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Passive to active: spa gets sporty

Spas offering strenuous activity have traditionally been in the minority, but a new generation of active spa and wellness fans is pushing the industry in ever more sporty directions, creating great synergies with everything from diving to surfing

In the 2015 edition of *Spa Business* magazine's annual spa and wellness trends report – Spa Foresight™ – we highlighted spa and sport as being an exciting growth area for the industry.

The majority of spas have traditionally focused on offering passive experiences, with only destination spas programming in active pursuits, such as hiking, but we expect this to change rapidly over the next decade as millennials come on stream as spa consumers.

They're demanding more participatory activities and spas will have the opportunity to engage with this new generation by making their offer more active.

Over the next year, we'll be bringing you a series of case studies illustrating how synergies between spa and sport are being optimised to deliver a wide range of new spa and wellness experiences, in areas from spa and dive to spa and surf and everything in between.

In this edition of *Spa Business*, we visit the first of these – The Deep Joy, otherwise known as Y-40 – a new and incredible 40m-deep thermal dive pool at the Hotel Terme Millepini near Padova in Italy (p96).

Y40 is the brainchild of owner Emanuele Boaretto, who first had the idea in the 1980s when he was studying architecture. The concept incubated for 30 years until the Boaretto's – searching for a new USP to give the hotel and spa something unique and spectacular to offer customers – decided to push ahead with their audacious plan.

The result is the world's deepest thermal pool – a spectacular facility designed for people of all abilities and which enables guests to have a more active way of experiencing the healing properties of the local water.



We find our tribe through our leisure time choices and there's a new sporty tribe which wants spa coupled with prevention and adventure

The Boaretto's say the water is 30 per cent more powerful than cortisone and highly efficient as an anti-inflammatory, for soothing muscles and regulating hormones and it's already attracting new custom to the spa and hotel.

Other operators are finding new ways of combining spa and sport too. Over in the east of Bali, industry veteran, Tony de Leede – who has Australia's Gwinganna Health Retreat in his portfolio – is creating a wellness business around his Komune surf resort.

De Leede and his partners have just opened The Health Hub at Komune, a holistic centre with everything from an organic garden, juice bar and healthy menus to a beautiful yoga pavilion, gym, infinity pool and spa. He says the synergies between surfing and wellness are creating strong demand for the new services and we'll be reporting more fully on the spa & surf trend, and Komune, in 2016.

We find our tribe through our leisure time choices and there's a new tribe emerging which wants spa coupled with prevention, wellness, sport and adventure – it wants experiences which are purposeful as well as indulgent. The question is, what will you do for them?

Liz Terry, editor @elizterry

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On the cover: Deepak Chopra on his new project with Leonardo DiCaprio (see p36)

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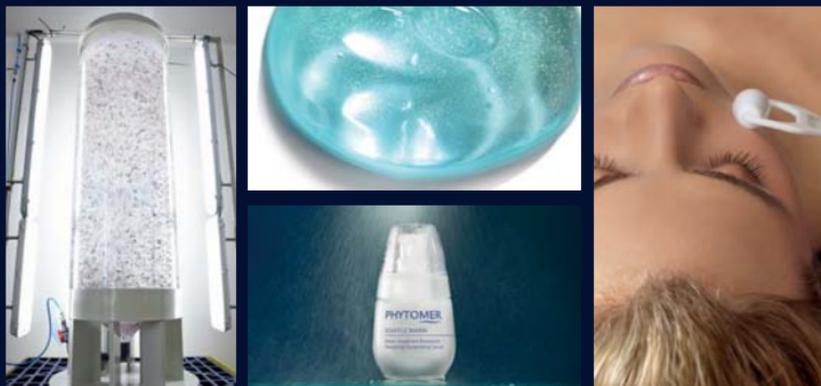
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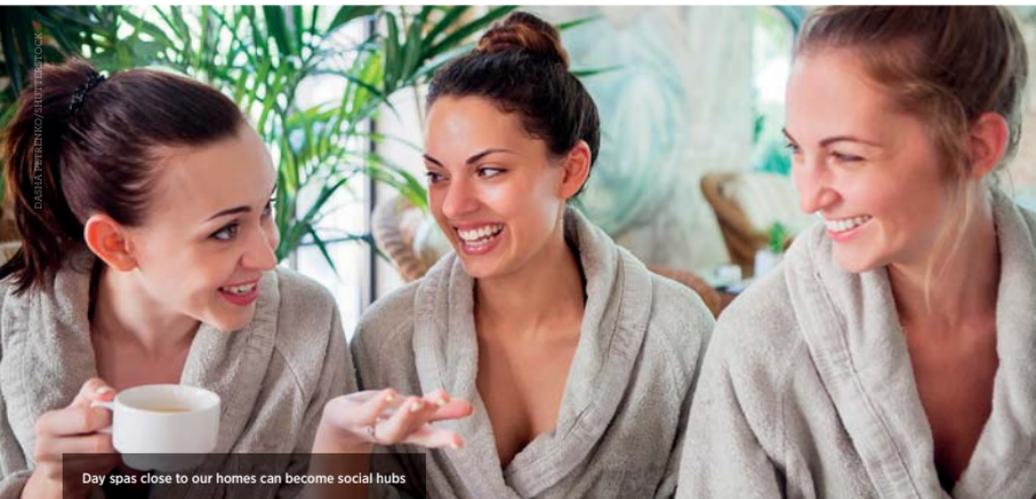
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Letters

KATIE BARNES, MANAGING EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

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



Day spas close to our homes can become social hubs

DAY SPAS ARE THE KEY TO TACKLING LONELINESS

Mia Kyricos, chief brand officer, Spafinder Wellness Inc

The opportunity for spas to help with the 'age of loneliness' that we're seeing globally was highlighted, in-depth recently in *Spa Business* (see SB15/2 p86). However, there were a couple of points I'd like to bring to the table that weren't covered.

Firstly, I feel technology is what's driving this change. Although we're connected to each other over the internet – we spend more time, on average, in front of our various screens than we do sleeping – we're interacting far less in person. This is particularly the case in the developing world, with India, China and Brazil's singleton populations growing the fastest.

Secondly, while the article focused primarily on how destination spas could

tackle loneliness, I think it's day spas that have a bigger role to play. Those wellness properties closest to our homes, in our own backyards, have an opportunity to become the new 'third place'. Just like the 'Starbucks phenomenon', where the local coffee shop became a favoured destination between the office and the homes, so too can day spas, yoga studios and wellness centres.

We're seeing this hyper-social behaviour already emerging in the fitness industry, with brands such as CrossFit and SoulCycle bringing together individuals to sweat it out. These brands



have found a way to foster a culture of community along with wellbeing (or at least one aspect of it), resulting in clients who not only work out together but who even vacation together. Arguably it's technology that helped formed that community – aiding offline, as well as online, connections.

If this is something the spa industry – particularly day spas – can tap into, it could be one way to reach out to lonely people.

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UBER FOR MASSAGE: CONVENIENCE AGAINST EXPERIENCE

Lopo Champalimaud, CEO, Wahanda

The increasing popularity of massage-on-demand businesses has raised a contentious issue in the spa industry, as focused on in *Spa Business* (see SB15/3 p70).



The trend for mobile browsing and the desire for 'right here right now' among consumers has revealed a gap in the market that massage-on-demand is filling. With spas failing to provide last-minute and same-day appointments, businesses connecting mobile therapists with consumers are thriving.

That said, I don't see massage-on-demand businesses as a threat to spas. They offer the convenience of at-home services but visiting a spa enables you to escape from your day-to-day; it becomes a haven where you can unwind without the presence of daily pressures. Add in the use of spa facilities and you have a service that no mobile therapist can compete with.

Does this mean it will become a battle of convenience against experience?



It's crucial for spas to realise the benefits of last-minute bookings if they are to compete with on-demand home-based treatments

LOLOSTOCK / SHUTTERSTOCK

I sincerely hope not. Spa bookings at Wahanda have nearly doubled in the last 12 months, which shows that demand for spas shows no sign of waning and that these two businesses can easily co-exist.

One thing we're sure of is that it's crucial for spas to embrace the change in consumer behaviour and realise the benefit of opening up last-minute bookings. The importance of a mobile booking platform

and real-time availability should not be underestimated. Spas that use software systems to block out busy periods with zero lead time are leading the movement to give clients the treatments they want; when they want them.

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UBER VETTING ISSUE RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT MASSAGE-ON-DEMAND

Iain Martin, consultant, Massage Heights

Spa Business' article on massage-on-demand (see SB15/3 p70) highlights the trend for accessible and affordable massage services in the US.

But although some people like to have massage in their own homes, it's not clear how massage-on-demand businesses vet therapists in order to safeguard clients, and many will still prefer the experience and security of attending a professional spa. The recent issues faced by Uber, when one of its taxi drivers assaulted passengers after not being appropriately vetted, is likely to increase people's concerns about inviting strangers into their homes.

Enabling people to book therapists to visit their homes or places of work is

not the only solution for more affordable and accessible spa services. At Massage Heights we've been part of a wider revolution in the US that's changed massage from being something that was a rare treat to a high street essential.

Over the last 10 years, our approach has been to transfer the membership model used by the fitness industry to spas (our customers pay a monthly fee for regular massages), locate our retreats in urban areas across the USA and Canada, and open longer hours.

As a result, massage has become a frequent experience for many more people



and the high street massage industry is one of the fastest growing in the US.

Is this concept right for Europe? We think so and see the UK as an ideal virgin market.

So as we look to grow our franchise model internationally with the help of like-minded entrepreneurs, we hope UK customers will soon be able to benefit from regular, professional massage services on the high street.

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Ivanka is the daughter of Donald Trump

Ivanka Trump spa concept for global rollout

New York-based Robert D Henry Architects are working on Ivanka Trump's flagship spa that's being built at The Old Post Office in Washington, DC, USA as part of the property's US\$200m (£144.4m, £119m) redevelopment.

The Spa by Ivanka Trump, a prototype spa for the former model, will be rolled out across the 14 international properties in the Trump Hotel Collection. Trump Hotels is owned by Ivanka's father Donald Trump – the US real estate developer who's currently running for president.

"Ivanka has mandated that this will be a game-changing wellness project," says Robert Henry.

Spa consultancy WTS has also worked on the concept and will launch and manage the first spa. It's also the favoured spa management company for the other sites.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=q4D9u_B

Study: US spa industry surpasses US\$15bn mark

Revenues in the US spa industry rose above US\$15bn in 2014 – up 5.3 per cent since 2013, according to the latest industry study by the International Spa Association (ISPA).

Released in September, and conducted by PwC, the ISPA study also shows that spa visits are at a record high of 176 million. Around 500 spas opened in the US in 2014, bringing the total number of sites to 20,660. See p72 for more study details.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=N2x4Y_B



The Well has been billed as the largest spa in Norway and is set to open in December

Thermaarium building 10,500sq m global spa in Norway

Austrian spa design and equipment manufacturer Thermaarium is building a 10,500sq m (113,000sq ft) spa complex called The Well just south of Oslo, Norway.

The three-level, privately-owned spa – set to open in December and billed as the largest in Norway – will include five areas that transport guests to different spa cultures from the Nordic regions to Japan. It will also feature unique, cutting-edge lighting technology to enhance relaxation.

The spa concept, interior design, engineering and final construction are all

by Thermaarium, while Norwegian architects Halvorsen & Riene designed the buildings.

The design of the spa is "a mixture between modern and traditional Nordic design," says Adrian Egger, managing director of Thermaarium. "But it also integrates different areas of the world."

Egger says the owner wanted a consistent design, but also for each area to feel authentic to the wellness tradition from which it was inspired. "There is nothing like this in Norway," he adds. Read more: http://lei.sr?a=3P3P4_B

Thailand and Costa Rica top 'hot' wellness countries list

Spafinder Wellness 365 has released part one of its annual *State of Wellness Travel Report*, revealing that – for the first time – Asia ranked as the fastest-growing global wellness travel destination and that Thailand and Costa Rica topped the list of many countries that agents identified as getting "hotter".

The annual survey of North American and European travel agents also showed the highest percentage of agents in its eight-year history expect growth in wellness travel for the current year (2015).

Survey findings show the wellness travel sector is expanding in directions beyond luxury spas and in more far-flung global regions. Agents were also asked how awareness of the wellness travel category



JASON KALININ/SHUTTERSTOCK

Travel agents say Thailand will see growth

changed in the last year and the results show the category is on more people's radar, on every front. About half of agents reported that 20 per cent or less of the wellness-focused travel they book is primarily spa-focused.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=t7y2q_B



The Ngai Tahu Maori tribe is planning a NZ\$25m hot springs complex in Queenstown

New Zealand thermal springs industry heats up

Plans for three thermal spa projects are underway in New Zealand, indicating that development in the country's hot springs sector is getting hotter.

Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa, near Christchurch, is looking to build a European-style day spa in the historic Chisholm Ward of the Queen Mary Hospital located next to the thermal attraction.

The hospital once served as a convalescent home for World War One soldiers who were treated using the natural thermal waters.

Hanmer Springs general manager Graeme Abbot says a NZ\$15m (US\$9.4m, €8.4m, £6.1m) investment is required to create the day spa and he's looking for a joint venture investor to make that happen.

"There's nothing else like this in the country," says Abbot. "...This would be the largest one-off tourism investment ever made in the Hurunui and will help attract

both domestic and international visitors."

Meanwhile, in the hot springs region of Rotorua, mayor Steve Chadwick is calling for a focus on hot spring and spa development. The locale is famed for its natural thermal pools, but they've been relatively unused.

"Internationally, the real big growth area for the spa industry is health and wellness in locations where hot springs naturally occur," says Chadwick.

Also in the Rotorua district, Prime Minister John Key says the government will help fund a NZ\$10m (US\$7.3m, €7m, £5m) spa complex which is expected to boost the country's economy and create additional jobs. The World Spa hotel and spa complex is being built to "reignite excitement about the spa offerings" in the area. It's also expected to help grow the number of commercial spa visits from around 500,000 to 1.5 million.

And in Queenstown, plans have been proposed for a NZ\$25m (US\$17m, €15m, £11m) hot pools and spa complex that's expected to draw more than 300,000 customers annually. The tourism arm of the Ngai Tahu Maori tribe is in talks to lease 1.8 acres for development, to include 12 hot pools, four smaller private hot pools and a health spa. Ngai Tahu Tourism already owns and operates nine other attractions, including the Glacier Hot Pools at Franz Josef on the west coast.

Read more: http://lei.sr?A=A2D5w_B



Rotorua mayor Steve Chadwick

Report: Middle East spa growth projections

Research company Intelligent Spas has released its first *Spa Development Pipeline Report*, which identified 139 spa openings planned in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE between 2015 and 2019. This will potentially increase the number of spas in the region by 27 per cent.

Saudi Arabia has the highest growth potential, with the number of spas set to increase 34 per cent by 2018. Meanwhile, Oman's spa industry is set to grow by 23 per cent.

Dubai hosts the highest number of spas out of the GCC states, with over 190 currently in operation and another 34 spas in the pipeline.

Read more: http://lei.sr?A=A2D5w_B



Brokers and bankers will use the spa

Spa plans in new Saudi Stock Exchange building

Spa Creators, a UK-based consultancy, is working on a spa and leisure development in the Tadawul Tower, future home of Saudi Arabia's Stock Exchange which is due to open in late 2016. The 750sq m (8,073sq ft) spa is designed for the exclusive use of the occupants of the building, and will include separate men's and women's spas.

The spa will include a vitality pool, steamroom, sauna, experience showers, several treatment rooms and a large fitness centre.

Read more: http://lei.sr?A=Z6y2B_M

WTS creating luxury spas for Cachet Hotel Group

Global spa consultancy and management firm WTS International will create a new spa concept for the Cachet Hotel Group in Asia.

The concept will be called cSPA and will be developed at Cachet's properties throughout greater China, Southeast Asia and the Americas. The first cSPAs will debut in Bangkok, Thailand and Hangzhou, China.

The cSPA concept will be designed for the affluent spa connoisseur and will be rolled out worldwide following the openings in Asia.

The spas will be modern, innovative and sophisticated and will draw on the values of the Cachet Hotel Group brand, which is designed around elegant, chic and exclusive spaces. WTS is integrating environmental features into the design, based on LEED Standards. The concept envisages a modern spa palace with intuitive service.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=V9u8e_B



The spa features open-air gardens

Vietnam's Naman Retreat is 'wall-less' wellness spa

The five-star Naman Retreat in Danang, Vietnam, has opened a 15-room Pure Spa featuring lush, open-air gardens, lotus ponds and a 'wall-less' ground floor. Designed by Ho Chi Minh-based MIA Design Studio, the 2,250sq m (24,219sq ft) spa features different areas that flow into each other. "The beautiful landscape creates an amazing journey into a dream-like experience," says Nguyen Hoang Manh, principal architect at MIA Design Studio.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=h4c4P_B



The Puxuan Beijing's spa will be designed by Remedios Studio in collaboration with AW Lake

Spa is part of the picture at Beijing's new art centre

Hong Kong-based design firm Remedios Studio is working in collaboration with spa consultancy AW Lake on a new spa at the Guardian Art Centre Beijing – a project that has been masterplanned by Chinese architect Büro Ole Scheeren.

Expected to open in Q1 2017, the 120-bed Puxuan Beijing Hotel & Spa is being constructed above a new auction house, museum and exhibition space in the Chinese capital and will have views of the Forbidden City – once home to the Chinese imperial palace.

The hotel will be operated by Urban Resort Concepts, the company behind the Shanghai's PuLi Hotel & Spa.

The new 1,000sq m (10,764sq ft) URSpa will span two floors. The customer journey begins with a signature heat experience, including a quick body scrub or stretching with a therapist to get the body warm in preparation for a massage.

Büro Ole Scheeren's design for the art centre seeks to fuse history and tradition with a contemporary vision for the future. Read more: http://lei.sr?a=d7h6N_B

Aman opening resorts in Japan and Dominican Republic

Aman is to introduce its first hot spring resort in Q1 2016 in Ise Shima National Park, central Japan.

Amanemu, the company's second property in Japan, will be perched on the shores of Ago Bay and feature 24 suites and four two-bedroom villas, all with their own onsen, or mineral hot spring. Amanemu will also include an extensive Aman Spa, which will feature two expansive onsen bathing pavilions and a watsu pool, four treatment suites, a gym and a yoga studio.

Designed by Singapore-based Kerry Hill Architects, Amanemu will adopt a classic Japanese aesthetic in the ryokan tradition.

Aman is also opening a new resort in Q4 2015 in the Dominican Republic,



Amanemu is the brand's first hot spring resort

which will include an Aman Spa with a steamroom, sauna and relaxation room, as well as a fitness centre and personal training studio, and will "adopt a holistic approach to wellness through relaxation and movement."

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=F8c2H_B



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Sepielli is known for her spa designs

Sepielli leads design of spa at The Breakers

Spa consultant and designer Sylvia Sepielli is leading the US\$8m (£7.1m, £5.2m) renovation of a 20,000sq ft (1,858sq m) spa at The Breakers, Henry Flagler's historic hotel in Palm Beach, Florida.

Sepielli, who's just finished work on England's Gainsborough Bath Spa, is working in conjunction with Peacock + Lewis architects and landscape architect Gregory Lombardi Design on the indoor/outdoor spa, which will include 17 treatment rooms.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=B8q6C_B



Lewis replaces Niki Bryan as CEO

Former Walmart exec to lead Marilyn Monroe spas

James M Lewis has been named CEO of Florida-based Marilyn Monroe Spas which is looking to grow from 10 to 50 franchises. The company has just received a US\$20m (£18m, £13m) investment from JCR Holdings to fund the expansion. Lewis' background includes high-ranking positions at Walmart, Disney and PepsiCo.

Lewis replaces Niki T Kearn (formerly Niki Bryan) who will remain on the board of directors.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=E4f6s_B



The urban spa kiosks are designed to bring people to the lakefront during cold winter months

Lakefront spa kiosks entered in Chicago competition

One of the entries for the Chicago Architecture Biennial Lakefront Kiosk Competition was an idea for a 2,000sq ft (186sq m) Urban Therme spa created by designers Kyle Bigart, Andrew Sommerville and Alex Paulette.

"Living in Chicago, we know that the lakefront is heavily congested during the summer, but during the cold winter months, the lakefront quickly becomes desolate," says Bigart.

The Urban Therme spas are designed in mobile kiosks and made to serve multiple

spa experiences, including hot and cold baths and dry saunas. The plan calls for a "herd of spas" to move along the lakeshore. The team researched ancient Roman spas for inspiration.

"The logic is beautifully simple – spas have existed for thousands of years, and this way we didn't need to invent any new technology," Bigart adds.

While Urban Therme did not win the competition, Bigart said the reception to the kiosks has been great.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=n5P3R_B

On-demand provider Soothe acquires Unwind Me

American on-demand massage company Soothe has acquired San Francisco Bay Area competitor Unwind Me, expanding the firm's presence in San Francisco.

As part of the acquisition, the Unwind Me network of mobile massage therapists will be folded into Soothe's national network. Akaash Achreja, the founder of Unwind Me, will serve as an advisor to Soothe, and Unwind Me's technology will be integrated to enhance Soothe's technology platform, the company says.

Founded in 2013 by Merlin Kauffman, Soothe connects customers through a mobile app or website to an available massage therapist, ready to travel to their home, hotel, office, or event space in as little as an hour.



Merlin Kauffman, founder of Soothe

Soothe has more than 1,700 therapists and is available in 13 major US markets, and will soon launch in New York City.

Massage-on-demand businesses have been identified as disruptors to traditional spa facilities (see SB15/3 p70).

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=x4h8s_B

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De La Rosa is a regional spa director

Rosewood Hotels names two spa directors

Rosewood Hotels & Resorts has named two spa directors; Menique De La Rosa is regional spa director for the Caribbean and spa director at Rosewood Little Dix Bay in Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands, and Anabel Ramos Acevedo is Rosewood San Miguel de Alledé's new spa director.

De La Rosa is charged with overseeing high-level operations and guiding the vision for Rosewood's spas at its four Caribbean properties.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=t8z9P_B



The airline partnered with XpresSpa

Delta invests in three private employee spas

Delta Airlines is launching a new SkySpa, designed exclusively for its employees, in Salt Lake City – the first of three in the works. The SkySpa will include walk-in appointments for discounted massages, skin and nail care.

The US airline has partnered with XpresSpa to help set up the facilities, which are aimed not just at flight attendants, but also airport customer service agents, cargo, tech ops and other employees.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=v6j3R_B



The historic buildings in São Paulo, Brazil, are being converted into a stylish development

Starck to transform hospital into luxury hotel and spa

A complex of early 20th century landmark buildings in South America is being transformed into a stylish development featuring a hotel and spa.

As part of the project, historic buildings in the centre of São Paulo, Brazil, are being converted into art galleries, theatres and cinemas by the owner of the 3-hectare site – Groupe Allard. At the heart of the development, Cidade Matarazzo, a former maternity hospital, is being transformed into a hotel with a large spa featuring six treatment rooms, a fitness area, two

swimming pools, landscaped grounds, a music studio and a screening room.

Rosewood Hotels & Resorts has been appointed by Groupe Allard to manage the hotel, collaborating with leading lights such as Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, international hotel designer Philippe Starck and renowned Brazilian artists Beatriz Milhazes and Saint-Clare Cemin. Nouvel and Starck are respectively working on the architecture and interior design of the hotel and spa.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=n8G3e_B

Hartling Group developing new Turks & Caicos spa

Resort and real estate developer The Hartling Group is opening The Shore Club next year, a 110-suite resort in the Turks & Caicos that will include a luxury spa.

The Hartling Group also developed and manages the Turks & Caicos property The Palms, which includes a 25,000sq ft (2,323sq m) spa. Building on the success of The Palms, the Spa at The Shore Club will offer the same quality experience, but with a slightly different variation on focus, Sue Nickason, a spokesperson for The Hartling Group, told *Spa Business*.

Designed by Angel Stewart and architect Rafael Amuchastegui, who also designed The Palms' spa, the Shore Club's spa will be more organic in design and feature more couples-based amenities, says Nickason.



The Shore Club is set to open in 2016

The resort will pay tribute to the salt history in the Turks & Caicos, using salt in the architecture and also in the spa treatments. The resort is set to open in 2016 – first to residents, later to guests.

Read more: http://lei.sr?a=r2J2c_B

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DIARY DATES

3-5 NOVEMBER 2015

Spa & Wellness International Congress

Renaissance Hotel, Minsk, Russia
Association-led congress which helps to shape the Russian spa industry.
www.1swic.ru

5-8 NOVEMBER 2015

5th Balkan Spa Health & Wellness Summit

Thermana Lasko, Slovenia
Spa professionals from the Balkans exchange ideas and network.
Organised by a different Balkan country each year, with Slovenia being the host for 2015.
www.balkanspasummit.org

10-11 NOVEMBER 2015

Spa Life UK

Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon, UK
Includes a spa supplier/buyer forum, conference and product showcase.
www.spa-life.co.uk

11-13 NOVEMBER 2015

Cosmoprog Asia

Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong

Asian business-to-business show covering the spa, beauty, haircare, natural health, perfumery and cosmetics sectors.
www.cosmoprog-asia.com

13-15 NOVEMBER 2015

Global Wellness Summit

The St Regis, Mexico City, Mexico

Top event for spa professionals worldwide which brings together leaders and visionaries to drive industry development. The theme for the ninth summit is Building a Well World and Deepak Chopra heads up a list of high-profile presenters.
www.globalwellnesssummit.com

7-8 DECEMBER 2015

Spameeting Business Meetings

Dubai, UAE

Set meetings of 30 minutes which put spa suppliers in front of distributors and those heading up new developments.
www.spameeting.com



The £16m Ramside Hall spa is one of the most noteworthy openings in the country this year

Upgrades and additions for famous UK spa resorts

Across the UK, several well-known resorts are investing in spa facilities, adding new spas, thermal gardens and detox centres.

Ramside Hall in Durham has spent £16m (US\$25m, €22m) on a 14-treatment-room facility – one of the most noteworthy spas to open in the UK this year. Its thermal suite includes a herbal sauna, Himalayan salt and aroma steamrooms, a tepidarium and a sunken amphitheatre sauna. There's also be a rasul mud chamber, plus a sleep sanctuary with soundwave therapy beds and a fitness suite that will offer more than 40 classes every week.

Also near Durham, the 20-bed Seaham Hall hotel has raised £2m (US\$3m, €2.7m) of private funds to refresh its famous Serenity Spa. It's reported that the 4,090sq m (44,000sq ft) facility accounts for 65 per cent of the hotel's business.

Meanwhile, 25 miles south of Durham, Rockcliffe Hall has invested £1m (US\$1.6m,

€1.4m) in a new spa garden which "is the most significant development since the resort launched five years ago," says chief executive Eamonn Elliott. Designed by Sparstudio, the garden features two spa pools, a glass-fronted sauna cabin, lounging areas and landscaped garden – all overlooking the 365-acre estate.

The outdoor facilities join the hotel's celebrated 50,000sq ft (4,645sq m) indoor spa and following its launch, a fresh spa management team has been put in place with Ali Bramwell taking the role of spa operations manager. Bramwell has worked at the spa for over three years.

Sparstudio were also picked to design a new spa garden which opened at Pennyhill Park Hotel & Spa, near London, this summer. This formed part of a £1.2m (US\$1.8m, €1.6m) renovation of the spacious 4,181sq m (45,000sq ft) spa which is now in its 12th year. The money also went towards an upgrade of its Thermal Heaven with 11 heat experiences including a new two-level sauna by Dröm, a rose herbal steamroom and Canadian hot tubs.

Completing the line-up of recent UK spa work, Champneys destination spa in Tring launched a detox centre in October which it claims is the first of its kind in the country. Its therapies revolve around the recuperative, natural qualities of seawater, algae and marine minerals.

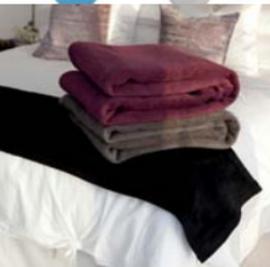
Read more: http://lei.sr?a=J6d5v_B



Pennyhill Park has completed renovations

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Spas have a big future ahead. But they should repackage existing offerings and develop new ones to define and market spas as a wellness necessity – especially by drawing on traditional therapies

Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, president of Mauritius

Mauritian president kicks off first African spa conference

Lisa Starr, senior consultant, Wynne Business

Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, president of the Republic of Mauritius and a biodiversity scientist, highlighted wellness as a key industry opportunity in her opening speech at the first continent-wide spa conference in Africa in late September.

“Spas and wellness centres have a big future ahead,” she said. “But they should repackage existing offerings and develop new ones to define and market spas as a wellness necessity – especially by drawing on traditional, cultural-based therapies...”

“There’s also a strong need to build a body of evidence-based consumer research that connects spa with wellness.”

Gurib-Fakim was talking at the inaugural annual show for the Spa & Wellness Association of Africa (SWAA). The two day event, held at the gorgeous Lux Belle Mare resort in Mauritius, attracted 60 spa operator and supplier delegates from nine countries across Africa. The show is a milestone achievement for SWAA, an organisation set up in 2010 to support the development of the sector on the continent.

I think the SWAA is their platform to showcase what each country can offer in terms of wellness and traditional healing.

“Some spa owners in Africa will continue to look to the west and redo what’s been done but some will create a format that actually fits with African lifestyle expectations. I think these ