

# spa opportunities

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## Selman Marrakech hotel opens with Henri Chenot spa

GLA Hotels has opened Selman Marrakech hotel in Morocco – its first managed property in the Moroccan resort city.

The 56-room Selman Marrakech was designed by French architect Jacques Garcia and is owned by the local Bennani Smires family of entrepreneurs.

Facilities include the 1,200sq m (12,900sq ft) Espace Vitalite Chenot spa, which houses seven treatment rooms, four hydrotherapy rooms, a hammam, two outdoor heated pools and a relaxation pool.

Arranged around a central square pool, the seven treatment rooms are hidden behind latticework screens. The spa offers treatments using the Chenot method, as it is practiced at the Henri Chenot Centre at Palace Merano in Merano, Italy.

Henri Chenot's concept of health focuses on the principle of "Biontology", based on



Selman Marrakech opened on 1 May and boasts a 1,200sq m Espace Vitalite Chenot spa

understanding the evolution of vital resources for the human body at different ages of life.

Dominique Chenot, wife of Henri, oversaw the development of the spa at Selman. She said: "The Selman Marrakech took a very conscious decision in choosing us to differentiate themselves in today's commoditized market. The spa has been organised in line with the application of the Chenot method and like all the spas that

carry our insignia. Our spa at Selman consists of five different biontology departments that work together and complement each other."

According to Chenot, the five sections are:

- The department for massage and beauty treatments for the face, body and scalp.
- The department for hydrotherapy which involves whole body wraps, water jet massages and immersion in corrective mixtures of essential oils.
- The department of corrective

aesthetics that uses advanced technology, soon to be in the presence of a cosmetic surgeon.

• The fitness and wellness department equipped with the latest machines.

• The culinary biontology department offers a choice of Biolight menus in the restaurant.

"All of this allows us to offer our guests a complete program to help restore harmony, wellness and energy," Chenot added.

### St Regis' Iridium Spa opens in Abu Dhabi

St Regis Hotels and Resorts has unveiled the Middle East's first Iridium-branded spa at the new 377-bedroom St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The 3,500sq m (37,674sq ft) spa includes 12 treatment rooms – five for men, five for women, a Vichy room and a couple's room – and three individually-designed suites.

Germany-based skincare company Babor has joined forces with the Iridium Spa to offer an extensive range of treatments, such as the Asia-inspired ShiTao treatment.

### SpaFinder launches corporate division

Spa and wellness marketing company SpaFinder has launched a new corporate wellness division. The new arm will look to cater for the workplace wellness industry, estimated by SRI International to be worth around US\$30bn (22.6bn euro, £18.5bn) globally.

At the core of the new service will be its "Wellness Currency", a credit system that allows employers to offer incentives that are both attractive to employees and aligned with health objectives.

The Wellness Currency can be redeemed for fitness and stress-reduction classes such as yoga, Pilates or meditation, as well as visits to wellness experts, complementary medicine



Betty Weinkle will lead SpaFinder's new service

practitioners and spas delivered through SpaFinder's global network of spa and fitness establishments.

Betty Weinkle, past president of the Incentive Gift Card Council, has been appointed as vice president of the division and will be tasked with leading the new service.

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## Centara opens first standalone spa

Centara Hotels and Resorts, the Thailand-based hospitality group, has announced the launch of its first standalone Spa Cenvaree in collaboration with Acron Group in the state of Goa, India.

The spa has opened along with three restaurants as part of the USD10m (£7.6m, £6.2m) Acron Place lifestyle complex at the beach resort of Candolim to the north of Goa – India's smallest state.

Spa Cenvaree Goa includes 13 treatment rooms and a couples' spa suite with private en-suite facilities such as a sunken spa pool.

Other features include a nail and hair salon, a Zen garden with tranquil relaxation lounge, and a range of water facilities comprising a Vichy rain shower, a steam bath and a hot air sauna. Spa Cenvaree is Centara Hotels and Resorts' signature wellness brand and was launched in 2000 throughout its Asian portfolio of properties in Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam and the Maldives.



Spa Cenvaree Goa includes 13 treatment rooms and couples' suite

"Goa presents the perfect lifestyle destination to commence our operations in India," said Centara Hotels and Resorts chair Suthikiat Chirathivat. We are convinced that this is the right time and place to introduce authentic Thai spa and wellness experiences in India, in a stand-alone property."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=O6c5G>

## Jumeirah enters Europe with Port Soller resort

The new 120-bedroom Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel and Spa on the island of Mallorca, Spain, has become the Dubai, United Arab Emirates-based operator's first resort to open in Europe.

Located on the north-east coast of the island, the property overlooks the bay of Sóller and is divided into 11 low-rise structures to complement the surrounding natural environment. Facilities at the new resort include the Talise Spa spanning more than 2,200sq m (23,681sq ft), which incorporates 10 treatment rooms and a thermal area containing a hammam.

An ice room; a glass-panelled sauna overlooking the valley and a relaxation room with a fire feature also form part of the spa, along with an outdoor heated hydro-pool.

Treatments are inspired by ingredients such as olive oil and citrus fruits. Products suppliers include Natura Bissé, Aromatherapy Associates;



The Port Soller Hotel will house a 2,200sq m Talise Spa with 10 rooms

Linda Meredith; and Bastien Gonzalez. A Jumeirah spokesperson said: "Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel and Spa is a luxury resort ideal for travellers who want to discover the local traditions, connect with the destination and enjoy an internationally recognised service."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Z4vou>



## Qatar-based Katara Hospitality launches

Qatar National Hotels Company (QNH) has announced its new corporate identity - Katara Hospitality - in order to drive forward the company's ambitious global expansion plans.

Katara Hospitality was launched during the recently held Arabian Travel Market in the United Arab Emirates, and the name is designed to mark the start of a "new era" for the hospitality organisation.

The group said its corporate identity - derived from 'Catara', the ancient Greek word which referred to the Qatari peninsula - was more "relevant" to its international expansion aims.

Katara's portfolio comprises more than 4,000 bedrooms either open or under construction, with two Qatar projects and three European properties among its forthcoming openings.

The group's European openings include Switzerland's Royal Savoy Lausanne (2013), with a 1,500sq m (16,146sq ft) spa with eight treatment rooms among its facilities



Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim bin Jabor Al-Thani, chair of Katara Hospitality

Another planned Katara launch - due in 2014 - is the Bürgenstock Resort Lake Lucerne in Switzerland, which will include the 10,000sq m (107,639sq ft) Alpine Spa with 15 treatment rooms and three private spa rooms.

Katara Hospitality chair HE Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim bin Jabor Al-Thani said: "Our focus is on strategic investments and acquiring a collection of iconic international properties."



Wynn's plans for Cotai strip have been approved

### Wynn Macau to begin work on Cotai strip development

Wynn Macau, the China-based subsidiary of US-based casino operator Wynn Resorts, has confirmed it has gained approval for its new Cotai scheme from the Special Administrative Region's government.

The company said the announcement paves the way for construction to begin on the 51-acre (20.6 hectares) Cotai Strip development after securing the official transfer of real estate.

Facilities at the new Wynn Macau resort will comprise a five-star hotel, a luxury spa and gaming areas. Retail, entertainment and food and beverage components will also form part of the scheme.

It is thought the Macau government will receive around MOP1.5bn (US\$188m, £143m, £116m) for the land, which will be payable through a down payment and eight semi-annual payments.

### Tony Kaye, founder of Coiffeur Transocean, passes away

Tony Kaye, founder of onboard spa services provider Coiffeur Transocean, has died peacefully at home at the age of 85.

A spa industry pioneer, British-born Tony Kaye started his career as a jazz musician before moving into the beauty industry.

His first venture within beauty was to open onboard hair salons before moving into cruise ship spas. He was responsible for the first purpose built onboard spa, based on the SS Norway.

In 1994 Tony Kaye oversaw the merging of the Coiffeur Transocean business with Steiner Leisure - resulting in the company being called Steiner Transocean and it becoming the largest cruise ship spa operator in the world. He is survived by his son Alexis Kaye who lives in London, UK.

A book on Tony Kaye's life - titled *G Strings and Curls* - was published in 2006.

## 'No plastic' campaign from Green Spa Network

A new plastic reduction campaign aimed at spas, resorts and spa suppliers has been unveiled by the Green Spa Network (GSN) in partnership with The Plastic Pollution Coalition. The 11-month GSN Plastic Reduction Challenge is designed to encourage the spa industry to cut down on the usage of disposable plastics - such as bags, food items and product packaging.

Spas and suppliers are now invited to register for the challenge, with prizes to be awarded to winners in seven different categories on Earth Day 2013, which will take place on 22 April.

The award categories are: Most Innovative Solution; Biggest Impact - for size of a facility; Local Impact - within a state; Global Impact; and Alternative Product Packaging.

Plastic Reduction Pioneers and Most Comprehensive - by number of categories, including employee plastic usage are the other two categories that form the challenge.



Spas and suppliers are invited to register and take part in the challenge

Roberto Arjona, president of GSN and managing director of Rancho La Puerta resort in Mexico, said: "This effort underscores the very purpose of GSN's existence.

"It's our responsibility to take a leadership role with proactive measures that promote the health and wellbeing of not only our fellow humans, but also the planet we all share." Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Q7j7L>

## Renaissance opens in China's Pearl River Delta

Marriott International has announced the opening of Renaissance Huizhou Hotel – the first Renaissance Hotels-branded property in China's Pearl River Delta.

It follows the signing of a long-term management agreement between the hospitality group and Guangzhou R&F Properties Development, one of its long-standing partners. The 342-bedroom property, which is also the first Marriott hotel in Huizhou City, includes the Enoch Touch Spa with seven treatment rooms, a whirlpool; a sauna; and a steamroom. Other facilities include a fully-equipped fitness centre with cardiovascular machines and the glass-roofed indoor swimming pool, as well as eateries such as Yuzu Japanese Grill.



