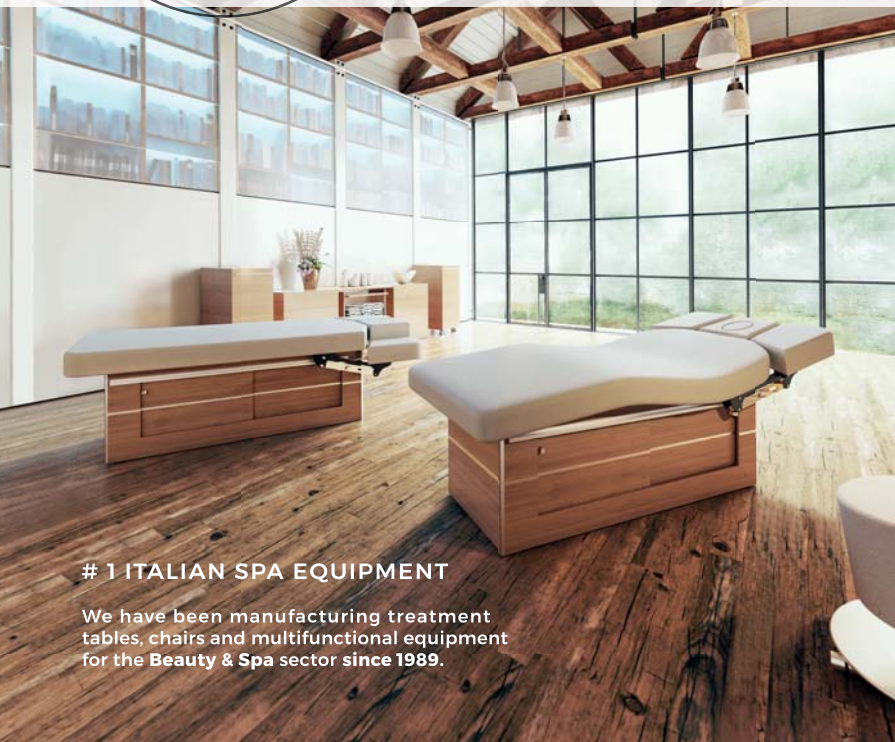


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Climate emergency

We're creatures of nature and the health of the earth is inextricably linked to our own wellbeing. As the final fight to save the planet begins in earnest, we have a some key roles to play

Powerful forces are converging which will determine the future of our species and our planet. As an industry close to people's wellbeing, we're feeling the impact of these changes, as cases of mental, physical and spiritual 'unwellness' increasingly present themselves.

As we inhale pollutants and absorb plastics from our food, we experience disruption at a cellular level. Couple this with the effects of too much tech - and the accompanying sleep disruption - and it's clear that in eroding nature, we're also damaging ourselves.

But positive change is in the air. Spring in the Northern Hemisphere has seen the outpouring of love and selflessness of the Extinction Rebellion and Schools 4 Climate Action movements. Thousands have protested across 100 countries to call on governments to declare a climate emergency.

Swedish activist, 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, has addressed the UN and the EU to raise awareness of climate breakdown and veteran environmentalist David Attenborough has produced *Climate Change: The Facts*, a hard-hitting documentary calling for immediate change.

Although these actions build on what has gone before, there's a new urgency, now we know 200 species are becoming extinct **every day** and the UN has stated we only have 12 years to stop climate change and save the planet.

I see a direct correlation between the destruction of the natural world and the increase in health crises being reported. The earth is one delicately balanced system and we cannot separate ourselves from it and expect to thrive.



Speak truth to power: Greta Thunberg faces the suits at the EU

“We know that 200 species are becoming extinct every day. We cannot separate ourselves from the natural world and expect to thrive”

The industry must join the fight for the natural world, by making immediate, climate-positive changes, as well as supporting people to maintain both their optimism and purpose and their physical, mental and spiritual health in the face of these ever-increasing challenges.

Liz Terry, editorial director @elizterry

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on Hard Rock's
music-centric spas



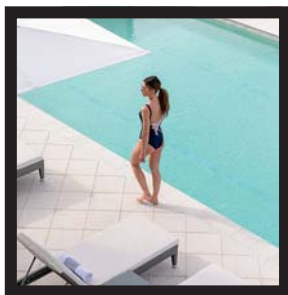
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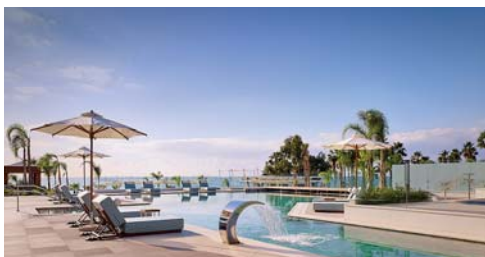
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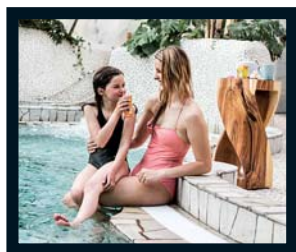
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VOYA

A close-up photograph of a person's bare back. Several long, dark, fringed strips of seaweed are draped over the upper back and shoulders, hanging down towards the waist. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with a wooden fence.

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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

Pitfalls to avoid when investing in cryotherapy

Adela Thornton-Wood, director and co-founder, Quantum Cryotherapy



I was pleased to see *Spa Business* focusing on cryotherapy (see SB19/1 p76), but it did not explain the significant differences between direct and indirect cryotherapy.

Direct cryotherapy applies cold nitrogen vapour directly to the body, with the head typically above and external to the chamber.

Indirect cryotherapy uses liquid nitrogen to cool down air so the user is only ever exposed to the super-chilled air and the nitrogen gas is safely ducted away. The user can experience cryotherapy in a fully enclosed chamber and the entire body, including the head, is exposed to extreme cold. This



Adela Thornton-Wood

is important because so many of the wellbeing benefits are based on the brain's response to cold.

There are safety implications to consider too. Direct exposure to nitrogen vapour carries a risk of asphyxiation and cold burns. Many direct cryotherapy systems are not supplied with

oxygen monitors and ventilation systems which, while costly, are crucial for safe operation. Gas companies won't supply liquid nitrogen if installations do not meet stringent safety criteria.

In addition, while overseas manufacturers may seem like a cheaper option at the outset, they can leave customers without any locally-based engineers to deal with maintenance issues. Service agreements should be scrutinised!

Being aware of these issues before making an investment could help spas avoid expensive and potentially harmful mistakes further down the line.

● www.quantumcryotherapy.com

Growing demand for mental health retreats

Dervla Louli, founder, Compare Retreats

Gerri Bodeker's whitepaper revealing the proven mental health benefits of spa modalities was a timely read (see SB19/1 p60). Last year, our own wellness travel survey found that mental health is a new primary focus for consumers.

Compare Retreats is a booking portal which partners with big brands from Aman to Mandarin Oriental as well as boutique resorts. Out of our 500-plus retreat-goers questioned, 63 per cent selected



Dervla Louli

6 Out of our 500-plus retreat-goers questioned, 63 per cent selected mental health as their top priority

mental health as their top priority. This shows a shift away from body-shaping, weight-loss and fitness training which have long dominated retreat offerings. Moreover, millennials rated mental health far higher than other demographics, with 67 per cent ranking it first compared to 58 per cent

of gen X and only 53 per cent of those aged 50 and over.

Elsewhere, we uncovered a strong desire for plastic-free policies, favoured by 90 per cent of respondents; and an indifference to digital detox, with only 1 per cent showing an interest in it.

With a rapidly evolving wellness travel industry, it will be interesting to see how these preferences shape the trends of the future. ●

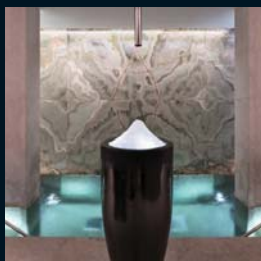
● www.compareretreats.com



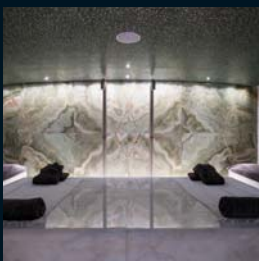
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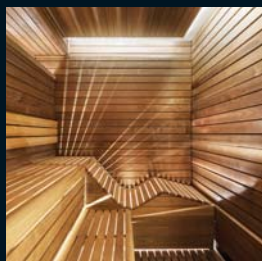
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Joining forces with IHG means we can grow our brand and reach new markets – without losing our quirky personality and playful touch

Neil Jacobs CEO, Six Senses



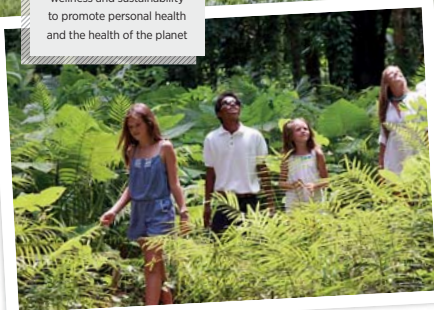
“We are certainly in a period of industry consolidation,” says Neil Jacobs, CEO of wellness resort brand Six Senses. In February, InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) acquired Six Senses from Pegasus Capital Advisors for a reported US\$300m (£267m, £229.5m). The sale included the management of 16 Six Senses hotels, 37 spas, and sister spa management companies Evason and Raison d’Etre. Jacobs says the deal “reinforces the IHG commitment to creating a very high-end portfolio of brands, and says to the markets that they care enough about wellness and sustainability to conclude the Six Senses acquisition, rather than another boutique brand.”

It was Six Senses’ focus on wellness and sustainability, along with its “impressive management team”, that IHG pointed to as reasons for the purchase. Jacobs, who’s been CEO since 2012 and who has a personal passion for spa, sustainability, design, food and experiential travel, is certainly a part of that team. He has more than three decades of experience

It’s an “exciting new era” for the company says Jacobs



Six Senses aims to merge wellness and sustainability to promote personal health and the health of the planet



in running and developing hotels and spas, including heading up the Spa Task Force at Four Seasons.

Wellness innovation

Many of Jacobs' passions are growing in importance – and increasingly overlapping – for today's travellers. "As people become more conscious about their health, they're more accepting of different modalities, including the spiritual and mindful, and become more curious each year as to the possibilities," Jacobs explains. "What will keep [wellness] relevant is continued work around new initiatives, jumping feet-first into the lesser-known healing arts, and doing work to devise programming that is interesting and exciting for our customers."

Those new initiatives and programmes are driven by a Wellness Innovation Group,



Anna Bjurstam

headed up by Anna Bjurstam, vice president of spa and wellness for Six Senses. The group is charged with the ongoing creation of wellness content for the brand, which recently has included the launch of a Grow With Six Senses programme for children; a holistic anti-ageing concept at Six Senses Kaplankaya; the development of a jet lag app; and the Sleep With Six Senses (see SB18/2 p66) and Eat With Six Senses programmes, which address sleep health and nutrition, respectively.



Notable new openings include a circuit of five lodges in Bhutan (top) and Six Senses Krabey Island in Cambodia (above)

Jumping feet-first into the lesser-known healing arts is exciting

“

Focus on 'spa as spa'

Despite these broader wellness initiatives, spas remain at the heart of each Six Senses property, with every location offering signature treatments and therapies, plus locally inspired therapies, yoga programmes, and more traditional feel-good pampering. Therapists are drawn from all over the world, and visiting practitioners add an extra depth of knowledge.

But it's the move to take wellness outside the spa, integrating it into the entire stay for guests, that





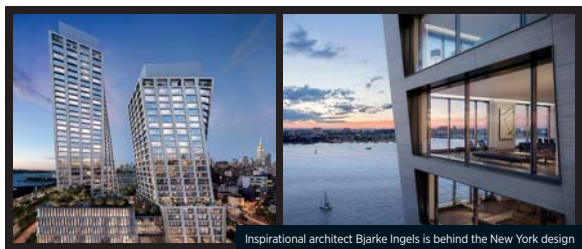
Six Senses is expected to grow to 60 hotels in 10 years and a desert hideaway in Israel is one of the next to open

► has set Six Senses apart from the competition. "Spa is a big part of the wellness offering, but it's not the only part, as we know," says Jacobs. "We remain focused on 'spa as spa' to ensure that our spa offerings remain vibrant and relevant, and interface properly with all of our other content."

Accelerated growth

Jacobs says it's 'business as usual' at Six Senses since the acquisition, though some restructuring may follow to deal with growth and the multiple new properties which are scheduled to launch in the next few years. These planned openings include a hideaway in Israel's Negev Desert; the transformation of a series of 19th-century mansions in Istanbul; and the group's first project in North America, a contemporary duo of twisting towers designed by inspirational architect Bjarke Ingels in New York. Additional projects are currently underway in Austria, Brazil, mainland China, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan and Thailand.

In March – just after the acquisition – Six Senses opened two ambitious projects: Krabey



Inspirational architect Bjarke Ingels is behind the New York design

The entire world is talking wellness. It means different things to different people, but it's not going anywhere

“

Island in Cambodia, set on a private island near Ream National Park, which includes an expansive spa inspired by the sacred Khmer Kbal Spean River; and Six Senses Bhutan, which will include five lodges and a circuit of spas spread over the remote Himalayan kingdom.

"This is an exciting new era for Six Senses," says Jacobs. "IHG believes in our purpose to merge the two platforms of wellness and sustainability to promote personal health, and the health of the planet. Joining forces with IHG means we can use a wealth of systems and operational excellence to

grow our brand and reach new markets – without losing our quirky personality and playful touch."

Six Senses is now expected to grow to 60 hotels within the next 10 years, as IHG plans to accelerate the brand's growth globally. But with other major hotel groups jumping on the wellness bandwagon, whether with in-house offerings or buyouts, will the demand for wellness continue?

"There's absolute certainty that wellness is here to stay," says Jacobs. "The entire world is talking wellness. It means different things to different people, but it's not going anywhere." ●

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The Biological Age kit costs £399 a year and is one of the first consumer epigenetics tests



Epigenetic testing gives the most accurate measure of your biological age – using real data that you can act upon to improve your health now and in the future

Dr Tom Stubbs CEO, Chronomics

Leading spas are starting to offer DNA testing as the ultimate way to personalise services (see p56). However, molecular biologist Dr Tom Stubbs is taking the science a step further. He's the co-founder and CEO of Chronomics, a UK startup which lays claim to being the first company to bring epigenetic testing directly to the customer.

He says: "Our genome – 3.2 billion letters of information – is fixed from birth. That's your DNA. But your lifestyle and the environment have an influence on how that information expresses itself.

"Epigenetics testing gives the most accurate measure of your biological age – using real data that you can act upon to improve your health now and in the future."

Stubbs says Chronomics uses next generation sequencing technology to test around 5 million

epigenetic marks on DNA, combined with machine learning to predict how factors such as sleep, nutrition and pollution could be affecting your health today.

Its Biological Age test, which costs £399 (US\$522, €464) a year, involves a saliva swab to assess epigenetic marks and in-depth lifestyle questionnaire. Results are processed in a lab and then over the next 12 months consumers have access to health and lifestyle coaches and DNA experts.

They log onto a dashboard loaded with their results, receive bespoke Chronomics health and lifestyle support, and progress tracking. They also have access to one-to-one coaching calls to help with mindset and implementation.

"We believe we're the first company to offer this level of



Epigenetics can help them to choose a better path of preventative wellbeing



support after customers receive results," says Stubbs, adding that they aim to "reduce their risk of chronic and age-related diseases by up to 80 per cent."


Chronomics is also now working with dozens of wellness providers – in corporate wellness, private healthcare and spas both in the UK and internationally. He says: "Some want to use their own experts to deliver the recommended lifestyle changes, while others need us to provide the whole service."

Stubbs concludes: "The advent of consumer DNA testing brought a sense that things were predetermined and people couldn't do much about it. Epigenetics, however, can push back against that part of their story, and help them to choose a better path of preventative wellbeing." ●



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Read about two more major spa openings – South Lodge, UK and Parklane Limassol, Cyprus – on p60 and p86



Sister property to iconic Blackberry Farm is revealed

For the first time in 40 years, US wellness resort Blackberry Farm has put its name to another property, Blackberry Mountain sits in 5,200 acres (1,012 hectares) near the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee.

Wellness underpins everything at the resort “creating moments as epic and invigorating as the views that surround our guests”. And its approach to fitness, nutrition, mindfulness and self-care is rooted in nature.

Given the setting, outdoor adventure is a focal point – whether that’s treeline aerial yoga, creekside meditation or a mindful nature walk.



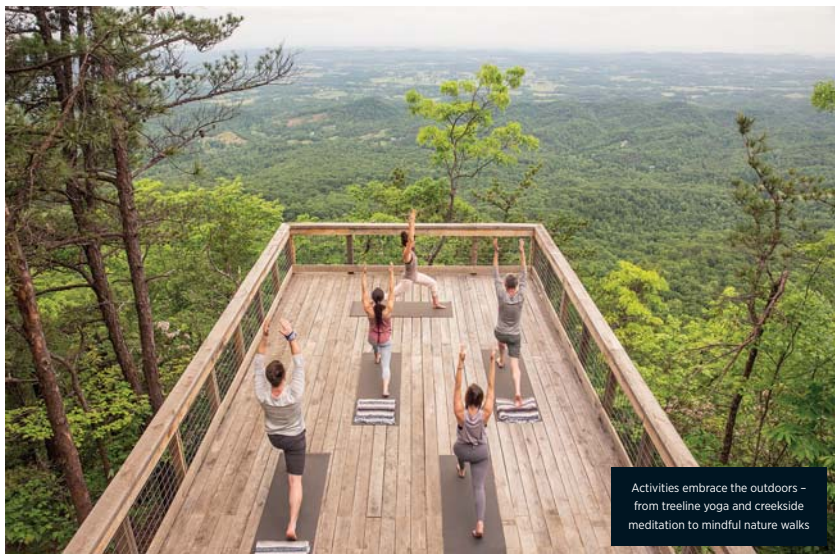
It's taken Blackberry 40 years to put its name to another site

Nest, the subterranean spa with eight treatment rooms, offers therapies to balance the mind, body and spirit such as forest bathing, sound immersion, a herbal poultice massage or red clay wrap. A tranquility lounge, sauna, steam showers and outdoor infinity pool with scenic views further aid relaxation.

Meanwhile, holistic approaches include ‘a classroom’ session where guests can learn about any type of treatment or health condition of their choosing in depth; or a ‘nervous system reset’ combining anything from craniosacral therapy and tuning forks to myofascial release and tui na.

The property opens with six traditional style cabins, 13 cottages and multi-bedroom homes.

{ Given the setting, outdoor adventure is a focal point }



Activities embrace the outdoors - from treeline yoga and creekside meditation to mindful nature walks



Wellness underpins everything at the resort and its wellbeing approach is rooted in nature



spa business uniting the world of wellness

The IHG hotel pushes construction to its limits and took 12 years to build

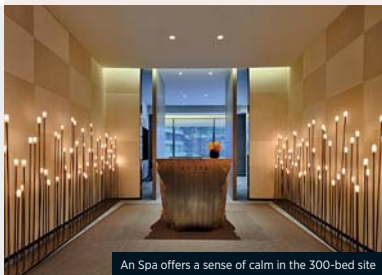


Spa tranquility at world's first underground hotel

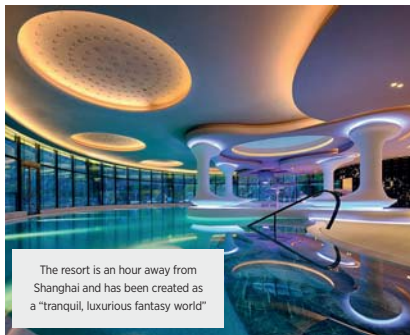
InterContinental's long-awaited underground hotel, built in an abandoned quarry in the Sheshan Mountain Range near Shanghai, has made its debut after 12 years in development and a reported US\$300m (€265.5m, £229.3m) investment.

Built by JADE+QA Architects, InterContinental Shanghai Wonderland pushes construction to its limits as it merges into the cliff face and delves down into the quarry - 16 of the 18 floors are underground and two submerged in water.

Martin Jochman, chief architect told *Forbes* that his intention was to "create a place that would become a refuge, a tranquil, luxurious fantasy world away from the hustle and bustle of Shanghai". The An Spa, with views over the water-filled quarry, adds to that sense of calm. The modest-sized wellness facility, for the 300-room resort, offers Japanese-style therapies in one of four treatment rooms. Elsewhere guests can soak away their troubles in the futuristic pool.



An Spa offers a sense of calm in the 300-bed site



The resort is an hour away from Shanghai and has been created as a "tranquil, luxurious fantasy world"



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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Civana's 28-treatment-room spa opens

Wellness destination resort Civana in Arizona, US, has completed its US\$50m (€44.3m, £38.2m) renovation with the grand opening of its new spa.

The Civana brand has caught the attention of the spa industry with its 'democratic wellness' positioning. It's aim is to make authentic and holistic wellness more approachable to the everyday traveller – with prices up to 50 per cent less than some competitors.

Launching six months after the hotel, the two-storey spa has an extensive treatment menu drawing inspiration from varying schools of practice and tradition, ancient healing and modern approaches to encourage guests to explore different types of experiences. Think watsu, energy aligning massages and a hot and cold 'sensory immersion'.

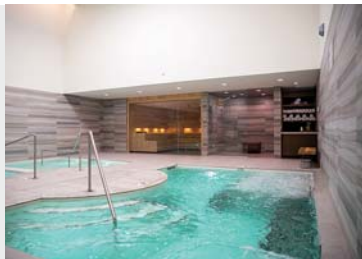
"Our goal at Civana is to offer guests options and flexibility in all aspects of wellness, including the spa," says CEO Maggie Lang, "wellness means different things to each person."

Aside from its 28 treatment rooms, spa facility highlights include a communal hydrotherapy area with an aqua vitality circuit and a 1,600sq ft (149sq m) relaxation lounge offering vistas of the Sonoran Desert and Black Mountain.

Civana plans to open five resorts in the next five years. The concept was the brainchild of industry leader Kevin Kelly.



The spa opening completes a US\$50m renovation

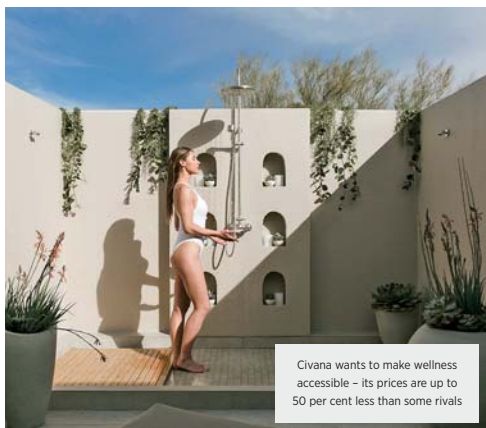


The two-storey spa has an extensive treatment menu and the aqua vitality circuit (above) is a facility highlight





{ The Civana brand has caught the attention of the spa industry with its 'democratic wellness' positioning }



Civana wants to make wellness accessible – its prices are up to 50 per cent less than some rivals



spabusiness.com issue 2 2019 27

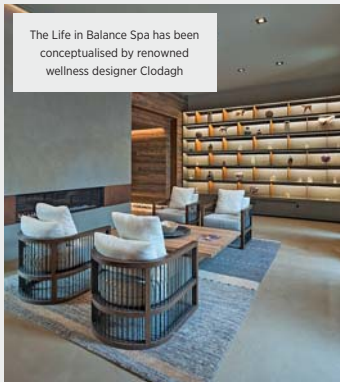
Miraval unveils second-ever wellness resort

Leading US destination spa brand Miraval has opened a second wellness-focused property outside of its flagship site in Tucson, Arizona. Miraval Austin is set on 220 acres (89 hectares) overlooking Lake Travis. The 117-bed property, previously known as Travaasa Austin Resort, was acquired by Miraval in December 2016, just before the group itself was bought out by Hyatt in January 2017 for US\$215m (€190.4m, £164.3m).

