and macerated quinoa before having a massage and mini facial and finishing up with a light lunch.

Product houses include native line Loto del Sur and global brands Sothys and Sisley.



The top-floor spa has cloud-like interiors

Spa inspired by map making methods

Spa consultant Bonnie Baker has created a spa in Mexico based on the Cartesian Method for map making - to "invite guests to delve within themselves, using a personal compass to create their own map to wellness".

The Northern Alignment Ritual, at the boutique Hotel Cartesiano, for example, is designed to help guests find their own 'magnetic north' by focusing on expanding the breath, releasing physical and emotional blockages and connecting with the subconscious mind. It begins with a foot cleanse and energetic alignment, followed by a massage with rhythmic movements to stimulate acupressure points and bring inner awareness and a feeling of expansion in the body.



Bonnie Baker

The idea is that all treatments allow guests to embark on their inner territory and to understand the connection between mind, body and emotions. "We tend

to get a little bit stuck in our approach to life and forget about the infinite possibilities in front of us," Baker says. "This is a place where people can not only connect with where they are, but see the possibilities in front of them - honouring the past and moving forward to the future".

Hotel Cartesiano, Puebla, Mexico

2 hours

MXN2,500
(US\$132, £113, £101)

Four Seasons Seychelles, Africa

60 minutes or
90 minutes

€180 (US\$212,
£161) or €235 (US\$276,
£210) plus taxes

Hypnotherapy coming to Four Seasons Seychelles

Four Seasons Seychelles is to offer hypnotherapy to help with anything from stress reduction, sleep issues and happiness through to relationships, phobias and weight-loss, as part of its new Visiting Masters programme. Hypnosis taps into the subconscious, allowing harmful, negative beliefs and behaviour patterns to be released and new, positive beneficial ones to be implanted.

The sessions will be led by Tim Stoneman who works with numerous high-end spa resorts across Asia. Stoneman also specialises in energetic emotional pain release and reiki healing.

Sandie Johanessen, Four Seasons senior spa director Middle East & Africa, says: "We are providing our guests with an alternative way to step back temporarily. Hypnotherapy allows introspection and aims to break bad habits and provide a better coping system for stress management. It helps us find balance in the modern world - where smartphones are pinged every five minutes - and this is something that's good for our health and our relationships."



Sessions will be led by Tim Stoneman



Sandie Johanessen

Groupo Vidanta collaborates with Deepak Chopra

Integrative medicine specialist Deepak Chopra is to keynote at a conference and VIP dinner for Mexico's Vidanta Nuevo Vallarta in November. He will speak about The Future of Wellbeing.

Chopra will be one of a number of speakers at the inaugural 4-day Vidanta Wellness Retreat which includes workshops, lectures and classes on everything from vegan cooking and healthy nutrition to sunrise and aerial yoga, paddle boarding and functional training camps. Spa-inspired cuisine, guided meditation and traditional temazcal healing experiences are also on offer.



The weekend retreat is available to both resort guests and members of the public via three packages. Access to just the Chopra conference and dinner costs MXN7,122 (US\$378, €322, £287). ●

Vidanta Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico

4.5 hours

(US\$378, €322, £287)



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THOMAS KLEIN

How is Canyon Ranch planning to turn an iconic wellness brand into a scalable hospitality business? COO and president Thomas Klein talks to Katie Barnes about the transition, brand leveraging and rollouts

Having spent 35 years in luxury hospitality working for the likes of Ritz-Carlton and Fairmont Raffles, Thomas Klein was “looking for the next chapter”. He says: “I loved what I did day in day out, but I wanted to find my legacy.”

So he and his wife Bahr, empty nesters from San Francisco, brought an RV with a view to taking a year out to travel across America and Canada with their four chihuahuas – and to hopefully get some inspiration on what to do next. But they never made it. Just before they took off, Klein got a call from a headhunter to meet with John Goff, the owner of the iconic destination spa Canyon Ranch.

“I knew John because he owned one of our Fairmont hotels,” recalls Klein. “I knew he was committed to the wellness space and growth and I knew Mel and Enid [Zuckerman, the founders of Canyon Ranch] were going to retire. What a great opportunity.”

He had found his legacy. “I fell in love with Mel and Enid’s mission of ‘living younger longer,’” he says. “When you can change people’s lives for the better, that’s pretty cool. So I sold the RV, kept my wife and chihuahuas, and here I am two-and-a-half years later.”

Original US destination spa

Husband-and-wife team Melvin and Enid Zuckerman launched Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Arizona in 1979. It’s one of the original destination spa resorts in the US and the company has built up a reputation for transformative wellness with its combination of good nutrition, fitness and stress management and up-to-the-minute preventative healthcare.

Since then, the company has opened a sister resort in Lenox, Massachusetts and operates numerous brand extensions including Canyon Ranch spa + fitness at The Venetian and The Palazzo hotels in Las Vegas and 22 At Sea facilities on cruise ships. ▶

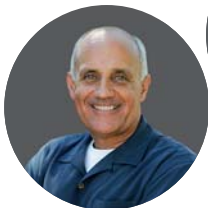


Canyon Ranch opened in 1979 and is one of the original destination spas in the US



It offers a mix of good nutrition, fitness, stress management and preventative healthcare





Dr Carmona, US 17th surgeon general heads up health innovation (left); new CEO Susan Docherty (right)

When you can change people's lives for the better, that's pretty cool

► It's admittedly experienced some bumps along the way. In 2008 the seminal spa real estate concept Canyon Ranch Living in Florida fell victim to the global economic downturn (see SB11/1 p30). While its first international property in Kaplankaya, Turkey, which launched in July 2016, never fully recovered from the impact of an attempted coup d'état just two weeks after opening and Six Senses took over management of the site in May 2017.

Yet the brand remains at the forefront of the now US\$4.2tn global wellness space. Its comprehensive, professional approach includes board-certified physicians – US 17th surgeon general Dr Richard Carmona is its chief of health innovation – registered dietitians, exercise physiologists, licensed therapists and an array of other skilled staff.

After nearly 40 years at the helm of Canyon Ranch, the Zuckermans announced their retirement in 2017 when Melvin turned 89. Goff, who was already a majority shareholder, took full ownership under his company Crescent Real Estate.

The brand baton was passed onto CEO Susan Docherty who the Zuckermans appointed in 2015. Previously, Docherty spent three decades at General Motors and since joining Canyon Ranch she has added new management to her team including Klein

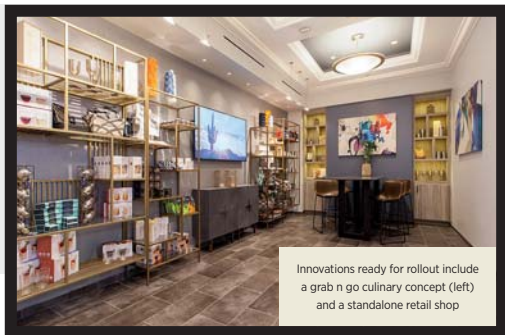
who came on board as COO in April 2016 and then took on the role of president just over a year ago.

Huge paradigm shift

As COO and president, Klein's role is "all about strategy and growth" and his first unenviable task was to get the company ready for "a huge paradigm shift" in terms of future development. "It's been a family-run business that's grown organically for almost four decades so it's been a challenge breaking down a 37-year-old company and setting it out," he admits. "We had to solidify our foundation from an operational standpoint to get it ready for growth in years to come."

Technology and infrastructure were some of the first things he addressed. "We didn't even have a website three years ago, no dynamic pricing, we used to have a plastic sheet for rate cards and no menu engineering – all good business fundamentals that you need for scalable growth."

Notable changes include narrowing down guest programmes from over 600 to about 400. "It's still a lot," says Klein. "But everybody's an individual so you have to be able to tailor what that programme might look like for one person – and that's part of our core."



Innovations ready for rollout include a grab n go culinary concept (left) and a standalone retail shop



The plan is to attract younger guests with family resorts and older ones with a senior living tie up

Thomas Klein personal file

Film: *The Great Escape*

Book: I've just finished *Essentialism* by Greg McKeown

Place: The Great Barrier Reef and anywhere when I'm with my wife Bahr
Season: Love the spring

Spa treatment: 90 to 100-minute deep tissue massage with a great therapist
Advice: Hotelier Horst Schulze taught me to "Be humble and kind and respect your roots - elegance without warmth is simply arrogance" and "Don't worry about the things you cannot control"

Most admire: People who don't put their interests in front of others - I've been blessed to meet many of these people, including Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama

There have been additions too, such as expensive services like Nutrigenetics for Personalized Weight Loss for US\$727 (£635, £558) and a US\$2,950 (£2,578, £2,265) All-Night Sleep Study. It's also been criticised for the introduction of CR Aesthetics, including botox treatments, from its At Sea division. Klein responds: "As a trusted sanctuary, Canyon Ranch is constantly evolving to bring guests a comprehensive wellness experience. We want to provide more ways for our guests to feel like their best selves. Responding to frequent guest requests, CR Aesthetics aligns with this."

Most significantly, Klein and Docherty have surrounded themselves with the "right people" to facilitate growth, bringing in 15-20 different staff at senior management level from general managers to global directors of food and beverage, retail and merchandising, communications and more.

"It was difficult, because some people had been there for years. Great people. But we weren't equipped for growth and we needed to do that," says Klein. "Once the industry saw Canyon Ranch was growing, we'd get 80 to 100 applicants for leadership roles which is a wonderful position to be in. And we looked not only at who's good for today, but who's good for the future and now we're ready for growth and it's an exciting future for us."

New audiences

Happy that Canyon Ranch is now set up from an infrastructure and people standpoint, Klein's focus is on the various vertical businesses the company is planning on going into. And there's a lot!

Innovations ready for rollout include CR CREĀT - a standalone 'grab and go' culinary concept based on the company's healthy food policy - which launched in Las Vegas in March, plus the development of a nutritious flight menu for customers on long-haul Singapore Airlines' routes.

It's also unveiled a standalone retail shop concept selling everything from skin and haircare products, to teas and fitness apparel. Voya, Red Flower, Naturopathica, Shankara, Luzern, Dr Dennis Gross and Canyon Ranch's own in-house products are among the brands on offer.

Over the years, Canyon Ranch has earned a loyal customer base (repeat business in Tucson sits at 60 per cent), largely in the 45 to 60 bracket. But now the aim is to capture new audiences - both young and old. "We want to get people early and take them through life with personalised wellbeing," says Klein. "It's a fantastic opportunity."

With this in mind, Klein outlines a plan to venture into the senior living space. "If you look at baby boomers, people my age, 20 per cent of the US

► population will be 65 or older by 2030. How do you create a lifestyle in an environment that you've been accustomed to versus a nursing home?

"We're working very closely with some partners to provide the wellness experience in those environments. We're currently refining with our partners how we're going to co-brand this experience as we won't operate retirement communities." At the other end of the spectrum, Klein says Canyon Ranch is "aggressively looking to acquire properties in Florida and northern California" with a view to launching family-friendly Canyon Ranch resorts to target younger audiences and the multi generation market.

"I grew up with chips and coke and my grandkids are eating bags of carrots and fruit, so there is a demand and many of our guests ask 'are you ever going to do family resorts?'," Klein says. "They won't be as immersive as those in Tucson and Lenox, with the depth of medical skill, but we'll look to make them fun and affordable with family spas and child-friendly wellness, nutrition, activity and exercise."

Canyon Ranch is looking for properties with 150 to 200 guestrooms and south-east and north-west America are pinpointed as key markets for national

We'll never veer
away from the
vision of living
younger longer

as well as international guests, such as those who are travelling from Europe and Australia.

And while Klein is impatient to get the ball rolling, he's adamant they're not just going to "put the flag up". He adds: "It has to be done right. Otherwise there's a real danger of diluting the brand".

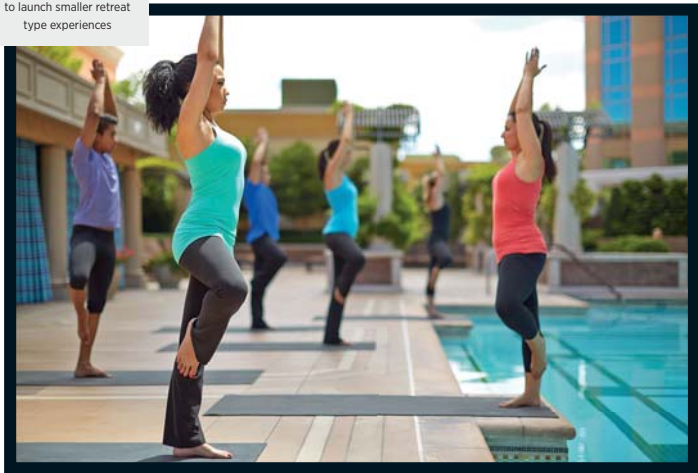
Revisiting concepts

More imminent than the senior living and family resorts, is a US\$25m (£21.8m, £19.2m) renovation of the original Tucson site which started in mid October.

In addition, in the next six months, it's looking to launch smaller retreat type experiences to keep in touch with customers when they're not at flagship sites. "They're afraid they'll default back to bad habits and want accountability," explains Klein.

As if this isn't enough, Klein also announces that Canyon Ranch will be revisiting its Living concept with 120 to 150 guestrooms, a residential condominium component and up to 30,000sq ft of wellness space. "Miami was a good model for us, real estate had a premium of 25-30 per cent which was quite amazing and we'll definitely do that

In the next six months, Canyon Ranch is looking to launch smaller retreat type experiences





Global expansion is still an option and propositions in Spain, Italy and France are being discussed

again. Location will, again, be a challenge and we're looking at new builds rather than taking an asset and rebranding it, so that will take a little longer."

Neither is he ruling out international expansion. "There were a culmination of issues in Turkey, geopolitical being one of them and it was too early for us. But there are some terrific opportunities. We'd love to be in Europe, whether that's in Spain, France or Italy and we'll start to evaluate propositions we've had.

"We will be a global company at some point. But you can't spread yourself too thin, which is why we're just focusing on North America at the moment."

Preserving the core

With so many plans for expansion in the pipeline, how can the new team behind Canyon Ranch be sure they won't lose sight of the Zuckerman's legacy?

"We'll never veer away from the vision of living younger longer," states Klein, adding that both himself and Docherty are very cognisant of preserving that mission. "We have a week-long Life Enhancement Programme which takes you through everything we do to help create a healthy balance in life – whether it's mindfulness, nutrition, exercise – and we put every one of our leaders through that programme because it can't be taught, you have to experience it."

Klein concludes: "When an investor comes in, people always think 'oh god, they're going to become a



corporate operation', but John was a guest at Canyon Ranch and the experience has positively influenced his and his family's lives. He appreciates the core of what we do and he's been involved with Canyon Ranch for 20 years. To all intents and purposes, we're still a family run business as it's owned by John [Goff] and his wife Cami and they're committed to preserving its core. Which is quite special." ●



Katie Barnes is the editor of *Spa Business* magazine. Email: katiebarnes@spabusiness.com

PHYTOMER

Bringing the SEA *to the* CITY

Luxury marine skincare brand Phytomer opens its first flagship spa in the heart of Paris

French skincare brand Phytomer has been bringing the power of the sea to skincare for more than 40 years – and in turn its marine-based products and treatments have brought the essence of the sea to the city in spa and beauty outlets around the world.

Now Phytomer has taken a step further with the launch of its first flagship city spa in the heart of Paris. Phytomer Spa Etoile, which had its soft opening in October, occupies a prime corner location where Rue Washington meets the brand-populated Champs-Élysées, less than 50m from the iconic Arc de Triomphe.

The historic building formerly housed an independent day spa, and has now been extensively refurbished to create a calm marine oasis for stressed-out Parisians.

Phytomer's director of sales and digital development, Tristan Lagarde says: "We

felt this was the right step in our evolution. It took us a while to find the right site but eventually we found the perfect location, building and team."

The 250sq m spa is on two levels and offers eight treatment rooms, including one dedicated to nails, and a hair salon.

There's also a whole-body cryotherapy chamber and a Japanese infrared sauna that will complement some of Phytomer's skin and body treatment protocols.

Holistic approach

Breton designer Dominique Tosiani, acclaimed for his creativity in hotel design, was commissioned to create



We felt this
was the right
step in our
evolution

Tristan Lagarde

the Spa Etoile's interiors. Lagarde says: "His task was to bring the raw, natural environment of Brittany and blend it with a more opulent look – a kind of contemporary coastal retreat meets classic Parisian salon."

"Phytomer has always brought the most fascinating elements of the sea to the forefront. Beauty that's pure and wild."

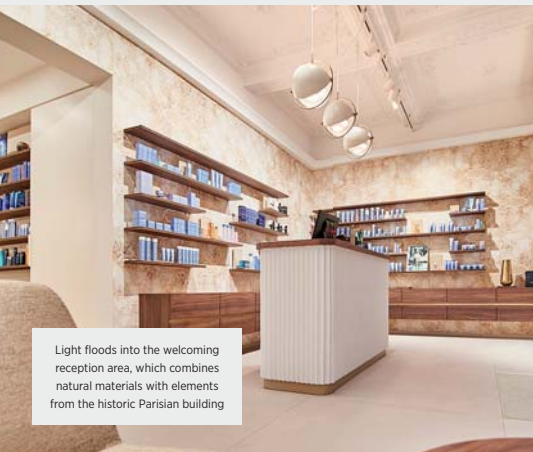
"It can be felt in many realisations of our brand, with the choice of natural materials,

combined with pure lines splashed with bright lighting and open spaces.