Duncan Bannatyne, founder of Bannatyne Group

## Bannatyne expands with 34th UK spa launch Manchester

The Bannatyne Group has re-launched the spa at its health club in Chepstow Street, Manchester, UK. The relaunched spa houses a double treatment room, two individual treatment rooms and a spray tan room.

In addition, a new reception area and specialist nail station have been added, where therapists offer treatments and products from the range developed by celebrity nail artist, Leighton Denny and Gelish Semi Permanent Nailcare.

As part of the spa's relaunch, the company also showcased its new range of skin care products, The Bannatyne Spa Collection.

The collection boasts 12 products across two skin care ranges created to assist with dry and combination skin.

The spa is Bannatyne's 34th in its UK portfolio. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=x7R2U>

## AED35m overhaul for historic resort

Ain Al Fayadha, one of the longest-operating resorts in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates is to reopen its doors following a AED35m (US\$9.8m, €7.4m, £6m) refurbishment programme.

The 36sq km (13.9sq mile) property is owned by Al Qudra Holding and managed by One To One Hotels.

It will relaunch as One To One Resort-Ain Al Fayadha in two phases. More than 50 one- and two-bedroom villas and a signature contemporary restaurant set on a boating lake will be the first facilities to be unveiled in the first stage of the reopening.

A 26-bedroom, boutique hotel, three swimming pools and a luxury spa will form part of the next phase in late June, although further spa details have yet to be announced.

A beauty salon; comprehensive sports facilities; two more restaurants; and a fitness centre



Ain Al Fayadha is one of the longest operating resorts in Abu Dhabi

will also be added to the resort, along with a traditional 1,000-seat Arabic tent for socialising, dining and relaxing.

Philippe Harb, hotel manager at One To One Resort-Ain Al Fayadha said: "While we want to rekindle the nostalgia, we also want to create a new, modern experience. We will do this while maintaining the qualities that made the property so special in the first place."

## Hyatt agrees deal to run Cambodia hotel

Hyatt Hotels Corporation is to open its first hotel in Cambodia after announcing the signing of a management agreement which will lead to the rebranding of a property in Siem Reap.

The 107-bedroom Hotel De La Paix Siem Reap is to close on 30 June in order to receive an extensive renovation before reopening as the Park Hyatt Siem Reap during Q1 2013. Facilities at the hotel currently include the Spa Indochine, a three-storey spa with four single and two double treatment rooms - one of which includes a decadent plunge bath.

The spa - overlooking the Khmer-inspired pool and water garden - offers traditional Khmer or Jamu treatments using products



Hotel De La Paix Siem Reap will become Park Hyatt Siem Reap in 2013

custom made on-site from fresh ingredients.

Spa Indochine also offers facials using Pevonia Botanica products. Following the rebranding, the hotel will contain a spa, although it is not yet known if it will remain in its current guise.

## Rezidor opens fourth Tunisian hotel with Thalasso spa

Rezidor - now part of the US-based Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group - has confirmed plans to open its fourth hotel in Tunisia with the Park Inn by Radisson Sousse in autumn 2013.

The property is currently undergoing an extensive renovation before it joins the Park

Inn by Radisson portfolio, with facilities to include three restaurants and extensive meeting space. Following the hotel's relaunch, it will also incorporate more than 2,000sq m (21,528sq ft) of thalassotherapy and spa facilities. Further details, however, are yet to be confirmed.



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## Marriott's to open in first hotel in Dominican Republic

Marriott International has announced that its luxury hotel brand, JW Marriott, is planning to open a new 131-bedroom property in the Dominican Republic - its first in the Caribbean. JW Marriott Santo Domingo is to be operated by the group under a management agreement with Grupo Velutini, the Panama-based subsidiary of Fondo de Valores Inmobiliarios.

A spa will form part of the new hotel, although design work is yet to begin on the facility and no further details are yet known at this stage. A swimming pool and a fitness centre will also feature.

JW Marriott Jr, chair of the Marriott International board, said: "The Dominican Republic is a highly desirable destination for today's luxury traveller."



The range is designed to appeal to youngsters

## Elemis signs retail deal for teenage freshskin range

UK-based spa supplier Elemis has introduced its freshskin by Elemis range to the UK retail market. Designed exclusively for teenagers and people in their early 20s, freshskin by Elemis consists of nine products, with each having been formulated with active raw ingredients.

The range, first introduced last year, was launched exclusively into Superdrug stores on 30 March 2012 and will be available nationwide from 17 June 2012.

Active components include elderflower, rosehip seed oil, goji berry and geranium combined with skin-kind bases, which have been specially chosen for their ability to help cleanse, exfoliate, prevent damage, moisturise and boost skin's elasticity to keep it youthful for longer.

The range features an intensive and hydrating Super Boost Moisturising Serum designed to combat dull and lifeless skin by boosting and maintaining skin's natural moisture levels.

## First Qatar hotel for Hilton Hotels

Hilton Hotels and Resorts, the flagship brand owned by Hilton Worldwide, has expanded its international portfolio to 80 countries with the opening of its first property in Qatar.

The 309-bedroom Hilton Doha is located on the capital's Corniche and boasts the Middle East's first spa to be operated under the group's signature eforea: spa at Hilton concept. Featuring a combination of Arab-inspired design details and a contemporary finish, the new spa spans 600sq m (6,458sq ft) and contains five multi-use treatment rooms.

A Thai massage and mediation room; a couples' suite with steam rasul; and a single suite - also with a steam rasul - also feature, in addition to an extensive thermal lounge.

The thermal lounge houses a traditional sauna; two aroma steam experiences; a hydro-pool; an ice chute; and two experience showers, while also providing access to the



The Erbil property will include a Shine-branded luxury day spa

spa garden. In line with the growing international portfolio of eforea-branded spas, Hilton Doha offers treatments using LIT'YA; Kerstin Florian; VitaMan; and Peter Thomas Roth.

Rudi Jagersbacher, area president for Hilton Worldwide in the Middle East and Africa, said: "Introducing eforea: spa at Hilton into this region is of great importance to us and supports our strong pipeline of individual hotels and growth of our market leading brands."

## Meliá enters UAE with Dubai hotel and spa

Meliá Hotels and Resorts, the Majorca, Spain-based hospitality group, has announced its debut in the United Arab Emirates with the soft launch of the new 164-bedroom Meliá Dubai hotel.

Located in the centre of Bur Dubai, the Marco Mangili-designed property is to open in two phases and includes the Titanic by Marco Pierre White restaurant offering European cuisine.

The second phase will add the group's signature Yhi Spa concept to the hotel. Spa facilities will include six single treatment cabins, one double treatment cabin and a vascular path among its facilities.

Turkish and Moroccan baths; a water circuit; and men's and women's saunas will also form part of the Yhi Spa, along with a spa boutique and an area for Garra Rufa Fish therapy.

Meliá Dubai general manager Gilles Longuet said: "Over time, the two ancient cultures of Arabic and Spanish have traded language, architecture and heritage.



The Yhi Spa will include seven treatment cabins and a vascular path

"The opening of a Meliá property in the heart of historic Dubai marks the entrance of Spanish hospitality to the Middle East. In a sense, Meliá Dubai is home."

• In February 2012, Melia opened the 116-bedroom Gran Meliá Rome Villa Agrippina in the centre of Rome, Italy. Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=L2U2X>



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# CLARINS

# Global Spa and Wellness Summit is here again!



The picturesque resort town of Aspen will host the event

**This year's programme has been designed to ignite industry innovation: from the latest in telomere or 'brain science', to creativity training**

**N**ow in its sixth year, the Global Spa and Wellness Summit has built up a reputation of being the premium gathering of senior executives and luminaries from across the many disciplines that make up the global spa and wellness industries. Last year's event, in Bali, attracted a record number of executives (275) from 35 nations. This year, 300 delegates are set to descend on the Aspen Meadows Resort, US and take part in three days of seminars, talks, discussion and networking. This year should prove special: the Summit is being held in collaboration with – and at the site of – world-renowned think-tank, The Aspen Institute.

Under the 2012 theme of "Innovation through Imagination," the three days of presentations and discussions will represent a dramatic

departure from "the industry conference as usual." Each day has been dedicated with its own theme and designed to enable attendees to hear from thought-leaders about the cultural, technological and medical innovations poised to transform the industry – rather than rehashing the state of the market or established best practices. This has been done to spark innovations within the spa and wellness industry.

Additionally, delegates will not just passively learn; top Fortune 500 consultants and interactive workshops will teach them how to unlock creative processes and "get innovation done" for their own businesses.

Philippe Bourguignon, co-chair of the 2012 Summit agenda, said: "Aspen, the place, is a perfect metaphor for what we aim to accomplish this year: to present a bracing, fresh,

pioneering 'wild west' of new ideas, and help industry leaders climb out of the rut of the 'already did that,' and see things anew, globally and from on high."

"Spa and wellness businesses that want to own the future must engage their imaginations and innovate, and we all need to get outside our narrow 'industry boxes' to accomplish that. So, we plan to check what we already know at the door this June, to take a deep dive into what our industry most direly needs right now: true creativity and imagination."

As with previous summits, the agenda has developed over time right up until the event. This is done to make sure the sessions feature the very issues of the moment, giving the summit the vibrancy and relevancy that have become its trademark.



Each year, the GSWS gathers the spa industry's senior executives and luminaries under one roof to positively impact and shape the future of the global spa industry



*Spa Business* editor Liz Terry takes part in a GSWS panel on social media at the summit in Bali

**“Spa and wellness businesses that want to own the future must engage their imaginations”**

## DAY ONE - INNOVATION

The first full day will look into innovation outside of our specific industry, and key speakers include 17th Surgeon General of the US and current vice-chair of Canyon Ranch, Dr. Richard Carmona (see *Spa Business* 09/1 page 66); Philippe Bourguignon, vice-chair of Revolution Places; and Ted Souder, head of industry-retail at Google. John Kao, expert and author on enterprise innovation, will also give his session “*Jamming: The Art of Getting Innovation Done*.” Kao’s creative presentation (using a jazz piano) will demonstrate how to practically unlock the innovation process. And Jose Maria Figueres-Olsen, President of the Carbon War Room & Former President of Costa Rica, will present on “Global Business at the Forefront of the Low Carbon Economy.”



Dr. Richard Carmona will speak on the first day

## DAY TWO - IMAGINATION

The talks and events on the second day will centre around creativity and imagination. Sessions include a design showcase of the annual Student Challenge Competition. This year’s entries come from four US universities – Cornell University, Penn State University, University of Denver and University of Houston. The competition is again moderated by ESPA founder Sue Harmsworth and professor Mary Tabacchi.

Other highlights include a talk by Elizabeth Stephenson, Principal at McKinsey & Company, on “*The 5 Pillars of Innovation*” and a session given on creative processes by Peter Rummell, past chair of Disney Imagineering. Elsewhere, Dr. Elissa Epel will look into the way telomeres work (see SB11/3 p90). Her session, titled “*Telomeres: The New Frontier*”, will offer delegates a unique insight into the latest from telomere science and its implications for wellness. Telomere length is emerging as one of the best markers of age-related disease risk, and appears to be positively impacted by healthy behaviours like stress-reduction and exercise. The Governor of Colorado, John Hickenlooper, will also address delegates.



Dr. Elissa Epel will host a session on Telomeres

## DAY THREE - INDUSTRY UNLEASHED

The third day will offer delegates the opportunity to learn about the latest research being conducted in the sector. Katherine Johnston, senior economist at SRI International, will share findings from the 2012 Summit research project, titled “*Spa Management Workforce & Education: Addressing Market Gaps*.” Meanwhile, Jan Frietag, SVP, Smith Travel Research presents the latest spa industry figures. Jeremy McCarthy, director of global spa development at Starwood Hotels & Resorts (see SB10/3 p24), will offer an inspiring session on happiness, while Oscar-nominated star actress and spa advocate Mariel Hemingway will present a session entitled “*Spas, Wellness and Mental Health*.”



Actress and wellness advocate Mariel Hemingway

## SHOW REVIEW

## SPATEC Europe 2012

Katie Barnes reports on the news and key trends

emerging from SPATEC Europe in Marbella, Spain

**T**his year's SPATEC Europe attracted 49 spa operators and 63 industry suppliers – for more than 800 one-to-one scheduled meetings – with a remit of conducting business as well as exchanging ideas with peers.

Held at the Don Carlos Leisure Resort & Spa in Marbella, Spain, on 18-20 April, the event welcomed the majority of its delegates from the UK but had a growing number from mainland Europe and – interestingly – international representatives from as far away as Australia, India, Hong Kong and North America.

"There is a general feeling of optimism in the industry" says event director Stephen Pace-Bonello, "although operators and suppliers are finding it increasingly necessary to take a more creative and innovative approach. Spa operators are seeking new revenue-generating and cost-saving products and services while striving to maintain their standards. Meanwhile, suppliers are coming up with new ways to promote their products and services."

## OPENING SESSION

The opening session, chaired by management consultant, Berni Hawkins addressed the question 'what do women want?' and provided statistics from Mintel and Global Spa Summit research. Over a third of women still want to age naturally, delegates heard. And these women are taking a more holistic approach – eating healthily, exercising more, staying out of the sun – and, of course, prefer natural/organic skincare products with nourishing ingredients coupled with home detox remedies such as supplement and cleansing juices. Interestingly, it was

also revealed that younger consumers, women aged 18-25, are most likely to believe anti-ageing skincare claims. This is a generation that's been bombarded with marketing messages about the importance of looking good and is a key target market for spas which is often overlooked in favour of the older age groups, says Hawkins. Adapting treatment menus and products houses that 'talk the language' of this age group might be a smart move for some operators.

Another element that resonated with the audience is that consumers don't trust spas – there's a need to build a stronger relationship with customers by improving the follow-up process post visit and opening up websites to consumer feedback. Older therapists, with more life skills who are able to better empathise with clients, could also be a solution, one delegate said.

## OPERATOR TRENDS

Meanwhile, from meetings with operators, two key trends stood out. Firstly, consumer demand for results-driven treatments continues to gather apace. While not new, medi-spa services – whether in the form of botox and fillers, or more machine-based microcurrent facials and laser treatments for cellulite – are becoming increasingly popular. "We're looking at what's the most invasive treatment that spas can do that's safe," says Sandra Sadowski, director of spa and fitness at Ritz-Carlton Spa New York Central Park.

Secondly, there's a growing demand for specialisation in treatments and therapists. "Consumers look to spas for expertise," says Ewa Goos director of spa control & development at Scandinavian



SPATEC events are based on 'speed-dating' meetings

chain Nordic Hotels & Resorts. "If they book an anti-ageing facial, for example, they expect a specialised, trained therapist who is excellent in anti-ageing treatments. It's the same as hairdressing where you have some staff focusing on colour and others in hair design and cutting. We're also seeing a demand for more specific, results-orientated therapies such as feet treatments, sleep treatments, jetlag treatments etc."

Liz Holmes, spa director at Rockliffe Hall, UK, adds: "While it's important to have therapists who can deliver exceptional core treatments, we've begun to separate areas of specialisation for therapists to allow their confidence and expertise to develop. We've recently promoted one therapist to a spa grooming specialist; while another, who had a background in sports therapy and relaxation, has just completed a course on palliative treatments which has allowed her to create a protocol for guests affected by cancer and life limiting conditions."

## CLOSING REMARKS

At the closing dinner, delegates heard that Noor Kassam, president of the organising company Questex-McLean Events, will be retiring at the end of the year. The rest of the Questex-McLean Events team remain, with SPATEC Europe being headed up by Pace-Bonello and SPATEC North America overseen by Michelle Gamble.

Finally, it was announced that SPATEC Europe 2013 will be held on 24-27 April at the Ritz-Carlton Abamar resort in Tenerife.



The event attracts the leading operators, suppliers and service providers from within the spa industry





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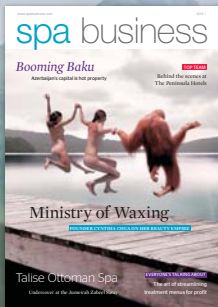
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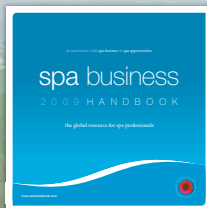
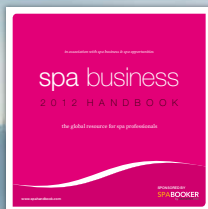
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## Pampering makes a comeback

While the spa industry's advances into science are a welcome development, we shouldn't forget what the sector's core strengths are

For most consumers, a spa visit is a "pampering" experience. But over the past several years, economic hardships have pushed spas to find new ways to prove their relevance to consumers, and many have moved away from the idea of pampering for fear they will be perceived as a luxury indulgence.

"Wellness" has become the new offering as many spa professionals strip their marketing materials of terms like "indulge," "luxurious," and "decadent" in favor of more clinical terms such as "health benefits," "cortisol-reducing" or "medical." Spas are turning to science to validate the benefits of the treatments they offer. Last year, the Global Spa Summit launched spaevidence.com, a web database of research on spa modalities where consumers and spa professionals alike can educate themselves on the science behind what spas do.

The spa industry's move towards science is one of the few positive outcomes of the down



Jeremy McCarthy

Jeremy is the director of global spa development and operations at Starwood. He will take the stage at GSWS on day three as part of the afternoon panel session

**"The spa industry is beginning to realise that pampering is more than just a luxury indulgence"**

economy. A greater reliance on science and research will ultimately help the spa industry to innovate and evolve. But the move towards science has been made at the expense of pampering and that's unfortunate. Pampering is the very thing that sets spas apart from any other healing institution in our society.

We already have a variety of healing centers (doctors, hospitals, clinics) that are based on science. While spas should educate themselves on the latest research, it's hard to imagine that spas are going to be the ones to do better science than some of these existing institutions. But there are other things that spas do better than any other healing institution: they provide wellness that's warm and nurturing – rather than cold and clinical. They provide experiences that are not only physically healing, but emotionally renewing and psychologically uplifting. Spas are the only healing institution that people look forward to going to and remember fondly afterward. This is the real strength of spa.

Ironically, it is science that is helping spas to reconnect with their pampering roots. The new science of positive psychology, for example, is studying the effects of positive emotions and interactions, positive approaches to health and wellness, and the importance of touch and

relationships on health. Spas are realizing that pampering and wellness are not mutually exclusive ideas but complementary partners.

This science is not lost on the medical world either. While spas were moving towards wellness, other healing institutions were moving towards spas. Hospitals and doctors' offices have gotten more spa-like, with comfortable designs, soothing lighting, artwork and water features. Hospitals are offering alternative healing methods such as massage and acupuncture while observing the benefits of stress relief.

The medical world will, however, continue to focus on the science of physical health. There will be new drugs, new machines and new surgical techniques to combat disease and improve the quality of our lives. But this is not enough. People need to be touched, to be listened to. They need to relax and learn how to let go of stress. They need places to go to escape technology and urbanization. Sometimes they need to connect with others. Sometimes they need "me time" and a space for quiet contemplation.

This is what spas deliver: healing that feels good. Spas are realizing that pampering is more than just a luxury indulgence. In fact, it's just what the doctor ordered. To read more visit Jeremy's blog: <http://psychologyofwellbeing.com>

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[www.cosmeeting.com](http://www.cosmeeting.com)

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Sheraton New York Hotel &amp; Towers, New York, US

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[www.naturalbeautysummit.com](http://www.naturalbeautysummit.com)

14-16 May 2012

**Beautyworld Japan**

Tokyo Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan

This event will feature the latest products and services, information and trends in the Japanese and Asian beauty and spa sectors.

Tel: +81 3 3262 8939

[www.beautyworldjapan.com](http://www.beautyworldjapan.com)

15-17 May 2012

**The Hotel Show**

Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE

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**Sustainable Cosmetics Summit North America**

InterContinental New York Barclay Hotel, New York, US

This summit will explore sustainability issues facing the beauty and spa industries.

Tel: +44 20 8567 0788

[www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com](http://www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com)

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**Global Spa & Wellness Summit 2012**

Aspen, Colorado, US

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Tel: +1 212 716 1199

[www.globalspaandwellnesssummit.org](http://www.globalspaandwellnesssummit.org)

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1-2 July 2012

**VITASPA Spa Expo & Medical Spa Conference**

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Tel: +54 11 4468 0879

[www.vitaspaaestetica.com](http://www.vitaspaaestetica.com)

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The spa industry is integral to the Maldives economy

# Maldivian spa ban

The brief ban on spa services in the Maldives was politically motivated, but how were operators affected and what implications does it have for the industry globally?

**N**ews that the government of the Maldives was to ban all spa operations came out of the blue on 28 December 2011. The initial reaction was of shock, especially as the closures were ordered by the Ministry of Tourism – the department responsible for championing spas and resorts. Adding confusion was the fact that the decree seemed to have been in response to a street protest organised by the opposition, the Progressive Party of the Maldives, a group described as ‘fundamental Islamists’. Demonstrators had called for the government

to enforce a form of Sharia, a more strict Islamic law, to stop all anti-Islamic activities – such as prostitution and the selling of alcohol and pork. Massage parlours and smaller spas were accused of being a source of at least two of these “offences against Islam”.

Despite coming under pressure to act, the government’s measures seemed bizarre. Considering that the total contribution of travel and tourism to the Maldives GDP was estimated at 70.5 per cent in 2011, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the decision to close all spas just didn’t make

sense. Why would the government risk permanently damaging the largest single revenue generator by shutting down the tourism sector’s perhaps greatest asset – spas?

Then, on 5 January, just as quickly as the ban had been issued, it was lifted. The then president Mohamed Nasheed, admitted the move had all along been politically motivated. “We wanted to impress upon everyone where the opposition’s demands were ultimately going to end,” Nasheed said. “Our ultimatum sparked a healthy national debate about the future direction of the country.”

Although his motives might have been admirable – to highlight the threat posed by religious extremism to the country’s tourism industry – the move ultimately backfired. Less than a month after the spa ban, Nasheed was ousted in a coup that handed the control of the country to a group loyal to the Progressive Party leader – and former president – Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

## IN THE CROSSFIRE

Although the religious protests against prostitution were mainly directed at so-called spas in remote areas, it was inevitable that luxury resorts were going to be caught in the crossfire. And despite the ban on spas being in place for less than a week, its impact should not be underestimated. Not only did it affect operators at the time, but it has also cast a



Former president Nasheed announced the ban

“A long term ban on spas would have been disastrous – it would have affected Maldives’ reputation”



Most tourists arriving at the Maldives associate the country with luxury spas and exotic hideaways

shadow on the future prospects of Maldivian tourism. Jesper Hougaard, owner of the Serena Spa chain (see SB10/4 p30), operates seven spas in the archipelago and has been based in the capital city Male since 1994.

"There were some nervous moments trying to grasp the situation," Hougaard says, describing the day the ban was announced. "It was a frustrating experience and difficult to tell holiday makers that they wouldn't be able to enjoy a spa treatment for a couple of days. And of course it caused a considerable financial losses to our seven spas as we had to keep the shutters down for 48 hours."

Hougaard adds that for him, however, the episode had at least one positive outcome – he was encouraged to see that the spa sector and its stakeholders were able to pull together and face the adversity as a united front.

"We were in constant contact with the Ministry of Tourism as well as our industry organisation MATI (Maldives Association of Tourism Industry) which filed a legal case on our behalf against the ban. The ban was lifted very swiftly when it was made clear that there was no evidence that any of the resort spas had violated any rules."

Another company that would have been affected by a long-term ban was Six Senses Spas, which operates three properties in the Maldives. Samir Patel, managing director, said the company quickly understood that the ban was motivated by a struggle for political power. "We figured it would be political posturing, and that is what it turned out to be," Patel said. "And there was no need for us to take any action as it was reversed in a short time."

#### LASTING LEGACY

There's no getting away from the fact that the emergence of religious extremism within the political arena does pose some serious questions. What if the ban had been left in place? What would the longer-term implications be on spas in the Maldives – and the Maldivian tourism industry in general?

"Disastrous", Patel declares. "It would erode the Maldives' prominence as a sought-after destination. Once the tide turns towards overriding commercial compulsions to appease minority views, then various other aspects of the hospitality industry in the Maldives would follow."

This doomsday scenario is, luckily, unlikely at the moment. Many of the opposition leaders

The industry needs to ensure there's no confusion about what a spa is and to make sure that it isn't a sitting target

remain stakeholders in the tourism sector due to being landowners and involved in the resorts themselves. But who's to say that another political power struggle – say, to appease the religious right – will throw further unexpected limitations to the way spas and resorts are able to operate in the Maldives and other similar societies?

Patel says the industry would be wise to act now to ensure there's no confusion about what a spa is and to make sure it isn't a sitting target.



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## Two hotels planned for Macau complex

Marriott International has announced plans to open two new hotels - under the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton brands respectively - at the Galaxy Macau leisure and resort development in China. The company has secured long-term management agreements with the Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) for more than 1,300 bedrooms, suites and floating villas at the properties.

Both of the hotels will anchor the second phase of Galaxy Macau, which already boasts three "world-class" hotels and more than 55 restaurants, cafés and bars in the first phase. A spokesperson has revealed that both properties are expected to include spas, with the Ritz-Carlton one to be "more spectacular" - however, further details are yet to be confirmed.

The 250-bedroom Ritz-Carlton, Macau will also comprise a rooftop pool with whirlpool and eight private cabanas, as well as an all-private-dining Chinese restaurant and the Ritz Bar. Meanwhile, nearly 1,100 bedrooms and suites will comprise the JW Marriott Hotel



Both properties will include luxury spas as part of their guest offer

Macau, with facilities to include a signature Chinese restaurant and a "tranquil" pool.

Marriott International, Asia president and managing director Simon Cooper said: "China is our second largest market outside North America and opening two of our premier brands on the same site in such a fast growing market is a major commitment."

GEG chair Dr Che-woo Lui added: "To complement Phase One's exceptional hotel offering we are extremely pleased to be introducing Marriott International's globally recognised luxury hotel brands."

## Sofitel unveils new Moroccan spa retreat

Sofitel Luxury Hotels has announced the launch of a "new reference in thalassotherapy and wellbeing in Morocco" with the new Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea and Spa property.

The hotel, which comprises 125 bedrooms and 49 luxury suites, overlooks the Atlantic Ocean and is the brand's second location in Agadir Bay alongside the Sofitel Agadir Royal Bay resort.

Facilities at the hotel include a thalassotherapy institute, which features a "pure white décor" and has been designed to rest and replenish mind and body in a detoxifying environment.

The 2,500sq m (26,910sq ft) thalassotherapy centre includes 16 treatment booths that either lead to the beach or the hotel gardens and offer massages with Argan and other essential oils. Other spa facilities include a hammam, a whirlpool, thermal baths and a



The 174-room hotel includes a thalassotherapy institute and spa

fitness centre, while a water course of seawater heated at 32 degrees Celsius also forms part of the institute.

Sofitel Worldwide chief executive officer Robert Gaymer Jones said: "Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea and Spa offers the best of today's thalassotherapy offer, paired with Sofitel's inimitable standards."

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Wellness Association (ISWA)</b> T: +49-30-397-5335 W: <a href="http://www.iswa.de">www.iswa.de</a></p> <p><b>International Spa Association (ISPA)</b> T: +1 888 651 4772 W: <a href="http://www.experienceispa.com">www.experienceispa.com</a></p> <p><b>Japan Spa Association (JWSA)</b> T: +81-3-5724-6649 W: <a href="http://www.jwsa.jp">www.jwsa.jp</a></p> <p><b>Latin American Spa Association</b> T: +52-55-52-77-17-76 W: <a href="http://www.expospa.com/spa">www.expospa.com/spa</a></p> <p><b>Leading Spas of Canada</b> T: +1 800 704 6393 W: <a href="http://www.leadingspasofcanada.com">www.leadingspasofcanada.com</a></p> <p><b>Mongolian Spa Sauna Association</b> T: +976-117-014-4410 W: <a href="http://www.mssa.mn">www.mssa.mn</a></p> <p><b>National Guild of Spa Experts Russia</b> T: +007 495 938 1592 W: <a href="http://ng.ru.russiaspas.ru">ng.ru.russiaspas.ru</a></p> <p><b>New Mexico Spa Association</b> T: +1 505 331 2344</p> <p><b>Portuguese Spas Association</b> T: +351-217-940-574 W: <a href="http://www.termasdeportugal.pt">www.termasdeportugal.pt</a></p> <p><b>Romanian Spa Organization</b> T: +40-21-322-01-88 W: <a href="http://www.romanian-spas.ro">www.romanian-spas.ro</a></p> <p><b>Samui Spa Association</b> T: +66 7742 08712 W: <a href="http://www.samuispaassociation.com">www.samuispaassociation.com</a></p> <p><b>Serbian Spas and Resorts Association</b> T: +381-65-20-20-120 W: <a href="http://www.vudruzenjebanja.co.rs">www.vudruzenjebanja.co.rs</a></p> <p><b>South Africa Spa Association</b> T: +27-11-447-9959 W: <a href="http://www.saspaassociation.co.za">www.saspaassociation.co.za</a></p> <p><b>Spanish National Spa Association</b> T: +34-915-490-300 W: <a href="http://www.balnearios.org">www.balnearios.org</a></p> <p><b>Spa Association of India</b> T: +1-919-310-03932 W: <a href="http://www.spaassociationofindia.in">www.spaassociationofindia.in</a></p> <p><b>Spa Association of the Czech Republic</b> T: +420 222 511 763 W: <a href="http://www.spas.cz">www.spas.cz</a></p> <p><b>Spa Association Singapore</b> T: +65 6243 1158 W: <a href="http://www.spaassociation.org.sg">www.spaassociation.org.sg</a></p> <p><b>Spa &amp; 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