Central to the resort is the signature Life in Balance Spa, a 20,000sq ft (1,858sq m) offering conceptualised by renowned wellness designer Clodagh, which sits alongside a 10-acre (4-hectare) farm and Life in Balance Culinary Kitchen. The spa combines many of the Arizona health and wellness programmes – such as its famous equine therapy (see SB19/1 p70) – with new experiences that push the ‘farm to treatment table’ concept.

With the Wild Harvest Herbal Healer, guests pick herbs from the farm to be used in a massage, while the Spiritual Warrior Facial utilises the energies of plants and gemstones and has been created in collaboration with organic skincare brand Laurel.

The Life in Balance Spa has been conceptualised by renowned wellness designer Clodagh





New experiences highlight the ‘farm to treatment table’ concept

There are 30 treatment rooms in total, plus a spa pool, relaxation rooms, heat experiences, salon, retail boutique and Body Mindfulness Center.

The opening is part of a rollout plan which has already seen Miraval's signature Life in Balance Spa concept introduced to St Regis Monarch Beach Resort in California and Park Hyatt St Kitts in the Caribbean in the last three years. A third resort, an overhaul of the Cranwell Spa and Golf Resort, is expected to open in Lenox, Massachusetts by 2020.





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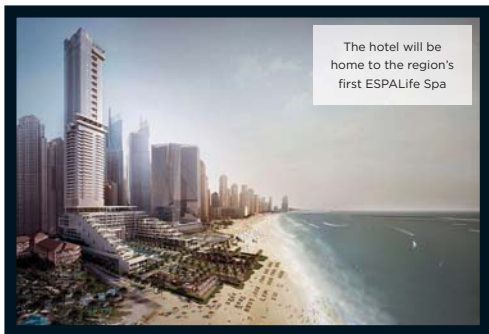
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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Corinthia to open first hotel in the Middle East

Corinthia is to open its first hotel in the Middle East, the Corinthia Meydan Beach Dubai, in 2020. The contemporary property marks the beginning of ambitious expansion plans by the group, and will feature the region's first ESPALife Spa.

The spa will be an impressive 5,000sq m (53,820sq ft), with a concept that offers a holistic approach to mind, body and spirit. This will be represented by an array of therapies where ancient practices and technological advances work in harmony. As well as luxurious treatments, the spa's



The hotel will be home to the region's first ESPALife Spa



ethos encompasses mindfulness, fitness and nutrition, to provide a well-rounded service to enrich and uplift lives.

Working in partnership with Meydan Group, the 360-bed hotel will be located in Dubai Marina. It's been designed by America's AE7.

The existing Corinthia portfolio features the flagship Corinthia London – home to the first ESPALife – as well as sites in

Malta, Budapest, St Petersburg, Prague, Lisbon, Khartoum and Tripoli. Four more landmark hotels are expected by 2021.

Matthew Dixon, Corinthia's MD in the area, says the hotel will offer "the market something fresh and new; an interpretation of heritage, culture and service values that we feel have not yet been brought to the UAE."

More: http://lei.sr/g9N5n_S

Jim Root named director of wellbeing for Enchantment Group

Industry veteran Jim Root will oversee all new spa and wellbeing development projects for US hospitality group Enchantment. Root is currently GM of the group's destination spa Mii amo, located in Sedona, Arizona.

Enchantment's portfolio includes two more sites in the US and one in the Bahamas.

In addition to running Mii amo, Root will spearhead an initiative to establish each property as a destination for wellbeing, create fulfilling guest experiences that exceed current standards, lead new projects, and provide strategic direction



of wellbeing programming at its Scottsdale-based corporate office.

Root has worked in spa and hospitality for over 40 years and has held positions at Glen Ivy Hot Springs, Miraval Arizona and Sea Island Resorts. He was also the chair of ISPA in 2008.

More: http://lei.sr/u4B7S_S



Adrian Zecha opens second Azerai hotel in Vietnam

A historic 122-room boutique hotel on the banks of the Perfume River in Hue, Vietnam has been transformed into

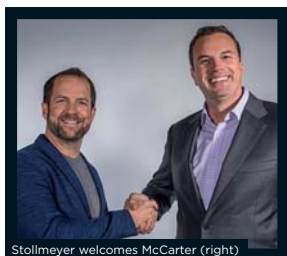
Azerai La Residence, Hue, the second hotel in a new group formed by hotelier Adrian Zecha, founder of Aman Resorts.

The property's expanded and completely renovated spa now features six treatment rooms – four singles and two doubles – each with a dressing area, vanity and shower. Separate wet areas for men and women offer steam, sauna

and ice fountains. The spa's menu of massages, therapies and scrubs draws from both eastern and western traditions.

After opening the 60-room Azerai Can Tho on the Mekong last spring, Azerai has embarked on a path that calls for a new debut every year. The new hotel brand has a mission to "present the single-most compelling and elegant accommodation experience in a given locale at an affordable price-point."

More: http://lei.sr/X5G6X_B



Stollmeyer welcomes McCarter (right)

Josh McCarter appointed president of Mindbody

Industry tech business Mindbody has appointed Josh McCarter as president.

He was formerly CEO and co-founder of Booker, which was acquired by Mindbody in 2018 in a US\$150m (€134m, £116m) deal.

In his new role, McCarter will be responsible for revenue-generating activities, including sales, marketing, customer services and business development.

Rick Stollmeyer, the CEO of Mindbody, has praised McCarter for his "profound knowledge of the wellness industry and deep understanding of our brand."

McCarter previously served as COO of SpaFinder, managing the company's technology, operations and strategic initiatives. Before that, he oversaw international and business development for online automotive marketing business, Autobytel.

More: <http://lei.sr/J6J5R>

COMO opens 15th property in historic Tuscan castle

COMO opened its first hotel in continental Europe, the COMO Castello del Nero in Italy. The Tuscan hotel is the 15th property in the group's global portfolio, and is situated on a 740-acre historic estate in the Chianti wine region. At the heart of the estate is a 12th century Italian castle, featuring 50 rooms and suites with 'lighter and more modern' interiors by Milanese designer Paola Navone.

The spa was previously an ESPA spa, and COMO Hotels and Navone have also softly adjusted the spa offerings with an aim to create a serene, contemporary retreat that makes guests feel at home, with therapeutic wellness experiences.



“COMO Castello Del Nero is the holistic next step of growing our portfolio of hotels and resorts”
Oliver Jolivet

The wider estate also features a COMO Shambhala Retreat, known for its healing, restorative treatments and expert therapists which form the basis of extended wellness-focused stays.

“COMO Castello Del Nero is the holistic next step of growing our portfolio of hotels and resorts in select destinations around the world,” says COMO Group's CEO Oliver Jolivet.

More: http://lei.sr/X8H8a_S



Aman ventures into medical spa services

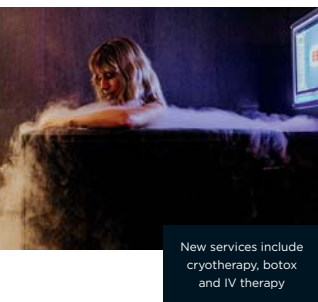
Holistic resort operator Aman has ventured into the medi-spa market at its flagship site in Phuket, Thailand.

Specialist treatments at Amanpuri's "new and revolutionary" Holistic Wellness Centre range from botox and cryotherapy to IV therapy and hormone injections. These complement new sports performance services at the centre, plus longer Intensive Wellness Immersions which Aman introduced in 2016, personalised nutrition plans created by naturopaths and raw/vegan chefs and the alternative healing therapies the brand is known for.

Guests embarking on any medical therapy will first be assessed by a doctor during a comprehensive diagnostic consultation.

The Amanpuri Holistic Wellness Centre has been the core part of a wider sixth-month renovation at the resort which also included the complete refurbishment of its 12-suite Aman Spa and two-storey hilltop fitness centre and studios. It will be run by a certified medical team from Thanyapura, a nearby world-class health and sports resort.

More: <http://lei.sr/b6C1i>





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DIARY DATES

23 May 2019

Forum Hotel & Spa

Paris, France

Discussions and speakers at this one-day forum bring together hotel and spa professionals.

www.forumhotspa.com

3-5 June 2019

Spa Life International, Germany

Gesundheitsresort Freiburg, Germany

The third year of Spa Life Germany includes a two-day conference plus a buyer & supplier meetings forum.

www.spa-life.eu

8 June 2019

Global Wellness Day

A global wellness movement first celebrated in 2012, which encourages people to change one aspect of their lives for the better for that day – and hopefully beyond.

www.globalwellnessday.org

19-22 June 2019

Spatec Europe

Grand Hotel Dino, Baveno, Italy

Face-to-face meetings for top European spa operators and domestic and international suppliers; plus speaker sessions.

www.spateceu.com

22 June 2019

World Bathing Day

Hot springs locations worldwide

An international celebration of thermal bathing started in 2018, which encourages hot springs owners to educate the public about thermal bathing benefits and traditions.

www.worldbathingday.org

28-30 July 2019

Cosmoprof North America

Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, USA

Beauty exhibition attracting up to 30,000 spa buyers and professionals.

www.cosmoprofnorthamerica.com

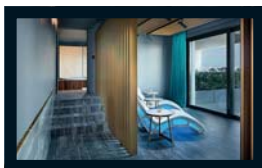
24-25 August 2019

Beauty Expo Australia

ICC Sydney, Australia

Australia's annual beauty, medi, wellness and spa trade event.

www.beautyexpoaustralia.com.au



Amber, gold and crystal sound treatments: Croatia's new Ikalia Spa inspired by ancient Illyrian mysteries

The Ikador Luxury Boutique Hotel & Spa – an ultraluxe project led by Croatian entrepreneur Pavo Zubak – has opened the Ikalia Spa, which occupies the entire third floor of the hotel. While the hotel has just 14 bedrooms, it's one of the most expensive new properties in Croatia, with a total investment of over €1m per accommodation unit.

Created by international spa consultants Illyria Wellness, Ikalia Spa uses artisan natural ingredients, including 100 per cent pure Baltic Amber powder, local olive crush, organic distilled plant oils, and premium



Liz Ugrin

plant-based skincare featuring Croatian spring waters. Illyria Wellness co-founder Liz Ugrin says she drew inspiration from local water goddess Ika and the Amber Road ancient trade route. Special rooms include The Ikalia

Floater Room with a Starpool Zero

Body table where guests can experience live music therapy. There's also an Amber Spa suite with a rasul; a Crystal room with a terrace; a Gold room for nail services; solarium; smoke sauna; conifer steamroom; two relaxation lounges and a hydro pool.

More: http://lei.sr/h3C2T_B

Caesars' Qua Spa travels to Dubai

Qua Spa, the signature spa concept for Caesars hotels, has made its first appearance outside of the US at Caesars Palace Bluewaters Dubai.

It's been designed as "a sanctuary fit for royalty" and menu highlights include the emirate's first Iyashi Dome, an infrared capsule which claims to burn up to 600 calories per session, and a Gharieni Quartz bed offering the benefits of sand therapy, aromatherapy, inversion therapy and a wave-like massage all at once.

Indulgent facials featuring gold leaf, caviar and collagen come courtesy of British beauty brand Carol Joy and are complemented with Elemental Herbology and Gentleman's Tonic treatments.

The Qua offers eight treatment rooms, a relaxation lounge and



Highlights include an Iyashi Dome

male and female facilities with rock saunas and aroma steamrooms.

The 178-bed property is the first non-gaming resort for Caesars which has two other hotels in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, with another under construction in Los Cabos, Mexico. The corporation has 50-plus casinos globally, generating annual revenues of US\$8.6bn (£7.6bn, £6.6bn).

More: <http://lei.sr/X7D8A>



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**Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary
Freestone, California, US**

At Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary in California, Earth Day was the start of a new effort to re-plant a redwood forest on its land.

"We've realised that sustainability is no longer enough," says **Thor Holm**, general manager. "We need to actively contribute to the regenerative cycle of nature."



Four Seasons Seychelles

Four Seasons Resorts Seychelles and Four Seasons Resort Seychelles Desroches Island took part in Earth Hour on 30 March, replacing electric lighting with candle lights from sunset onwards. The two spas also held meditation sessions under the stars, inviting guests to join in for a moment of reflection. "We had the highest participation of any event hosted in our resort since we opened Four Seasons Desroches Island a year ago," says **Sandie Johannessen**, senior spa director, Four Seasons Middle East & Africa.



Mandarin Oriental Miami, US

After kicking off with a beach clean up the Saturday prior, Earth Day was converted into Earth/Sustainability Week, with sustainable lunches, herb planting classes and clothes and shoes recycling.



**Six Senses Con Dao,
Vietnam**

For Earth Hour, Six Senses Con Dao in Vietnam held a candlelight meditation at the spa, guided by spa manager Jitendra Bhatt, whose goal was to introduce a simple way to practice meditation using candles in combination with singing bowl therapy.

PLANETARY WELLNESS

We take a look at how spas around the world celebrated Earth Day and Earth Hour

Earth Day is an annual event celebrated on 22 April to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First started in 1970, it now includes events in more than 193 countries around the world. For spas, it's an opportunity to raise the profile of what they're doing for sustainability measures, or to dedicate part of the day to activities that help the planet. We look at how spas around the world celebrated Earth Day and Earth Hour – an event where people are encouraged to 'switch off' for the sake of the planet.

Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

In celebration of Earth Day, 20 per cent of the cost of the spa's Tropical Rainforest treatment was donated to the Malaysian Nature Society.



Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman

On Earth Day, 20 trees were planted in the organic garden and 10 more in a green patch, with guests pitching in to help.

Escenza Wellness – locations throughout India

At Escenza Wellness, Earth Day was a chance to help fight plastic pollution in India. For every treatment booked, the spa gifted 100 paper bags to small-scale vendors and shops in more than 15 cities in India. "We got the paper bag bundles personally signed from our guests (who were happy to do it) and then our spa managers went to these small-scale vendors to educate them regarding plastic



pollution and give them these bundles of paper bags so that they could be encouraged to stop using plastic," says Aditee Gokhale, head of marketing for Escenza Wellness. "The results of this activity were fabulous. What started as a simple Earth Day activity turned into a collaborative team effort that has brought our employees together in spite of working in locations far away from each other."





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the Italian TOUCH



From humble beginnings in a small Italian village, Lemi has grown a hugely successful global business in the massage bed market. As it celebrates its 30th anniversary year, we talk to GM Matteo Brusaferrì

Looking back to his childhood growing up in a small village in northern Italy, it was probably inevitable that Matteo Brusaferrì would follow into the family business.

He remembers his tiny bedroom being dominated by an industrial drawing board, where his father Emilio Brusaferrì and father's cousin Silvio Genelli, would spend hours plotting out new designs for their massage and medical beds.

Several decades later and that fledgling business this year celebrates its 30th anniversary, having established itself as a leading designer and supplier of equipment to the spa, beauty, podiatry and medical industries.

"In many ways it also feels like my birthday, having grown up alongside the company," says Brusaferrì, who turned 31-years-old this year.

Now as general

manager, Brusaferrì made it his mission to learn about the company from the inside out, spending time in all the departments, from accounts and HR through to sales and marketing. The recent opening of the new Dubai office to spearhead the company's expansion in the Middle East was 'his baby'.

Last year, Brusaferrì also published the story of the growth of Lemi in his book *Some Like it Comfy*, which details how his metal-worker father 'accidentally' went from fixing tractors around the village to creating high-tech massage beds and eventually building a global business.

Design powerhouse

Brusaferrì says: "Lemi was the first to make beds that enabled practitioners to stand up and not sit down. We also brought a strong element

of design and durability to beds, and managed to successfully hide all the not-so-aesthetic component parts.

"The first bed my father ever made was discovered quite recently, still very much in use in a doctor's surgery!"

With strong design ethics and capabilities, Lemi is known for being a powerhouse of innovation, with an ever-growing catalogue of products, and 60,000 beds produced each year for over 100 different countries.

At the recent CosmoProf trade event in Italy (where his father exhibited his very first bed three decades ago) the company showcased a range of six new forward-thinking table models.

These include the Verona Evo, a dual-use spa table which, thanks to its fully electric height adjustment, can be used as a massage table or a chair; and the Elba PeditSpa, which



Left: Matteo Brusaferrì and his biography on the Lemi Story (pictured). Right: the earliest models of Lemi massage tables





Lemi's products are largely crafted by hand at its base in northern Italy. There's also a strong culture of fostering wellness among its staff. Right: the new Elba Pedita Spa



“

The company's beds are still handcrafted with great care in their two village factories and carry the prestigious certification of '100 per cent Made in Italy'

follows the same elegant design as the Capri Pedita, but with a thinner silhouette and more basic technology to create a better quality/price ratio for customers.

Brusaferri says: "We realised that we had a gap in our range for something that was high spec, but which allowed smaller businesses to offer their customers the unique experience of a Lemi bed."

Highly personalised

The company's beds are still handcrafted with great care in their two village factories and carry the prestigious certification of '100 per cent Made in Italy'.

Brusaferri says: "Because of our very close, dedicated team and processes, we're still able to guarantee a lead time of four to six weeks. It's entirely bespoke. We don't keep any premade beds in stock."

"In health and wellness, we're entering a new era of increased personalisation. Clients who regularly go to spas know exactly what they want from a massage experience, and so our spa clients expect a high degree of customisation from us."

As well as the best quality Italian leather in a vast range of colours, Lemi offers

additions that turn the massage experience into a multi-sensorial journey – from chromatherapy through to blue-tooth music.

So with 30 years clocked up, what's next for the Lemi Group?

Certainly there are many more designs and customisations in the pipeline, says Brusaferri, with some "exciting new departures" to be revealed later this year.

As one of the leaders of the company with an eye on greater expansion, Brusaferri's business schedule is unsurprisingly full on, with two weeks in four spent travelling internationally.

"Unlike my father, who didn't have the benefit of the internet when starting out, we can take advantage of great marketing opportunities like social media."

"But I see wellness as a very human-to-human business. It's based on building relationships, and so there's really no substitute to getting out there and meeting our customers and future customers face-to-face."

"We can talk about how fantastic our massage beds are, but until you actually lie on one you can't truly appreciate how wonderful they feel."

Wellness culture

Lemi's passion also extends to how the company treats its employees, fostering a culture of wellness for all who work there.

"We've introduced a relaxation lounge and ensure that nobody works for more than two hours without taking a break. We have a gym and offer pilates classes at three different levels, as well as English classes," says Brusaferri.

"When our employees are happy and well cared for, we know that that contentment shines through in their work for us. In the same way, we also design our beds with the comfort and needs of therapist in mind."

"If a therapist doesn't enjoy giving a treatment on a particular bed, then that discomfort can truly be picked up on by the massage client."

"So when the therapist has an exceptional massage bed to work on, the client experience will be exceptional too. That's what the Lemi difference is all about."

Contact Lemi

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On the menu

We highlight some of the latest treatments, services, initiatives and programmes spas are offering



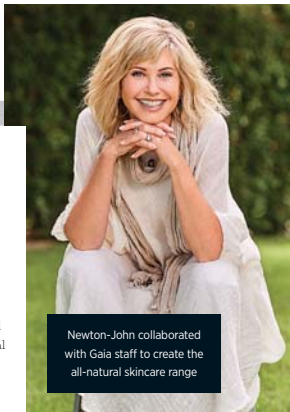
There are 10 products in the Retirement Botanics collection

Olivia Newton-John creates skincare range

Australian singer Olivia Newton-John has launched an all-natural skincare range which is available online and at Gaia, the Byron Bay retreat and spa she co-founded in 2005 (see SB10/3 p46).

Retirement Botanics comprises 10 products which blend extracts from native plants, such as banksia flower and kakadu plum, with antioxidants, essential fatty acids and vitamins A, C & E to target ageing and skincare concerns.

Newton-John says that as Gaia successfully grew into "a place of beauty that was nurturing and gentle on the soul, I dreamt of an equally beautiful, nurturing skincare range that really worked".



Newton-John collaborated with Gaia staff to create the all-natural skincare range

📍 Gaia Retreat & Spa, Australia

💰 Prices start at AU\$39 (US\$28, €25, £21) for a 100ml hand & body cream



Jet lag butler available in Rome hotel

Guests arriving at Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Resort in Italy, can now receive a thorough consultation with a specialist butler to help combat jet-lag, fatigue or general burn-out.

They'll suggest the perfect room temperature for optimal sleep, talk through the pillow menu options, recommend healthy in-room dining and arrange an unpacking service. They can also find the most

suitable spa treatments, such as the Ultimate Detox Reviver by Aromatherapy Associates, a massage based on rosemary, pink grapefruit and juniper berry energy boosting oils.

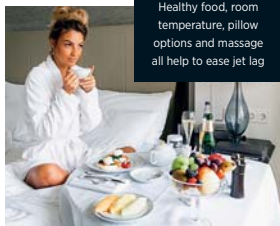
A recent global survey of 2,000 luxury

consumers, conducted by Waldorf Astoria's parent company Hilton, found that a third of travellers want to experience such a treatment.

📍 Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Resort, Italy

⌚ 50 minutes

💰 €400 (US\$452, £347) for two people



Healthy food, room temperature, pillow options and massage all help to ease jet lag





African drumming and a massage inspired by tribal healing techniques are on offer



Sounds of Africa promotes hyperconsciousness

A wellness programme focusing on the sight, smells, sounds and taste of Africa has launched at Azura Benguerra in Mozambique.

Sounds of Africa aims to promote the benefits of hyperconsciousness to cultivate a new way of thinking to care for the mind and body.

The programme features an African drumming session which combines traditional rhythmical drumming, singing and exercise to promote healing, a walking meditation expedition around sensory

spots on the island, a silent breakfast on the shore line and an TheraNaka massage inspired by tribal healing techniques. Guests can pick and choose any element of the programme to add on to their stay.

Azura Benguerra is a private island resort, which was hand-built and is part-operated by the local community, and is situated in a marine national park.

Sounds of Africa is also available at its sister property, Azura Quilalea, which is in Mozambique as well.

📍 Azura Benguerra Private Island, Mozambique

💰 Resort rates start at US\$695 (€619, £532) a night



Emmie is a plus-size supermodel and positive body image advocate

Emmie brings a sense of clarity at Carillon

Wellness resort Carillon Miami is inviting guests to "gain a new sense of clarity" in a three-day retreat guided by Emmie - the US plus-size supermodel and advocate of positive body image.

Emmie will be joined by Inessa Freylekhman, a spiritual psychotherapist and feng shui master, to help attendants to clear their minds and release subconscious blocks through meditations, yoga, workshops and forgiveness rituals. The

📍 Carillon Miami, US

🕒 Three days

💰 Starts at US\$780 (€690, £599)

overall goal is to develop an 'ideal vision' for life and create a plan on how to get there.

Prices include a US\$200 (€177, £153) spa credit for treatments and access to one of the country's largest thermal experiences.

📍 In-office stretch sessions currently available in New York and Los Angeles, US

🕒 15 minutes-1 hour

💰 Prices vary according to length of treatment and type of subscription



On-demand stretch sessions for employees

On-demand massage service Soothe has added stretch services to its treatment list for corporate clients.

Jeff Bishop, Soothe's VP of operations, says: "Because so much of daily stress occurs in the workplace, it was natural for Soothe to go beyond providing in-office chair massage therapy by developing Soothe Stretch, where individuals can receive assisted stretching while at work."

Spa Business recently tipped assisted stretching as an up and coming spa treatment (see SB18/3 p98) as it allows a therapist to target particular muscles and



Jeff Bishop

points that cannot be activated through solo stretching.

Soothe, a leading on-demand massage service and app, delivered one massage every two minutes to clients in the US, Canada, UK and Australia in 2018. It's At Work programme sends therapists to workplaces on a subscription basis. ▶



Sessions can include an Aura-Soma massage to balance chakras

Colour therapy at Four Seasons Vietnam

International colour and massage teacher Tricia Sharkey will be helping guests to "explore harmony, health and healing" through colour as part of a Visiting Masters programme at Four Seasons Vietnam in June. They can choose from over 100 Aura-Soma dual



Tricia Sharkey

colour bottles – combining essential oils and crystals – which each have a special meaning and are applied to a specific area of the body.

Sharkey says: "Colour has been proven to be a most effective emotional enhancer, like golden sunlight on a cloudy day. It helps you feel better about your situation, and even more, it helps give you insights, motivation and creative solutions."

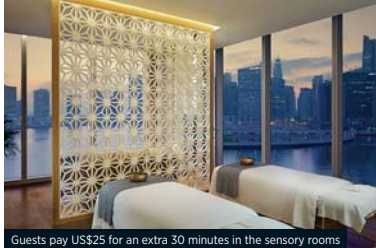
She can talk guests through the colour in more depth if interested and also combine the consultation with a chakra balancing massage.

Additional Visiting Masters highlights include sixth sense readings and yoga, music and healing vibration workshops.

♥ Heart of the Earth Spa, Four Seasons Resort The Nam Hai, Vietnam

🕒 60 minute Chakra Balance Massage with Aura-Soma oils

💰 VND5,300,000 (US\$228, €203, £176)



Guests pay US\$25 for an extra 30 minutes in the sensory rooms

Spa suites dedicated to the senses in Dubai

Treatment suites focused on different senses are available at Six Senses Spa Dubai in the Renaissance Downtown Hotel.

In the Sound Suite, guests lie on a So-Sound Legato Healing Lounger where healing vibrations resonate through the body to release muscle tension, improve circulation and blood pressure and encourage relaxing brainwaves. It's been described as "lying in your very own Tibetan singing bowl". Rather than just hearing with your ears, you're now listening with your



Tactile living walls in the Touch Suite

whole body." There's also an interactive hanging chime feature, and a steam shower and sauna where guests can choose either relaxing or reenergising music.

Features in the other rooms include a living moss wall and a floatation pod for a feeling of total weightlessness in the Touch Suite; and circadian lamps, beautiful image projections and a light pollution mask in the Sight Suite.

Any spa treatment can be enjoyed in the suites and an extra 30 minutes will be added for the sensory experience. A range of rituals to further heighten the senses have been created for the specialist rooms.

♥ Six Senses Spa, Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai

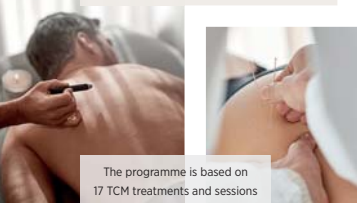
🕒 30 minute add on for treatments

💰 AED90 (US\$25, €22, £19)

♥ Lefay Resort & Spa Lago di Garda, Italy

🕒 Five nights

💰 €2,500 (US\$2,801, £2,162)



The programme is based on 17 TCM treatments and sessions

Lefay launches stress-busting programme

Leading Italian spa resort Lefay has revealed a five night stress-busting programme based on 17 treatments and sessions.

"Detoxing from stress is as important as any health detox," it says. "Prolonged stress causes chemicals in the body to build up, creating symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, skin problems, digestive issues, depression and joint pain."

The Recovery of Original Energy programme combines Lefay's classical

Chinese medicine approach with neuroscience – where doctors monitor the effectiveness of treatments on stress, through heart rate variability.

Acupuncture points are stimulated and energy flow is boosted with multiple tui na, moxibustion, reflexology and qi gong sessions. There's also La Quiete, a new massage for 2019, which uses slow movements with medium pressure that builds to release muscle tension and promote deep relaxation. ●



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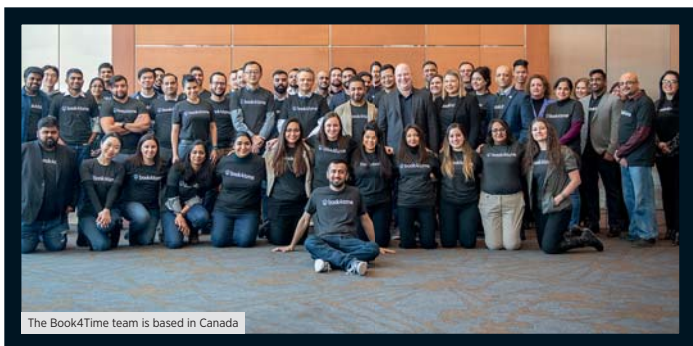
spa business uniting the world of wellness



“

Book4Time is committed to the wellness technology industry. We'll continue innovating and bring new solutions to market that help advance the global wellness cause

Roger Sholanki
launched Book4Time,
the first cloud-based
spa management
system, in 2004



The Book4Time team is based in Canada

ROGER SHOLANKI

As Book4Time celebrates its 15th anniversary, we talk to its founder and CEO about his passion for the spa and wellness industry

The biggest challenge we're tackling today is how to keep our clients' schedules full," says Roger Sholanki, founder and CEO of spa and wellness software brand, Book4Time.

"The aim of spa and wellness businesses is to achieve 100 per cent utilisation, but on average, we've established that spas are 40-50 per cent under-utilised across the industry.

"Our goal is to figure out innovative ways to keep the books full at the highest profit margin and we're in the process of launching a new solution to address this problem," he confides.

Fast response

As the creator of the first ever cloud-based spa software, Book4Time has a reputation for being fast to respond to the changing needs of the industry, as Sholanki explains: "We've pivoted the company four times and launched a stream of new releases of our product - as well as bringing new products to market and uncovering gaps in the market that weren't being met.

"Book4Time is committed to the wellness technology industry. We'll continue innovating and bring new solutions to market that help advance the global wellness cause," he says.

"Our aim, as innovators, has always been to find solutions for our clients and today, we're working on a unique new product offering that's currently under wraps, but which will connect spas and wellness businesses with a leading marketplace - more news to come on this soon."

Launching in 2004

"As we celebrate 15 years of Book4Time and look back at the journey we've been on, we could never have imagined when we started out that we would have been on such a journey," reflects Sholanki.

"Our initial purpose was to build a simple software booking system and sell it to anybody anywhere who wanted to book an appointment," he explains.

"In the early days we had clients such as car services and veterinary clinics - a mix of businesses - and that's when we created the name Book4Time.

"Then an opportunity came up to work with a day spa chain which had four locations. They were trying to grow the business and wanted to have a centralised call centre to book their appointments, which wasn't possible with the on-premise software they were using.

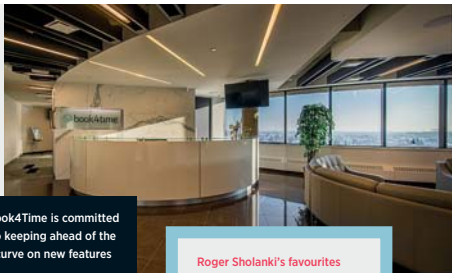
"I investigated, but couldn't find anyone with a cloud-based solution for the spa



Book4Time aims to enable spas to achieve 100 per cent utilisation



Book4Time is committed to keeping ahead of the curve on new features



Roger Sholanki's favourites

- Passions** Collecting exotic cars and cooking
- Relaxation** Spending time with family
- Community** Coaching young entrepreneurs
- Food** Homemade hot sauce
- Book** Anything to do with personal development
- Spa Treatment** Hot stone massage

► and wellness market and it inspired me to solve that problem," he says.

"The early vendors of spa and wellness software had been focusing on independent business owners, so we developed our vision to become the standard for more complex businesses and enterprise hotel and resort chains," he continues.

"We saw immediate interest from hotel and resort spas and quickly realised how unique and different their processes and requirements were. We decided to pivot the company and focus on the wellness and spa industry, within the hotel and resort market and large day spa market."

Growing market

As the market has grown, so has Book4Time, with no end in sight for what's possible, as Sholanki explains: "According to the Global Wellness Institute, the global wellness economy is at US\$4.2 trillion and we're finding there are lots of new trends emerging and those, in turn, are creating new business challenges and opportunities for us to work on that still haven't been solved.

"The outlook for wellness is very positive," he says, "with lots of room for new and innovative services and products that have yet to come to fruition.

"We're already seeing AI playing an important role across many industries and I believe it will make a huge impact on the wellness market over the next decade," he says.

"Wellness is also reaching almost all industries in some way or other, to help improve lifestyle choices and overall physical and mental wellbeing."

Global clients

"The businesses that benefit most from our solutions are typically hotel and resort chains, multi-location day

spas, as well as beauty and fitness chains that require enterprise-level capabilities, such as centralised client profiles and reporting," says Sholanki.

Book4Time's strong client list reads like a who's who of the spa and hospitality industry, with locations from Shangri-La and Fairmont using the system and properties such as Four Seasons Toronto, Hyatt Zilara Cancun, and St Regis Saadiyat Island on board.

Software features include online booking for single and group reservations, central reservations across multiple visits, booking for activities and classes and a native app for iOS and Android.

Book4Time also offers an API which enables operators to build their own branded online booking experiences or mobile apps.

Book4Time announces CardConnect partnership

A new collaboration with CardConnect sees the addition of a Book4Time all-in-one payment system, creating a fully-integrated solution so operators can manage both their business and payments, enabling them to streamline operations, reduce costs and elevate their business.

The software offers a host of features including: intuitive pricing and implementation processes, more

payment options, real-time reporting, PCI compliance and dedicated support.

Roger Sholanki, CEO and founder of Book4Time, said: "We began this integration with the entire business ecosystem in mind. When used as part of Book4Time's suite of wellness resource management products, it streamlines business work flows and improves customer experience for both frontline personnel and the customer."

Staying ahead

So how does Sholanki stay on top of such a fast moving business? "I have a daily exercise regimen that I cannot go without," he says, "regardless of how busy I am - It keeps me focused on the bigger picture.

"I also learned some valuable lessons in my last business that I still use today. It comes down to making sure your team is aligned and that they understand the 'Why?' behind your passion. It's also critical to keep focused on your vision and purpose." ●



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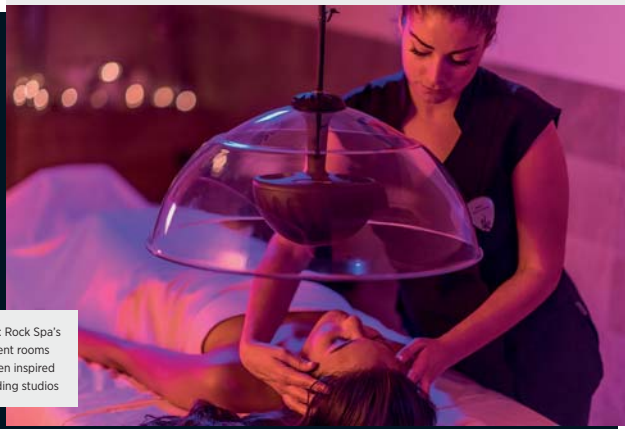
INTERVIEW

A portrait of Dale Hipsh, a man with glasses and a dark suit over a purple shirt, smiling. He is standing in a guitar shop, with several acoustic guitars hanging on the wall behind him. The text "DALE HIPSH" is overlaid in large white serif font.

DALE HIPSH

Hipsh's love affair with spas began when he worked with Sylvia Sepielli on a new hotel opening in Hawaii

Tuning in: Rock Spa's treatment rooms have been inspired by recording studios



Katie Barnes talks to the senior vice president of hotels at Hard Rock International about creating a music-centric spa concept which strikes the right chord with both consumers and media

By his own admission, Dale Hipsh concedes that spas contribute only a tiny amount to the bottom line of the 28 hotels he oversees for the iconic music-related leisure brand Hard Rock International. In fact the vast majority of income for its Native American owners, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, comes from gaming revenue (see p52).

Yet this has done nothing to quell his love for spa and wellness. "It's [a] very small [part of operations], but it's my passion. It's the jewel inside the lotus," Hipsh says, referencing a Buddhist mantra. With his senior vice president hat on, he also lays down the business case for the group's 21 spa facilities. "A luxury spa is expected when you're in the proper side of gaming. If unique and individualised enough, the experience can drive return visits and they've been integral to the expansion of our brand in the luxury market.

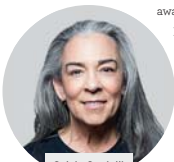
"Another reason they're super-important, besides the fact that I like the spa environment, is because they drive incremental gaming revenue," he

says, explaining that an extra massage or sauna session could be all it takes for someone to extend their stay and ultimately spend more on gaming.

But how has Hard Rock brought its distinct music background alive in its Rock Spas® and what adaptations will it make as it moves into wellness? And what will this mean as it switches from just owning to managing hotels and expands into gateway cities?

Learning from a spa maestro

It's difficult not to be captivated as Hipsh, an animated storyteller, recounts his 30-plus years in hospitality. Originally from Pensacola, Florida, his family were 'saloon keeps' who ran a series of restaurants so a career in hotels was a natural step. His roles have been many and varied - from butler and assistant housekeeper, to front office manager and specialising in projects and development. "I really built my career opening hotels and giving



Sylvia Sepielli

away big chunks of my life to passion projects and another dollar more and another promotion," he says.

Prior to starting at Hard Rock in 2002 he worked for Hyatt across the US and gained international experience with Ritz-Carlton in countries like Seoul, Singapore and Bali. It

was while opening the Grand Wailea, once a Hyatt property, in Hawaii that his paths crossed with renown industry designer and consultant Sylvia Sepielli and his love affair with spas began. "Immediately I was in love with spas, a devotee," he says. "I'm so grateful to have fallen into her orbit. She's the spa maestro and I've just learned a tremendous amount from her." Unsurprisingly, she was Hipsh's first choice when he turned his attention to Hard Rock's wellbeing offer in 2010.

The group's Rock Spas already had a distinctive style with treatments such as the energy boosting Rhythm Sticks massage performed with bamboo rods

INTERVIEW: DALE HIPSH

► and the meditative Retune Yourself experience combining lomi lomi massage and a gong bath. But Hipsh wanted to further elevate the brand. "It's a great name," he says. "But what does it mean, what does it smell, sound and taste like? What is the experience and where are the SOPs to back that up? We started to flesh out the brand and explore what a Rock Spa should and could be."

More Zeppelin than Zen

At the core of Hipsh and Sepielli's efforts are the signature Rhythm & Motion treatments which make up what Hard Rock refers to as "the world's first fully immersive, music-centric spa menu". The 50- or 80-minute Synchronicity massage, Face the Music facial, Smooth Operator dry brush experience and Wrap Remix envelopment are available at 12 select Rock Spas and cost US\$150 (€132, 113) or US\$210 (€185, £158), respectively.

Dale Hipsh: personal file

Film: *A Star is Born* - "oh my god, it's amazing"

Book: *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien

Place: Marrakech

Season: Autumn with the falling leaves

Type of treatment: Deep tissue massage - "I'm a stressed-out executive and I want you to beat it out of me"

Advice: If you have to ask yourself 'is it the right thing to do', it almost never is

Admire: My uncle, who was able to take an idea and a dirt floor and build a fortune

Marketing images are intentionally cool and sexy (above); the Rhythm Stick massage uses bamboo rods (right)

Each treatment utilises Hard Rock's differentiator - music - and connects it with the artistry of spa modalities. Therapists, for example, synchronise movements with an expertly curated playlist. Hipsh says "getting the music right was the hardest part" as he goes into great depth about mixing Louis Reed's *Walk on the Wild Side* with tracks from Bobby McFerrin and even the Beverly Hillbillies to tell the story of strolling through an Aspen forest in autumn. The team is now working on 'train journey' and 'beach walk' soundtracks to add variety.

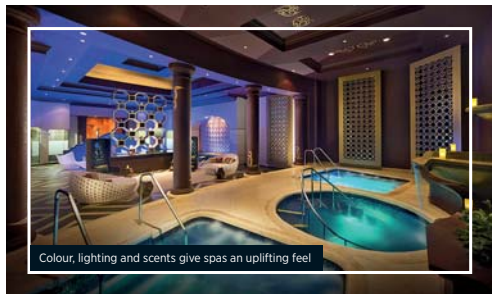
"We really worked on elevating that sound experience," says Hipsh. "I'd gotten past drippy 'ding dong bong' spa music and in this data driven, always-on approach to life we felt today's spa should leave you wanting to hit the dance floor - not relaxed."

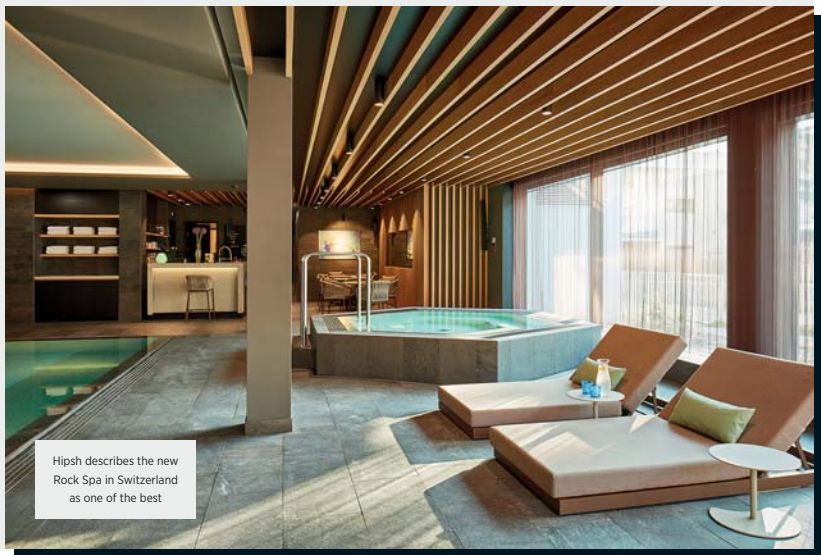


Lynn Curry

He adds: "Our strapline is more Zeppelin than Zen." To this end, energising touches include pops of colour in the interiors, verbenas rather than tuberose scent and bold marketing images of men with tattoos. "It's meant to be cool and sexy," says Hipsh. "I know this has always been taboo in the spa industry, but grow up - this is not what we're going to do."

Perhaps the most obvious example of thinking outside the box, however, is its vibration-inducing massage beds and overhanging sound domes which send pulses through the body to amplify the music spa experience. "I told Sylvia I wanted our massage rooms to be like a sound recording studio and she said 'oh my god, that's an amazing idea,'" recalls Hipsh. At first conversations led down an expensive path with costs exceeding US\$15,000 a bed. Undeterred, they looked to the attractions industry for affordable solutions. The sub-woofers embedded in the LEC-customised beds are the same devices Universal uses in its rides to replicate the roar of a jet engine, while the sound domes are used for audio experiences in museums.





Hipsh describes the new Rock Spa in Switzerland as one of the best

Warmly received

It's been four years since Hard Rock revealed its Rhythm & Motion treatments and the reinvented Rock Spa, so how 'successful' are they? "Anytime you do something really different in an industry, you need to brace yourself for harsh criticism - but we didn't have that," explains Hipsh. "Treatments have been very warmly received and we've had wonderful reviews from both journalists and customers."

At launch only one specialist Rhythm & Motion room was introduced to facilities, but hotels are now adding more as the demand for the treatments grow.

Yet as much as Hipsh appreciates the value a spa can add to a property, he says there's not always a market for it - "it breaks my heart!". For every new locale, he relies on spa consultant Lynn Curry to judge the setting. "She does everything for us," he says. "She tells me what the competition is in a new market, what the benchmark is. And then we'll start working on the design - do we need two treatment rooms or 20, what budget is there for the design and moving forwards she'll help with the SOPs and revalidating whether emerginC is still the best product partner for us."



Expertly curated playlists accompany choreographed treatments

Some of its newest openings include hotels and spas in the US and Switzerland. In Atlantic City, New Jersey, Hard Rock acquired the Trump Taj Mahal and gave it a US\$500m (£440.4m, £377.7m) facelift "the spa was an integral part of getting that property stood back on its feet and differentiating it," says Hipsh.

In Davos, the offer sits at the higher end of the Hard Rock portfolio. "I've never seen anything like Swiss quality," he says, adding that the group collaborated with Raison d'Etre on spa design. "We've got

a jewel of a hotel with 110 rooms, but then a spa [with hydrothermal facilities] what would support a 300/400 bed property so it's got a lot of horsepower."

Broader wellness

Outside the spa, Hard Rock has introduced wellness into guestrooms with its Rock Om® yoga experience.

Rolled out in January 2018, the programme gives Hard Rock guests access to three yoga videos in their rooms on-demand, or via its website.

INTERVIEW: DALE HIPSH



Rock Om, an in-room yoga experience, launched last year

► The sessions are for those who want to 'play hard and purify harder' and feature original tracks mixed by DJ Drez - who's collaborated with artists such as Eminem and the Black Eyed Peas - and his yogi wife Marti Nikko. It's also partnered with leading yoga brand Manduka for mats.

"We have to find touch points that always relate back to our DNA of music and yoga was something that really resonated," explains Hipsh, hinting that this isn't the end of Hard Rock's take on wellness. "Right now we have two [wellness] things we're doing really well, but we are working on another idea. There will be three legs to the stool."

The third offering he reveals will expand on Hard Rock's existing city guides, where local artists talk about their favourite things to do - but with a wellness angle. "We're just talking about how we bring that from paper to a real life experience."

Owning and managing

Looking to the future, Hipsh announces that the biggest change on the horizon is to manage as well as acquire hotels - the

Hard Rock is targeting gateway cities as it grows globally. Next to open is a hotel in central London



Iconic music brand owned by Native Americans

Hard Rock International has embodied the spirit of rock music for more than 47 years. It started out as a themed restaurant, the Hard Rock Café in London, in 1971 and is now one of the most globally recognised brands known for its music memorabilia - it has an eclectic mix of 81,000-plus pieces ranging from Eric Clapton's guitar to a Jimi Hendrix pouch and metal bikini and jewellery set once worn in a music video by Rihanna. These are showcased across its portfolio of 185 cafes, 28 hotels, 12 casinos and live performance venues.

In 2007 the Seminole Tribe of Florida acquired Hard Rock for a reported US\$965m (£853.6m, £737m) from Rank International. Close to 3,300 Seminole Indians live on and off reservations throughout Florida. Its business operations include cattle ranching, citrus production, tourism promotion, sports management and tobacco sales, but it excels in gaming. Analysts believe it operates one of the most profitable gaming enterprises in the world and up to 90 per cent of its budget comes from this side of the business.

group only operates one out of the 28 properties it owns. "And if we're managing a hotel, we're managing the spa," he says.

Another clear goal is to be more strategic when it comes to expansion. Hipsh explains: "Up until three, four years ago the hotel division evolved opportunistically - 'Maui? Sure, sounds like

a good place; Singapore? Why not?' - Now we're focusing on big gateway cities."

Imminent new openings are scheduled in London and the Maldives. While hotels in Madrid and Budapest are due to open later this year and sites in Amsterdam and Dublin are on the cards in 2020.

Although not every hotel will have a spa, Hipsh feels it's still a vital element to the Hard Rock offering. "A few years ago the spa industry went through a bit of a wane. But I knew spa and wellness was always going to be part of anything we were involved with and it has to be something pretty special if you're innovating in a down cycle. And now it's coming back, I think it's definitely trending the other way." ●



Hard Rock is part of the first integrated resort in the Maldives which opens in June



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



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- Available in many wooden decors

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Growing *the* GLOBAL SPA FAMILY

After almost three decades serving members and contributing to the growth of the industry, we talk to ISPA's Crystal Ducker about the work of the association and the future of spa

As a membership association for spa providers, educators, students and suppliers around the world, the International SPA Association (ISPA) has witnessed great changes and exciting growth within the industry in its 29 years of existence.

The association was started by a number of spa professionals in 1990, who had come together for a spa symposium in New York. Frustrated by the fact that industry talk was almost solely focused on hotels, the group realised there was a need for a united, guiding voice for their own industry.

At that time, there was also a distinct lack of industry resources and data, and limited opportunities for spa professionals to meet up and share business ideas with their peers.

The newly-formed ISPA set out to change all that. The association's first ever event was held just a year later, in Florida and attracted 150 attendees from 10 countries.



“

IT MIGHT SOUND LIKE
A CLICHÉ, BUT ISPA
REALLY IS LIKE ONE BIG,
SUPPORTIVE FAMILY

Fast forward to September 2019, and the global ISPA Conference & Expo will welcome more than 2,000 attendees and 250 exhibitors from over 30 countries to Las Vegas, US.

"It might sound like a cliché, but ISPA really is like one big, supportive family," say Crystal Ducker, vice president of research and communications.

"Its whole culture is founded on spa community and collaboration, which is driven by our members volunteering through various task forces. All our members are passionate industry professionals who have a desire to share their knowledge and make the spa industry the best it can be."

Strong growth

This passion has taken the association far, and so has its commitment to collating and analysing meaningful spa data. Ducker says: "From early on, ISPA identified the immense importance of producing data-driven resources for its members, which they could then use to help inform their business decisions."

"PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) were commissioned in 1999 to conduct a full market overview of the spa industry - and



ISPA is getting ready to welcome over 2,000 delegates to its annual conference later this year in Las Vegas





ISPA members know they will receive the best education, as well as enjoy valuable networking opportunities



“

ISPA CURRENTLY HAS MORE THAN
3,000 MEMBERS IN OVER 50 COUNTRIES

that survey, the US Spa Industry Study, has been produced annually ever since.”

In that 20-year period, industry growth – with the exception of the global economic downturn of 2008 – has been strong, consistent and healthy – and this has been reflected in the association’s growth too.

In the first PwC study, there were 4,140 spas in the US generating a total revenue of \$4.2bn in 1999. The 2018 survey showed there were now 21,770 spas in the US, generating a total revenue of \$17.5bn.

Ducker adds: “ISPA currently has more than 3,000 members in over 50 countries. We have sole proprietor mobile spa operators right up to global hotel and resort brands. Everyone is welcome.”

Spa members pay \$689 per year and gain access to high quality online training materials, up-to-date and in-depth industry data, a searchable network of spa facilities and resource partner brands, digital and in-person networking opportunities, and an invite to the annual ISPA Conference & Expo.

Ducker says the voluntary nature of the organisation gives it a level of independence that is one of its greatest strengths.

“Speakers do not pay to present at our events. We invest in education. We’re proud that it’s an event where you know you’ll receive the highest levels of education and information.

And it seems the future for spas is looking even brighter, and younger. Ducker says: “Millennials are a growing force in the spa market. They’re enthusiastic spa-goers and also keen shoppers.

“Our research shows that 75% of millennials will make a retail purchase after a spa treatment, compared to just 42% of baby boomers. Millennials are interested to learn more about the products, what they do and the ingredients they contain. They represent a huge opportunity for spas if they can connect with this market.

Industry challenges

ISPA has never been an organisation to shy away from important topics, and a key focus going forward will be on maintaining and up-levelling the workforce and managing talent, says Ducker.

“In 2018 there were 35,000 unfilled spa positions in the US alone. We really must help spas focus on growing a quality workforce through gold standard training, and incentivising them to ensure that both retention and career progression remain high,” she says.

Next year will see ISPA celebrating a landmark 30th anniversary, and Ducker says there are many yet-to-be announced developments and celebrations planned for its members.

With 187 million spa visits recorded in the US alone last year, and with the spa industry emerging rapidly across all parts of Asia, there’s no doubt that the association will continue to grow and flourish.

“The spa lifestyle has truly arrived and visiting a spa is no longer seen as a luxury, but as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle. Spa is everywhere – from hotels to the workplace and even schools with the spread of mindfulness practices.

Ducker says: “Looking back over almost 30 years, we’d like to feel that the realisation of spa as an attainable and important way of life can be greatly attributed to the work of the members of the International SPA Association.

“And we’ll continue, of course, to serve those members at a very high level and respond to their needs in this exciting marketplace.” ●



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How are spas using and interpreting data from DNA tests effectively?

Everyone's talking about...

DNA Testing

More commonly associated with crime scenes and paternity tests, DNA testing is becoming mainstream.

Julie Cramer finds out what this means for spas



Julie Cramer is a health and wellness journalist
■ juliecramer@me.com

Fuelled by the growth of popular companies such as US-based 23Me, DNA testing is more readily available to consumers than ever before. And it's also becoming a service offered by health and wellness providers.

DNA testing involves a simple saliva swab which can be analysed to deliver powerful health information directly into the hands of the consumer. UK-based firm Chronomics has taken things a step further by launching one of the world's first consumer epigenetics testing kits and we take a closer look at that on p20.

But what should people do with this data once they receive it? Is this where spa facilities should be stepping in as the experts to prescribe lifestyle changes

and assist with their implementation? What sort of services are spas offering?

The good news is that, with the growth of third party DNA testing providers, spas don't need to have a medical component onsite as everything can be outsourced, with specialist training provided for staff. But how do they choose a credible partner?

There are caveats to consider too. How can such sensitive data be protected, and how can spas deal with the delivery of often life-changing information? And with the extra infrastructure a spa might need, will the service be profitable?

We talk to leading wellness providers and industry experts about how spas can tackle these issues.

Simone Gibertoni CEO, Clinique la Prairie

The future of wellness is based on genetics. Soon there will be no 'standard' detox or wellness programmes. Instead, they'll be customised according to genetic tests.

We chose to partner with Gene Predictis (GP) because of its expertise. It's tests are based on the most recent validated knowledge in the field of health and genetics and proprietary algorithms.

GP developed genetic testing panels specifically for Clinique La Prairie, which launched in December. A saliva swab is sent to the GP labs for DNA analysis and in three days a personalised report giving an overview of inherited risk factors is made available to our doctors for review and health recommendations.



Our physicians, who have also been trained by GP scientists, can identify risks of developing certain diseases, for which a treatment or preventive care is available. In addition, they can help by giving guidance on how to improve quality of life by focusing on things like nutrition, stress reduction, better sleep etc.

The future of wellness is based on genetics. Soon there will be no 'standard' detox or wellness programmes

The genetic test has been added to our renowned Revitalisation programmes and the Master Detox programme, and will soon be integrated into Weight Management offering and maybe more programmes in the future. Prices for these all-inclusive, multi-night packages start at CHF14,900 (US\$14.7k).

So far clients are keen and very impressed that they can get such personalised medical information and advice.

I'd say the main success of our DNA tests is that they promote an increased awareness for prevention

and give greater motivation to adopt a better lifestyle. Recently we had a patient who was hesitating in doing further cardiological investigations, even though the medical consultations indicated a need for it. But when his DNA results showed an increased genetic risk for heart attack, he decided to go further into preventive care.

■ Gibertoni joined Switzerland's Clinique La Prairie in 2016. He's worked in the luxury, cosmetics and industrial sectors for 20-plus years

Mary Huddleston Tabacchi professor emerita, Cornell University

I can see a number of advantages and disadvantages to spas offering DNA testing, for both the consumer and operators.

Tests usually only require a saliva sample, which is easy to collect, and spas could be seen as a one-stop shop for this kind of service (instead of going to the doctors). This will allow customers to find out about health markers they otherwise might never have known about.

Offering DNA testing could help set the spa apart from other facilities, increase their standing as a wellness provider and even increase occupancy.

But there are potential downsides too, of course. Important psychological factors must be taken into



consideration. Is it the place of a spa practitioner to deliver certain kinds of results and what kind of impact might that have on them psychologically – for better or worse? On the other hand, they are the best placed to help clients achieve the lifestyle modifications that might be needed.

Spas might have to consider extra personnel costs and insurance against potential misinterpretation

There's also a debate that DNA blood samples may have less impurities than saliva. If blood is to be taken, it's likely that the spa will have to employ a phlebotomist. Who will interpret the findings? Will there be a need for a doctor on the premises? And how will the spa protect the privacy of the information?

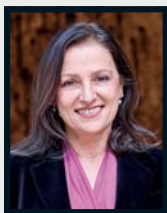
The added costs could end up outweighing the extra revenue these tests bring. Spas might have to consider extra personnel costs, more space, and increased insurance

against potential mistakes or misinterpretation.

In addition, while personalised nutritional approaches may be a step in the right direction, few scientific organisations believe we even have enough current genetic information to assist in diet effectiveness. It's clearly a complex matter.

■ Huddleston Tabacchi has a PhD in biochemical nutrition, biostatistics, and a specialist knowledge of the global spa industry ▶

Lina Lotto spa director, SenSpa



I've long been aware of DNA testing as a tool, not only to discover ancestry but to identify individual health markers and biological influences. I've always wanted to use it personally, but it was initially expensive.

I found DNAFit to be a very affordable and excellent choice. After testing it on our team, we're just about to launch it to our 380-plus SenSpa members at a cost of £149 (US\$194, €172).

Our fitness team have completed 23 DNAFit training modules and four exams so they can now programme PT sessions using the DNA tool.

Although the reports are user friendly and self-evident in the way information is presented, our team is able to interpret genetic markers

Reports help us to home in on the most effective means to achieve wellness goals without wasting time

that determine the body's functionality. For example, am I better built for power or endurance, am I likely to suffer injury and how quickly might I recover from a workout?

The reports help us to home in on the most effective means to achieve wellness goals without wasting time, energy and resources on activity or nutrition that adds little or may even be detrimental.

We're seeing now, especially with the treatment of disease, that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. We're in an era of personalisation and

there's nothing more personal than DNA testing to tailor and eliminate activities or foods that aren't beneficial.

We may already be doing what's good for us. For example, I instinctively prefer a lower carbohydrate diet – which is exactly what my DNA says is right for me. But I also gained a huge amount of insight that I can put to practical use every day.

■ *Lotto is a senior executive at Greenclouse Hotels, UK, and has overseen its SenSpa at Careys Manor for 15 years*

Marina Efraimoglou CEO and founder, Euphoria Retreat

We see the huge value of DNA testing. It's something that can have a highly personalised influence on lifestyle interventions that can be used to reduce the expression of a 'bad' genotype.

We chose to partner with the Greek firm Eucrasia, whose experts have been studying human metabolic function for more than 20 years, producing a significant track record of over 15,000 clinical cases.

One of the tests we offer is 3GL, which costs €110 (US\$124, £95). Through a simple finger prick blood test, we measure the levels of glutathione, the master protection cell for our metabolism. We also measure



blood glucose levels. From this we can we determine a person's precise antioxidant nutritional needs and identify the ideal isoglycemic diet to keep blood glucose balanced. Balanced sugar levels promote wellness, longevity and metabolic homeostasis.

It can have a highly personalised influence on lifestyle interventions

Our advanced seven-night Nutrigenomics Programme, priced at €3,471 (US\$3,925, £3,000), measures the influence of your lifestyle and nutritional habits in the expression of your genetic code.

Using a blood panel that measures around 200 parameters, our scientific team can assess a person's cellular respiration, gut flora, general detoxification and how they metabolise macro and micro nutrients.

We use this information to prescribe diet and exercise, but nutrigenomics is so

much more than that. It also encompasses elements such as recovery, psycho-emotional balancing, detoxification and meditative therapies.

This is a life-changing approach which, at a scientific level, goes right to the core of the nucleus of the cell – ie DNA and expression, and it's why Euphoria is fundamentally changing clients' health for the long term. ●

■ *Formerly a high-profile banker, Efraimoglou set up Euphoria Retreat in Greece last year*

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SISTER ACT

The owners of the renowned spa at Pennyhill Park, UK, have launched a purpose-built, £14m spa in the picturesque South Downs. But how will the new opening make its own mark in the industry? Katie Barnes pays a visit

When the 45,000sq ft (4,181sq m) spa opened at the stylish Pennyhill Park in 2003 it was one of the largest destination spas in Europe. Located just 27 miles from London, it quickly became a favourite escape for stressed-out city folk and has scooped up numerous awards. So when the owners, Exclusive Hotels, revealed a new standalone spa building for its sister property in the South Downs countryside in February expectations were high.

Developed over four years by Felce & Guy architects and Sparcstudio spa designers, to the sum of £14m (US\$18.5m, €16.4m), The Spa at South Lodge does not disappoint. So what makes it stand out and will it be as successful a business as The Spa at Pennyhill Park which turns over £5m (US\$6.5m, €5.8m) a year?

Bringing the outside in

Nature has hugely influenced the design of this 44,000sq ft (4,088sq m), two-storey spa. The building itself has a curved, grass-covered roof in a nod to the sweeping South Downs, with floor to ceiling windows making the most of the views. Further inspiration comes from the rich botanical history of the grounds by naturalist Frederick DuCane Godman which date back to the 1800s and boast more than 360 species of trees and plants from the Azores, Caribbean and Central & South America.

Inside, the 14 treatment rooms – named after and with décor inspired by onsite plants – host therapies using Exclusive's own product range, as well as Omorovicza which is made from thermal waters and mud from Budapest. Additional touches

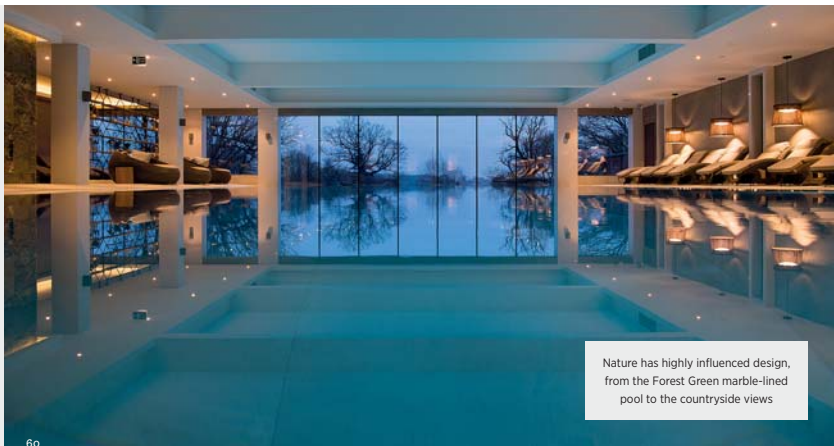


Beverley Bayes

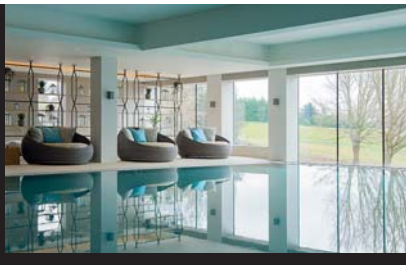
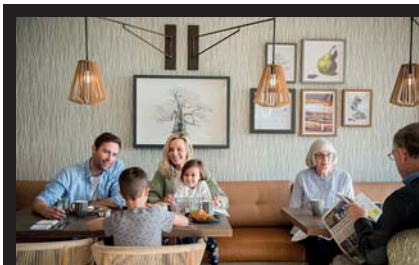
include tables carved from logs, leaf laying motifs and the Forest Green marble-lined pool hall.

Sparcstudio director Beverley Bayes is particularly proud of the thermal suite created in collaboration with Helo UK.

"It's not massive but it has some bespoke experiences," she says. "The camomile-infused sauna with its curved wooden fins on the ceiling is definitely something different. The jasmine steamroom is quite special too." South Lodge has been one of the biggest projects for Sparcstudio, which has created top UK spas such as those at Calcot Manor and Center Parcs. It was responsible for the overall spa concept, working on space planning through to commissioning pieces of furniture and interior finishes.



Nature has highly influenced design, from the Forest Green marble-lined pool to the countryside views



The Botanica restaurant is a central hub (above left); the jasmine steamroom (left); and Spa4 deep relax loungers (below)



At a glance: The Spa at South Lodge

Hotel rooms: 85

Size of spa: 44,000sq ft (4,088sq m)

Treatment rooms: 14 single and one double

Other facilities: Botanica restaurant and lounge; Ridgeview Beauty Bar; Grizzly's male grooming; spa boutique; pool and thermal suite; mineral mud suite; relaxation lounge; gym; group cycling studio; yoga/pilates studio; and spa gardens with 100-seat terrace, hydropool and natural pool

Spa staff: 65 – including 18 therapists, plus one senior and one head therapist

Suppliers: Assa Abloy, BC Software; Helo UK; Gharieni – distributed by Ellisons; Jessica; Mii make up; Ojmar; Omarovicza; Spa4 deep relax loungers

Outside, large terraced sundecks surround the UK's first heated natural swim pond that's filtered by plants, plus a hydropool and the Watershed eatery. Danny Pecorelli, MD at Exclusive, says: "We learnt a huge amount about spa at Pennyhill and South Lodge has been built to further elevate the customer journey. Predominately around the scale of the outdoor space and how we can incorporate the outside in and inside out so the experience is maximised whatever the weather."

Going local

To give the business an edge, South Lodge brought in spa operations manager Sara Young. An energetic leader of the 65-strong

spa team, Young retrained as a therapist eight years ago following a career change. "I used to sell aircraft engines for Rolls Royce," she reveals, "and while travelling the world I got to experience luxury spas. My background is in finance and business management, so I'm probably different to most spa managers."

Drawing on her business background, Young has worked with Pecorelli to map out a spa model that will draw in local customers – a market that's often overlooked by hotels but one which is proving to be of growing importance. In



Danny Pecorelli

fact, some of the latest research from CBRE shows that 46 per cent of spa revenues in US hotels now comes from locals (see SB18/2 p82).

One way of pulling in nearby customers is to offer memberships. The Spa at

South Lodge has two: a five-day and seven-day option costing £2,000 (US\$2,613, €2,320) and £2,500 (US\$3,266, €2,900) a year plus joining fees. Prior to opening, 130 people had already signed up and Young says there isn't a cap – "we'll stop when it starts getting too busy" – adding that Assa Abloy locker bands will be used to track numbers and usage. ▶

NEW OPENING

- To appeal to the local market even more, the spa has a stylish yet welcoming 70-seat Mediterranean restaurant that's open to spa guests and members as well as the general public. Botanica serves delicious healthy food such as grilled figs and spiced roasted cauliflower. Pecorelli says:

"Food has evolved so much in the last 20 years [since opening Pennyhill] and we really wanted to make it one of the key heartbeats of the spa experience."

In addition, the Ridgeway Beauty Bar – named after a local sparkling wine offered during services – and barbers are also open to the public. Bayes comments: "I'm so proud of the spa design because it's got so many elements which have come together as a whole – fitness for example isn't just spa fitness, it's a centre of excellence in its own right. There are no secondary spaces. The restaurant, beauty bar and

The £25 basic manicure is competitively priced to secure business from members and locals



Sara Young



barbers are all well thought through and work from a functional standpoint."

Purposeful pricing

With her business hat on, Young also approached spa pricing with purpose. A basic manicure, for example, is based on what she refers to as "premium high street pricing" and costs £25 (US\$33, €29). "Often members will go somewhere cheaper to get their nails done," she says "but it makes sense to be competitive if your cost per treatment isn't that high compared to a facial. We want people to use the spa more and if it's busy in the beauty bar it will be busy in the restaurant."

Similarly, there's a £10 premium for manual massage to encourage customers to go for the 60-minute bamboo massage, priced at £105 (US\$137, €122) in the week, instead. Manual massage won't be included in spa day packages either. The idea being, it will lessen staff burnout. "I've worked on cruise ships and witnessed the fast rate of staff turnover first hand," says Young, who focused on revenue management for Canyon Ranch at Sea

before managing a leading UK spa at Chewton Glen. "Yes it's about making money, but at what cost do you make that money? Staff retention is a key area here and at the hotel so it will be interesting to see what happens at the six month mark."

Comfortable luxury

With a strong plan in place, The Spa at South Lodge has a sturdy base on which to grow. And it's an important element of Exclusive's overall business which includes seven hotels and venues in the UK. "Our spas work as a stand alone business," says Pecorelli. "The Spa at Pennyhill represents about 8 per cent of our total group turnover, generating over £1m (US\$1.3m, €1.2m) EBITDA. Spas are also hugely beneficial to the hotels as they drive occupancy and rate as well as overall positioning."

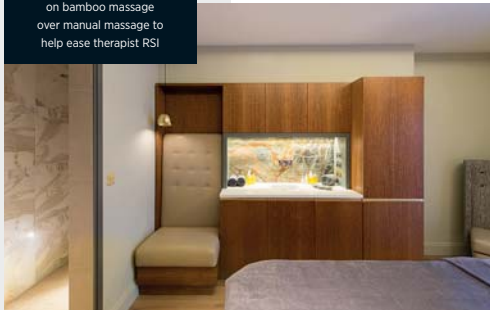
For Young, the initial goal is to "get the members in here and make them happy as that's going to be a solid revenue stream for us". Capturing the corporate market guests at South Lodge is another focus. "A lot of hotels go down the spa day route, but if we do really well with memberships and the restaurant then we won't have to rely on them."

But what does she think makes this spa so significant? "We're really looking to get those eco-credentials with our biomass boilers, natural pool, wild swimming and green roof," she says. "But the big thing for me is that we're a five-star, impeccable facility but informal."

Bayes echoes these sentiments. "To quote Coco Chanel – luxury isn't luxury unless it's comfortable. And that's at the heart of our design." ●



South Lodge is focusing on bamboo massage over manual massage to help ease therapist RSI



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



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Brittny Hunt • Spa Director
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BEYOND TRANSFORMATION

Spa expert Susie Ellis reflects on her dramatic changes at Vana – and why a good internet connection plays an important role



Stressed. Not sleeping well. Carrying a few extra pounds after the holidays and feeling bloated. I craved an experience that would change my health and life for the better. I'm not alone in this thinking.

The growing popularity of 'transformational travel' has been highlighted by the Global Wellness Summit research team in its annual forecast. In its 2018 *Global Wellness Trends Report*, the authors describe transformational travel as connected experiences – rather than disconnected programming – that challenges people on a deeply personal level. While it's wonderful to enjoy a massage, hike up a mountain, eat a healthy meal or make new friends at a retreat, today people are looking for more – including me.

To describe my experience at Vana as “astonishing” is not something I do casually }

Astonishing experience

After working in the wellness industry for four decades, visiting more than 1,000 locations around the world designed to help people renew body, mind and spirit, this January, I experienced transformative wellness at Vana, the destination spa retreat created by visionary Veer Singh in north, India. To describe my experience as “astonishing” is not something I do casually. I've been to many places – destination retreats and spas in particular – where I had a transformative experience and was a different person when I left than when I came. But I think of my experience at Vana as ‘beyond transformation’ because the dramatic changes lasted.

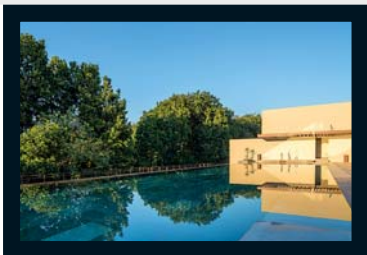
As I sit typing this article, it's been two months since I returned and the unique inner feeling of stillness and confidence I discovered is still with me. I'm still drinking warm water before meals. I don't have a desire for coffee or alcohol and I'm limiting my focused work to shorter time frames. I no longer go to bed with my iPhone next to my pillow, nor look at it first



Talks and cuisine lessons are some of the many elements included in a Vana programme



Ellis says her stay instilled a "unique inner feeling of stillness and confidence"



thing. In fact, I've reorganised my days and prioritise important projects before I even look at emails. This way I don't let emails dictate so much of what I do. I've maintained most of the 5lb weight loss that resulted from my stay and in general have quieted the 'monkey mind' that kept me in an almost constant state of mental stress.

Moreover, the most wonderful thing about this lasting transformation is that it's been very easy. There's been very little willpower involved. I've learned more about my body and what it needs and wants. By giving it the rest and time it needs, I've rediscovered my younger child-like self – a self that was happy, joyful and carefree before the stresses of the world began piling on.

Wellness everywhere

Set at the foothills of the lower Himalayas in its own 21-acre (8.5-hectare) estate, Vana is not opulent or showy. It's understated and excels in an artistic way. The 80-plus rooms are relaxing and beautiful and views of the surrounding Sal forest are integral to the design. Bedding is luxurious (you can choose your pillows). Even the TV is curated with uplifting viewing options such as Louis Schwartzberg's nature films,

VANA AT A GLANCE

Bedrooms: 82

Treatment rooms: 55 – clustered around three treatment pavilions

Skin, body and haircare: In-house, nature inspired brand Vanaveda

Basic package: Minimum five-night stay includes food, a private consultation, one treatment a day and yoga, meditation, cuisine lessons, functional fitness, talks, music and more

Cost: INR30,000 (US\$426, €377, £324) a night

Making it easy for people to relax yet still work remotely gives Vana an edge says Ellis



the Disney animal channel and spiritual presentations from the Dalai Lama. Wellness is everywhere. The bathroom is stocked with pink Himalayan bath salts to increase magnesium intake and even the technology is thoughtfully designed. With a click of a button I can control lights, heat/air conditioning, privacy button and a discreet night light from my bed. And they provide all the comfy and stylish clothes I need for my entire stay.

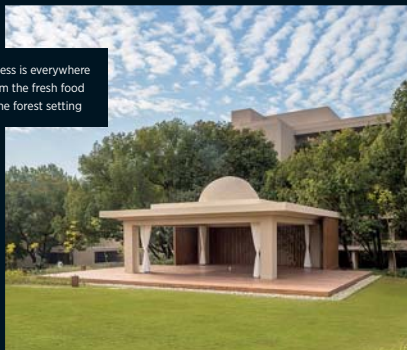
Expertise and personalisation

The outstanding wellness practitioners who practice ayurveda, Tibetan or traditional Chinese medicine in one of 55 treatment rooms are the foundation of Vana's transformative experience. Vana has done the work of finding them: I simply showed up and enjoyed the benefits of their expertise.

When it comes to affordable, democratic wellness, Vana is actually quite reasonable compared to



Wellness is everywhere
- from the fresh food
to the forest setting



- ▶ many other destination type retreat experiences. Prices start at INR30,000 (US\$426, €377, £324) a night for a minimum five-night stay.

Those of us in the industry hear a lot about 'personalisation'. However, in my opinion, Vana's doctors and practitioners went far beyond the buzz. They applied their expertise via pulse diagnoses, listened to me - my needs, desires and issues - and then designed a personal course, including treatments, programmes, food choices and lifestyle practices. And because this was a nine-day stay, I didn't just have one reflexology session to help digestion but rather a series of appointments. I was at Vana long enough to see results and that was motivation to commit to a new lifestyle. I feel different, look different, my confidence is stronger and going back to old bad habits isn't appealing. I can only imagine what I could feel like after 14 days or 21 days - or even longer.



Veer Singh opened
Vana in north India
five years ago

A surprising revelation

I found Vana's mobile phone policy extremely effective. You can only use your phone in your room and one discreetly private lounge. Period. In

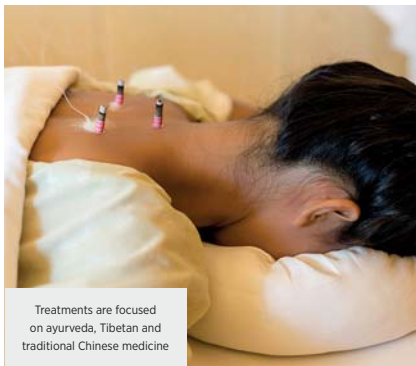
addition, guests cannot take any photographs on the property. Wellness is not a frivolous social media opportunity here. In this age of technology bashing, however, I also believe Vana's programme is transformative in part because the property has an excellent internet connection, making it easy to stay connected with loved ones and to whatever important work you're doing.

Over the years, I've suggested that if people want to truly transform their wellbeing they need more than a week: rather multiple weeks would be my suggestion. But, to be honest, I've never found a place where I really wanted to

stay for that long. Vana was the exception. I could have easily stayed a month. And one reason this was possible - here's the surprise - I need to carve out blocks of time to connect to work. Frankly, I think that's the case for most people these days. No one can check out of their entire life for very long. Even a day or two is a stretch.

Realising that many people work remotely these days, there's no reason why that can't happen from a place of body/mind/spirit transformation. I suggested to Singh that he consider offering a wellness sabbatical programme where the guest engages in a deep dive Vana programme for the first few weeks and then adds on extra weeks as desired. And then I thought there's no reason this couldn't take place at other destinations such as Lanserhof, Canyon Ranch, Rancho La Puerta, Gwinganna, or Chiva-Som.

The timing could be perfect for people putting together their own wellness sabbaticals of a month or more. And come to think of it, even if Vana doesn't offer something like this when I visit next year, I just might decide to move my workplace there anyway. ●



Treatments are focused
on ayurveda, Tibetan and
traditional Chinese medicine

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A profound sense of space, respect for local culture and exquisite design all underpin Chablé's 'redefining wellness' approach



Kim Megson ventures deep into Mexico's jungle to find out how two Chablé resorts with Mayan spas are aiming to redefine wellness

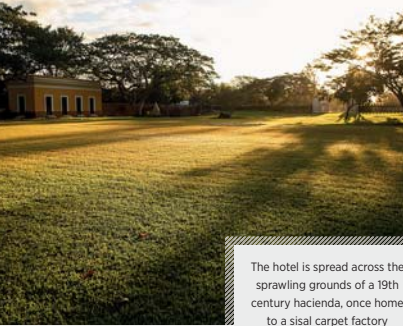
Ideas about wellness are changing," says Rocco Bova, taking a thoughtful sip of mescal. "We've made a conscious decision not to put spa, massages and fitness at the centre of everything. Instead, we're focused on the wellness of being.

"For me, that's about creating happiness, be it through experiences that please the palate, the eyes, the mind and the soul."

As general manager of the globally acclaimed Chablé Yucatán Resort & Spa, hidden deep in Mexico's Mayan jungle, Bova is a well-placed observer of the changing nature of wellness. And while his five-star hotel does have a genuinely spellbinding spa that wants for nothing (see p73), he argues that just as important are other factors essential to wellbeing: sublime gastronomy, a profound sense of space, a respect for local culture and exquisite design. ▶



General manager Rocco Bova



The hotel is spread across the sprawling grounds of a 19th century hacienda, once home to a sisal carpet factory



The entire site has been designed to embrace the encroaching jungle; fresh ingredients are used in the spa kitchen (above right)





The spa is built around a natural sinkhole

Our aim is to speak to them in a real and honest way

- For Bova, a lesson in making tortillas, a tequila tasting session or a celebration of the annual Day of the Dead festivities with local community groups may provoke as much joy as a carefully tailored hydrotherapy treatment. "You'd have to stay for weeks to enjoy the full range of experiences we have here," he says.

According to Chablé's brand manager, Liliana Castellanos, the company calls this philosophy 'redefining wellness'. "We think it's the most innovative aspect of our portfolio," she explains. "It allows us to touch the hearts of our guests through both the tangible and intangible. With so many distractions in the world today, we invite our guests to go back to basics and to value the important things in life in an unforgettable setting. Our aim is to speak to them in a real and honest way."

It's a bold claim, but Chablé, and parent company Hamak Hotels, can fairly point to the fact that it spent 12 years developing the concept and building the hotel, which finally opened in 2016. Every detail has been accounted for. The results are quietly spectacular.

Modernism meets memory

Spread across the sprawling grounds of an 19th century hacienda, once home to one of the region's most important sisal carpet factories, the hotel is a self-contained paradise. Winding trails lead through pockets of jungle and past verdant organic gardens (a source for restaurant and spa ingredients), a deer park, tennis courts, golf course, several pools and a cenote – a natural sinkhole common to the Yucatán Peninsula – which the spa is built around. ►



Spa consultants Baker (left) and McDonald (right)

The Spa at Chablé Yucatán

Chablé Yucatán's spa which "blends ancient mysticism with modern curiosity" is of particular note



"We really want people to experience a modern interpretation of traditional Mayan rituals," says Amy McDonald





Floatation experiences in a pool made from petrified wood (left); a temazcal sweat lodge is designed to resemble the womb (right)



At the heart of the 3,022sq m (32,530sq ft) facility is a beautiful cenote – a natural sinkhole considered a sacred, healing force by the Mayans and a known feature of the Yucatán Peninsula. It forms the centrepiece for the 14 treatment rooms which are all situated around it and is a popular bathing spot for guests. If they tire of that, that's also an infinity pool made entirely from petrified wood.

The spa was conceived by Amy McDonald, owner and CEO of Under a Tree, Health and Wellness Consulting. "Although it's really high-end luxury, it's thoughtfully infused with local culture and nature," McDonald says. "The treatment



rooms are completely surrounded by glass – you are in the jungle."

McDonald hired Bonnie Baker, owner of Mexico-based spa consultancy Sattava to collaborate on all aspects of the spa, including a wide selection of treatments which use Naturopathica and Body Bliss products alongside indigenous plants.

The treatments are focused around three themes: Fountain of Youth (Flow), designed to be relaxing and rhythmic; Tree of Life (Balance), for purifying and de-stressing; and Heaven on Earth (Inspire), which aim to be heart-opening and connecting.

Each theme has a signature ritual. The three-hour, US\$550 (£486, £422) Fountain's Flow, for instance, includes a floatation experience, herbal salt exfoliation, lymphatic massage and aromatic anointment with plants, herbs and protocols very specific to the area and to Mayan traditions.

"We really want people to come and experience a modern interpretation of traditional Mayan rituals," says McDonald.

For a deeper spiritual experience, Chablé offers three temazcal rituals performed inside a traditional sweat lodge that's designed to resemble a mother's womb.

The heat comes from volcanic stones bathed in medicinal teas while chants and oral tributes reflect group energy. The sessions are designed to evoke feelings of purification and liberation and prices start at US\$200 (£177, £153) for 60 minutes.

Other treatments include guided meditation, a Mayan Rebirth Massage and Energetic Sound and Stone Cleansing.

The spa also has a hydrotherapy journey comprising sauna, steam, whirlpool, hot and cold plunge pools, swimming pool, salt room and floatation experiences. A fitness studio, salon, juice bar and cafe serving nutritious food round out the wellness offerings.

McDonald and Baker joined forces again when creating the spa at sister property Chablé Maroma which opened late last year.

Although half the size, covering 1,579sq m (17,000sq ft) with eight treatment rooms, it promises an equally purposeful experience. Trees, a sacred symbol of life, inspired this jungle spa and treatments look to "assist natural balance".

Signature therapies include the Deep Forest Awakening, an 180-minute, US\$450 (£477, £414) full body purification using essential oils from fir, juniper and cypress trees, or the 120-minute four-handed Tree of Life Treatment for US\$460 (£407, £353).

Naturopathica supplies products at this spa too, while towels are provided by The Madison Collection and loungewear by Zuzuja.



True luxury is about preserving the soul of an incredible destination

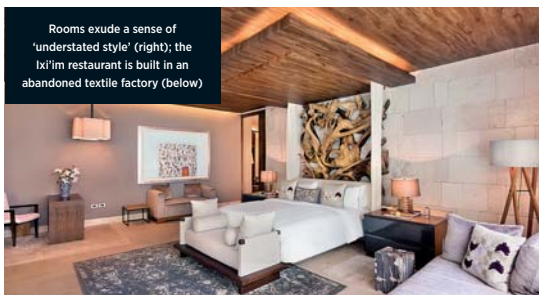
► And then there's the resort's architecture.

Despite the huge amount of space on offer, Chablé features only 36 casitas and four villas. Every residence lies hidden down its own jungle track. Architect Jorge Borja of Cancun-based Grupo BV SC has created a series of sleek, minimalist, white-clad volumes, fronted by expansive glass panels that allow 180° views of the surrounding nature. Outside, generous plunge pools, complete with hammocks, add an extra dimension of understated style. Think Tracy Island reimagined by Oscar Niemeyer.

The interiors, designed by Paulina Morán, are equally impressive, with local textiles and natural materials, such as tropical wood and limestone, subtly used alongside splashes of colourful art and nods to traditional Mayan design. An extreme sense of care, materiality and lightness of touch is evident throughout, and the result is a genuine sense of luxury, without any requirement for bling.

In contrast to the casitas, most of Chablé's public amenities are situated amongst what remains of the hacienda's historic buildings. The main office and welcome area can be found in a former administration HQ, a private wine cellar occupies an old jailhouse and the signature Ixi'im restaurant has been built in the carefully restored remnants of the abandoned textile factory.

Rooms exude a sense of 'understated style' (right); the Ixi'im restaurant is built in an abandoned textile factory (below)



Nature is also permitted to take its course. Trees burst through gaps in facades, twist majestically around rooftops and provide courtyard centerpieces. Such is the presence of the jungle, you're left with the lingering impression that you might find Indiana Jones lounging in the vine-covered cigar room, or Lara Croft perusing Ixi'im's extensive tequila collection (3,175 bottles – more than anywhere else in the world). Even more ludicrously, when you walk back to your room at night, the route is illuminated by fireflies.

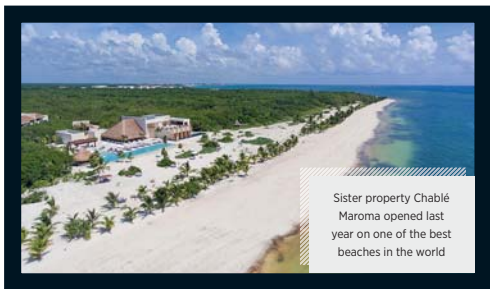
"True luxury is about preserving the soul of an incredible destination," says Bova. "One of the mainstream trends important to the new wave of travellers is design, and the Global Wellness Institute put in a recent report that we must 'build well to live well'. I guess we're just translating into action what consumers expect nowadays."

The effort has paid off faster than Chablé could have dared hope. Just a year after opening, the hotel received the 2017 Prix Versailles award, presented by UNESCO and the International Union of Architects to celebrate "structures that have the most remarkable interior and exterior architecture". Last year, Ixi'im won the same award in the restaurant category.

Being known as the world's best-designed hotel with the world's best restaurant has done no harm to business. Bookings have multiplied and Chablé's wellness philosophy is being reinforced to a new generation of travellers.

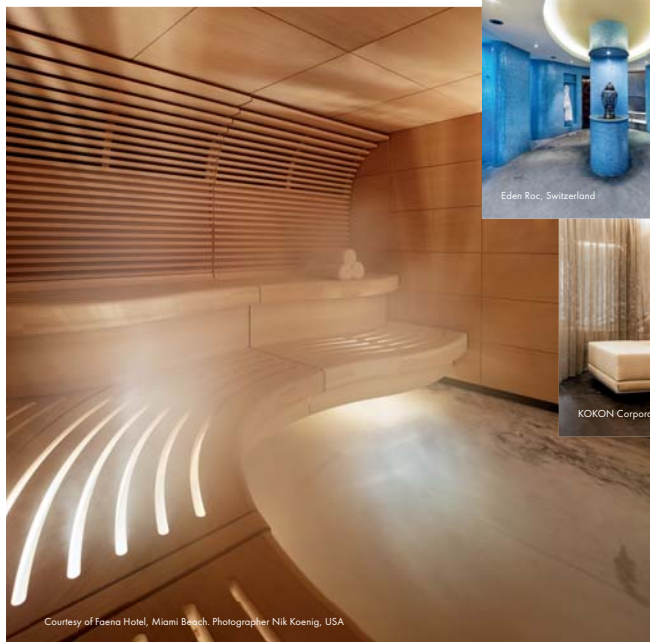
Chablé Maroma

Such has been the success of Chablé in Yucatán, Hamak is expanding. The first sister property, Chablé Maroma, opened near Cancun in 2018 after eight years in development. Unlike its faraway Yucatán counterpart, a different guest experience



Sister property Chablé Maroma opened last year on one of the best beaches in the world

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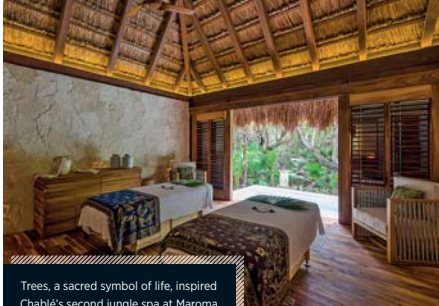


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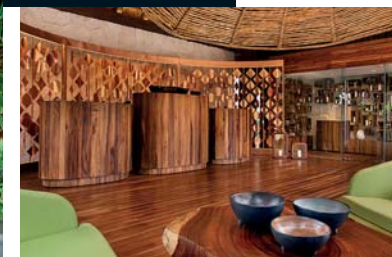
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Trees, a sacred symbol of life, inspired Chablé's second jungle spa at Maroma



The focus is to create experiences that encourage happiness

► is on offer, this time revolving around a tropical beach on the Caribbean Sea.

While there are no shells of ancient buildings here, the jungle once again takes centre stage. Signs on the approaching roads warn drivers to keep a careful eye for crossing jaguars and bridges for monkeys hang overhead.

Morán once again provides the hotel's interiors, with architect Javier Fernandez this time responsible for creating the casitas. As before, modernism meets nature, with smart geometric volumes placed carefully around existing mangroves on the 11-acre (4.5-hectare) site.

"This hotel is a response to our guests who seek the Chablé experience in a tropical beach setting, with closer proximity to an international airport," explains Castellano. "Maroma has long been considered one of the best beaches in the world and it seemed an obvious choice for us, far away from the all-inclusive hotels and noise.



"In line with its sister property, it respects the natural landscape, with minimal interference to the surrounding jungle and beach. We've touched none of the flora or dunes along the hotel's coastline."

There's also a unifying focus on creating experiences that encourage happiness, she adds, although this time an itinerary might incorporate kayaking, jet skiing, scuba diving or a conch-blowing ceremony on the beach, as well as a similar range of spa facilities, treatments and temazcal offerings.

"The aim of redefining wellness is the same, with the same combination of exceptional service, attention-to-detail, gourmet cuisine, unrivalled wellness activities, and culture and traditions in their authentic setting," she says. "Our future aim is to take this manifesto around the best places in Mexico and the world. ●



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« The Bathrobe by RKF as a Fashion item »

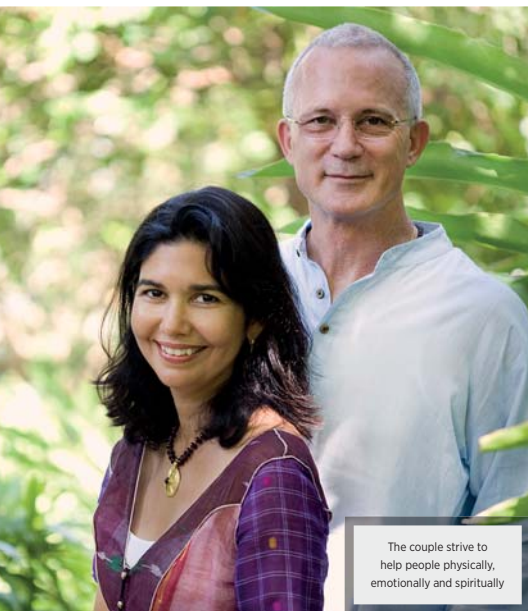
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FAMILY MATTERS

John & Karina Stewart

Guests routinely speak of transformation following their Kamalaya experience. Neena Dhillon asks the inspirational couple behind the wellness concept just how they do it and how they're evolving it



The couple strive to help people physically, emotionally and spiritually

Embarking on its 14th year of operations, Kamalaya has just added two more spa accolades to its clutch of 40 industry and consumer awards, an achievement that founders John and Karina Stewart put down to the vision, love and commitment of their team. And what a team it is. There are 350 staff serving guests of the 76-key holistic wellness sanctuary, which cascades down a hillside to a secluded bay in Koh Samui, Thailand. Average year-round occupancy stands at 70 per cent, and 50 per cent of guests travel solo. They come in big numbers from the UK and Europe, while visitors from Australia and New Zealand have increased by 20 per cent since 2015.

A number of guests are stressed out, depleted in terms of energy, others are seeking to change things, break bad habits, or simply reset lifestyles. And that's why they choose Kamalaya. Because its synergistic approach to wellness aims to make a real difference to people's lives by reconnecting them with their own potential. "Today, many of our guests express a life-changing experience," confirms John. "Our comment cards show consistent rating levels of above 90 per cent in terms of service. We have a 40 per cent repeat visitor rate and over 20 per cent have visited more than four times, often returning with family and friends." ▶



Forty per cent of guests revisit Kamalaya, a retreat which aims to make a real difference by reconnecting people with their own potential



► Addressing stress

At the crux of the concept is the intertwining of the couple's knowledge of ancient wisdoms, expressed in a contemporary form. For Mexico-born Karina, this is a 37-year specialism in Asian healing traditions, including a masters degree in Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) gained from Yo San University in California. John in turn – who left his native Vancouver aged 16 because of his interest in Asian philosophy – has 25 years' experience of serving communities in the Himalayas, 16 of these under the tutelage of a yogi master.

The couple have a shared dream to help people through physical, emotional, mental, psychological and spiritual wellbeing. And it was during his own recovery from a life-threatening illness that John chanced upon the land on which the Thai sanctuary thrives today, finding himself drawn to the site because there's a cave at its heart, used by Buddhist monks for meditation and retreat for over 300 years.

Kamalaya took four years from its launch in 2005 (see SB06/3 p82) to break even. Since those early years, the



Women's health, fertility and elderly clients are all new entities which interest Karina

number of wellness programmes has increased from four to 14, with length of stay from a minimum three nights to two weeks. The start price for a three-night programme is just under THB60,000 (US\$1,879, €1,676, £1,445). Detox remains popular because Kamalaya is well versed in supporting people through the process, drawing on its pool of TCM and naturopathic expertise. But it's been superseded by programmes addressing stress and burnout.

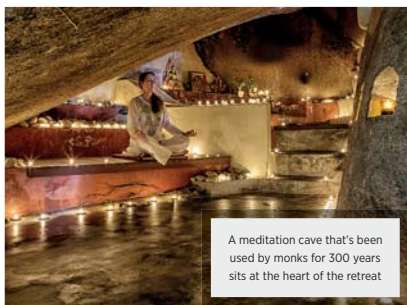
"Whether it's executives, creative professionals with no life-work boundaries, or mothers juggling children and career, we're finding so many people are struggling with the 24-hour plugged-in lifestyle," notes Karina. "Most people are already engaged in a search for wellness when they arrive but we find they're coming at a younger age compared to when we first opened, on average about five years, today in their early 40s." ►



It's evident that guests are now coming at a younger age, in their early 40s



There are 350 staff (below) who play a crucial role in helping guests feel 'safe' in their transformational journey



A meditation cave that's been used by monks for 300 years sits at the heart of the retreat

FIRST-PERSON EXPERIENCE

Kamalaya's Embracing Change programme Neena Dhillon

Having recently gone through an emotionally turbulent period in my life, I was intrigued by Kamalaya's Embracing Change programme. Since it is designed as a minimum five-night programme, it's worth noting I gained only a brief insight over a long weekend. Any stay begins with bioimpedance analysis and a wellness consultation with a naturopath. Sitting with Leila for 45 minutes, I'm struck by how she's balancing my reasons for visiting – yes, as a journalist, but also as a person with a lung condition and life changes to grapple with – into the way I spend my time. Warm and reassuring, she suggests two treatments to complement my 90-minute personal mentoring session. Within an hour, I'm having an abdominal chi nei tsang massage, one of the several treatments included in the five-night package, during which the therapist works on my stomach to balance the nervous system and release emotional tension. It's an effective 60 minutes – in Taoist thinking, as with other ancient healing modalities, the gut is considered the second brain. After a satisfying dinner, selected from the detox menu, I'm whacked and sleep early.

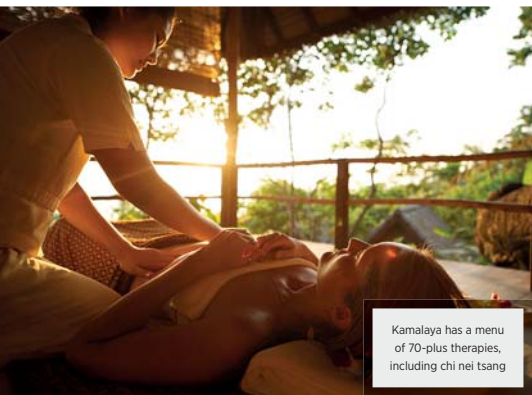
Next morning I'm up with the birds to drop into one of the day's six free holistic activities. Pranayama gives an introduction into how we can harness our breath as a grounding tool and we're shown how to work the practice into our daily routines. Then I'm off to my mentoring session with Sujay Seshadri, a life skills trainer and monastic lifestyle devotee. I'm soon comfortable enough to talk about two personal upheavals that have thrown me a curve ball and,



I feel fearful of letting go at one point but Sujay is beside me with kind words of encouragement

in return. Sujay shares key moments from his formative years when turned unpleasant emotions into a positive. During our 90 minutes, I can see Sujay is laying the groundwork for a visualisation in which he asks me to picture certain encounters, aided by meditative breathing, and vent pent-up emotions I've been needing to release. I cry hot, angry tears, but I'm not embarrassed. I feel fearful of letting go at one point but Sujay is beside me with kind words of encouragement. He seems to instinctively understand my feelings, while making a connection between my tendency to suppress how I feel and my physical condition. During the visualisation, my breathing becomes momentarily clogged, making the link all the more clearer in my mind. After a heartfelt hug, I leave feeling a bit wobbly, reflective and resolved to break some of my coping habits.

Truth be told, I feel introspective for the rest of my stay but the mix of the environment and care of the hosts helps me to process what I've learnt. Sujay explains that clients can spend the first session simply crying because they finally feel safe enough to do so. This seems unique to Kamalaya; the trust I am able to build almost immediately with my mentors. I can see why, over a longer period, another two sessions would lead to deep transformation. Still, Leila's instinct that I end my stay with an ayurvedic kati vasti oil-based massage on the lower back feels right, and I'm not surprised to learn that, in TCM, this area of the body relates to imbalances caused by not feeling supported in life. It is another insightful step in my Kamalaya journey.



Kamalaya has a menu of 70-plus therapies, including chi nei tsang

► A focus on inner lives

Always ahead of the curve, Kamalaya introduced the first of its programmes catering to emotional disposition and balance five years ago. The five-night tailored retreat includes bioimpedance analysis, wellness consultation, personal mentoring and five additional treatments from Kamalaya's menu of 70-plus therapies (see above). "Life is a series of changes, be that a move, relationship break-up, loss or unknown we're facing," Karina says. "We realised we could inspire and motivate people through these changes, disrupting negative psychological patterns and habitual responses to challenging situations. Kamalaya is a safe environment with the practitioners in place to deliver this programme. Of course, you have to ensure your team has the depth of training to do this mentoring work – I've recently interviewed a team



Embedded in nature and infused with genuine, caring staff, Kamalaya has all the attributes to alleviate other causes of mental stress such as loneliness



member with doctoral specialism in CBT and psychology, for instance."

As a destination embedded in nature, with a village atmosphere, and infused with a genuine, caring, non-scripted service philosophy, Kamalaya has the attributes to help people alleviate other causes of mental distress such as loneliness. On one level, the community table at dinnertime has proved a hit among guests seeking company over a meal to share encounters of the day and insights into what they're going through. It is the noisiest part of the restaurant – and lasting friendships have been formed at Kamalaya. On another level, the profound meditative practices that can be learnt here as well as the holistic scope of programmes means that guests leave feeling more fulfilled, often by resetting the relationship with themselves. Karina observes: "When you feel content and gratified, there's no

space left for loneliness." John picks up: "The act of pausing and disconnecting, coupled with an intention to harness our own emotional intelligence and resilience, leads naturally to greater mental stability."

Beyond Koh Samui

While there are no plans to launch new programmes at present, Karina is interested in how Kamalaya could support lifestyles that advance healthy ageing. She's aware of how stress can age us prematurely on a biological level, having experienced this in her late 40s. "I took medical tests during this period and was devastated by what stress had done to my body," she reveals.

Another idea she's exploring is whether the health benefits of fitness and movement activities can be maximised by having them at prescribed times of the day. She's equally motivated by the subject of

women's health and fertility but is aware it's a complex field, which requires lots of follow-up support, and debates whether a tropical island is the best environment to deliver on this. Similarly, she sees a need to address the concerns of an elderly clientele aged 65-plus, but thinks Koh Samui lacks the necessary back-up medical facilities.

Finally, it's the million-dollar question: will there be other Kamalayas since the original is at full capacity? "If the right project came along, with the right synergy, we wouldn't say no," Karina concludes. "But we love what we're doing and don't feel we need multiple sites. Kamalaya can't be forced – growth has to be natural." ●

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LUXURY Recognition

Gharieni has long been known as an industry innovator. Now, *Forbes Travel Guide* has named the company as its official Spa & Wellness Equipment Manufacturer. Sammy Gharieni tells us more

Gharieni has just been selected as a Forbes Travel Guide Official Brand - what does this mean and why is it an important recognition?

Being named the Official Spa & Wellness Equipment Manufacturer for Forbes Travel Guide - the global authority on luxury travel, which represents the best products and services in the luxury hospitality industry - shows that Gharieni embodies the core values and exacting quality standards demanded by FTG, which is the only independent, global rating system for luxury hotels, restaurants and spas.

This great recognition by Forbes Travel Guide serves to reinforce our commitment to delivering stellar service, supreme comfort and impeccable design to our partners in the hotel and resort category. From the initial design concept to the installation of our equipment, we strive to deliver a memorable and impactful treatment experience to both



Sammy Gharieni is an innovator, creating unique experiences like the Spa.Wave system (above)



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guest and provider, by incorporating multi-sensorial components and full customisation capabilities.

This acknowledgement by Forbes Travel Guide reinforces our mission to provide the utmost attention to design detail and differentiation in our equipment and furnishings.

Can you tell us about some of the unique products and experiences you've created?

Innovation is our passion. We allow for transformation of flexible spaces within the treatment rooms while retaining efficiency, functionality, and design aesthetic. Our partnerships outside the industry have led to the creation of binaural and augmented technologies built into our treatment beds, thereby incorporating equipment into treatment protocols.

From the moment Gharieni entered the spa and wellness category, its mission was to upend the tried and true, and focus on creating equipment that would elevate a spa experience and even integrate it within the protocols.

Our Psammo quartz treatment bed brought ancient traditions into a modern setting by offering massage and body modalities on a bed composed of mineral quartz. Enhanced by features such as inversion gravity, aromatherapy, thermal heat and built-in massage functions, the quartz bed allows the guest and therapist to completely immerse themselves into the treatment.

The Spa.Wave System features binaural technology, used for PTSD, anxiety



The Psammo quartz bed brings ancient traditions into a modern setting



Above: the new MLR Select Vintage features retro styling. Right: The Libra Edge with horizontal shower and chromatherapy

and stress, and is supplemented with a floatation mattress that carries the sound through the body. In this age of digital detox, where guests are looking to reduce stress, improve sleep and lessen anxiety, it is an ideal remedy.

Lastly, the HydroSpa collection reimagined what was once a dormant category by incorporating a built-in sound system, chromatherapy and cadenced shower heads to stimulate and invigorate the hydrotherapy experience.

You've just debuted the MLR Select Vintage - where did your inspiration come from?

Heralding the return of retro trends in furniture but adapting it to the spa and wellness category will challenge designers to gain inspiration from the past and fuse it with modern details and inventiveness.

Inspired by Patchwork, a technique of cutting and sewing small pieces of fabric to create larger textiles, this innovative approach to furniture design interprets the idea of joining diverse wood and other panels together and showcasing high contrast colours and textures. Contrasting wood tones and a mixture of vertical and horizontal directions for depth are

combined with solid metal components to give the table a modern yet authentic connection to the past. Harkening back to the industrial and functional furnishings of the 1940s and 50s, when durability and practicality reigned supreme, these contemporary design interpretations are ideal for the needs of today's spas.

Skillfully made with great attention to detail and materials, the MLR- Select Vintage treatment bed features all the accoutrements that Gharieni is known for. To complete the treatment room, an accompanying trolley and matching sideboard are available. In addition to the wood finishes pictured, the Vintage collection can be rendered into limitless possibilities to adapt to each design aesthetic.

The MLR-Select Vintage will be available from June 2019, and has two strong lifting columns, lowerable and swivelling armrests, adjustable head, back, leg and foot areas, generous storage space and

the Trendelenburg function, as well as a wide range of additional options to customise for a particular spa's needs.

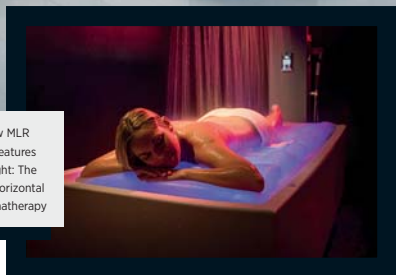
What other news do you have on the horizon?

We are always looking ahead and have been fine-tuning technology. We are expanding our footprint globally, and now have a presence in more than 100 countries, and we plan to open more operational showrooms around the world.

We have also recently instituted revenue sharing with some of our favoured partners, who have greatly reaped the benefits.

In September, we're planning an industry party at ISPA to delight and surprise our partners. The amusement and joy experienced at the Phoenix Children's museum last year will be even more unexpected and tantalizing this year, since the conference is being held in Las Vegas again! ●

■ www.gharieni.com



Kalloni Spa

Marriott has made its debut in Cyprus, with one of the first international branded resorts in the country. The seasoned director of lifestyle of the hotly anticipated property tells Lauren Heath-Jones about its standout spa

Cyprus has commanded much industry attention with the arrival of Parklane, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, in the characterful city of Limassol. Launched in March, the property sees Marriott venturing into new territory and it's one of the first international branded luxury hotels in the country. It's perhaps most well known in the spa arena, however, as the previous home to Le Méridien Limassol (see p88).

A hallmark experience of the resort, both in size and significance, is its Kalloni Spa. Named after the muse of beauty in Greek mythology, Kalloni was created by Harrods Interiors – the design studio of the world-famous

department store. It occupies a 3000sq m (32,292sq ft) duplex, making it one of the largest spas in Cyprus, complete with 12 treatment rooms, three suites – including two with Russian banyas – and five thalassotherapy pools. Seawater therapies, inspired by the Mediterranean shore setting, form the basis of the treatment menu and complement personalised therapies developed in partnership with international brands.

Paris Kounoudis, Parklane's director of lifestyle, knows the local spa market well having overseen facilities in Greece and Cyprus for more than 12 years and once served as president of the Cyprus Spa Association. He talks to Lauren Heath-Jones about what makes the new spa so special.



Paris Kounoudis oversees the thalassotherapy spa which is a major feature at the resort





More than €150m has been spent on the refurbishment of the old Le Méridien Limassol

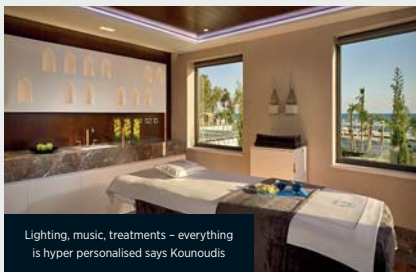
What's the philosophy behind Kalloni?

To offer bespoke, luxury experiences – giving our customers something truly personalised while staying true to the roots of the spa. That's why thalassotherapy is such an integral part of our offering. We're a Luxury Collection resort. Luxury Collection is all about getting the local feeling, the local elements and incorporating them into the services and culture of the resort and spa.

What makes the offering so personalised?

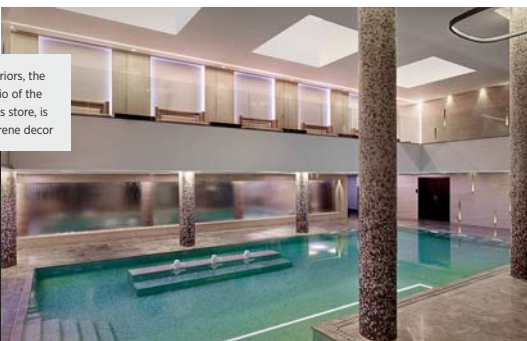
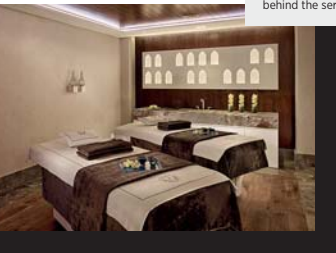
Everything, absolutely everything, can be tailored. We can play with the lighting, the music and adjust them accordingly. We specifically chose Biologique Recherche as a new product brand because it's very, very effective and customisable – guests can tailor these luxury treatments, practically creating their own experience. We've added an operational concept too where guests in our three treatment suites can pick and choose their own à la carte packages. Similarly, the banya can be rented by the hour for individualised treatment bundles.

What's your favourite part of the new spa? I like the decor, it's serene and beautiful and our treatment rooms are very spacious, much more calming. ▶



Lighting, music, treatments – everything is hyper personalised says Kounoudis

Harrods Interiors, the design studio of the world-famous store, is behind the serene decor



“We’ve added a new operational concept where guests in our three treatment suites can pick and choose their own à la carte packages,”

► **What impact did you have on the project?**

I wasn’t involved in the design stage as I was living and working in Abu Dhabi. I came on board as a finisher, so my input was to recruit the staff and choose the treatment beds [by Gharieni], the products, the linen by RKF, things like that.

What are you most proud of? My team!

We’re a small team – only 13 therapists – but I’m really happy with what we’ve created so far, and how well they’ve coped with the transition from pre-opening to the stage we’re at now, 10 days in. I’m really happy with the level of service that is being provided, hearing guests come out of treatments saying things like ‘that was amazing!’ makes me very proud.

A SPA IS REBORN

In a former life, Parklane, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, in Cyprus operated as Le Méridien Limassol – home to a well known spa globally. With its focus on thalassotherapy, including a wide range of indoor and outdoor pools, and 34 treatment rooms (before the refurb), spa has always been a core part of the destination and over the years

it has scooped up 14 major industry awards and had a yearly turnover of more than €1.5m (US\$1.7m, £1.3m).

In 2014, new owners felt it was time for a refresh. Now, after four-and-a-half years, an acquisition by Marriott and a major reconstruction, worth €150m (US\$169m, £129m) that saw the entire resort rebuilt from the foundations, the property is set to shine once more.

Why did you introduce a totally new treatment menu?

We chose Voya to complement our thalassotherapy ritual as it’s seaweed based and Biologique Recherche for customisation and effectiveness. Carol Joy offer amazing hair treatments and products and Gentleman’s Tonic is our men’s range.

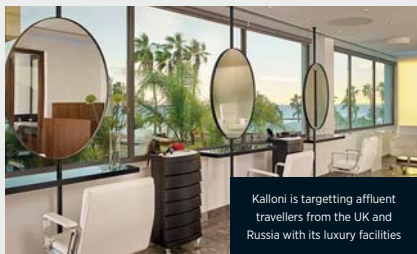
We picked brands that would complement each other, and give this luxurious, rich offering. Obviously, every year we’ll add new things and change and grow step by step.

Who is your target market?

We’re targeting luxury travellers, people who like to travel and spend a little more on their experiences. Our largest market is the UK, we have a lot of expats and a lot of visitors from the UK. Russia is our second largest, hence the Russian banya – we wanted to create an experience that was traditional and appealing to them, while also offering something completely unique to our guests. The banya is the only one in Cyprus so it’s something of a USP for us.

What are your plans for the spa?

The target is pretty straightforward. First of all it’s to continue operating at the level we’re operating at now, with all the treatments and staff we need, and then go through to our next step, which is finalising all the small details so we have the standard exactly where we want it to be across all aspects of the spa. Then, obviously, I want to grow the business, year by year, and hopefully win some awards too. ●



Kalloni is targeting affluent travellers from the UK and Russia with its luxury facilities



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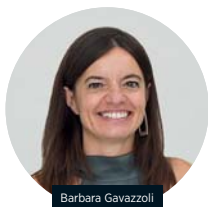
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spa business uniting the world of wellness

[comfort zone]

Beauty Reloaded

Skincare brand Comfort Zone has partnered with Wellness for Cancer to create a new programme of spa treatments for people touched by cancer. Barbara Gavazzoli tells us more



Barbara Gavazzoli

At Comfort Zone, we believe in the joy of beauty for everyone, at every age, and in every phase of our life," says Barbara Gavazzoli, director of communication and education for Comfort Zone. "We all have the right and the responsibility to care for the way we look and feel, and to assist those who need our support; sometimes this is easier, sometimes this gets very challenging for many different reasons. One of those reasons is cancer."

To address this need, Comfort Zone has created a new programme called Beauty Reloaded, which includes a spa facial and body massage for cancer survivors, as well as a professional educational class.

Wellness for Cancer

Gavazzoli points to statistics that show 40 per cent of the population will suffer from cancer at some point during their lives. "Challenging and undesired as the situation can be when facing cancer and its effects, we know today, more than ever, that medical care is key to recover good health, and that professional spa care can be

For a project to succeed, it must have commitment and a cross-functional team that ensures the best for the clients

a valid support in again attaining serenity, energy and a revived glow," she explains.

Gavazzoli first met Julie Bach, chair of Wellness for Cancer, at the Global Wellness Summit in Morocco in 2014, when Bach called for spas to stop turning away cancer survivors and instead, provide comfort, solace and positive recovery paths. Bach has been working closely with Comfort Zone on the Beauty Reloaded programme since then; the skincare company has even made her part of its scientific committee. That committee also includes Dr Mariuccia Bucci, a well-respected dermatologist who is also a founding member of the International-Italian Society of Plastic-Aesthetic and Oncologic Dermatology.

"For a project to succeed, it must have commitment and a cross-functional team that ensures the best for the clients," says Bach. "Comfort Zone's master trainers have been very open to learn, and also share some personal experiences they had with cancer directly or through their clients. This has added a more personal dimension to the professional one, and resulted in a very compassionate and empathic attitude, which is what the brand stands for."

New protocols

The Beauty Reloaded programme includes one facial and one body treatment, as well as the educational session, which helps therapists learn to adapt their protocols to the different guests' needs when they have been through a cancer-related care or surgery.

Bach, left, and Gavazzoli have worked together to create the Beauty Reloaded programme



The new facial uses Comfort Zone's Remedy line to address sensitivity and dehydration



Right: the Beauty Reloaded Pro-Sleep Massage combines a gentle touch and unique soft brushes for relaxation



The facial addresses two important skincare issues of particular importance to cancer survivors: dehydration and sensitivity, which is catered to through Comfort Zone's Remedy line. The body treatment takes on the issue of troubled, poor-quality sleep through the Beauty Reloaded Pro-Sleep Massage. All the formulas applied during these protocols are fragrance-free and without essential oils, to ensure maximum comfort for the skin.

The Beauty Reloaded Facial is a soothing, replenishing, calming facial to help with skin's recovery, and to provide emotional comfort and reinforce the epidermal barrier after periods of intense stress. Fragrance-free delicate formulas are enriched with natural-origin prebiotics, which nourish and empower the skin's good bacteria; Marula oil, which aids in repairing the skin; and Marvel of Peru and Mexican Hyssop extracts, which soothe inflammation.

Julie Bach, chair of Wellness for Cancer, is part of Comfort Zone's scientific committee



The Beauty Reloaded Pro-Sleep Massage is designed to deeply alleviate both body and mind, and combines the benefits of a gentle touch and unique soft brushes to induce a deep relaxation. The fragrance-free, nourishing, restoring formulas are enriched with Illipé butter, Jojoba and Babassu oil.

"The Beauty Reloaded Pro-sleep Massage responds to the fact that sleep is a big issue for people touched by cancer," says Bach. "Medical evidence suggests that sleep disruption is actually linked to cancer metastasis. Up to eighty per cent of people touched by cancer have sleep issues during treatment, and many continue to have sleep issues up to 10 years after cancer treatment."

The Beauty Reloaded educational programme, which includes both in-class and digital sessions, is being organised through Comfort Zone's regional branches and distributors around the world. The first one took place at Derby University in the UK, with many more scheduled across Europe and the US.

At ease in skin and body

"What people touched by cancer look for – and what we want to offer them – is a regenerative experience that can relieve both their skin and their emotional discomfort," says Gavazzoli. "We want to make them feel and look beautiful and at ease in their skin, and in their bodies – this is why we have called the educational programme and the spa treatments Beauty Reloaded."

Bach finds the name a perfectly fitting one. "The name 'Beauty Reloaded' fully expresses Comfort Zone's understanding that the skin is a mirror of one's physical and emotional wellbeing, and at the same time recalls what Wellness for Cancer stands for," she says. "When someone goes through cancer treatment, the physical effects are very visible on the skin, but what's worse is the damaging psychological effects on their own body perception and the sense of 'lost beauty'. Therefore it is key, as Comfort Zone decided to do, to offer holistic, empathic care including 'clean' products and special massage techniques to repair the skin and ensure a total de-stressing, regenerating experience." ●

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“Hydrothermal traditions always play a vital part in the health and wellbeing of children”

Multi STORY

As the trend for parents travelling with their grandparents and children gathers pace, Jane Kitchen takes a look at operators that have dedicated spaces for the littlest spa-goers

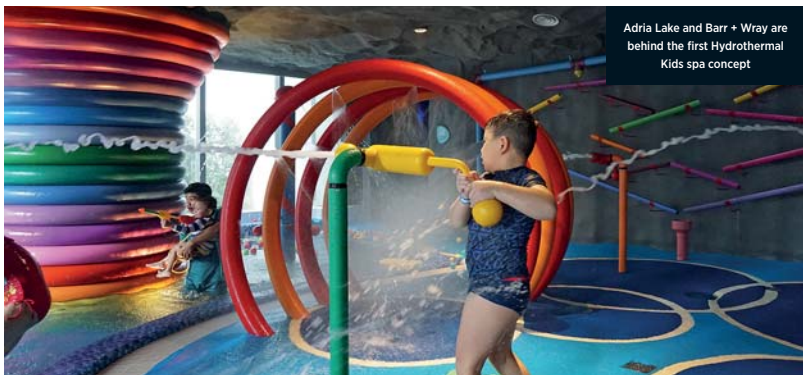
Traditionally, spas are for adults. But with a rise in multi-generational tourism, and as wellness takes a more central seat in our lives, there's growing pressure for spas to embrace family wellbeing.

“While it's important to maintain spas as places of quiet relaxation, there's an undeniable trend of wanting to include all members of a family in wellness – from children to grandparents,” says Ingo Schweder, CEO of wellness consultancy GOCO Hospitality. “We've been incorporating significant elements of family wellness for clients in the Caribbean, the Middle East and Thailand, so it really is a trend we're seeing around the world.”

Adria Lake, founder of wellness design firm AW Lake, first created a Hydrothermal Kids spa concept in 2014. “In all the various cultures I've studied, hydrothermal traditions always play a vital part in the health and wellbeing of children,” says Lake, referencing Finnish saunas and Japanese onsen which are a family affair. “Properly designed and engineered hydrothermal kids spas allows children to experience the health benefits of



Family travel is to grow by 25 per cent by 2022 and it's a market that's very interested in wellness



Adria Lake and Barr + Wray are behind the first Hydrothermal Kids spa concept

Acquaree Spa

Jakarta, Indonesia / opened: 2019

The Acquaree Spa in JHL Solitaire in Jakarta, Indonesia, is based on Adria Lake's Hydrothermal Kids concept. Lake designed and conceptualised the 820sq m (8,000sq ft) spa, while Barr + Wray provided the engineering for the extensive hydrothermal circuit, which has been created specifically with child safety in mind. Children are guided and continuously monitored by highly trained spa coaches certified in first-aid, and the design features gentle curves and padded surfaces. Temperatures are adjusted to child-level tolerance, and Barr + Wray's antibacterial ultraviolet technology ensures water hygiene.

The main hydrothermal circuit for kids aged 5-12 includes a long, winding cavernous water and heat tunnel; a rock sauna with climbing walls; a mud room where organic and freshly prepared therapeutic clays are provided and 'octopi' tentacles blow warm air to dry the mud; a Rainforest Chamber with scented rain showers; rinsing water buckets and shower hoops.

A separate water playground designed specifically for toddlers aged 3-5 features fun and educational hydro experiences such as a bubble pool, water guns, slides and a mushroom shower. An outdoor playground located on an adjacent roof terrace serves as a pre and post spa area for the children.



Media, kids and parents all love the concept, says Dharmadi (centre)

"You're never too young to experience and learn about wellness, through our unique hydrothermal spa journey, enjoying a safe and fun educational experience on the importance of wellness," says Mega Dharmadi, director, JHL Group and owner-operator of Acquaree Spa. Dharmadi says while Acquaree is receiving lots

of media buzz, what's most encouraging is the response from the children and their parents. "The children love playing with the coloured muds, the octopi tentacles, the water guns and games in the rainforest area," she says. "The parents are so grateful the kids have this experiential learning journey that's fun at the same time."

exposure to heat, cold, mud/clay, and water pressure in an environment that's both fun and safe."

She adds: "Investing in such a facility will not only increase the capture rate of the adult spa and provide additional revenue, but it's a valuable brand differentiation, as it shows a serious commitment to children's health as well as to overall development."

Family travel will increase by 25 per cent by 2022, according to analytics firm GlobalData. The market is becoming increasingly sophisticated, with growing disposable income, emerging markets and multi-generational travel driving demand for wellness activities for all ages. "As wellness tourism grows at an increasing rate due to hectic work schedules... more families will start to take wellness holidays," says Ralph Hollister, associate analyst, travel & tourism for GlobalData.



Adria Lake

Activities like yoga and meditation are growing in popularity for children, and with teens stressed by social and school pressure, parents are interested in giving them tools to support their mental and physical health. "Parents no longer want someone to simply look after their children in order for them to be alone - they want their children to be stimulated and engaged, without social media and games, and further, they want to connect more with their kids," says Anna Bjurstam, who heads up spa and wellness for Six Senses, which launched a comprehensive programme for children last year.

Here, we take a look at some of the newest kid-friendly spas around the world. In Part 2 of this series later this year, we'll explore other innovative ways spas are engaging with children and families. ▶

► FAMILY SPA

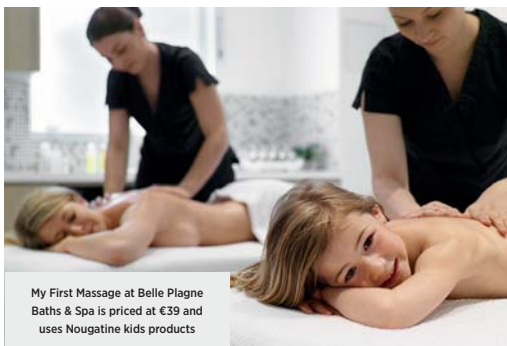
DEEP NATURE FAMILY SPAS:

Belle Plagne Baths & Spa

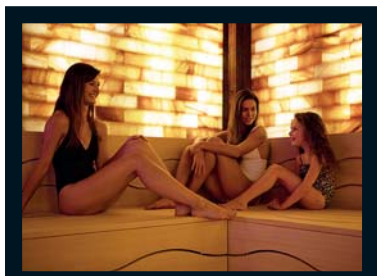
Belle Plagne, France / opened: 2018

Three Forest Center Parcs

Moselle, France / opened: 2018



My First Massage at Belle Plagne Baths & Spa is priced at €39 and uses Nougatine kids products



Deep Nature's spa at Three Forest Center Parcs welcomes kids over 8

Global spa consultancy Deep Nature has added family spas to several of its most recent creations. At the 1,500sq m (16,145sq ft) Belle Plagne Spa in the French Alps, 170sq m (1,830sq ft) is set aside as a family spa. Children under 15 can attend with their parents, with an admission for two adults and two children priced at €59 (US\$66, £50). The aquatic course includes swan neck jets, a vertical water sheet, geysers, a water lounge area, counter current walkway and underwater jets, as well as a pool. Children's treatments, such as Pretty Little Face and My First Massage

which both cost €39 (US\$44, £34), have been created using kids skincare brand Nougatine.

At the Three Forests Center Parcs in Moselle, France, Deep Nature operates a new 1,600sq m (17,222sq ft) spa in the 435-hectare forested family resort. One of Center Parcs' main objectives is to help families create memories, so including a family spa in the offering made sense. Accessible to children aged 8 to 16, accompanied by a parent, the experience is designed as an introduction to wellbeing and relaxation and is priced at €19 (US\$21, £16) for a two hour session.

Grand Resort Bad Ragaz Family Spa

Bad Ragaz, Switzerland / opened: 2018

The Grand Resort Bad Ragaz in Switzerland opened a 550sq m (5,920sq ft) spa for children last year, where different water zones range from 0.2 to 1.3 metres deep and are filled with balmy 33°C water. The family spa is part of the luxury resort's three-generation strategy, which also includes reconfigured guestrooms catering to families travelling with parents, grandparents and children together.

Interior designer Claudio Carbone recreated the Tamina Gorge in rustic rock faces for the children's spa, and a wooden

Alpine hut is a reminder of the story of Heidi. A mini slide invites youngsters to splash in the warm water, and activities include mermaid swimming, aqua Latin dance, learning about the underwater world and a kids' party on Saturday.

Child-friendly treatments include the Funny Choco and Sweet Honey massages for CHF120 (US\$118, €105, £90), Bling Bling Fingers and Happy Feet for CHF85 (US\$84, €74, £64). "Children and their parents need space to let their hair down and to feel good," says general manager Marco R Zanolari. ►



Bad Ragaz's new 550sq m family spa is part of a wider strategy to attract the three-generation market



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Schloss Elmau

Krün, Germany / opened: 2015

At Germany's Schloss Elmau – which bills itself as a 'luxury spa retreat and cultural hideaway' – families often visit each year with multiple generations, and the cultural programming and spa accessibility extends to all ages.

Three of the spas are aimed at families, including the Shantigiri Family Spa, which has an outdoor lap pool, seven treatment rooms, gym, spa lounge and restaurant; and the Family Spa at the Hideaway, which includes an indoor lap pool, five saunas and steam baths, a relaxation area and tea lounge. Treatments for children and teenagers are available, but there are also three separate

adults-only spas, and even silent areas just for adults. "This strict separation enables high-quality service for all different age groups," says Johannes Mikenda, director of spa and sport.

Additionally, Schloss Elmau's Edutainment Workshops, designed and run by artists, authors and educators, go far beyond a traditional kids club, to include a chess academy, yoga for kids and teens, a debating club, theatre courses, iPhone photo workshops, philosophy classes and science lab, helping to address wellness in a more holistic way. Children stay for free at the resort and all of the cultural activities and use of the spa are included in the room rate.



Schloss Elmau has three family spas and 'edutainment' workshops which go way beyond typical kids clubs



Finisterra Spa, Martinhal Family Resorts

Four locations, Portugal / opened: 2010



Finisterra's parent-and-child experience is booked nearly every day

Martinhal Family Resorts, which runs four hotels in Portugal, has positioned itself as five-star family-friendly hospitality, and its spas offer a wide range of treatments for all ages – from babies to grandparents. Children are welcome everywhere, including the spas, where whirlpools, saunas and steamrooms are set at lower temperatures to suit their sensitive skin, and hydrotherapy pool jets have a softer pressure. "Every nook and corner has to be about the whole family; there's no space in any of our hotels that is not for families," explains Seema Lodi, GM of Martinhal Lisbon Cascais.

Martinhal also offers treatments for children aged 6 onwards, including a popular

25-minute, €65 (US\$73, £56) parent-and-child massage, which Lodi says is booked almost every day. "The millennials especially are investing more time with their children," says Lodi. "These young adults are looking for meaningful experiences with their children, so if we don't start looking at what they want, we'll be falling way behind."

This summer, Martinhal plans to add a range of ayurveda treatments for families, as well as classes in baby massage and family meditation and yoga sessions. "If they can learn football or tennis at 4, they can also learn meditation," says Lodi. "Experiencing these as a family, and learning something you can carry on when you go home – we can add a lot of value." ●

Part 2 of this article will appear in the next issue of *Spa Business*, and will look at innovative ways traditional spas are incorporating wellness programming for children and families

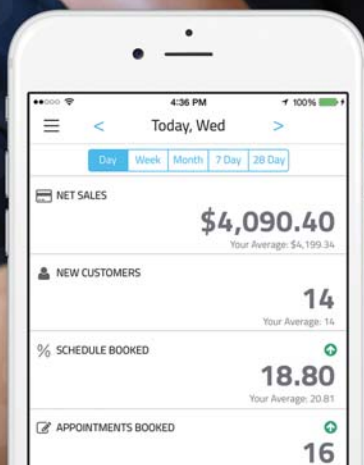


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Having strong bones is essential to good health, especially as we get older, enabling us to remain active and with good vitality and quality of life.

Osteoporosis – brittle bones – is a highly debilitating disorder, which can lead to fractures and falls and it's estimated that one in three women and one in five men will suffer from it in their lifetime and this number is growing as the population ages and people become more sedentary.

However, the good news is that spas which offer fitness services could have a part to play in helping people who are susceptible to this disease to avoid it or lessen its impact.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Doing weight bearing activity is vital in achieving good bone health. The stress which is placed on the bones by exercises such as weight lifting, plyometrics and running stimulates the body to build and maintain strong bones.

BONE LOADING

Spas can help guests avoid
or reverse osteoporosis.

Liz Terry reports



Weight bearing activity is vital in achieving good bone health

FLAMINGO IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK



High impact, jumping workouts are an effective bone loading activity

It does this because the impact generated by exercise compresses the bone matrix, triggering the bone to take in calcium and other minerals and thereby increasing bone density.

The amount of weight bearing needed to trigger this response is called osteogenic loading because it takes a certain 'load' to stimulate the bone building cells.

This 'bone loading' is essential if people are to maintain a healthy skeletal system, and we expect more spas and fitness centres to add bone loading workout options, as the demand for wellness services increases and people are more aware of the need to work hard to ensure a healthy older age.

WHAT LOAD IS NEEDED?

When it comes to the impact of exercise on bone health, scientists measure activities according to how many multiples of body weight they load onto the skeleton.

A study led by musculoskeletal specialist Kevin Deere at the University of Bristol, UK looked at the bone loading which was needed to stimulate bone mineralisation in teenagers and found the amount of loading required was 4.2 times their body weight*.

This means if you weigh 130 pounds, you need to load your bones with 546 pounds to trigger bone building.

The impact generated by exercise compresses the bone matrix, triggering the bone to take in calcium and other minerals and thereby increasing bone density

At rest, gravity applies a load to our bones which equals that of our body weight. Activities such as walking, jogging or running add more load, but much higher impact is needed to achieve a load of four times bodyweight, with weight training, plyometrics or jumping being options.

Although the researchers cautioned the extrapolation of these results into other population groups, the results nevertheless highlight that light exercise is unlikely to be as effective.

WHY OFFER IT?

Spas which add bone loading to their repertoire will be able to better serve guests and members, as well as enabling them to take steps to improve their long-term health, longevity and quality of life.

Researchers point out that while exercise such as cycling and swimming have excellent health benefits in areas such as flexibility, strength and cardiovascular capacity, they effectively 'unload' the bones, so anyone who focuses exclusively on these

types of exercise and are without bone loading in their routine as a result, may be susceptible to osteoporosis and would be advised to add more weight bearing activity to their workout programme.

Another area for consideration is the advice which people get to enable them to make the right exercise choices, as it's important they avoid overloading and creating other musculoskeletal issues.

It's suggested that anyone with low bone density or osteoporosis works with a fitness professional to ensure that bone loading is done progressively and without causing harm. ●

* Source: Deere, et al. *Habitual levels of high, but not moderate or low, impact activity are positively related to hip BMD and geometry.* JBMR, September 2012



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Training & education

From bespoke training programmes to 24/7 support teams and company super-users, how are software suppliers helping spas get the most out of their systems?

Your spa has a newly-installed management system with a depth of functionality – offering greater operational efficiency, alongside a plethora of business analytics. But how do spas access that breadth of functionality and what training and support is on offer to help achieve optimum business value?

THE WHY, WHAT AND HOW

From 24/7 support teams, guided tutorials and bespoke educational programmes to training conferences, in-site walk-throughs and super-users, software companies offer a multitude of training scenarios, but with one goal in mind: to help businesses learn in the most efficient way possible.

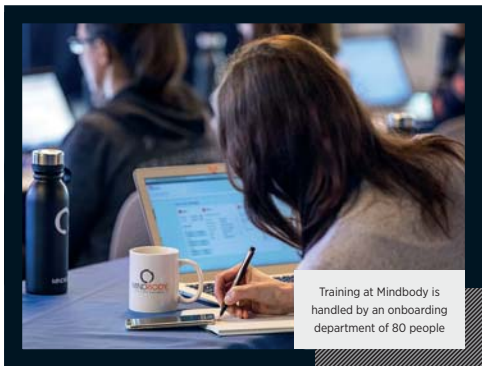
Most software suppliers offer a basic training programme which is client-centric. Key to providing that tailor-made support is in understanding why a spa operator needs a business management system in the first place and the nature of their particular goals. As Frank Pitsikalis, founder and CEO of ResortSuite, says: “We always start with the ‘why’ before we begin explaining the ‘how’.”

Leonie Wileman, COO of Premier Software, agrees: “Prior to installation we work closely with the client to ascertain what main functions they’ll be using and by whom, and build this knowledge into the initial training programme.”

Premier’s bespoke training ethos resonates with client Helen Cain, group spa manager of 10-plus sites at Harbour

Hotels, UK. “We spoke with Premier very early on to make sure all areas of the software were covered in the shortest amount of time taken out of the business,” she says. “Prior to training, team members found simple processes long-winded and often misunderstood or didn’t know the most efficient way to use the software. Premier’s training takes you through how to use Core, its flagship business management system, efficiently, saving time.”

ResortSuite delivers its training to clients in a variety of ways, with configuration training often undertaken online remotely, while go-live and end-user training is always conducted onsite: “Training topics are dependent on the property and the ResortSuite



Training at Mindbody is handled by an onboarding department of 80 people



Mindbody offers a lot of different training resources like videos, articles, guided tutorials, webinars, in-site walk-throughs and staff certifications

KATIE PHILIPP, MINDBODY



ResortSuite's training helped Buttermilk Falls to provide a more seamless guest experience

Since ResortSuite's training, our productivity has gone up and communication logs and daily tasks are now in one central place

CJ HARTWELL-KELLY, BUTTERMILK FALLS INN AND SPA



modules purchased," says Pitsikalis. "Our implementations team takes a new customer through different types of training. It's always tailored to the specific customer because each property is unique, whether it's a day spa with 10 treatment areas or a destination spa with 30 treatment areas, dining, a membership programme, wellness activities and accommodations."

CUSTOMISATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The ability to tailor training, from topics covered to the way they're delivered, is key. As ResortSuite client CJ Hartwell-Kelly, GM at Buttermilk Falls Inn and Spa, in New York state, testifies: "Prior to ResortSuite, none of the entities at Buttermilk Falls would interface with each other. ResortSuite offered us a single solution for property management, spa, food and beverage, and catering. Since training, my team is now able to provide a

seamless guest experience. Productivity has gone up and communication logs and daily tasks are now in one central place."

The Assistant Company (TAC) uses a modular structure within its TAC University programme to train spas, fitness clubs and thermal baths alike. MD Günther Pöllabauer explains: "The TAC University programme includes quarterly webinars comprising updates of the latest functions, management workshops with our partner consultants, basic or advanced user training, and individual training on request."

But how do software companies make such an in-depth, technical subject accessible across multiple key roles on an ongoing basis? Delivered predominantly over the phone with online screen sharing, training by Mindbody covers topics such as service set-up, bookings and retail, branded web configuration, marketing features and business resources. Senior business education specialist Katie Philipp says: "We really try to customise

the language and communication style. Mindbody offers a lot of different training resources like videos, articles, guided tutorials, webinars, in-site walk-throughs and staff certifications to help businesses learn in the most efficient way possible."

DEEP TRAINING

Like many software companies, Mindbody also embraces super-users. Philipp explains: "Our team typically trains a single point (or two) of contact on a conference call." It's an approach which has proved popular with Mindbody client Jennalee Dahlen, owner of California-based Yoso Wellness Spa: "We spend approximately two weeks training new staff on how to use the Mindbody software. This includes shadowing time to observe someone who's well versed in the software. We find this particularly helpful with trainees because they learn on the spot the most efficient ways to create a smooth client experience."

TECHNOLOGY

▶ Book4Time advocates a company champion too. With a training programme that's delivered online, Book4Time offers six sessions as part of its onboarding process. But as Laura McLeod, director of client success, says: "It's the 'train the trainer' approach which works best for us. Our go-to approach is to help individuals with specific skills/responsibilities develop the ability to manage and work with the product. They are our super-users who handle the training of other employees."

Likewise, TAC acknowledges the power of a super-user. Pöllabauer explains: "In large corporations there's always one TAC key user who's received deep training. This person is the specialist who trains her/his colleagues."

TRAINING DEPARTMENTS

So, tasked with delivering such a diverse range of training scenarios to a broad range of clients with widely differing needs, how exactly do software training departments operate and what are the challenges?

According to Book4Time's McLeod, knowing how to use the company's product to optimise operational efficiency and draw business intelligence is the key to client success: "Our success depends largely on CLTV [customer life time value] and we can enhance that only by delivering value. The quickest way to start delivering value is during the training itself."

And to deliver that training, the company has a team of 20 staff based



Book4Time has dedicated training teams based in Toronto and Manila



"Our go-to approach is to help individuals develop specific skills... They are our super-users who handle the training of other employees"

LAURA MCLEOD, BOOK4TIME

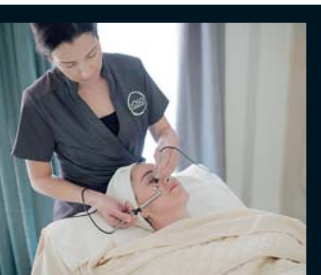
in Toronto and Manila. "The goal is to account for the time difference and be accessible to clients irrespective of the hour in the day. In a lot of ways, they're the backbone of what we do," she adds.

Over at Mindbody, there's an onboarding department comprising some 80 people. "They perform a critical function. They are the boots on the ground that help our customers develop a comfort level with our comprehensive software system," says Philipp. With a

global reach, complimentary onboarding is available in six languages.

Helping spas to continue to access the full breadth of functionality, and not revert back to working within their comfort zone, is another key consideration for software suppliers. ResortSuite offers a Customer Success Team to keep clients on track. Pitsikalis says: "We wanted to create a team dedicated to proactively reaching out to our customers to talk through how they're using the software today, and how they could improve with the use of certain functionalities."

At the end of the day, successful training – measured in both greater operational efficiencies at the spa and improved adoption rates by the software company – boils down to a process of continuous and open two-way communication. As Mindbody's Philipp concludes: "We stay curious and ask lots of questions around our customers' goals. By helping them achieve these, hopefully businesses find they can't live without us!" ●



Jennalee Dahlen,
Yoso Wellness Spa

Yoso Wellness Spa spends two weeks training new staff in Mindbody software

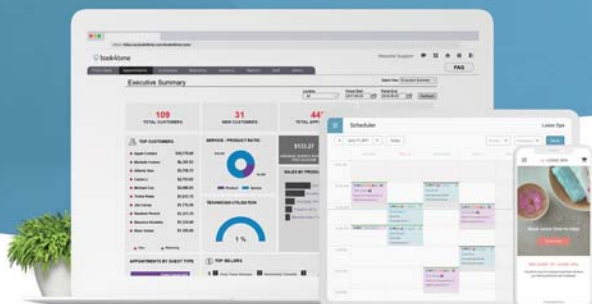


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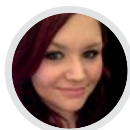
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STARPOOL

spa business uniting the world of wellness

Product innovation



by Lauren Heath-Jones,
assistant product editor

Industry suppliers tell Lauren Heath-Jones about their latest product, treatment and equipment launches

Ferrari designer Ken Okuyama unveils 'technologically advanced' massage chair

Billed as the Ferrari of massage chairs, DreamWave's new M.8 is the first in a line of technology-advanced and elegantly designed full-body shiatsu chairs.

It's been created by Japanese designer Ken Okuyama, who drew inspiration from his automotive roots at Ferrari, Porsche and Maserati, to create a chair with groundbreaking capabilities, such as the Deltawave massage engine and Shiatsu Point Locator, with a refined aesthetic.

He says: "You have to design the whole environment, without that, the story doesn't carry through."

In a nod to the supercar, rear swinging doors have been added for user convenience. "Getting in and out of a traditional massage chair can be a challenge for older users and anyone with back issues," says DreamWave founder Cliff Levin.



Okuyama collaborated with a shiatsu master to create "a personalised, immersive, sensory massage environment that allows for disconnecting, recharging and rejuvenating both body and mind".

The DreamWave M.8 has been described as "unapologetically luxurious" and recently received a coveted Innovation Award at this year's CES consumer electronics show in Las Vegas.

KEYWORD: DREAMWAVE

The M.8 is described as
"unapologetically luxurious"



The chair has rear swinging doors like the supercar



"You have to design the whole environment, without that, the story doesn't carry through."



“The textiles not only look good but are unrivalled in terms of comfort and handling”

Klafs' Benno Kirschenhofer reveals Mollis textile range for saunas



The material can withstand sauna and steamroom conditions

German sauna manufacturer Klafs has created Mollis, a textile solution for saunas designed to make the heat experience more comfortable for users.

Mollis, taken from the Latin word for 'soft' and 'comfortable', was in development for two years and features a series of mats, bolsters and cushions in a range of sizes and colours.

Made from Tencel fibre, an eco-friendly alternative to viscose, Mollis is designed to overcome the hot and wet environment of thermal experience while being practical, comfortable, hygienic, stylish and machine-washable.



The range is designed to make heat experiences more comfortable for users

Benno Kirschenhofer, corporate communications manager at Klafs, says: "Mollis, in every regard, is simply more than just putting a pillow in the sauna. Mollis will set standards in several respects: the textiles not only look good but are unrivalled in terms of comfort and handling, just like you always wanted in the sauna."

KEYWORD: KLAFS

Marine Mist transports users to the seaside, says Phytomer's Mathilde Gédouin-Lagarde

French marine skincare brand Phytomer has launched a professional facial spray that will become an integral step in all its treatments.

Called Marine Mist, the spray is formulated with Oligomer, a sodium-reduced seawater concentrate exclusive to Phytomer, and is designed to hydrate, refresh and revitalise tired skin.

The mist is subtly fragranced with woody base notes of amber, patchouli and musk, and floral top notes of cypress, mugwort and clove.

Mathilde Gédouin-Lagarde, director of marketing & communication at Phytomer, says: "The Marine Mist is an iconic Phytomer product that, as soon as you use it, transports you to the seaside. It is fresh, full of

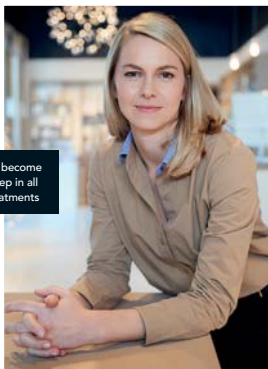


The spray will become an integral step in all Phytomer treatments

minerals, and is both revitalising and relaxing at the same time."

She adds: "I use it all day long: in the morning to wake my skin up, during the day for a boost of moisture and in the evening if I need a refresher before going out."

KEYWORD: PHYTOMER



“It is fresh, full of minerals, and is both revitalising and relaxing at the same time”



Marc Massing explains the benefits of aromatherapy in a spa's wet areas

Essential oils transform ordinary saunas and steam rooms, creating a unique olfactory experience

How can Camylle help spas revitalise their wet areas?

The wet area in a spa – including saunas, steam rooms, hydrotherapy baths and more – often represents a spa's largest investment, yet these areas are often underutilised or even neglected in the day-to-day operations. Often, saunas and steam rooms are simply turned on in the morning and then turned off in the evening.

But with the help of aromatherapy, these spaces can become a major draw for clients. The steam room or sauna is transformed into a wellness treatment in its own right, and becomes a central component of your wellness space, helping to boost the number of visitors to the spa.

How does aromatherapy work in the wet area?

In a sauna, when essential oils are poured over the scorching lava stones, the entire body is able to absorb the benefits deep into the skin. From an operational standpoint, it's simple: in the morning, prepare the bucket by adding 10 to 20 ml of Voile de Sauna per liter of water. Set the spraying schedule, ideally every 30 minutes, or place the bucket inside the sauna.

In a steam room, the humid atmosphere means the essential oils can be absorbed through the skin. Simply arrange to change the canister under the fragrance pump according to the established programme.

How can Camylle's essential oils add value to a spa?

Supported by effective communications, an active aromatherapy programme brings



Essential oils are poured over a sauna's hot lava stones



“The steam room or sauna is transformed into a wellness treatment in its own right”

real added value to the spa, and has an immediate impact on the number of visitors. We can help you create a weekly or monthly aromatherapy programme, with an 'essential oil of the day'.

You can also create a monthly programme, where a different fragrance is used each month, according to the season – different scents can offer the body the right energy at the right time of year, and you can promote the virtues of the essential oils to your customers.

Or we can create a personalised programme based on your profile, environment and regional culture – or even help you to create a signature fragrance to offer a unique olfactory experience.

Our turnkey solution means that we've thought of everything – from information flyers to a customised enhancement programme creation tool. We're also available to offer advice and personalised assistance.

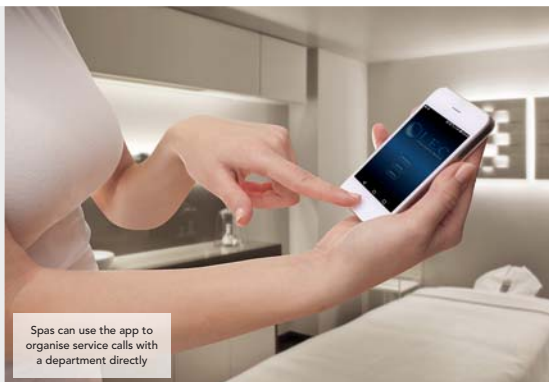
Our programme helps turn a passive situation into an active one, meaning you're more likely to keep loyal clients, attract new clients and support and involve staff. In the end, enhancing your spa's wet area is simply good for business.

KEYWORD: CAMYLLE



LEC app 'major leap' in customer service, says Brian Paris

Billed as an industry first, the Living Earth Crafts' app is available for free on both Apple and Android devices, and is designed to enable LEC customers from across the world to register their equipment with the LEC headoffice simply by scanning it. It also enables users to troubleshoot equipment issues and organise service calls directly with LEC's service department.



Spas can use the app to organise service calls with a department directly

Working with both new and old equipment, the app allows users to send video, images and other information directly to the customer service department. LEC says this will ensure faster response times.

Brian Paris, EVP of sales at the company, says: "This is a major leap forward for customer service in the spa equipment industry, by connecting directly to our equipment service experts,

spas can expect dramatically improved troubleshooting and quicker warranty service response times, worldwide."

He adds: "This breakthrough underscores our commitment to provide the best service in the industry. We highly encourage all of our spa customers from around the world to download and begin using this invaluable app."

KEYWORDS: LIVING EARTH CRAFTS

“Spas can expect a dramatically improved troubleshooting service”



RKF launch inspired by traditional Mediterranean cloth, says Riadh Bouaziz



Fouta is lightweight and patterned

RKF Luxury Linen, a leading, French spa supplier, has created Fouta, a range of hammam towels inspired by traditional Mediterranean cloth.

Fouta is a lightweight piece of patterned fabric that's been used in traditional dress in the Mediterranean and Middle East for centuries.

RKF have put a luxe spin on the fabric for its new hammam towels which are made from 100 per cent cotton and are incredibly absorbent thanks to a sponge underside.

Riadh Bouaziz, chair and CEO of RKF, says: "RKF is all about customer experience. A terry towel is too heavy for a hot and moist hammam, our Fouta are as absorbent as terry towels but weigh less."



“A terry towel is too heavy for a hot and moist hammam, our Fouta are as absorbent as a terry towels but weigh less”

The towels are custom-created on a client-by-client basis, with existing clients including Al Manara, a luxury resort in Jordan and Le Palace at the Grand Hotel Kempinski in Switzerland.

KEYWORD: RKF



IYASHI DÔME



Iyashi Dôme was founded by Shogoro Uemura, who wanted to re-create the ancient method of Suna Ryoho in a modern setting

Iyashi Dome: the original Japanese far infrared sauna experience

Shogoro Uemura is reviving the ancient Suna Ryoho practice for modern spa settings

What is Iyashi Dôme?

Iyashi is a Japanese word which carries the notion of wellness. It has, however, a number of other meanings depending on context – including relief, healing and cure. The word Dôme has been added to reflect the technology.

The brand itself was created in 2004 and it was the first company on the market – hence Iyashi Dôme became the generic term for “japanese sauna” (the combination of dry heat and Japanese technology).

The technology has been inspired by the ancient Suna Ryoho



practice, which originates from the Ibuzuki beach in the south of Japan. For centuries, people there have been burying themselves in the hot sand – which has been warmed up by the sun and the underground hot springs – to induce sweating.

As the sand on the beach is volcanic, it emits infrared which is perfect for the purpose of sweating.

How does it work?

Iyashi Dôme Sessions take 30 minutes. Guests strip and then spend 15 minutes lying on their front and 15 minutes on their back. The first 15 minutes feels like a sun bathing session and is very relaxing – many people fall asleep during the process. We describe the second 15 minutes as a “sport session”, as users sweat intensely during it.

It is estimated that each 30 minute session is the equivalent of a 20km run, burning up to 600 kcs and sweating up to 1,200ml.

What health benefits does Iyashi Dôme offer users?

It has shown proven results in a number of areas – it helps people to detox and slim down and also has anti-ageing benefits. It also works in a sports environment,

aiding preparation and recovery.

To prove the effects, we have invested in clinical studies which clearly outline the benefits. A clinical trial undertaken in Switzerland, for example, showed that users who undertook two sessions a week achieved an average weight loss of 4kgs.

The analysis also showed that, through sweating, Iyashi Dôme can help rid the body of toxic heavy metals – including strontium, barium, nickel, lead, chromium, arsenic and cadmium.

How can installing an Iyashi Dôme benefit spas?

By adding a new customer offer and increasing business. It is a “hands free” device, so therapists can safely leave a customer while undertaking other tasks.

What is the recommended set-up at a spa?

Iyashi Dôme devices are 225cm long and 90cm wide, so they fit in most spaces. We recommend a room of 10-12sq m. A shower isn't necessary. Some spas locate Iyashi Dôme in a separate room and others in rooms with massage tables in order to create signature treatments.

KEYWORD: IYASHI DOME





Michael Q Pugliese on Circadia's partnership with The HydraFacial Company

“Circadia is proud to utilise our innovative skin science to deliver these exclusive boosters through HydraFacial technology.”



The boosters protect the skin from environmental damage

Skincare brand Circadia has announced a partnership with The HydraFacial Company that will see two of its signature treatments, the Chrono-Peptide Booster and the ProTec Plus Booster, offered by HydraFacial providers worldwide.

Circadia's treatments are based on chronobiology, the science of natural rhythms, and are designed to protect the skin from environmental damage during the day, while triggering internal repair mechanisms during sleep.

The formulations combine botanicals, stem cells and vitamins with peptides, and can be used to address skincare concerns such as ageing, acne and rosacea.

Michael Q Pugliese, CEO of Circadia, says: “Circadia is proud to utilise our innovative skin



science and formulary expertise to deliver these exclusive boosters through the HydraFacial patented technology for exceptional results.”

HydraFacial equipment is used to cleanse, exfoliate and extract impurities while simultaneously delivering serums to the skin.

KEYWORD: CIRCADIA

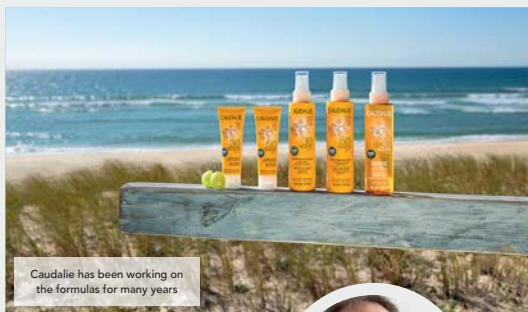
Caudalie Suncare protects the skin and the environment, says Jean-Christophe Samyn

Vinotherapy company Caudalie has created a suncare collection to protect both the skin and the environment.

Consisting of five products, including face and body sunscreens and an oil spray, the collection uses patented ‘ocean protect’ formulas that were in development for several years.

Traditional chemical sun filters, including oxybenzone and octinoxate, have been eliminated from the formula, leaving only water-resistant and biodegradable filters which offer maximum UVA and UVB protection while reducing environmental damage.

The range is certified by the Mediterranean Institute of Biodiversity and Ecology and bears the Ocean Protect eco logo.



Caudalie has been working on the formulas for many years

Jean-Christophe Samyn, Caudalie's UK & Ireland director, says: “We didn't want to compromise between protecting the skin and protecting nature. For many years, Caudalie has been working on skincare formulas that give the senses an experience and are eco-friendly, and this new collection reflects that perfectly.”

KEYWORD: CAUDALIE



“We didn't want to compromise between protecting the skin and protecting nature.”

THE | TIDES

Pure Dutch Nature Inside

Annemarie Wortman highlights a new, effective detox treatment and product line by TheTides Wellness

Ocean Deep Recovery rids the body of toxins, soothes muscle tension and improves sleep

TheTides Wellness, a wellness care brand based in The Netherlands specialising in products made from Dutch seaweed and magnesium, has launched a new detox treatment and accompanying professional skincare line for the spa market.

Called Ocean Deep Recovery, the ritual is billed as a 'physical and mental detoxification experience', and is designed to rid the body of toxins and soothe muscle tension, as well as



“They are so pure and clean that you can actually eat them.”

reduce feelings of fatigue, improve sleep quality, alleviate stress and anxiety and relieve the symptoms of 'wired and tired' syndrome.

"Ocean Deep Recovery is an extension of our holistic BrainBody Wellness Treatments, a concept that is curated to reboot the body and brain through innovative treatment techniques and effective organic products," says Annemarie Wortman, co-founder of TheTides Wellness.

The treatment begins with a full body exfoliating scrub to stimulate blood and lymph flow and detoxify the skin. Clients are then given a massage, which incorporates assisted stretching, breath work, acupressure point massage and ice cube therapy.

One of two body masks is then applied before the client is wrapped

in an infrared blanket to relax the muscles and open the pores, enabling effective absorption of vital active ingredients. Guests also receive a scalp and facial pressure point treatment – with a special elixir of magnesium, chlorella and ice plant extracts – whilst under the blanket.

Designed for professional use only, the product line consists of two full body masks, containing magnesium to cleanse and purify the skin, whilst seaweed hydrates and nourishes. This unique blend is designed to encourage deep relaxation, renew and restore lost minerals and electrolytes and reduce stress levels, as well as release tension and soothe aches and pains.

"The body masks were top of our list. We have been working for quite some time to create effective extracts and powders from some of our key ingredients, such as magnesium, organic chlorella, marine phyto-plankton and fossilised algae," Wortman adds.

"We dare to say that they have become very effective and potent products. They are so pure and clean that you can actually eat them."

KEYWORDS: THE TIDES

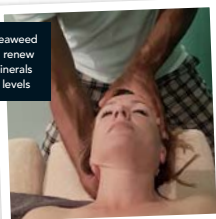
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The ritual begins with a full body scrub to stimulate blood and lymph flow



The products use seaweed and magnesium to renew and restore lost minerals and reduce stress levels



Portofino unites comfort and functionality, says Lemi GM Matteo Brusaverri



The ergonomic Portofino Evo boasts a stress relief system

Wellness equipment supplier Lemi has launched two multi-functional treatment tables, the Portofino and Portofino Evo.

The company's answer to demand for lower massage beds, the tables stand at 49cm (19.2") tall, with adjustable height, and combine comfort and functionality for clients and therapists while optimising the work space.

Both feature electric motors to control the height, back, leg and headrests, as well as customisable mattresses (on request), storage drawers and fire-resistant antibacterial upholstery coverings.

The Portofino features the American headrest and functions that return the bed to zero- and end-of-treatment positions.



“They are not just technical units, they’re a furnishing complement”

Portofino Evo is ergonomically designed to support the client's head, back and shoulders and features Lemi's HBS stress relief system and integrated armrests.

Matteo Brusaverri, Lemi general manager, says: “Portofino and Portofino Evo are not just technical units, but a furnishing complement that harmoniously integrate into the workplace and increase usability.”

KEYWORD: LEMI

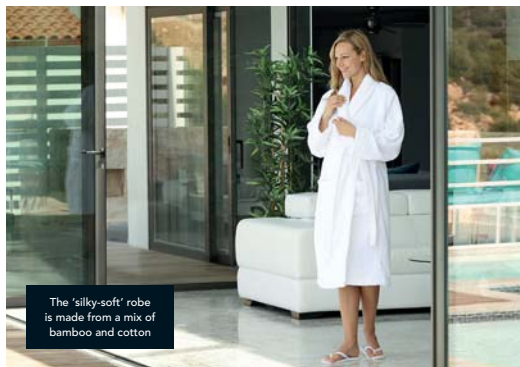


Bamboo robe is antibacterial and eco-friendly says BC Software's Barbara Cooke

BC Software, a UK-based spa linen supplier, has introduced an eco-friendly robe made from a combination of bamboo and cotton.

The Bamboo Bathrobe boasts a 'silky-soft' texture and is hypoallergenic and incredibly hygienic, due to the antibacterial, antimicrobial and antifungal properties of the bamboo.

The robe is very lightweight, weighing just 500gsm and features a shawl collar, turnback cuffs, adjustable waistband and double



The 'silky-soft' robe is made from a mix of bamboo and cotton

“We introduce products according to customer needs rather than following trends”

belt loops. It's currently available in white and extra large, with the potential for different sizes and colours to be added at some point in the future.

Barbara Cooke, founder & CEO of BC Software, says: “We introduce our products according to our customer's needs rather than following trends and this

super soft bathrobe was specifically requested by our customers.

She adds: “The product was put through rigorous testing to ensure it performs to our very high standards and will deliver our quality standards of commercial robustness and longevity.” ●

KEYWORDS: BC SOFTWARE

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Face rollers are commonly used to give skin a more youthful appearance

Finishing touch

ROLL PLAY

The benefits of face massage rollers have been given scientific backing from researchers in Japan. Tom Walker reports

Massage rollers are commonly used in beauty treatments to help stimulate the skin, aiding circulation and giving a more youthful and glowing appearance. But their effects on blood flow and the vascular system have remained unclear. Now a small study by Japanese researchers, however, has given some scientific backing to the subject.

Researchers from the Institute for Liberal Arts at the Tokyo Institute of Technology found that using a face roller can increase skin blood flow for more than 10 minutes after a massage. It was also suggested that the use of rollers can improve vasodilation – the widening of blood vessels – in the long-term.

The research team conducted short- and long-term experiments involving the participation of 26 healthy male and female volunteers to examine the effects of using a massage roller on facial skin and blood flow.

Among the findings of the short-term experiments were that even a five-minute massage resulted in “significantly increased facial skin blood flow” in the massaged cheek, with a relative change of up to around 25 per cent.

“The increase in skin blood flow after applying the massage roller persisted much longer than we had expected,” the study says. “Short-term mechanical stimulation by a facial massage roller increased skin blood flow for more than 10 minutes solely in the massaged cheek.”

In the long-term experiment, the researchers examined the effects of daily massage on the right cheek over a five-week period. They also examined the reactivity of facial blood

vessels to a heat stimulus, involving application of a heating probe set at 40°C, in order to test whether there were any changes in vascular dilation response.

Findings from the long-term study suggested that using a roller improved blood flow response, or the so-called vasodilatory response, to heat stimulation. One explanation for this could be that endothelial cells in the massaged area produce more nitric oxide, which is known to be a potent vasodilator.

The research was published in November 2018 in the *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* journal. ●

A face roller increases skin blood flow for more than 10 minutes after a massage

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