"At Spa Etoile, we've also added a baroque touch, promoting a sophisticated Parisian feel that naturally suits the building and adds a premium touch to our 'beauty by the sea' experience"

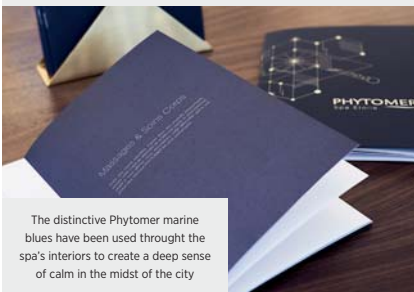
The new spa is situated prominently on a corner with huge windows, allowing light to flood into the open reception area.

The intense and 'hypnotising' Phytomer blue is in evidence throughout the spa, along with materials like natural stone and warm walnut woods.



Light floods into the welcoming reception area, which combines natural materials with elements from the historic Parisian building





The distinctive Phytomer marine blues have been used through the spa's interiors to create a deep sense of calm in the midst of the city



This natural feel is offset by more classic features like bespoke Baroque wallpaper, brass fittings and ornate traditional ceiling moulds.

France-based RKF Luxury Linens has supplied the spa linens, matched to Phytomer's brand colours, with treatment couches supplied by Lemi.

Great attention has also been paid to the therapy team's eco-friendly uniforms, with exclusive designs from Debbie Leon of Fashionizer Spa (see boxout).

City treatments

The treatment menu has been created with city living in mind. For example one signature treatment is the Citylife, a 60-minute facial "to de-pollute city-dwellers' skin and revive asphyxiated and dehydrated faces".

Lagarde adds: "Another highlight is the Phytomer Spa Etoile Ritual, a 2 hour 45-minute programme that combines an anti-ageing facial promoting instantly visible results, together with a deeply relaxing, energising body massage. All based on the power of innovative ingredients from the sea and a deep sense of manual healing."

Alongside Phytomer's original range of products will be its Vie Collection, a

ECO-FRIENDLY UNIFORMS

Spa Etoile's uniforms consist of Fashionizer's Omward wrap tunic and straight-leg Luna trousers for therapists, and Azla jacket for the spa manager.

All garments are made from organic cotton performance fabric. Treated with Silverplus, a stain-resistant soil-release, eco-friendly treatment that is skin safe and antibacterial, the fabric is therefore ideal for a spa.

Uniforms are deep navy with a vivid blue satin trim to embody the marine blues of the Phytomer brand.

cosmeceutical brand specialising in facial protocols inspired by aesthetic medicine, to address targeted anti-ageing needs.

There are also treatments for men, and special spa packages for brides.

Lagarde says the new spa team are all therapists from the day spa that formerly occupied the building.

"We found a very passionate team working in a very busy spa who recognised exactly the needs of their clients, and who shared our vision," he says.

Phytomer already has one highly successful, multi-award-winning spa

- Phytomer Spa and Wellness - which opened at its headquarters in St Malo on the Brittany coast in 2015.

Lagarde says: "We have many senior figures from the worldwide spa industry visit us and they're always bowled over by our integrated approach to wellness in our spa."

"We've had 40 years spread over three generations to truly hone our products, treatments and approach. There's a deep sense of comfort, ritual and wellbeing to everything we offer, and our St Malo spa is a direct expression of that."

Phytomer Spa Etoile will be an extension of this ethos, set in a high profile city location.

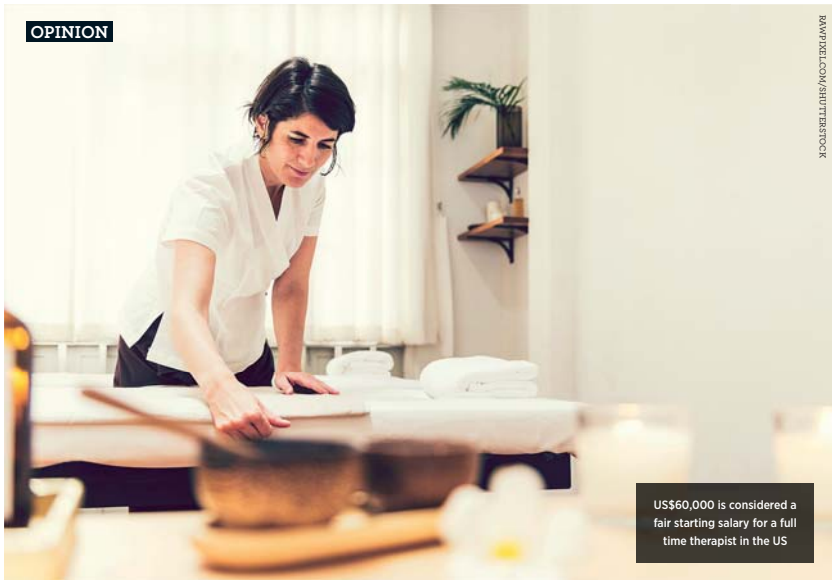
Lagarde says: "We've designed the Phytomer Spa Etoile treatment menu for those clients who don't have time to make the 2.5 hour trip from Paris to St Malo to experience the Phytomer brand in its original setting."

"As well as serving the residents of Paris, Spa Etoile will be a valuable touchpoint for the industry to experience the Phytomer brand in all its forms."

Contact Tristan Lagarde

Tel: + 33 2 23 18 31 63

Email: tlagarde@phytomer.com



US\$60,000 is considered a fair starting salary for a full time therapist in the US

Everyone's talking about...

Gender pay gap

Is pay the root of the spa industry recruitment problem and does this stem from the fact that therapists tend to be female? Or are there other factors at play? Kath Hudson investigates

Kath Hudson is a regular contributor to *Spa Business* magazine.
Email: kathhudson@leisuremedia.com



While ISPA's recent *Spa Workforce Study* on employment in the global spa market, found it attracts committed, passionate and caring people, there still remain issues surrounding therapist pay. There are many compensation models, which can be confusing, and in many parts of the world the pay is unarguably very low.

The industry is facing a huge recruitment problem, with more than 32,000 therapist vacancies in the US alone. Finding and retaining staff is also a massive problem in the Middle East, with some operators even working with unscrupulous agents in Asia who provide therapists, but take their passports away and take half of their salaries for a year.

So how much does therapist pay contribute to the staffing problem?

What does constitute a fair wage? And how could this be standardised globally?

If operators were to increase wages, this could potentially lead to more appointments and therefore more profits. Perhaps more men would also join the industry and it would be viewed as a more attractive sector in which to pursue a career.

Or do the majority of spa operators already remunerate their employees adequately? Is the recruitment shortage to do with other factors, including the rate of growth in the industry?

To recruit more staff does the industry need to raise salaries? Or be better at promoting itself, target new markets and extol its benefits of being a flexible employer? We ask the experts...

■ For a more detailed analysis of ISPA's *Spa Workforce Study*, read *Spa Business* issue 2, 2018, p44

Lynne McNees president, International Spa Association

Our latest research, conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, was very insightful and showed that generally those who work in the industry, at all levels, are passionate about it. Eighty-seven per cent of management say they're looking for a long-term career in the sector.

We do have a workforce shortage in the industry, but we don't believe that compensation is the primary cause. Our research showed that only 32 per cent of therapists feel they're unfairly compensated, while 68 per cent feel positive or neutral about the fairness of their compensation. When compared with Payscale's finding that only 39 per cent of people across all industries



feel positive or neutral on their compensation, this suggests the spa sector is already doing a better job than the wider economy.

According to Payscale, only 11 per cent of employees who feel that they are underpaid are actually underpaid. Most people are fairly compensated, so it's up to management to communicate why that

32 per cent of therapists feel they're unfairly compensated, while 68 per cent feel positive or neutral

compensation is fair. Pay is obviously important, but there are also other factors which make the workforce happy, including a positive work environment and flexible working hours. Operators should offer and promote these benefits.

We all need to work together to raise awareness of what a wonderful industry it is to work in. And we should also broaden our range to attract young people, school students, veterans, retirees and more men. ISPA has partnered with more than a dozen industry organisations

to raise awareness of the many benefits of working in the spa industry by launching a Get Your Dream Job Campaign. It's important to draw attention to the overall package of benefits that spas can offer their employees – a positive work environment, flexible hours and multiple compensation models – because the pay in the spa industry is already healthy relative to the national US economy.

■ McNees has been president of ISPA, a leading spa association, for more than 20 years

Neil Jacobs CEO, Six Senses

Generally the pay in our industry falls on the middle to low side, which is a contributing factor to the staff shortage. When entering a new jurisdiction, Six Senses' strategy is to survey the competition and pitch our base salaries at around the 75th percentile. We then calibrate commission structures for treatments and retail sales, giving therapists the opportunity to earn more.

We are lucky enough to work in parts of the world where we can employ people who have grown up in the healing tradition, such as Thailand and Indonesia. We combine their talent with our own very comprehensive training, and



look after our employees well. Job satisfaction is more than just the size of the salary. We offer additional perks for a job well done such as excursions and dinner for two, which adds to our employees feeling valued.

The rapid growth of the industry is part of the general

The rapid growth of the industry is part of the general staffing problem, but it's also incumbent on us to upgrade the image of the industry

staffing problem, but it's also incumbent on us to upgrade the image of the industry, so that it's seen as an attractive and meaningful place to work. We must pay appropriate salaries and follow fundamental human resources philosophies of looking after people. Therapists should not be expected to consistently do eight or nine treatments a day, which leads to burn out, as well as impacting the quality of the experience for the customer.

It's not rocket science: genuinely care for your staff in a positive environment, pay them a decent wage and you will engender contentment and loyalty, while your guests will be well looked after. Do the opposite and you create turnover which costs the business in a number of ways.

■ Six Senses operates 31 spas and 11 resorts worldwide and Jacobs has been at the helm since 2012 ▶

Kathryn Moore founder and managing director, Spa Connectors

Currently, there is a chasm between what operators are willing to pay and what they expect for the salaries. Consumers are now spa savvy and, for the prices they are paying, want an incredible experience, which can only be delivered by a good therapist. Generally speaking, pay is holding the industry back: it means customer demand cannot be satisfied and many private investors are put off.

In the Maldives, while the price of treatments and accommodation has risen, therapists haven't had a pay rise in 10 years. In the Middle East, operators are



dropping salaries to make up the shortfall of higher rents. In the UK, US and Australia, therapists are finding they are financially better off to set up a home salon or go mobile.

Based in the Middle East, I'm finding it very difficult to recruit the good

Pay is holding the industry back: it means customer demand cannot be satisfied and many private investors are put off

therapists from Asia, the UK or the US, because the operators are simply not paying enough to make it worth their while. Cheaper therapists from Indonesia, Nepal and Cambodia are not as experienced, don't speak English and therefore can't generate extra revenue.

This is a US\$4.2 trillion wellness industry with opportunities for managers, sales staff, wellness specialists and so there's much more we could do. Operators need

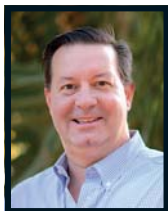
to be realistic with their salaries, provide good working environments, good training and provide therapists with the tools needed to do their jobs properly. We need an industry wide campaign to attract people into the industry, because we can't grow the sector without good human capital.

■ Moore set up recruitment and training firm Spa Connectors in 2015. She previously oversaw 60-plus spas for Minor Hotels

Michael Tompkins partner, Hutchinson Consulting

One difficulty is that therapists are frequently compensated with a mix of a standing wage, commission and tips. These confusing structures are antiquated and make it difficult to educate potential workers on exactly how much they will earn.

In the US, about US\$60,000 (£31,100, £45,220) for a full time therapist is a current fair wage as a starting point, but it varies tremendously from country to country. I know some countries where therapists work six days a week and make US\$25 (£21, £19) per week, plus tips. On-demand therapists can make about 50 per cent more than staff therapists, as well



as being in control of their schedule and tips, but surveys have shown they miss the camaraderie of working in a team. Both models could learn from their shortcomings in order to improve employee morale and retention.

I liken the massage industry to the US nursing industry

I liken the massage industry to the US nursing industry in the 1980s: increasing wages to meet demand drove men into the field in large numbers

in the 1980s: increasing wages to meet demand drove men into the field in large numbers, while improving the perceived professionalism of the career choice. Creating flexible work schedules, offering continued education and excellent benefits, in a safe and supportive work environment, drove satisfaction and retention more.

We need to tackle all these issues in the spa industry. Rethinking

compensation models and publishing guidelines could be a start. Also, the perception of professionalism could be upped, by highlighting the combined educational requirements and hands on practical work a therapist is obligated to complete. ●

■ Tompkins is a partner at hospitality recruitment firm Hutchinson Consulting and has been CEO at both Miraval and Hilton Head Health



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In the future,
there'll be no
more wellness
without fashion

Riadh Bouaziz, CEO, RKF

PUTTING SPA FASHION ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

With a long list of awards and achievements in 2018, the coming year looks set to see RKF Luxury Linen become firmly established as a 'spa fashion' leader



RKF is changing the way
the industry sees spa
linens, elevating them to
desirable fashion items

Already acclaimed as an innovator in the world of spa textiles, RKF Luxury Linen has been intent on revolutionising the design of the humble spa robe in recent years. Traditionally the most unflattering, least trendy garment to be seen at a luxury destination, RKF has been intent on elevating the spa robe to a hot fashion item.

And judging by the reception earlier this year to RKF's inaugural fashion show at Paris Fashion Week, the French textile company seems to have succeeded.

RKF's CEO Riadh Bouaziz says: "Bathrobe design has changed very little over the course of history, but RKF is now revolutionising that."

"In March, we exhibited 33 unique designs in Paris and at the end received a 10-minute standing ovation from some very discerning eyes in the fashion, cosmetics, spa and hotel industries, as well as international journalists."

"Utopia by RKF" treated the audience to a 40-minute, high-energy fashion event featuring live music (electro pop and a classical string quartet), a dancer, backdrop videos, botanical scenography, and a

striking mirrored catwalk. This show was 100 per cent designed, managed and produced by RKF's team: fashion design, soundtrack, tale, scenography and choreography."

Bouaziz adds: "The show took a whole year of planning and organisation, but the results were spectacular. You could not distinguish our bathrobes and designs from other haute couture items."

Such was the impact of the event in the fashion world, that soon after RKF was invited as star guest for Tunis Fashion Week in Carthage in May.

Bouaziz says: "We redesigned our Paris show to fit the historical setting of the 1st Century amphitheatre, and in just two weeks our talented team created extra designs inspired by Tunisian history and mythology."

Exclusive partnerships

The year 2018, which saw the company celebrate its 18th anniversary, also welcomed many new high-end partnerships for RKF, including worldwide brands such as Dior, Valmont and Filorga, as well as luxury hotels and resorts like W Tel Aviv, Kempinski Geneva, Bulgari Dubai, Mandarin Oriental London and Doha, Four Seasons George V Paris, Lotte Seoul, Parklane Cyprus and Blue Waters Resort Dubai.

Bouaziz emphasises that RKF is also dedicated to bringing its particular brand of luxury to all segments of the wellness and hospitality market.

The year 2018 saw RKF stage two spectacular catwalk shows, first in Paris and then in Tunis



That's one of the reasons the company used the EquipHotel exhibition in Paris in November 2018 to relaunch its corporate identity into three key categories.

ESSENTIEL by RKF will provide the must-have, all-white products for spas and hotels, using RKF's award-winning range of textiles like Dreamsoft and Timeless.

COLLECTION by RKF is where the company's creativity and expression truly comes to the fore, serigraphed garments, innovative designs and a high level of embroidery detail.

"We now have the largest capacity in the industry for creating and producing bespoke embroidery. In RKF group, we also have one of the largest collection of handcrafted embroidery patterns and archives dating back to 1834," Bouaziz adds.

Finally, SIGNATURE by RKF will feature designs that are far ahead of what's currently available in the spa linens market. Elements of these designs will filter through to every collection that RKF brings to market.

Starting with a societal problem related to disability, the RKF team has also developed a particular textile design that will be integrated into all its products.

Showcased at EquipHotel in Paris and remaining true to Maison RKF's design philosophy, Bouaziz says this particular technique not only brings "societal added value", but also a refined finish to products. ▶

► Style and functionality

While RKF has brought fashion very much to the fore, it has never compromised on investment in R&D, which continues to yield fabrics that are incredibly lightweight, cost-effective to launder, durable and eco-friendly for spa and hospitality environments.

Bouaziz says: "We've listened to the feedback and requests from wellness experts, and are now considering creating a 360° textile experience that's featured throughout the spa – not just in the therapy rooms and relaxation areas.

"It's now widely understood that lying on a massage table that feels deeply comfortable and sensual must be the first step to wellness, but customers' expectations are getting even higher.

"That's why we've created bathrobes as fashion items. And we have new products coming that will offer a brand new customer experience. The boundaries of wellness, beauty and fashion are becoming more blurred and that's really exciting.

"In future, there'll be no more wellness without fashion. Given the spa's luxury environment it just doesn't make any sense to have ill-fitting robes and uninspiring linens."



RKF's stunning wedding dress, made from all its unique fabrics, was star of the Paris fashion show

Innovations for 2019

As RKF gears up for its busiest year of business yet, there will be many more launches to come in 2019. Currently under wraps is a 'highly unique and art-inspired' concept that Bouaziz says will filter through to all of RKF's collections.

In addition, three major events are also to be announced – for France, the Middle East and Asia.

Meanwhile Bouaziz will also retain his tenure of France ambassador for Global Wellness Day for a third year, planning and overseeing events for the eastern region.

Alongside its work to elevate spa fashion, RKF's digital assets have also received

a complete makeover, with the launch of a new website and the development of its industry blog. An e-commerce store that will also cater for the B2C market will be launched at a later date.

This could well be another growth area for RKF, as the company has already become an influencer on social media, breaking away from what's considered a traditional supplier industry to become an inspirational brand that attracts a much more diverse following.

"The teaser video for our Paris fashion show alone received more than one million views on Facebook, and two million views on Instagram," says Bouaziz.

RKF's official Facebook page now has more than 30,000 fans, and the CEO himself – a worldwide traveller and sought-after speaker – has garnered his own personal Instagram following of more than 30,000 fans.

All this serves to highlight how a niche B2B supplier has successfully managed – through technological innovation, investment, great vision and sheer passion – to transform itself into an inspiring, fashion-driven brand that's admired way beyond the industry it serves.

As RKF Luxury Linen gets ready to launch into a new year, Bouaziz's personal update catchphrase of "think positive, do positive, feel positive" could not be more apt.



RKF achievements

Since its creation in 2000, RKF has served 25,000 customers in 72 countries, including:

- 13,000 hotels (90 per cent of which were 4*, 5* and 'palaces')
- 9,000 spas directly (+ 2,000 spas indirectly through cosmetic brands)
- 3,000 private projects (including presidential and royal palaces, private yachts and jets, embassies, private islands, and celebrity clients)

RKF Group has filed 15 international trademarks and patents, and two new patents are planned for 2019

In 2017-2018, the RKF Luxury Linen brand received more than 12 international awards for innovation and design – including accolades from the International Design Awards in LA, the European Product Design Awards in the European Parliament, and the A'Design Awards in Italy

RKF Group has received more than 10 honorary titles that highlight the performance of its team – including international trophies for the career and vision of CEO Riadh Bouaziz, and title of 6th best designer in the world for artistic director Christophe Dijoux

In 2018, RKF was honoured for its core values, winning a Design for Society award for its textile creations for disabled people

Contact RKF

Telephone: +33 3 84 90 08 56
Email: rkf@rkfr
Website: www.rkf.fr
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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Spa Foresight™



Spa Foresight™
is published
annually in the
*Spa Business
Handbook*

What's going to have
the biggest impact on
spas in the future?
Spa Business outlines
the trends, technologies
and strategies that are
coming down the track

Top 20 predictions

- 1 Vegan spas
- 2 Spa tribes
- 3 Rage rooms
- 4 Senior living
- 5 Rewilding
- 6 Cockroaches
- 7 Plastic free
- 8 Assisted stretching
- 9 Blue light antidotes
- 10 Home wellness
- 11 Andropause
- 12 Brain health
- 13 Visual detox
- 14 Diagnostics
- 15 Hawaii
- 16 Self-care
- 17 Spa coaching
- 18 Climbing
- 19 Mindful meetings
- 20 Blockchain



The growth of veganism
will create opportunities
for dedicated spas

A PLANT-BASED LIFE

1. VEGAN SPAS

Interest in plant-based diets has never been greater, with veganism being one of the fastest growing health trends globally.

As interest continues to accelerate, we expect to see the launch of fully vegan spas, where all aspects of the operation have been put through the vegan filter.

They'll offer certified vegan food, vegan furniture, vegan retail and vegan facilities.

For resort and destination spas, producing enough vegan food at this scale will require local food production, and we expect them to partner with the emerging hydroponic farming industry for this.

This will also enable spas to go organic, something which has eluded most to date.

Veganism will get a further boost from the James Cameron film *The Game Changers*, which explores the world of world-class vegan athletes such as Serena Williams and challenges meat eating.

A NEW KIND OF RETREAT

2. SPA TRIBES

While social media has done a good job of connecting us, it has also left some relationships fractured and disjointed, and made a whole generation yearn for a sense of community and belonging through real-life connections. Spa retreats can help people to 'find their tribe' - lasting from a few days to a few weeks, retreats are a powerful way for spas to stay nimble by changing their programming throughout the year, with little additional cost in the way of staff or infrastructure.

Retreats featuring Instagram celebrity fitness gurus are already happening and have been an easy place to start, as there's a built-in audience, as well as built-in marketing, but we think spas can take things one step further.

What about partnering with specialised instructors in your local area to create retreat packages that help guests find wellbeing through spa treatments, creativity and connection? Finding a niche interest, such as painting, singing or cooking, means participants already have something in common - the spa's

job is simply to create the programming to generate interest and to facilitate ways for attendees to connect, through creative workshops or shared meals. This is a new generation of experiential travel that offers connection, community and a real sense of belonging.

Creative activities like painting can help guests connect with each other

SHUTTERSTOCK/MONEY BUSINESS IMAGES



SMASHING TIME

3. RAGE ROOMS

A step up from punching a pillowcase, rage rooms see people grabbing a bat weapon to destroy anything from a wine glass to that annoying computer keyboard - all in the name of de-stressing.

While the idea might seem at odds with the typical spa ethos, rage rooms could potentially provide people

who are feeling angry or frustrated with a healthy way to express emotions.

The sessions - lasting 15-30 minutes and costing US\$20-US\$100 - could be a quick way of relieving tension pre-massage, or serve as a quirky precursor to meditation or other mind-focused therapies.

ELDER POWER

4. SENIOR LIVING

Trust the baby boomer generation to age differently - after all, they've been breaking rules their whole lives. It's no wonder that retirement communities are starting to look differently at how they structure wellness programming.

Watermark, which operates more than 50 senior living communities in the US, has partnered with spa consultant Amy McDonald of Under a Tree to transform senior wellness, taking cues from destination spas. And as more and more baby boomers move into senior living, expect to see further opportunities for those in the spa industry to get involved.

Forest bathing has been shown to help reduce blood pressure and cortisol levels

SHUTTERSTOCK/JOHNNY BUSINESS IMAGES

► NATURAL THERAPY

5. REWILDING

As we increase our love of – and dependence on – technology, a movement is growing to stop the ‘always-on’ lifestyle that’s wreaking havoc on our mental health and real-life relationships.

Rewilding is a part of that, and expresses a desire to disconnect from the machine world and reconnect with the natural one. It can include anything from letting a piece of land revert to its natural state to attract birds and insects, to unplugging and getting dirty, to learning a long-lost craft or skill. For spas, there is a great opportunity

to introduce programming that helps people get in touch with this side of themselves – anything from forest bathing to rock climbing to food foraging. In addition to helping guests explore the natural environment, many of these activities promote mindfulness and help to reduce blood pressure and cortisol levels – all of which aids wellbeing.

POWERFUL GENES

6. COCKROACHES

Although many people find them repellent, in reality, cockroaches are miraculous creatures, and new evidence of their genetic makeup could prove useful in the development of healing treatments.

Scientists at South China Normal University in Guangzhou have just sequenced the cockroach genome and found it to be larger than that of a human.

This massive gene set has evolved to enable them to thrive in a wide range of challenging habitats, eat almost anything and tolerate insecticides and other poisons.

Among the cockroach’s gifts is the ability to regrow limbs, and scientists are investigating these healing and regenerative

Cockroaches have evolved to live in the most extreme conditions and can teach us valuable lessons about resilience and healing

powers to see if they can be harnessed for human treatments.

The Chinese call the cockroach ‘little mighty one’, or xiao qiang, and cockroach ethanol extract and powders are used in traditional Chinese medicine.

Cockroaches can survive in filthy conditions due to their natural

detoxification mechanisms and ability to secrete their own antibiotics.

While scientists in the pest-control industry are planning to use this gene knowledge to destroy the insects, the healing industries will take the opposite position and look for more ways to harness the power of the cockroach for health and wellbeing.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/KROLOK

ECO CHALLENGE

7. PLASTIC FREE

With worldwide awareness of the destructive consequences of plastic pollution growing fast, there’s plenty spas can do to stop using single-use plastics in everything from bottles, straws and cups to wraps and bags for amenities and swimwear.

A lesser-known offender is microplastics, such as those released into the environment when synthetic materials are washed and tumble dried.

Eco-friendly spas such as Ojai Valley Inn & Spa in the US and Titanic Spa in the UK are leading the way by cutting out single-use plastics and changing to natural fibres, but we predict an overall industry push is on the horizon

The spa industry can lead the way in





Xponential is opening 40 stretch facilities in the US in 2018

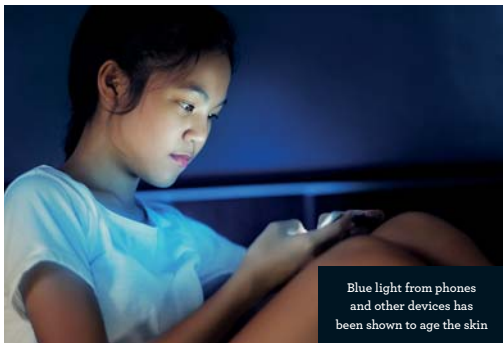
GETTING FLEXIBLE

8. ASSISTED STRETCHING

A mix of being hunched over desks and intense workouts has led to a new trend in assisted stretching studios, and the therapy is perfect for spas.

It's more effective being stretched by someone else, as the body can be eased past the point of natural resistance.

Anyone can benefit from it. Sportspeople can improve performance and longevity; sedentary people can work on posture or use it as a starting point for exercising; and it helps with joint pain, as well as a range of conditions such as stroke, MS and fibromyalgia.



Blue light from phones and other devices has been shown to age the skin

OVER STIMULATION

9. BLUE LIGHT ANTIDOTES

We know the dangers and damage to our skin that comes from exposure to UVA and UVB rays, but new research suggests that high-energy light, also known as blue light, is another big culprit, causing oxidative stress and damaging the skin.

Blue light is emitted from screens – computers, phones, tablets and televisions – and has long been shown to be a culprit in interrupting sleep patterns by upsetting our circadian rhythms.

Now inflammatory skin ailments, photo-ageing, premature skin ageing, and hyperpigmentation have been linked to blue light, and there's a suggestion it penetrates deeper than UVA and UVB.

Skincare brands such as Sofri, Murad and Matis have created new lines to specifically address this stressor, and we expect this trend to grow, as consumers – particularly millennials – become more aware of blue light's effects on the skin.

WELLNESS LIFESTYLE

10. HOME WELLNESS

The spa industry has done an amazing job of educating people about the joys of a wellness lifestyle based on self-care.

In recent years, wealthy people have begun to extend this experience into their homes by building their own treatment rooms, gyms, pools, pilates, meditation and yoga spaces and a wide range of other wellness facilities.

We expect this movement to accelerate and extend into the mid-market and eventually the mass market, as more consumers grow to appreciate the value of home wellness to complement their out-of-home experiences.

Far from being a threat to the industry, this trend towards home wellness adds another layer to the engagement between spa consumers and spa operators, and opens opportunities for spa brands to extend into the home market.



As an example of this trend, wellness real estate company Delos has just announced the launch of the DARWIN Home Wellness Intelligence platform, which monitors and controls indoor home environments to improve health, wellbeing and performance.

Wellness in the home is a fast-growing sector and spa is set to follow

FALLING TESTOSTERONE

11. ANDROPAUSE

In last year's Spa Foresight, we highlighted the opportunities around spa services for menopausal women and predicted that this market will grow strongly over the next five years.

But while social change has made discussion of the menopause acceptable in many cultures, there's still a veil of secrecy

over the male equivalent – the andropause.

Men's hormone levels decrease more slowly than women's as they age; however, lifestyle disease accelerates this process, leading to symptoms such as depression and low testosterone levels.

We predict increasing demand for preventative and curative interventions.

THOUGHT PROVOKING

12. BRAIN HEALTH

A trend towards a new kind of holistic spa that stretches the mind as well as the body is starting to emerge.

Locations such as 1440 Multiversity in California help guests learn how to be well through a combination of lectures and workshops on everything from mindfulness to creative leadership.

Recharging the body often means recharging the brain, and there's certainly room for more spas to offer programming that helps do both – partnerships with local universities, experts or authors are an easy way to get started.



Virtual reality massages can be used to plant more positive images in people's minds

PHOTO: THE ODDLY SATISFYING SPA

VIRTUAL REALITY

13. VISUAL DETOX

"We must have a sense of digital wellness. Just as we only put good food into our body, we also need to only put good media into our brain," says Tyler Pridgen, creator of The Oddly Satisfying Spa pop-up.

Treatments at The Oddly Satisfying Spa use VR to plant positive images in

people's minds – a visual detox if you will. "Right now we're spending a lot of time overwhelmed on our phones and consuming visual media which is unhealthy for us," Pridgen says.

Experiences include a massage combined with a VR headset that delivers appropriate 3D simulations – a roller was used to massage the back as people watched a ball meandering through a field of tall grass, for example.

Alternatively, in a hazy digital steamroom, people used hand controllers to manipulate cosmic images in their VR headsets to help them relax.

Pridgen's take on spa is a curation of soothing experiences inspired by the rise of #oddlysatisfying internet content, which has seen millions of people logging on to watch positive and curious videos.

We believe there's scope for spas to be mindful of healthy brain images.

INITIAL INVESTIGATIONS

14. DIAGNOSTICS

The starting point for any wellness intervention is a sound diagnosis.

Once people are aware of their health and wellness issues, they can take advice and decide on the best course of action – be it preventative or curative.

We expect the diagnostics market to grow rapidly over the next 10 years and become increasingly competitive, with new tests coming to market – both invasive and non-invasive.

There are other dimensions to the diagnostics market – spa and wellness destinations are increasingly being visited by people so they can undergo batteries of private health tests.

This enables them to avoid test results appearing on their official medical records, which would potentially increase their insurance or invalidate their policies.

There are also many other reasons why people would want their medical tests to be ‘off grid’, and the spa and wellness industry will be called on to deliver these services on a highly confidential basis that guarantees safe data storage.

Millions are being spent on wellness, spa and hydroponics in Hawaii



GROWING INTEREST

15. HAWAII

Expect to see more focus on spas, wellbeing and nutrition in Hawaii following the launch of Larry Ellison's new wellness company on the island of Lanai.

Ellison, founder of tech giant Oracle, bought

Lanai in 2012 to house Sensei, his hydroponic farm business, which will combine renewable energy and cutting-edge software to “transform agriculture”.

With the Four Seasons Lanai at Koele also closed

for a US\$75m renovation – including the addition of “a wellness retreat like no other” – it will be interesting to see what exciting spa details await. The reopening of the hotel and spa is planned for early 2019.

DIY SPA

16. SELF-CARE

Visit a spa and have an amazing wellbeing-boosting experience, yet return home, and all that good can be undone in an instant. Herein lies the huge potential for self-care.

Spas have both the expertise and capability to teach customers how to take better care of themselves with a huge range of modalities.

Self-massage is an obvious starting point. Therapists could build on relationships, either in the treatment room or as an interactive workshop, by giving clients pointers on how and where to massage themselves.

TEACHABLE MOMENT

17. SPA COACHING

For those of us who work in the spa industry, there's no question about how to use a sauna, or whether the function of a cold plunge pool is understood.

However, the facilities you've spent time creating may be more daunting than relaxing to uninitiated guests.

Signposting can play a part, but learning through doing is much more effective, and we foresee an opportunity to coach guests in relevant modalities.

The aufguss ceremony is popular in Germanic spas for a reason: it's not just sitting in a sauna, it's a whole experience led by a sauna master. The LivNordic spa on the *Viking Sea* cruise ship offers a bathing ritual where guests pay to join an expert-led group.



Spa coaches will create interactive experiences that teach guests about spa culture

They've walked through the experience and shown how to use the facilities. We expect this idea to spread, with 'spa coaching' becoming a discipline.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

18. CLIMBING

The latest workout making waves in the health and fitness market is climbing, with 90s staple the Versaclimber making a strong comeback. We expect this trend to be picked up by spas that have a big focus on exercise.

Climbing ticks many important boxes as a form of exercise. It's high intensity – effectively delivering a HIIT workout without the strain on joints.

It's also low-impact, making it suitable for people of almost any age.

A climbing class delivers a whole-body workout, making it a very efficient way to exercise for both strength and cardiovascular fitness.

Climbing also offers an especially powerful workout for the core muscles, making it ideal for people who want to improve their posture and back strength.

This growing interest in HIIT climbing workouts is also mirrored in the growth of indoor sports climbing, which becomes an Olympic event for the first time in 2020 at the Tokyo games.

Operators such as Six Senses already offer tree climbing activities at some destinations, while Miraval in the US is famous for its adventure challenges and full-scale climbing wall.

We see this growing interest in climbing as having potential to spice up exercise programmes indoor and out and to create safe physical challenges which are also fun.



Climbing is growing in popularity as a form of intensive exercise, with the Versaclimber making a comeback

SHUTTERSTOCK/WAVEBREADMEDIA



BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

19. MEETINGS

Traditionally, meetings have been unhealthy events: too much time sitting, drinking coffee, consuming sugary snacks and alcohol – and not enough time to sleep, or to process information.

Now, a new wave of healthy meeting options is taking shape, which utilise a hotel spa's expertise and programming to create packages for today's wellness-minded business executives.

Mandarin Oriental's Mindful Meetings is one such example, and includes energising

Healthy meetings can draw on a spa's wellness expertise and help raise its profile

food, wellness activities such as yoga and breaks designed for stillness, with massage stations and guided meditation breathing rooms.

We expect these kinds of meetings will accelerate. And such meetings enable spas to leverage their expertise and talent to bring wellness outside of the walls of the spa, and help raise the profile of the spa and its programming at the same time.

ASSET OWNERSHIP

20. BLOCKCHAIN

The World Bank estimates 70 per cent of the global population lacks access to property titling, meaning they could 'buy' land or property, only to lose it to someone else, with no way to prove their claim.

Having a legal description of an asset and a watertight record of ownership is a huge undertaking beyond the means of many governments in the third world.

But now government land registries are beginning to test Blockchain technology as a way of recording transactions – a move that could herald an unprecedented disruption of the asset ownership industry.

Putting transactions on a Blockchain makes them almost impossible to forge, and as Blockchain comes on stream as an enabler of transactions and is adopted by governments, we'll see an acceleration of growth in countries that have been out of reach to investors, because there's been no way to reliably own assets. ●



Blockchain: unleashing growth potential

SHUTTERSTOCK/ARCHIVE



SPA FORESIGHT™ Archive

2017

- Tattoo detox
- Spa dentistry
- Grief
- Simplicity
- Therapy animals
- Extreme bathing
- Skin microbiome
- Resilience
- Wellness communities
- mDNA
- Global onsen
- Cuddling
- ASMR
- Ketogenic exercise
- Menopause
- Body forensics
- Personal pollution sensors
- Nootropics
- Uzbekistan
- Nose to toe

2016

- Scaleable wellness
- Iceland
- Breathing/elimination
- Spa planes
- Social good
- The virome
- Clean eating
- Dementia-friendly
- Meditation spaces
- Epigenetics
- Skin science
- Specialisation
- Singing
- Suspension massage
- Hot Spot: Haiti
- Walk-in spas
- Immune challenge
- Rest for recovery
- Floatation
- Modular fitness

2015

- Invisibles
- Faecal transplants
- Hot spot: Panama
- Massage-on-demand
- ASEAN market
- Attractions & spa
- Hot spot: Cuba
- Tiered spa offering
- Tribal investments
- Sport & spa
- Next gen skincare
- Haemoglobin levels
- Sexual wellness
- Biomimicry
- Hot spot: Bintan
- Halal tourism
- Animal movement
- Age-friendly design
- Face massage
- Real estate

2014

- Loneliness
- Oil, gas and solar
- Edible environments
- Living food
- Neuroplasticity
- Cellular health
- Robot therapists
- Hot spot: War zones
- New superfoods: fats & carbs
- 3D printing
- Predicting purchasing
- No front desk
- Hot spot: Japan
- Virtual trainers
- Bad products
- Over nourishment
- Circadian programmes
- Microgyms
- Gut health
- ~microbiome

- Clean air & water
- Facial recognition
- Wellness cities

2013

- Fresh food deliveries
- Online reviews
- Wearable tech
- Death
- Emotion
- Skills register
- Glute massage
- More with less
- Delicious extras
- Pop-up spas
- New allies
- Cellulite
- Home spa
- Childhood obesity
- Mobile biometrics
- Sex in spas
- Spa brands
- Hand & arm massage
- Repeat business
- Hot spot: Africa
- Variable pricing
- Last impressions
- Exercise
- Hospital spas

2012

- Budget spas
- Corporate wellness
- Education overhaul
- Deal sites
- Beauty brand power

2011

- Express treatments
- Beauty treatments
- Spa data
- Location-based marketing
- Serious skincare

- Discounting
- Treatment room size
- Part time staff
- Global marketing partnerships

2010

- Spa art
- Four star spas
- Menu engineering
- Spa memberships
- Social spa-ing
- Spa niching
- Walk-ins
- Online learning
- Scientific proof
- Wellness tourism
- Pro retail brands
- Eco-packaging
- Social networking

2009

- Spa benchmarking
- Brand diversification
- Yield management
- Travel spas
- Hair services
- Online booking
- Diagnostic spas
- Organic certification
- RFID
- Getting ethical
- Olfactory marketing
- Wellness real estate
- Medical tourism
- Sustainability
- Spas for men
- Sleep health
- Spa bedrooms

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Liz Terry has been writing about and analysing the global leisure industries since 1983. She's editorial director of *Spa Business* and *Spa Opportunities* magazines.
Email: lizterry@spabusiness.com
Twitter: @elizterry



Jane Kitchen has a 20-year career in international media, covering topics from health and wellness to furniture and design. She's the editor of the *Spa Business Handbook* and contributing editor to *Spa Business*.
Email: jane.kitchen@spabusiness.com
Twitter: @JaneKitchenSB

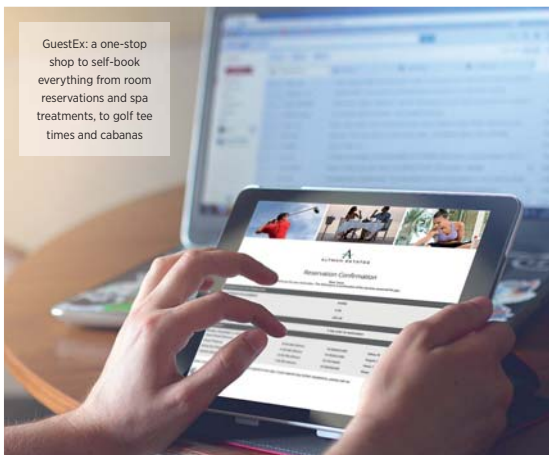


Katie Barnes is the editor of *Spa Business* magazine and was launch editor of the *Spa Business Handbook*. Her career in publishing has focused on the international spa, beauty and health sectors.
Email: katiebarnes@spabusiness.com
Twitter: @KatieBarnesSB



We wanted to provide an omni-channel approach and strategy to guest engagement

GuestEx: a one-stop shop to self-book everything from room reservations and spa treatments, to golf tee times and cabanas



ResortSuite's GuestEx

ENHANCING GUEST ENGAGEMENT

In a world where technology is evolving rapidly to meet the growing demands of an emerging generation of digital natives who expect mobile-friendly 24/7 accessibility, cutting-edge software company ResortSuite's hospitality system offers operators enhanced guest engagement alongside complete control of their booking availability.

As founder and CEO Frank Pitsikalis says: "ResortSuite offers guests a single online portal to self-book a room reservation, spa treatment, class, multi-day programme, dining reservation, golf tee time, or cabana - virtually any activity or resource available at a property. Guests can also download a branded mobile app with a mobile concierge experience allowing them to view their itinerary and add spa treatments, classes, dining reservations or golf tee times quickly and easily, as well as review statements, loyalty and privileges together with a 'shake to ID' feature that brings up a barcode for seamless ID and payments."

ResortSuite's GuestEx realises the vision for a streamlined, integrated and consistent guest experience

ResortSuite specialises in integrated hospitality management systems that can be deployed in single or multi-location spas, hotels, resorts and private clubs. But where ResortSuite stands out from the software vendor crowd, is in its unique modular form, meaning it can be integrated with other hospitality systems, or adopted as a single, fully-integrated and guest-centric hospitality management platform in its entirety; an ideal fit for wellness and activity-focused hotels, resorts and destination spas.

At the heart of ResortSuite's vision to deliver a streamlined, integrated and consistent guest experience is GuestEx, a suite of guest experience technologies that includes online booking engine ResortSuite WEB, branded mobile concierge app

ResortSuite MOBILE, marketing automation ResortSuite CONNECT, and integration with ResDiary for online dining reservations. "We wanted to provide an omni-channel approach and strategy to guest engagement," adds Pitsikalis.

GuestEx is ResortSuite's response to the rise of the digital native generation as a dominant spending force for spa and wellness experiences, together with their very different expectations around online booking and mobile self-service. "ResortSuite GuestEx is the first platform of its kind that gives a guest a one-stop shop to book everything that a business has to offer. ResortSuite has been designed to provide the ultimate in personalised guest service no matter what channel the guest engages with, be it online, mobile, phone or face to face."

Get in touch:

www.resortsuite.com
sales@resortsuite.com
Tel: +1 416 259 0715

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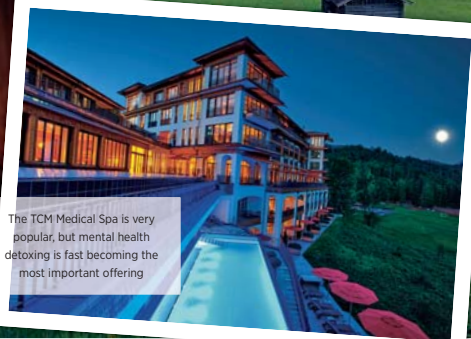


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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Popular culture

Bavarian resort, Schloss Elmau, combines music, culture and spa, feeding both the mind and soul. Owner and creator, Dietmar Mueller-Elmau, speaks to Kath Hudson about why this all inclusive blend of the best things in life works so well



The TCM Medical Spa is very popular, but mental health detoxing is fast becoming the most important offering



Guests are attracted by the spa, nature and sport, so the cultural side is a new thing for many, says Mueller-Elmau.



Culture and spa are an innovative and perfect combination: you can relax in the spa and then clear your head for new ideas, music and literature,” says Dietmar Mueller-Elmau. “It’s wellness for the mind and body: both a mental detox and food for thought.”

Mueller-Elmau claims there’s no other spa in the world offering what Schloss Elmau offers. Culture and ideas were the starting point and spa – all seven of them – came later, which is what makes the concept inimitable. World class musicians perform, leading philosophers lecture and best-selling authors, like Julien Barnes and Ian McEwan, come to launch new books, perhaps attracted by the massive book shop and well-stocked library.

“There’s no other place in the world which I know of which has this combination, the musical tradition goes back more than 100 years, with a legendary concert hall,” says Mueller-Elmau. He became proprietor in 1997, taking the helm of the property which had been in the family for three culture loving generations. It was built by his grandfather, Johannes Mueller, in 1914, and since the 50s it’s been building its reputation for music. ▶

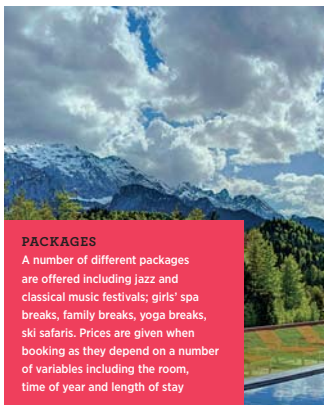
After a successful career in IT, Mueller-Elmau sold his hotel software company, Fidelio, and returned home to help his parents. Sadly, in 2005, a fire destroyed most of the original schloss.

Space and freedom

Turning disaster into opportunity, Mueller-Elmau decided the rebuild should include a luxury spa, which would attract more people and more top class musicians. However, he admits that he's not a spa lover. "I tried to build a spa which would tempt me to use it," he says. "I used the worst case scenario, taking the most extreme position in order to convince people like me, who don't like spas to use it. But I still haven't used it! I don't like to be with other people!"

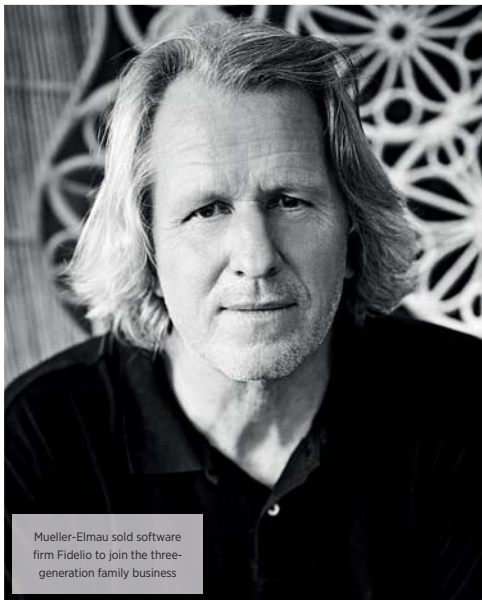
Space is one of the luxuries he has created for his guests: there's both space to

“
No other
place in the
world has this
combination,
the musical
tradition goes
back more
than 100 years
”



PACKAGES

A number of different packages are offered including jazz and classical music festivals; girls' spa breaks, family breaks, yoga breaks, ski safaris. Prices are given when booking as they depend on a number of variables including the room, time of year and length of stay



Mueller-Elmau sold software firm Fidelio to join the three-generation family business

avoid people and the opportunity to meet them. The Luxury Spa Cultural Hideaway, in the restored original building, has 115 bedrooms while the Luxury Spa Retreat, built in 2015 to host the G7 summit, has 47 suites, a view of the mountains and the sound of the stream rushing by.

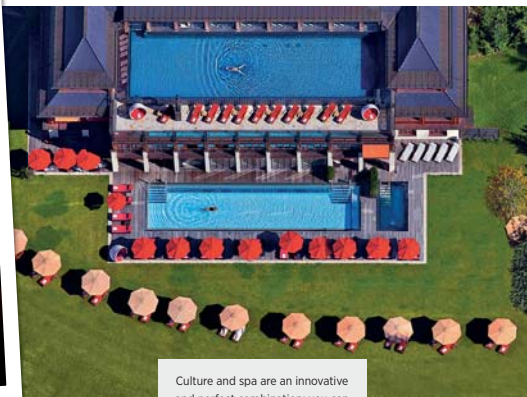
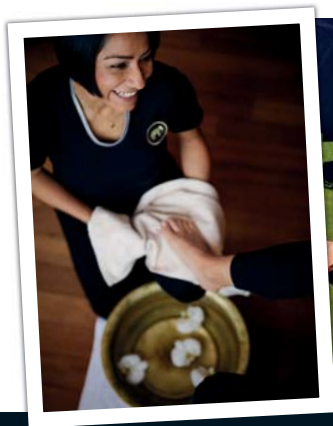
Guests then have the choice of eight restaurants, including one with a Michelin star and six pools, five of which are outside. "What you need in a spa is a sense of calm, fresh air and warm water," he says. "People love being able to swim outside in warm water when it's freezing cold."

Three of the spas are aimed at families and three are adult only. The TCM Medical Spa is very popular, as well as anti-ageing treatments, but the most demand is for traditional western massages. "We're seeing the mental detox becoming far more important than anything else," says Mueller-Elmau.

"Everyone is mentally stressed out, not physically stressed out. They want to be inspired and meet inspiring people, discover new worlds in literature and participate in interesting political debates. All of our guests are attracted by the spa, the nature and the sport, so the cultural side is a new thing for many, but they all go away talking about the psychological and mental benefits."

All inclusive

One of the interesting aspects about the model is that children stay for free and all of the cultural experiences, the use of the spas, breakfast, dinner and renting an electric BMW to explore the area are included in the room rate.



Culture and spa are an innovative and perfect combination: you can relax in the spa and then clear your head for new ideas, music and literature, says Mueller-Elmau



spa business uniting the world of wellness

► “And it’s still only one third of the price of a [high end] UK hotel,” he jokes. “We’re not pedagogic, we don’t give people programmes, there’s no pressure. Most go to the spa, but the most sophisticated guests don’t anything. The biggest luxury is to just gaze at the mountains.”

Hiking and e-mountain biking are popular in the summer and skiing in the winter. The mountains also host a castle dating from King Ludwig, which Mueller-Elmau describes as “the most spectacular architecture in spectacular nature.”

The whole concept has been created according to what Mueller-Elmau likes personally: “I didn’t think about any market, I was just trying to build something which I’d like to use. I have six children, I like to be alone, I like music, literature and architecture.”

If it seems like there’s a lot on offer for adults, children are equally well served with a huge ‘edutainment’ programme available. It features culture and sport, including soccer camps every two weeks – taken by professionals from the German football league no less.

Keeping ahead

The resort has been phenomenally successful. It’s consistently accoladed by magazines and polls, has been profitable since day one and runs at 75 per cent occupancy, with more than 90 per cent of guests returning. The bulk of the visitors – around 70 per cent – are from Germany or



Mueller-Elmau says a stay is one third of the price of a high-end UK hotel

WELLNESS FACILITIES

- Three adult-only spas featuring a 500sq m (5,382sq ft) oriental hammam, two outdoor lap pools and two outdoor saltwater pools, 14 saunas and steambaths, 25 treatment rooms, relaxation lounges, two spa restaurants and four tea lounges
- The Shantigiri Family Spa at the Retreat has an outdoor lap pool, seven treatment rooms, gym, spa lounge and restaurant
- TCM Medical Spa
- Two gyms
- The Family Spa in the Hideaway has an indoor lap pool, five saunas and steam baths, relaxation room and tea lounge
- The Nature Spa is open during the summer with an outdoor lap pool, sauna at the creek, playground and three tennis courts
- Jivamukti yoga centre
- Yoga pavilion for retreats

SUPPLIERS

Alpienne: body and massage products from Tyrol

Dermaviduals: Schloß Elmau’s signature skincare from Germany

Neom: body products, candles and room diffusers from the UK

Niance: premium skincare from Switzerland

Team Dr Joseph: natural skincare line

La Biosthetique: haircare

Und Gretel: natural make-up brand from Berlin

OPI: hand and footcare

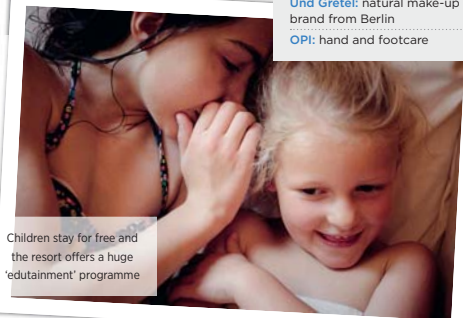
German-speaking countries and the rest are from the UK, Europe and the US. It’s a 50/50 split between families and couples.

The biggest operational challenge is to keep ahead of the game. “We’re rated as one of the best hotels in the world and the better you get, the thinner the air gets and the better you have to be,” says Mueller-Elmau. “There’s never an end, you have to continually improve, it takes a lot of energy to constantly run ahead of the curve and hire the people who have the energy. We are never happy, we have to lift the bar for everything.”

Mueller-Elmau might have hit on a concept which works perfectly, but he doesn’t think others will, or could, follow their lead: “It takes someone who has a passion to do this. We are running the hotel because of the cultural programme not the other way around and that’s why the artists come: we are the second biggest promoter of classical music in Germany. However, the spa is also a tremendous asset, it has made us even more unique and enriched the experience.” ●



Kath Hudson is a regular contributor to *Spa Business* magazine. Email: kathhudson@leisuremedia.com



Children stay for free and the resort offers a huge ‘edutainment’ programme



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THE SPA PERFUMER



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Oils
100% pure and
natural



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Form + Function

Living Earth Crafts has distinguished itself with furniture for the spa industry that combines high design with seamless functionality.

Brian Paris gives us insight into the company's stylish new introductions

Can you tell us about the new products you've just debuted at ISPA?

We launched a few large items and a few smaller ones, but the Wilshire LE Pedicure chair was the star of the show – it's a compact mani/pedi chair with a retractable, motorised, fully plumbed pedicure bowl. It takes up a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional pedi chair, is designed for 'social spa-ing', and also has a fun mid-century design aesthetic that people really responded to. It's a truly beautiful and unique concept for pedicure and lounge furniture. We'll be shipping our first production units in November, and we already have incredible demand.

We didn't need to reinvent the lounge – we just gave it a new spin, added a little sway – and we perfected it



Our Ella Wave Lounger was also a big hit at ISPA. It's a zero-gravity, gentle rocking relaxation lounge that's activated by a guest's own natural movements – move your toes, and you rock gently, or lift your arms over your head and you move more. It's equipped with a Strata GT SpaMattress with GelTech technology, so it's also super-comfortable, and perfect for a relaxation lounge, quiet

space or even a salt room. People were visiting it over and over at ISPA to lie in its curves. We didn't need to reinvent the lounge – we just gave it a new spin, added a little sway – and we perfected it.

It's always exciting to reveal these new ideas to the spa world. We were the most crowded that we've ever been at ISPA and our constant innovation is something that our top clients expect.

Where do you find inspiration for your designs?

Inspiration comes in many forms, this year we were inspired by both classic design and one surprise 'aha' moment.

For example, the new Wilshire LE Pedicure Chair is a derivative of our Club LE chair, which won this year's Innovation Award from ISPA. Our clients loved the technology, but we wanted to give it a more social spin. This is not your typical pedicure, it is low-lying, with a small footprint and a flash of mid-century design.



The Wilshire LE Pedicure chair has a small footprint and an on-trend mid-century design aesthetic



The Parker trolley has an elegant throwback design packed with practical features

Paris found inspiration for the zero-gravity Ella Wave Lounger – which features a gentle rocking motion – while surfing at his home in California



LEC is known for innovation, service, support – and listening to our customers



The “aha” moment was with our newly designed Ella Wave Lounger. I live in San Diego and have learned to appreciate the mindfulness that surfing brings. One day I was lying on my surfboard, just beyond the waves to relax. As a small swell went under, it made this gentle rocking motion. It was exactly what our Wave Lounger needed... and voila!

Can you tell us a bit about the design and engineering process for your products?

We thrive in the manta of ‘form+function’. While I can create designs and ideas for the aesthetics, it takes real engineering to create the correct mechanicals and features, and to perfect the movements of our furniture. Our in-house engineers are phenomenal and have helped craft these amazing pieces.

The electronically retracting pedicure basin on the Wilshire LE pedicure chair was a challenge but our team clearly hit the mark. The Wilshire LE will revolutionise spa design, creating a beautifully compact unit with a minimal footprint – all while being very ‘high design’.

What is your background in design and engineering, and how did you get where you are today?

My father was a design engineer. I was six years old when I learned how to use drafting tools, so I’ve always had a talent for rendering. I’m a bit old-fashioned, as every piece we create starts with a pencil drawing for my initial concepts.

When I came into the spa business nearly two decades ago, design development was the first talent that I applied. I instantly fell into spa design and concepts, but furniture is definitely my real love. While I’m a partner in our companies and manage our global sales, I’m secretly a furniture design aficionado. It’s my passion, but it was developed through a lifetime of study and years of consulting and design work.

I definitely learned the most when I worked for Robert Redford at Sundance. He taught me the value of storytelling in my design work and how that can bring a guest – and spa – experience to life.

What are the biggest things that set LEC products apart from your competition?

LEC has won the American Spa magazine Professional’s Choice Awards for Best Treatment Table and Favorite Company for Manufacturer Support nine times in a row. We’ve won the Pedicure Equipment Category. We’ve won ISPA’s Innovator Award four times in the last five years.

Our company is growing each year at an unprecedented rate, and LEC is known for innovation, service, support – and listening to our customers. We take each and every relationship to heart. We support and build for nearly every major spa operator in the world, but we value every single customer and show our love and appreciation by giving the best possible experience when purchasing spa, wellness and pedicure furniture.



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spabusiness.com issue 4 2018 77

Bella vita

An Italian inspired Global Wellness Summit featured fashion, food, fitness and spa... and cameos from Hugh Jackman and Oprah Winfrey. Katie Barnes gives her highlights

From morning workouts with fitness giant Technogym to meetings on exercise balls and dancing breaks, this year's Global Wellness Summit (GWS) in Italy was one of the most energetic to date.

There was an uplifting spirit throughout thanks to summit co-chairs Mia Kyrillos, who heads up wellbeing at Hyatt and Tony de Leeuw, owner of Australian wellness destination Gwinganna, both of whom also emceed the event over the three days.


Now in its 12th year, GWS 2018 was held at the striking, wellness-oozing

Technogym Village headquarters in Emilia Romagna, north Italy. More than 600 delegates from 50 countries convened with the intention of Shaping the Business of Wellness, which was the summit's overarching theme.

It's clear that the event which started out as a 'spa summit' back in 2006 has firmly transitioned to 'wellness'. While top spa professionals made up a strong proportion of delegates, many came from the nutrition, design, health, medical and fitness space – just under half were there for the first time – with talks reflecting this broad remit.

Exciting numbers revealed at the event now value the global wellness economy at US\$4.2 trillion (€3.6tn, £3.2tn). It's grown 12.8 per cent in the last two years – nearly twice as fast as global GDP. Today the worldwide spa sector is worth US\$119bn (€103.1bn, £90.6bn) and thermal/mineral springs are worth US\$51bn (€44.2bn, £38.8bn). We take a more in-depth look at these findings on p88.

Overall the message was that the momentum for wellness is undeniable and unstoppable, and spas will want to decide how they want to help shape it.



The summit took place at the wellness-oozing Technogym headquarters in Italy



Summit co-chairs Tony de Leede (left) and Mia Kyricos (above) brought an uplifting spirit to the event

“Momentum for wellness is undeniable and unstoppable and spas will want to decide how they want to help shape it”



WHO's Dr Ranieri Guerra (left) and ex NHS director Mark Britnell gave their views on wellness

Gaining gravitas

The move to wellness is attracting high profile speakers such as representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO) and an ex director general of the UK's National Health Service (NHS).

Dr Ranieri Guerra, responsible for strategic initiatives at WHO, the global authority on public health, said wellness is “everywhere and nowhere” on its agenda. It keeps cropping up, but isn't overtly acknowledged. He admits the need to

set up a framework that can measure life quality and longevity. He said: “We need you to tell us what to do and to direct us on the big policies on global wellness.”

After running the NHS, Mark Britnell now consults on global healthcare systems as a senior partner at KPMG International. The best systems for health are focused on prevention, he said, confirming the emerging trend the spa industry is seeing with the blurring of boundaries between wellness and medical institutions. ▶

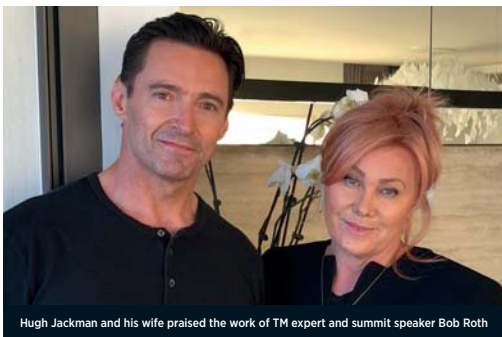


Excitement rippled through the audience when celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey addressed delegates via video

- ▶ Israel is leading the way in prevention, while Nordic countries excel in health promotion and Australia comes top in relation to mental health and wellbeing. "Your role is to work with health systems to teach them about prevention," he said, adding that the best way to do this is to first reach healthcare employees through workplace wellness programmes.

Excitement rippled through the audience when celebrities such as Hugh Jackman and Oprah Winfrey both addressed delegates via video.

Jackman praised summit speaker and transcendental meditation (TM) expert Bob Roth for teaching his family the type of meditation which taps into deeply relaxing alpha brainwaves. He said: "It's really been a game changer for us... although we're probably preaching to the converted." Jackman a long-standing of



Hugh Jackman and his wife praised the work of TM expert and summit speaker Bob Roth

“Transcendental meditation has really been a game changer for our family... although we’re probably preaching to the converted”



Winfrey spoke about Weight Watchers' move into the wellness sector

wellness, is also a co-investor in de Leede's Gwinganna (see SB16/3 p60).

His intro was followed by Roth's lively session detailing the potency of TM and his work at the David Lynch Foundation (see SB15/1 p36) which touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of inner city children and war veterans. An inspiring insight for spa operators who already offer meditation or those thinking about it.

This September, slimming company Weight Watchers rebranded to WW Inc with the tag line 'wellness that works' and a goal to focus more on holistic health and less on weight loss. Winfrey is an investor in the company and speaking directly to delegates during a talk with

WW president Mindy Grossman, she said: "We believe we can inspire people to not only eat well, but to move more, live more mindfully and to experience journeys of power and growth because that's really why we're all here - to find wellness."

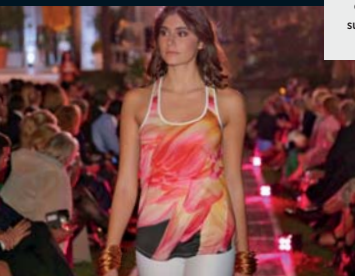
The take home message? Wellness is attracting major organisations and is getting the red carpet treatment itself.

Fashion and food

Speaking about the host country, GWS chair Susie Ellis said: "Italy is about emotion and love and that's the heart of dolce vita [a life full of pleasure]. We've tapped into Italy's most important assets - the lifestyle, the fresh food, longevity, ▶



Bob Roth's lively session focused on the potency of TM (left); the energetic summit included silent disco dancing breaks (right)



Italian style was embraced with a wellness runway show and a keynote from fashion designer Alberta Ferretti (below and right)



Over 600 delegates attended (left); new research values the global wellness economy at US\$4.2 trillion (right)





Antonio Citterio (left), Matteo Thun and Clodagh all talked about what wellness architecture and design means to them

► happiness, fashion, design, architecture, family – and used these as a lens with which to examine what's happening in wellness around the globe."

World famous designer Alberta Ferretti, who comes from Emilia Romagna, took a deep look at fashion and wellness and drew parallels on building self-esteem and confidence. On the gala night, delegates were also wowed with a wellness fashion runway show created by Jessica Jesse of BuDhaGirl which showcased athleisure wear with nature designs inspired by the mindful films of Louie Schwartzberg.

A number of nutrition and food specialists shared their insights on the latest trends in their sector such as diets based on your DNA profile, gut health and the microbiome (see SB14/2 p60), the importance of social eating and drinking and 'chewology'. The rise of veganism, spurred on by the documentary *What the Health*, has made many more mindful of dairy and meat consumption and *Spa Business* even foresees vegan spas in the future (see p60). All food for thought, if you pardon the pun, for any spa which serves snacks and meals.

6 It's about creating a place where people are happy to stay... and somewhere that will improve their quality of life 9

Wellness design

Wellness design discussions provided insight for those developing spa facilities. Celebrated Italian architects Antonio Citterio and Matteo Thun shared their perspectives on wellness buildings. Citterio said: "It's about creating a place where people are happy to stay, for community and ultimately somewhere that will improve their quality of life."

Thun, who's worked on projects such as the new Comfort Zone headquarters (see SB18/3 p44) and Bürgenstock's Waldhotel medical spa hotel (see SB18/1 p62), said: "Privacy is the most important part of spa design. People want silence."

New York-based designer Clodagh, favoured by companies such as Six Senses and Miraval, believes good design embraces wellbeing to transform people's lives and she uses approaches like feng shui, biophilia, chromotherapy and aromatherapy. "It's not about design," she said, "we're the messengers and it's our job to take people on a [sensory] journey." At the end of her talk, she was presented with this year's Leader in Sustainability award.

In a design panel led by *Spa Business'* editorial director Liz Terry, wabi sabi – the 'art of being imperfect' – was a key talking point. People can feel uncomfortable in pristine environments, such as ultra-modern spas. They form more emotional connections with imperfections, whether that's a less symmetrical room, characterful objects or hand-made materials. Later on, Terry launched *Well Home*, a prosumer magazine for the home wellness market (see p85).

Lifestyle focus

Looking at lifestyle was another primary topic at this year's summit. An illuminating talk by explorer Dan Buettner captured the ►

Mental health white paper released

In a keynote talk on mental wellness at this year's summit, professor Gerry Bodeker focused on the release of a new white paper – *Mental Wellness: Pathways, Evidence and Horizons*. The extensive 123-page paper, revealed at the summit for the first time, was put together by the GWIs Mental Health Initiative which Bodeker chairs.

The white paper documents known pathways to mental wellness – both western and eastern traditions – that are supported by evidence. It also offers evidence on the outcomes of wellness and spa treatments and perspective on mental wellness best practice in the industry, as well as suggesting mental wellness guidelines and training for spas and other operators.

Read more: globalwellnessinstitute.org



Gerry Bodeker launched a report on mental wellness evidence and guidelines



Thoughtful discussions continued over lunch; the *Spa Business* team at GWS (left); and Technogym's Nerio Alessandri with GWS chair Susie Ellis (right)



Delegates enjoyed socialising and getting together for numerous networking events, including a gala evening at the hotel where *La Dolce Vita* was filmed



Leading spa professionals made up a large proportion of delegates



It was a full house for Dan Buettner's keynote on Blue Zones – areas in the world with the highest concentration of centenarians

► attention of delegates. His work focuses on Blue Zones – five places in the world with the highest concentration of centenarians. He's researched the common denominators in the zones to unlock the secret of living long, happy, healthy lives. It's all about moving naturally, having the right outlook, eating wisely and connecting with others. Buettner tells *Spa Business* more about this and what it means to the industry on p16.

At the summit last year, Dr Richard Carmona, the US 17th surgeon general, put out a call to action for the industry to help eradicate chronic, preventable disease under the Wellness Moonshot banner. Working on this movement, the GWI teamed up with BuDhaGirl's Jesse to create a workplace wellness calendar. Every month research-backed details – outlining the benefits of everything from fitness to destressing – will be emailed to companies and employees to help spread the word about what they can do to prevent disease and make wellness a priority.

A spotlight was also shone on lifestyle and wellness in Italy. Specific figures were released about the country's wellness market. Italy has the 10th largest wellness tourism market in the world, generating €11.6bn (US\$13.3bn, £10.2bn) and 13.1 million trips in 2017. It has the sixth largest spa market globally with nearly 4,000 facilities and revenues of €2.8bn (US\$3.2bn, £2.5bn). It ranks number five in the world with its 768 thermal/mineral springs, which bring in €1.5bn (US\$1.7bn, £1.3bn) a year.

In addition, Nerio Alessandri, Technogym's inspiring president and founder, brought his own story alive recounting how he grew his company from a gym in a garage to one of the most successful businesses in the wellness sector. "I'm really emotional about this event [summit], I have the chills," he said. "The wellness economy is our 'collective raison d'être', our own 'tribe'."



Dan Buettner

On top of this, Alessandri set up a non-profit foundation 10 years ago to fund the Wellness Valley in Emilia Romagna where Technogym is headquartered (see SB18/3 p72). Under the initiative, local government, hospitals, schools and businesses have come together to improve public health and get people moving. As a result of their collective, commendable efforts, people in the region live 10 per cent longer than in the rest of the country.

Spa specific

Breakout sessions provided global spa operators and consultants with a chance to discuss industry issues and future trends.

“There’s enormous opportunity to scale up wellness destinations, but the lack of niche talent is holding them back”

Omer Isvan

In a panel on attracting investment, Omer Isvan, president of investment advisors Servotol, said “There’s enormous opportunity to scale up wellness destinations, but the lack of niche talent is holding it back.” For Neil Jacobs, CEO of Six Senses, the key to growth is finding developers, properties and senior management who truly believe in the company’s narrative. While for others the technology infrastructure and getting the right “people culture” is a must.

Meanwhile, return on investment (ROI) dominated a discussion on the future of wellness in hospitality with representatives from companies like



The new Wellness Moonshot calendar will offer companies advice on how to prevent disease



Liz Terry said *Well Home* targets wellness consumers and will be distributed in spas



AT HOME WITH JENNIFER BENINGFIELD IN AFRICA

Leisure media launches *Well Home* prosumer magazine

Liz Terry, CEO of Leisure Media, took to the stage at the summit to announce that the business to business publisher is branching out into the consumer market with the launch of *Well Home*, a new global consumer magazine for the home wellness market.

Leisure Media is already known for its leading industry magazines *Spa Business*, *CLAD* and *Health Club Management*.

Terry said: "The spa and wellness industry has done such an amazing job of converting consumers to a wellness lifestyle, that occasional trips to the spa or the gym are no longer enough.

"More and more people are starting to build wellness into their everyday lives, using their home as a base, with homes starting to have a wide range of wellness features,

from swimming pools and yoga studios, to circadian lighting and water and air filtration.

"*Well Home* magazine and website have been designed to inform and inspire people, through sharing these inspirational stories and knowledge."

Well Home will be distributed through spas and wellness facilities, with a number of key contacts already agreed.

Marriott and Accor, as well as Canyon Ranch and Mandarin Oriental. "The way [spa] ROI is measured in hotels is flawed," said leading industry figure Andrew Gibson. "Spas contribute so much more than just revenue from treatments."

Sarah Bader from design firm Gensler agreed and added: "You need to measure so much more than ROI if you're going to remain competitive."

The idea of measuring return on wellness (ROW), where you track the return on an individual's wellness after a stay at a hotel/having an experience, was suggested as a new alternative. Many were in agreement as it could have deeper meaning and, ultimately, links to customer loyalty. But how this is actually measured and to what level needs much thought.

Veering away from medical terminology such as 'oncology massage' and making sure staff know how to treat people affected by cancer was the focus of a Wellness Travel Heals workshop and this is something *Spa Business* looked at in-depth last issue (see SB18/3 p60). "Cancer is no longer a medical condition, it's a wellness condition, and it's our responsibility in the industry to treat these people and make them feel welcome," said Anna Bjurstam, wellness pioneer at Six Senses, adding that the group is getting all of its staff – from therapists to yoga



Scaleable wellness and finding the right developers was discussed in an investment panel

"The way spa ROI is measured in hotels is flawed. Spas contribute so much more than just treatment revenues"

Andrew Gibson





Anna Bjurstam spoke out about cancer training (above); Sheila McCann accepts the Leading Woman in Wellness award (left)

► practitioners – trained to deal with people affected by cancer for next year.

In a panel of spa, medical and wellness operators, Sheila McCann of Lanserhof UK said the ageing population and dementia is also something the spa industry needs to be mindful of. Is pre-screening thorough enough, especially if packages are sold via third parties? McCann is a staunch advocate of transformative wellness experiences offered at destination spas and was awarded with this year's Leading Woman in Wellness accolade at the summit.

The same panel, with representatives from esteemed resorts such as Bürgenstock, Lefay and Borgo Egnazia, agreed that while 'spa' is an easy sell and brings in a lot of business, integrative and medical approaches are where the opportunities lie as the population ages and people get more stressed in the workplace. Happiness and emotional retreats are popular as are convalescence packages. And guests prefer shorter stays rather than longer 10-14 day programmes.

“The ageing population and dementia is something the industry needs to be mindful of. Is pre-screening thorough enough?”

Save the date

Asia-bound: The 2019 Global Wellness Summit will take place on 15-17 October at Grand Hyatt, Hong Kong it was announced

China calling

Brand specialist Cathy Feliciano-Chon's presentation on China as a wellness mega-consumer force was an agenda highlight on the final day. The numbers speak for themselves. In two year's time, it's predicted that Chinese travellers will make 200 million overseas visits and that frequent independent travellers, female

travellers and the multi generational markets will be the ones to watch.

Gym memberships in the country have doubled since 2008, to 6.6 million in 2016 and there are now 37,000 health clubs. There are also 10,800 yoga schools and 12 million yoga practitioners. China's spa market generates CNY23bn (US\$3.3bn, £2.9bn, £2.5bn) and we take a closer look at those numbers on p34.

Feliciano-Chon's talk dovetailed neatly with the announcement that next year the summit will be held in Asia, specifically Hong Kong. Grand Hyatt Hong Kong will be the host venue and dates are now confirmed as 15-17 October 2019.

Ellis closed the summit by thanking co-chairs Kyricos and De Leede, and with a promise for delegates to expect great things at the next event.

“Every year I'm blessed with work with different co-chairs who keep the agenda fresh with their contacts and ideas,” she said. “We will decide on the 2019 co-chairs in the next month and then together we will study the region and its strengths when it comes to wellness and begin curating another fantastic summit.” ●



Happiness and emotional retreats are growing in popularity, a wellness panel said



Katie Barnes is the editor of *Spa Business* magazine
Email: katiebarnes@leisuremedia.com

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GROWING UP

Wellness is now a US\$4.2tn global industry and spa was the fastest growing sector from 2015 to 2017 according to the latest research from the Global Wellness Institute

The global wellness industry has grown 12.8 per cent, from a US\$3.7tn (€3.2tn, £2.8tn) market in 2015 to US\$4.2tn (€3.6tn, £3.2tn) in 2017, according to the 2018 *Global Wellness Economy Monitor*, revealed at the Global Wellness Summit last month (see p78).

The all-new data, by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), shows that the wellness economy increased by 6.4 per cent annually, nearly twice as fast as global economic growth at 3.6 per cent.

The research is based on 10 markets (see Diagram 1) and all of these – from fitness & mind-body to wellness tourism – gained much traction. The GWI says this “provides fresh evidence that wellness remains one of the world’s biggest and fast-growing industries.”



Report co-authors Johnston (left) and Yeung unveiled their findings at the 2018 Global Wellness Summit

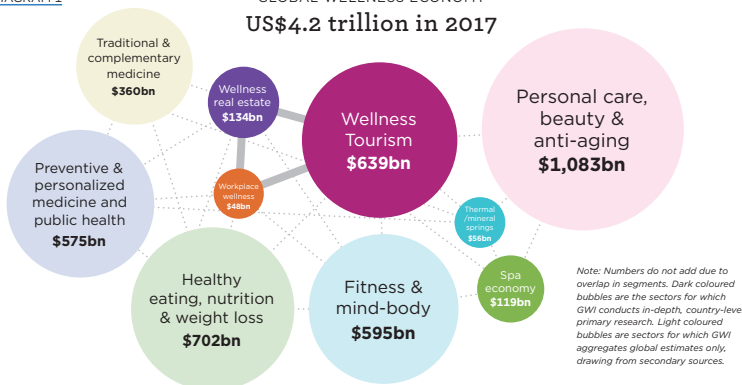
Global spa economy

Valued at US\$119bn (€103.1bn, £90.6bn), the global spa economy comprises spa facility revenues, now worth US\$93.6bn (€81.1bn, £71.3bn) yearly; and also spa education, consulting, associations, media and event sectors, now US\$25.2bn (€21.8bn, £19.2bn). While the spa economy is the third smallest out of all wellness markets, it's grown the fastest in the last two years with revenues increasing by 9.8 per cent. This is much higher than the 2.3 per cent pace of growth from 2013 to 2015.

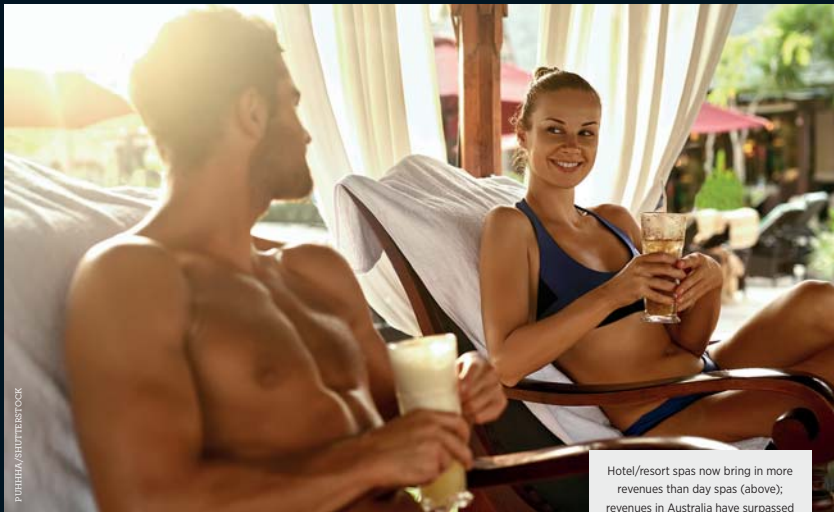
The number of spas jumped from 121,595 in 2015 to over 149,000 in 2017, employing nearly 2.6 million workers. Interestingly, hotel and resort spas brought in the most income and have now surpassed day spas and salons as the industry's revenue leader.

DIAGRAM 1

GLOBAL WELLNESS ECONOMY US\$4.2 trillion in 2017



Source: 2018 Global Wellness Economy Monitor, Global Wellness Institute



Hotel/resort spas now bring in more revenues than day spas (above); revenues in Australia have surpassed the US\$1bn threshold (below)

THE NUMBER OF SPAS JUMPED FROM 121,595 IN 2015 TO OVER 149,000 IN 2017 EMPLOYING NEARLY 2.6m WORKERS

Speaking at the summit, research co-author Katherine Johnston says: "Since 2007, the number of spas and spa facility revenues have doubled. Spa revenues have gone by 7.2 per cent annually, and that's more than double the GDP growth rate in that time. And this growth is especially remarkable if you remember that this decade began with years of recession."

The main drivers of the spa industry, according to the report, are rising incomes, the rapid growth of wellness tourism, and an increasing consumer propensity to spend on all things related to wellness.

Where in the world?

Asia-Pacific is home to the largest number of spas, the report shows, and also added the greatest number of new facilities from 2015 to 2017. Europe led in total spa revenues in 2017 (see Diagram 2).

Across the world, the spa industry remains quite concentrated in five countries – the US, China, Germany, Japan

and France – which, when combined, account for 48 per cent of global revenues. Meanwhile the top 20 countries represent 77 per cent of the global market.

However, the industry is becoming slightly more dispersed over time. In 2017, 18 countries had annual spa revenues exceeding US\$1bn, and Indonesia and Australia each surpassed the US\$1bn threshold for the first time.

Thermal & mineral springs

The thermal/mineral springs market continues to develop as more people turn to water for stress relief, healing and community, the report says. Market revenues increased by 4.9 per cent from US\$51bn (€44.2bn, £38.8bn) in 2015 to US\$56.2bn (€48.7bn, £42.8bn) in 2017, making it the fourth fastest growing sector out of the wellness markets. The number of facilities jumped from 27,507 (in 109 countries) to 34,057 (in 127 countries) – employing 1.8 million workers.

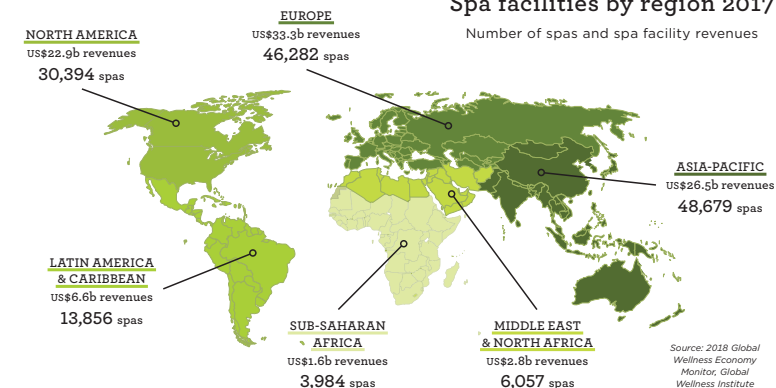


The majority of thermal/mineral establishments worldwide are rustic and traditional bathing and swimming facilities. "They target local markets and charge relatively low admission. About a quarter of establishments are higher-end, targeting tourists and offering value-added spa services," the report states. Those that offer spa services account for a much greater share of industry revenues (66 per cent) than those without.

The thermal/mineral springs industry is heavily concentrated in Asia-Pacific and Europe, "reflecting the centuries-old history of water-based healing and relaxation in these two regions". Together, these two world regions account for

Spa facilities by region 2017

Number of spas and spa facility revenues



- 95 per cent of industry revenues and 94 per cent of establishments.

Growth projections

The GWI worked on original research for five of the 10 wellness markets and used secondary sources for the others. Johnston predicts that all five of the sectors it worked on "will continue to grow faster than GDP over the next five years".

As wellness begins to permeate society even more deeply, however, the strongest markets will be those relating to how we live, work and travel – the core spheres of life – namely wellness real estate, wellness tourism and workplace wellness (see Table 1). Presenting alongside Johnston, report co-author Ophelia Yeung says: "In the last few years, wellness has become a dominant lifestyle value that's



Spas generate US\$93.6bn globally

profoundly changing consumer behaviour and the workplace. Our interaction with the wellness economy is also becoming less episodic and more intentional, more integrated and more holistic."

In short, there's an overlap between the different wellness markets. The

trend of wellness bedrooms/hotels, for example, is a convergence of spa, fitness, nutrition and travel (see SB18/3 p78). While hot springs in China which have traditionally focused on recreation and leisure are now mixing wellness tourism and workplace wellness. Yeung notes: "Wellness markets will become less siloed and more interconnected, converging to offer solutions and experiences in the places where people live, work and travel."

Johnston adds: "Everyone here [including spa operators] should be looking for opportunities to bring the wellness services and products into these three core spheres of people's daily lives, in new, innovative and creative ways.

Addressing inequality

While the 2018 Global Wellness Economy Monitor findings sound promising for both the spa sector and wider wellness market, Yeung and Johnston are also keen to give a reality check.

Yeung says: "Ultimately, it's not the size of this number, but the quality of wellness in the world. Can the wellness economy continue to thrive if it follows the trend of global income inequality? Are people totally well if only those who can afford it continue to save for their wellness?"

Johnston adds: "The challenge is this. Can the wellness economy touch a larger slice of the world, especially people who need it the most but can afford it the least?" ●

■ Download a free copy of the report at globalwellnessinstitute.org

TABLE 1 Wellness Sector Growth Projections, 2017 to 2022*

	Projected Market Size (US\$ billions)		Projected Average Annual Growth Rate
	2017	2022	2017-2022
Wellness Real Estate	\$134.3	\$197.4	8.0 %
Workplace Wellness	\$47.5	\$65.6	6.7 %
Wellness Tourism	\$639.4	\$919.4	7.5 %
Spa Facilities	\$93.6	\$127.6	6.4 %
Thermal/Mineral Springs	\$56.2	\$77.1	6.5 %

*Source: 2018 Global Wellness Economy Monitor, Global Wellness Institute

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WTA board members and presenters including founding members Anne Dimon (centre), Andrew Gibson and Thomas Klein (third and fourth right)

TRIP ADVISOR

What do wellness travellers want? And what issues need to be addressed as the wellness tourism sector grows? Anne Dimon reports from the inaugural members meeting of the Wellness Tourism Association



With health roots digging deep into the 17th century, Le Monastère des Augustines, a wellness-themed boutique hotel located within the historic stone walls of Quebec City, Canada, was the ideal setting for the Wellness Tourism Association's first meeting of members.

Figures just released value global wellness tourism as a US\$639.4bn (€552.4bn, £484.2bn) sector that's growing twice as fast as general tourism, representing 830 million trips in 2017 (see p88). On the cusp of this trend, the non-profit association launched in January with a view to creating connections between the places that offer wellness travel options – from tourist boards to high-end spas – and those who want to market this growing sector of the industry, such as tour operators and travel agents.

The inaugural meeting welcomed 29 members and partners from as far away as Turkey and the Dominican Republic, including top name

operators such as Canyon Ranch and Richmond Nua Wellness-Spa.

Along with thought leader presentations, delegates were privy to findings from the WTA's first consumer wellness travel survey (see p91) and engaged in open, round-table sessions.

Top takeaways

In his opening remarks WTA chair, and well known spa and hospitality figure, Andrew Gibson encouraged delegates to agree on the future direction and tasks of the association. And several plans of action were made.

With the goal of bringing standards and clear-cut definitions to stakeholders, travel advisors and consumers, it was agreed that members will work to make the WTA's Glossary of Industry Definitions widely acknowledged and accepted. The glossary, published earlier this year, includes definitions of wellness resorts versus wellness destinations and outlines the differences between wellness retreats, travel and vacations.



● Dr Richard Carmona spoke about how Wellness Meets Medical (left); delegates engaged in open, round-table sessions (above)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIRST WELLNESS TRAVEL SURVEY

Key findings from the WTA's first *Wellness Travel Survey* were revealed at the September event. The online survey attracted a total of 2,566 consumers, the vast majority of whom were 35-55 and 55-plus year-old females from the US and Canada

Main motivation for a wellness vacation:

Close to half of survey respondents identified "a general, overall reboot" as their main goal, followed by "to reconnect with self" and a "mental health break"

Top must haves: The vast majority (84.57 per cent) cited "a variety of healthy food options" as a must have for their personal wellness vacation, followed by "accessible nature", "access to spa treatments" and "a wide range of scheduled fitness activities"

Preferred type of programme: Nearly eight in 10 selected "a self-guided programme" with an opportunity to pick and choose

Nearly half of wellness travellers are willing to spend **US\$2,500-US\$5,000** on a five-day all-inclusive vacation

from a menu of options, versus just over two in 10 who prefer or would prefer "a structured programme" guided by hosts and experts.

Perfect length of stay: Close to half the number of participants indicated that their preferred length of stay for a wellness vacation is "three to five nights". The "seven nights" option was selected by one third of the respondents

Best travel companion: When asked with whom do you/would you prefer to travel on a wellness vacation?, close to one quarter responded "solo to meet up with the like-minded", followed by "with a significant other" and "solo"

Preferred price point: Half of respondents would be willing to spend **less than US\$2,000** (€1,728, £1,514) on a five-day all-inclusive wellness vacation (excluding transportation, while close to the same (44.86 per cent) were willing to spend **between US\$2,500-US\$5,000** (€2,160-€4,320, £1,893-£3,786).

In addition, a team will be assembled to look at the development of measurable standards to reinforce the definitions and determine if and how these standards should be audited.

In the meantime, an Education Advisory Committee will be launched with a mandate of identifying and/or developing educational tools and outreach programmes to help educate the various sectors - including consumers, travel advisors and destination marketing organisations (DMOs) - on these definitions. It will also offer consumers advice on finding the right fit, travel advisors a better understanding of what customers are looking for and DMOs insight into what they need to launch a viable wellness initiative.

Presenting on the topic of Wellness Meets Medical, Dr Richard Carmona, 17th surgeon general of the US and chief of health innovations at Canyon Ranch, said: "Wellness has become a necessity due to the continued rising disease and economic burden. We have to educate fellow citizens on its value, defined in its simplest terms as 'the personal pursuit of aligning one's mind, body and spirit'."

Under the same topic, neuropsychologist Dr Robert Velin shared that, "we're seeing the younger generation look at quality of life with a whole new perspective, and they're far more motivated to pursue that quality of life by embracing healthy living," which, naturally, extends to their travels.

And, how did participants feel about this inaugural event? Travelling nearly

24 hours from Turkey, Hakan Balcan, general manager of destination spa Richmond Nua Wellness-Spa, echoed the sentiment of many of the attendees: "Sharing ideas and experiences was one of the most important benefits. The wellness sector needed this organisation, and I'm honoured to be a member of this industry community."

In conclusion, chair Gibson pointed out that the WTA was created to help shape the sustainable future of wellness tourism and be a credible voice of the industry. ●



Anne Dimon is a wellness travel journalist and president of the WTA. Email: adimon@traveltowellness.com

INHALE *the* FUTURE

Teacher, healer and author Ashley Neese tells Neena Dhillion about the possibilities of breathwork and opening up the practice to more people



An in-demand breathwork teacher, Neese feels the modality is a great fit for spas

Yoga is huge, meditation has gone mainstream and there's more interest in energetic healing," observes in-demand, California-based breathwork teacher Ashley Neese. "As you go deeper into these facets of healing and cut through the layers, there's one foundation. That essence is breathwork." While scientific study into the modality is still in its infancy, practitioners of yoga and Chinese medicine have long argued that respiration influences mind, body and spirit. With the renewed uptake in yoga and meditation, as a way to not only manage anxiety but also to promote clarity in daily lives, it seems natural that people are turning their attention to the elemental question of how we breathe and what happens when we alter patterns of respiration.

For Neese, who's qualified and trained in hatha yoga, reiki and somatic therapy, her progression to teaching breathwork

was driven by a deep interest in its community potential. "The physical aspects of what I was learning appealed to me less than the work we did with the breath," she recalls. "While yoga has a strong body element and meditation has a mind aspect, breathwork connects the two more fully, and can be tried without special equipment or clothes in a learning environment. In my sessions, everyone sits in a circle and says what is on their mind and how they've been feeling. Breathing is a great way to open up to community."

Taking into account this group aspect and as a natural extension of yoga and meditation, breathwork surely has a place in spas and health clubs.



● Neese ran a healing breathwork retreat at Two Bunch Palms, California earlier this year

How it works

In a typical class, Neese shows participants how altering the rate of inhalation and exhalation can affect the way we think and how it reduces stress by grounding the nervous system.

These are techniques valued among her on-the-go clients who have invariably tried other types of therapies yet still have difficulty quietening the mind and releasing stagnant energy.

On a basic level, the inhalation is linked to the sympathetic nervous system, its primary focus to stimulate the body's fight-or-flight response. "We need this part of the nervous system to power us through the day but, for many, the issue is that they're in this mode for much



People learn that altering the rate of breathing can affect how they think and reduces stress



of the day so there's no chance for the body to recalibrate," explains Neese.

"Exhalation, on the other hand, feeds into the parasympathetic nervous system, which then supports activities that take place when the body is at rest. This is when we repair and restore. I don't have a strict formula when it comes to teaching – my approach is organic – but often I find that there's a focus on slowing and deepening exhalation to aid people's rest-and-digest processes."

While the science may not yet be widely accepted, recent studies including those at Trinity College Dublin reveal that the way we breathe directly affects the chemistry of our brains. As lead author, Michael Melnychuk, reports: "When we are stressed we produce too much noradrenaline and we can't focus. When we feel sluggish, we produce too little and again can't focus. There's a sweet spot of noradrenaline in which our emotions, thinking and memory are much clearer. This study has shown that our attention

is influenced by our breath, rising and falling with the cycle of respiration. By focusing on and regulating breathing, you can optimise your attention level."

Over in the US, Drs Richard P Brown and Patricia L Gerbarg, elaborate further on ways of breathing. They say: "Changing the patterns of breathing makes it possible to restore balance to the stress response systems, calm an agitated mind, relieve symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, improve physical health and endurance, elevate performance, and enhance relationships."

THERE'S A SWEET SPOT OF NORADRENALINE IN WHICH OUR EMOTIONS, THINKING AND MEMORY ARE MUCH CLEARER



Public classes ranges from US\$55-US\$175, while retreats start at US\$2,500

The life force

Fast becoming an authority on the subject, with a book called *How to Breathe: 25 practices for calm, joy and resilience*, due to be published in April 2019, Neese suggests that all the pieces are there to prove the benefits of breathwork. "Whether it's pranayama from the ayurvedic system or chi from Chinese medicine, the idea of breath as our life force has existed for years, with these classical cultures making the connection between the energy, breath and spirit," she says. "I've studied their history and witnessed their

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► practical application in today's world. It's logical that we can open up areas of static energy in the body through breathing. And when you see 70-year-olds who've been practising for years, you just can't argue with their levels of vitality."

As a teacher, she offers private sessions and group classes in studios, lifestyle shops and corporate settings as well as longer four-day retreats in spas. Her public classes vary in price from US\$55-US\$175 (€48-€153, £43-£137) per person depending on length of class while retreats, again open to the public, start from US\$2,500 (€2,191, £1,950). With an average of 30 in a public class, Neese uses somatic touch, a form of body-focused meditation that involves her guiding participants to use their own hands to access their body.

"We think of our respiratory system at the front of our bodies but I often guide people to the sides and back," she says. "Although you physically can't touch your diaphragm, I can direct people to a related part of the sternum, creating an intention and body memory, which helps them to shift their breathing practice. This is something they can continue at home." Along with guided techniques to activate and regulate the nervous system, there's a chance for people to talk about their intentions.

Clients come to manage stress, access intuition, or deal with emotional issues, says Neese



Neese loves the community aspect of breathwork, saying it's a great way for people to connect

ANXIETY CAN BE A MANIFESTATION OF TRAUMA OR ABUSE EXPERIENCED BY PEOPLE IN THEIR EARLIER LIVES

Clients come to manage stress, access their intuition, unleash their creativity, improve emotional intelligence or because they're suffering trauma. Neese has seen how breathwork can be an entry point into deeper layers of emotions that practitioners need to manage effectively. "Anxiety can be a manifestation of trauma or abuse experienced by people in their earlier lives so practitioners have to be careful about reigniting this level of emotion and sending clients back out into the world," advises Neese. "There has to be a safe container in which to work through trauma. Ideally you'd want a small group committed to meeting regularly over six months – once a week. In this scenario, my session would widen out to include therapy-type counselling and somatic meditation. I've taught many corporate classes and nine times out of 10, there will be one or two executives who find emotional stress coming out, rooted in their past."

When experience is essential

Although Neese has not taught in a gym, she sees no reasons why breathwork classes should not be offered especially if yoga or meditation is already available. She has colleagues who work specifically with high-performance athletes. For spas – Neese has previously run retreats at California's Two Bunch Palms – she says that "classes can be focused on relaxation, connection to self, creativity or intuition."

As a note of caution, she recommends gym and spa owners seek out practitioners who have a grounding in energy medicine, yoga and breathwork. "There are so many different schools and lineages of energy medicine so it's important to find teachers with more than a day's worth of breathwork training," she says. "Look for someone who has taught plenty of breath-specific modalities."

One of breathwork's great advantages is that it's suited to 45-minute classes through to extensive retreats. It's also great for self-practice at home or groups. Neese hopes that breathwork is shared with as many people as possible for its accessible and life-changing possibilities. ●



Neena Dhillon is a spa, hotel and travel journalist
Email: ndhillon@spabusiness.com

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Heidi Clark, Spa Director -
Monterey Plaza Hotel and Spa

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Taylor O. Fields, Corporate Director
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Data & analytics

Customers leave a data trail from the moment they book to when they check out, but how are software companies helping spas to use that data effectively, sensitively and lawfully?

Today's consumers might be wary of disclosing personal information and too busy to fill in lengthy paper forms, but increasingly they expect a hyper-personalised experience at every stage of the customer journey, a tricky dichotomy that spas must navigate in order to reap the rewards of the high-value return customer.



Data capture must be a key component of any spa software system and should be present at every step of the customer journey

YENIFFER PADRINO,
BOOK4TIME

BIG DATA

And the good news? The leisure industry has an enviable quantity and variety of data at its collective fingertips with which to work. A data trail of information from treatment booking to check-out can be mined and analysed for all its worth, providing the software systems are in place to gather the right data and come up with focused, actionable insights.

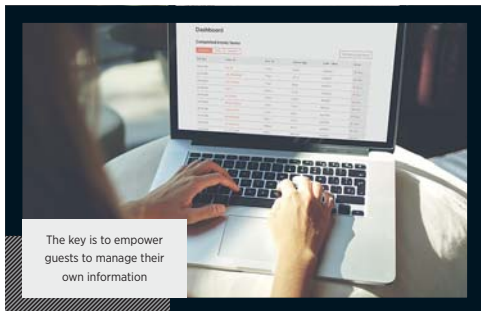
Yeniffer Padrino, marketing manager of Book4Time, explains: "Data capture must be a key component of any spa software system and should be present at every step of the customer journey."

But what sort of information should spas gather? The short answer: everything! Padrino says: "Book4Time captures the entire customer profile. We keep track of all treatments the customer has taken,

what products he/she bought, which technician provided the treatment, what locations of the spa the customer visited, if he/she prefers a particular therapist. All of this information will make the customer's future visits even better."

SIMPLICITY VERSUS ADVANCED ANALYTICS

Balancing the needs of time-poor customers who want 24/7 accessibility alongside a super-personalised experience is a difficult juggling act for spas to execute, but the software is there to support both sides of the relationship. ResortSuite's founder and CEO Frank Pitsikalis believes that the key is to empower guests to manage their own information via a number of different channels. He says: "The rise of online and



The key is to empower guests to manage their own information

Every aspect of the spa experience is expected to become hyper-personalised in the next few years

WILLIAMS/SHUTTERSTOCK

mobile app booking allows the guest to be in command of their own experience and provide information about themselves as well as the types of services they enjoy.

"ResortSuite's Spa Check-In App is an easy and streamlined way in which spas can obtain mandatory health information and consent from their guests. The forms and waivers are digitally stored on the guest's profile which eliminates filing cabinets filled with paper."

The result is a fast, convenient process for both the customer and spa. For ResortSuite client Laurence Roptus, spa and health club manager at Fallsview Casino Resort, Ontario, the most significant impact of the software has been on day-to-day operations. She says: "It allows us to process guests more efficiently with clear information, allows for better communication between therapist and guest, and creates an exceptional standard of service that guests have come to expect."

Simplicity might be key to the user-experience, but it's what spas do with the captured data that can make the difference and it's in this space that a spa software system's advanced analytics solutions can help deliver that competitive edge.



The Assistant Company's (TAC) offers over 1,000 different report options in order to inform spas of all processes in their business. Managing director Günther Pöllabauer explains: "Spa software companies need to understand that there should be different levels of data analysis such as interfaces with high-level business intelligence tools to connect all data, reporting and KPIs for spa managers and customised reporting like performance management for spa employees. Daily business reports, commission analyses, and examination of resource utilisation should also be available as well. This way, staff members will always have the most important data ready to use in their mailbox."

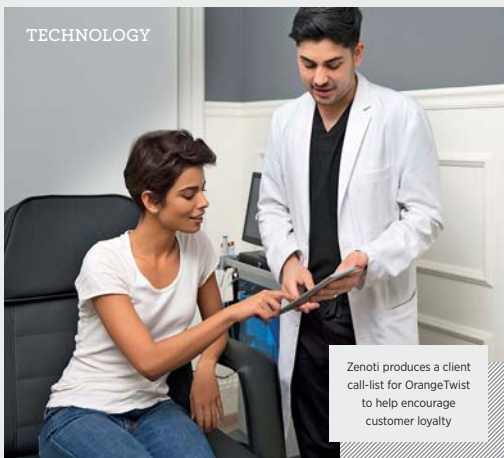
ResortSuite software allows us to process guests more efficiently and allows for better communication between therapist and guest

LAURENCE ROPTUS,
FALLSVIEW CASINO RESORT

CONTENDING WITH COMPLIANCE

However, what challenges do spas face in contending with such a vast amount of personal data? With privacy laws like the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into force in the European Union in May, and similar laws in operation across 80 other countries, it's essential for spas to be compliant. But rather than be daunted by the raft of regulations surrounding personal data, spas should view them positively, for the protection they afford and the opportunities they present.

Leonie Wileman, COO of Premier Software, asserts: "Whether you're an



Zenoti produces a client call-list for OrangeTwist to help encourage customer loyalty



Zenoti's dashboard and analytics helps us understand the customer journey... so we can forecast as well as learn about opportunities

DENISE KEELER,
ORANGETWIST

► independent boutique spa or part of a large group, ensuring you're GDPR compliant will protect you across countries and time-zones. Achieving compliance is relatively straightforward, you just need to be transparent about the data you keep, how long you keep it for and how you will use it."

For Premier client Ian Mitchell, sales and operations manager at The Woodland Spa, UK, GDPR compliance offered via the Core system provides peace of mind: "Core is fully secure and knowing that our client information is safe makes a



GDPR affects everyone, but it's been a good opportunity to cleanse our database and review our data and privacy policies

IAN MITCHELL,
THE WOODLAND SPA, UK

huge difference to the business. The data is encrypted and only accessible to staff with permission. GDPR affects everyone, but it's been a good opportunity to cleanse our database, review our data and privacy policies as well as ensuring we are, and will remain, compliant."

DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS

So, the data is captured, it's compliant and it's been mined for information. This allows spas to dig deeper into customer behaviour and leverage it for more personalised marketing campaigns and data-driven business decisions.

Sudheer Koneru, CEO of spa software solutions company Zenoti, says: "Because Zenoti is a centralised system, each customer has a single profile even if they visit multiple locations. This allows service providers to leverage insights from other locations and enables providers to really personalise every aspect of the guest experience, from greeting them with a question about a recent event in their lives to bringing them their favourite beverage to enjoy while they wait."

However, a spa's software system can go one step further, beyond the on-site experience and deep into smart marketing territory. "Smart marketing is integrated into the complete Zenoti solution, so it uses appointment book data to predict and fill slow days to help spa owners meet their designated weekly revenue goals. It even learns from customer

responses to send more compelling follow-up offers over time," Koneru adds.

Zenoti customer Denise Keeler, COO of US aesthetics chain OrangeTwist, agrees: "We allocate a fair amount of money to marketing, so we measure obsessively! Zenoti's dashboard and analytics helps us understand the customer journey and gives a snapshot of our business at any given time, so we can forecast as well as learn about opportunities. The analytics page helps us see client behaviour and gives us a call-list to get clients back in."

THE FUTURE'S PERSONAL

According to Koneru, there's no such thing as 'too much' personalisation, with every aspect of the spa experience expected to become hyper-personalised in the coming years. Likewise, Book4Time's Padrino believes the incorporation of technologies like artificial intelligence to automate even more processes will not only optimise operations, but will "heighten the customer experience to the max."

One thing's for sure, armed with systems delivering big data analytics, spas can only get smarter at keeping their customers happy. ●

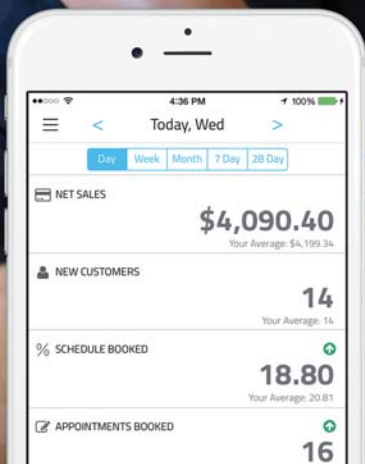


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Product innovation



By Lauren Heath-Jones,
assistant product editor

Industry suppliers tell Lauren Heath-Jones about their latest product, treatment and equipment launches

Bubble tent offers spa whatever the weather, says Ferran Monfort



“We offer a new experience where guests can relax in comfort under the night sky”

Spanish-based design firm Eye in the Sky is the creator of an transparent inflatable ‘bubble tent’ which could be used as a stylish outdoor treatment room, enabling spas to offer guests a one-of-a-kind alfresco experience whatever the weather.

Designed to offer a “uniquely immersive nature experience” without compromising on guests’ comfort, the bubble is a UV-protected, fully waterproof, climate-controlled cocoon, constructed from a strong, high-tech polyester fabric.

It comes in a range of sizes (3m-5m) and configurations, including the addition of an adjoining ‘bubble bathroom’ equipped with a toilet and shower. Wooden floors and bespoke furnishings are also available.



The inflatable bubble can be used as a stylish outdoor treatment room

Ferran Monfort, export manager and business development manager at Eye in the Sky, says: “People know what it is to go to a spa or a hotel, what we offer is a new experience where guests can relax in comfort under the night sky.”

Most recently, the company installed a ‘beach bubble’ at the Finolhu Resort in the Maldives so that guests can enjoy stargazing without compromising on high-spec design and luxurious creature comforts.

KEYWORDS: EYE IN THE SKY ▶



Finolhu Resort uses the bubble for a stargazing experience

Full Balance footpath promotes wellbeing and foot health, says Bernhard Wallner



Full Balance, an Austrian provider of reflexology tiles, has created a stimulating barefoot experience at the Therme Erding spa in Germany.

The Tile & Stone reflexology footpath, which can be used to supplement existing spa treatments, consists of six floor stations. Each station has a tile designed to stimulate a different reflexology point, just by using strategically placed stones and the guest's own body weight.

Handcrafted from natural materials, the tiles are intended to offer the health benefits of reflexology, which include increased circulation and improved organ function, and promote overall foot health.

There are six floor stations – each designed to stimulate different reflexology points



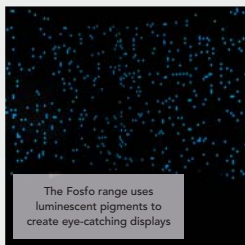
“The response from the guests is very positive”

“We’re happy to have partners such as the Therme Erding who share our vision and are open to set new trends. Four weeks after opening our footpath, the response from the guests is very positive and manifold which makes this project already a big success,” says Bernhard Wallner, co-founder of Full Balance.

KEYWORDS: FULL BALANCE



“These tiles work beautifully as a feature wall in spas”



The Fosfo range uses luminescent pigments to create eye-catching displays

Dave Foster unveils Designworks' glow-in-the-dark tile collection

High-end tile supplier Designworks has revealed a range of luminous mosaic tiles to bring light into wet areas.

The Fosfo range uses luminescent pigments, which ‘charge’ when exposed to light, to create a eye-catching glow-in-the-dark display.

The collection is available in sheets for a full on light show, or in a random pattern for a

more subtle effect. Up to six colours are available including, blue, grey and beige.

The tiles feature the company's JointPoint technology, an innovation that allows for easy application and stronger adhesion.

“Our new Fosfo collection adds vibrancy, fun and distinction to the Designworks mosaics range. These tiles work beautifully as a feature

wall in spas and steamrooms and look spectacular when integrated in swimming pools, especially at night,” says Dave Foster, head of leisure sales at Designworks.

“We predict this new collection will be very popular amongst luxury hotels and spas which are looking to add a unique touch to guests' experience.”

KEYWORD: DESIGNWORKS



The company supplies ofuro soaking tubs worldwide. Its latest project was in Italy



“Japanese bathing is a transformative experience”

Japanese bathing rituals are an antidote to modern life, says Jacopo Torrini

Bartok Design, which makes and supplies Japanese bathtubs known as ofuro, has completed a major installation at the newly opened SpaFusion at the Palazzo Varignana hotel near Bologna, Italy (pictured).

The brainchild of Italian architect Iacopo Torrini, Bartok creates handmade ofuro for spas. Used in traditional Japanese bathing rituals,

ofuro are soaking tubs, made from aromatic woods, designed specifically for relaxation purposes.

Guests simply lay back in hot scented water for 30 minutes to an hour, before emerging soothed and revitalised, their stresses soaked away.

The tubs, which are suitable for both indoor and outdoor use, are made-to-order and are completely

bespoke, with the company offering a range of model, size and material options, including straight and knotty hinoki wood

Torrini says: “Japanese bathing is a transformative experience. The aroma of the wood and the sound of running water create a sensory experience that serves as an antidote to modern life.”

KEYWORDS: BARTOK DESIGN

Brian Brazeau introduces Comfort Zone’s hormone ageing line



The products are designed to regenerate and hydrate menopausal skin

Italian skincare company Comfort Zone has partnered with hormone-health specialist Dr Alyssa Burns-Hill to develop a range of products and treatments targeting hormonal changes in the skin due to ageing.

Sublime Skin Hormon-Aging is aimed at women experiencing the menopause and consists of a skin oil, serum as well as a facial.

The products are formulated to comfort, re-densify, regenerate and hydrate menopausal skin. Active ingredients include passion fruit oil to stimulate cellular turnover, weakened by the drop in estrogen production, while the facial combines special massage techniques – a firm, kneading dermal petrissage and the Japanese kobido method of applied pressure through the fingers – to reactivate cellular communication.

Brian Brazeau, general manager of Comfort Zone, says: “The new



“It’s an extension of our best-selling rejuvenating line”

Sublime Skin Hormon-Aging is a strategic extension to our best-selling rejuvenating line to respond to the specific physical and emotional impact of the hormonal changes due to menopause.

“The new facial enhances the regenerating and re-densifying properties of the specific oil-based formulas and homecare product sizes are also available.”

KEYWORDS: COMFORT ZONE

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Christina Salcedas introduces Aromatherapy Associates' new Hydrasol Sheet Masks



Aromatherapy Associates has expanded its skincare range with a "next generation sheet mask".

The Hydrasol Sheet Mask is intended to leave the skin firm, radiant and intensely hydrated. It's infused with active ingredients, including hyaluronic acid to moisturise, aloe vera to soothe, turmeric root extract to form a protective barrier and frankincense to plump the skin, as well as hand-blended essential oils.

Used as an add-on to a professional treatment or retailed in spas, the mask is non-slip and designed to fit snugly to the contours of the face. It's made from a biodegradable material sourced from eucalyptus wood.



Ingredients include
hyaluronic acid to moisturise
and soothing aloe vera

"We've spent a long time developing the Hydrasol Sheet Mask and couldn't be more thrilled with the results," says Christina Salcedas, global director of education at Aromatherapy Associates.

"It's a great fuss-free way to inject skin with a boost of moisture. Skin feels lifted, firm and beautifully smooth in just 10 minutes," she adds.

KEYWORDS:

AROMATHERAPY ASSOCIATES

It's a great
fuss-free way
to inject skin
with a boost
of moisture

Elemental Herbology scrub combines aromatherapy with exfoliation, says Louise Riby

Elemental Herbology has launched a body scrub to complement its new full-body exfoliating treatment.

Combining aromatherapy with exfoliation and intense nourishment, the Coconut Shell Cream Body Scrub is designed to gently buff and polish the skin, leaving behind a healthy and glowing complexion.

The scrub contains both the shell of the coconut and its oil for "maximum skin smoothing benefit". The shell, which acts as a natural exfoliant, buffs and smooths the skin, while the oil intensely hydrates. Other ingredients include shea butter and aloe vera to improve the skin's texture.



"We wanted to make the perfect everyday scrub – one that buffed and polished to a gorgeous glow, but also left skin velvety soft and hydrated. By using coconut shell to exfoliate and oil to nourish, we've achieved both," says Elemental Herbology MD Louise Riby.

The scrub
contains both
the shell of the
coconut and
its oil



We wanted to make
the perfect everyday scrub

Also available as a retail product, the scrub is used throughout the deeply relaxing ritual, which can be customised with different scented body oils.

The first half of the treatment focuses on exfoliation, while the second half sees the application of aromatherapy oils to lock in moisture, for healthier, more radiant looking skin.

KEYWORDS:

ELEMENTAL HERBOLOGY

"Breathe in and feel good" with Neom Wellbeing Pod, says Nicola Elliott

Neom Organics has released an electronic aromatherapy oil diffuser and a complementary range of Wellbeing Essential Oil Blends.

Nicola Elliott, founder and creative director says: "The Wellbeing Pod is the perfect, powerful electronic diffuser for scenting large spaces in spas, letting wellbeing fragrance drift around for clients to breathe in and feel good."

Neom claims the pod delivers the optimal amount of scent, by creating high frequency vibrations that break the water and oils down into tiny particles before diffusing them into the air. It's also equipped with low-energy LED lights and a timer, making it



"The perfect, powerful electronic diffuser for scenting large spaces in spas"

suitable for dark treatment rooms or lighter communal areas.

The four new essential oils have been formulated to help people achieve better sleep, stress less and boost energy and mood levels.



The elegantly-designed pod can be used or retailed by spas and Elliot believes it's "the future of home fragrance".

Elliott, used to edit UK consumer lifestyle magazine *Glamour*, before retraining as an aromatherapist and nutritionist.

The Wellbeing Pod retails at £90 (US\$117, €101) and the four oils at £60 (US\$78, €67).

KEYWORD: NEOM

Four essential oils are intended to help people sleep better, stress less and to boost mood

Carsten Schueerhoff reveals new transdermal treatments for men

German cosmeceutical company Seyo has developed a range of products to go with its Transdermal Application (TDA) treatment, a non-invasive skin therapy device, which allows active ingredients to penetrate the skin without the use of needles.

Fight TDA and Rescue TDA are designed specifically for male skin.

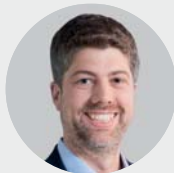
Lasting between two and 10 minutes Rescue TDA targets sensitive, stressed and irritated skin. It's intended to reduce the appearance of redness and soothe the inflammation, from shaving, as well as stimulate cell renewal and nourish the skin.

Fight TDA is an anti-ageing treatment that's suitable for use all over the face, including the delicate under-eye area. It's designed to leave the skin looking younger, fresher and revitalised,

"More and more men are coming into spas seeking treatments just for them"



The Fight transdermal application promotes cell renewal in male skin



and claims to reduce the appearance of wrinkles, promote cell renewal and strengthen the skin's protective barrier.

Carsten Schueerhoff, CEO of Seyo, says: "We have experienced a continuous increase of skincare treatments especially for men. More and more men are coming into spas seeking treatments just for them."

"We have been receiving extremely positive feedback from our customer and partners," he adds. ●

KEYWORD: SEYO

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SOTHYS' STORY

The French, family run spa business, blends a passion for nature with professional skincare

Sothys, a luxury spa brand based in Brive, central France, is owned by the Mas family and run by brothers Christian and Frederic Mas. The brand prides itself on its French roots and has a genuine focus on the production of high quality, professional skincare and expertise.

The company was originally established as a Parisian beauty institute in 1946, but in 1966 it was acquired by Bernard Mas who had a family history in cosmetics. Mas' goal was to expand its global presence, range and availability.

Today, Sothys distributes products exclusively through professional spas worldwide, spanning a total of 20,000 facilities in 130 countries.

Developing products specifically with therapies and therapists in mind is something that CEO Christian Mas feels is a key selling point. "Our expertise comes from the treatment," he says, adding that inspiration comes from its 70 years of experience in the field, what the team sees every day and from travels abroad.

"When we create a new product, we always think about the professional side first. The retail is the final touch but it doesn't work alone. Ultimately, for us, it's how we fine-tune treatments."



"When we create a new product, we always think about the professional side first. The retail is the final touch but it doesn't work alone"

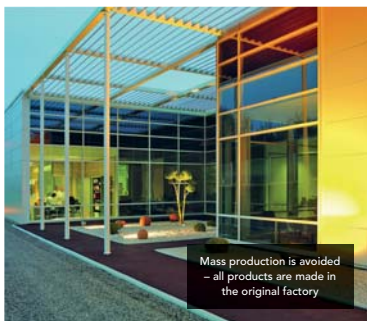
Sothys' CEO Christian Mas

The essence of family is core to Sothys' image and this is something that Mas also truly believes makes it stand out in a market dominated by large corporate brands. He says: "It's very important for our partners to be able to know the owner of the company, it maintains a human relationship and creates a relationship of trust. People need to feel safe about what they buy and where they put their money and as a family company we're respected in that way."

The stunning, multi-sensory Les Jardins Sothys are a source of inspiration and ingredients



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Mass production is avoided – all products are made in the original factory

Quality is of utmost importance too and it won't compromise this through extensive mass production. All products are made in its original factory in Brive and are subject to meticulous quality checks and controls.

At the very heart of Sothys' ethos is nature as a source of inspiration. This is embodied in the Les Jardins Sothys – 4 hectares of stunning botanical gardens on the edge of a lake and the Dordogne Valley in Aurillac.

Open to the public since 2006, the gardens were originally designed by Bernard Mas and offer a multi-sensory experience of nature with a series of intimate enclosures. "By losing yourself there, you will feel harmony, serenity and calm".

The family relies on the garden to provide inspiration and guide their company's creations. What's more, the organic flowers, plants and vegetables are used in formulations – it's even developed a special Bernard Mas Sothys rose to use in a premium skincare line. As its tagline reads: "beauty is our passion, nature is our soul". ●

 **SOTHYS**
PARIS

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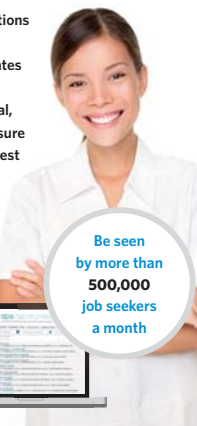
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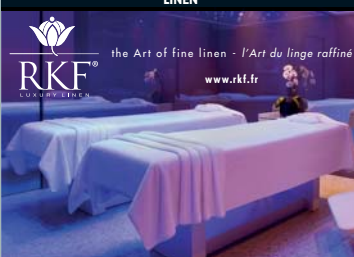


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Health benefits of saunas include improved respiratory, cardiovascular and immune functions

Finishing touch

WARMING UP

Frequent sauna visits may reduce the risk of several chronic diseases according to a new report

Emerging evidence suggests that beyond its use for leisure, sauna bathing may be linked to several health benefits.

A report published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings in August found that sauna bathing is associated with a reduction in the risk of vascular diseases, such as high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, neurocognitive diseases, nonvascular conditions, such as pulmonary diseases, mental health disorders and mortality.

Furthermore, sauna bathing alleviated conditions such as skin diseases, arthritis, headache, and flu. The evidence also suggests that regular sauna baths are associated with a better health-related quality of life.

The research team – led by scientists from the University of Jyväskylä, the University of Eastern Finland, and the University of Bristol – conducted a comprehensive literature review on the effects of Finnish sauna baths on health outcomes. Finnish sauna bathing is characterised by exposure to high environmental temperature (80°C-100°C) for a brief period.

Sauna bathing produces beneficial changes that are equivalent to the benefits of physical activity

Findings from this comprehensive literature review also suggest that the health benefits of sauna bathing are linked to the effects of sauna on circulatory, respiratory, cardiovascular and immune functions.

Regular sauna bathing stabilises the autonomic nervous system, reduces blood pressure, inflammation, oxidative stress, circulation of bad cholesterol, arterial stiffness, and vascular resistance. Moreover, sauna bathing contributes to beneficial levels of circulating hormones and other cardiovascular markers.

The same research team has published several experimental studies demonstrating the beneficial effects of short-term sauna exposure on blood pressure,

specific cardiovascular biomarkers, inflammation, arterial compliance, and cardiovascular function.

The feelings of relaxation and promotion of mental health and wellbeing associated with sauna sessions may be linked to the

increased production of circulating levels of hormones such as endorphins, the research team reported.

The review also reports that sauna bathing produces beneficial changes that are equivalent to those produced by physical activity. Indeed, the research team has shown in their previous studies that a combination of sauna bathing and physical activity might have added health benefits compared with each activity alone. ●



One community, working
together to shape and
support the sustainable
future of wellness tourism



Dear industry colleagues,

Reflecting back on our first year - and with special thanks to Founding Members Accor Hotels, Canyon Ranch, Art of Living Retreat Center and the Monaco Government Tourist Office - we've accomplished a lot:

- Grown to 50 plus members and partners from six countries
- Published the first Glossary of Industry Definitions (www.wellnesstourismassociation.org/glossary)
- Released results of our first consumer survey on Wellness Vacations
- Organized our inaugural Annual Meeting of Members
- Set up a Standards Committee and an Education Task Force
- Participated in six targeted industry events in Canada, Italy, the U.K. and the U.S

We invite you to join our network of qualifying DMOs, suppliers, travel advisors, industry consultants and other stakeholders. Come be part of a like-minded community for learning, sharing and collaborating. Come have a voice in the industry, and help support and shape the sustainable future of wellness tourism.



Sincerely

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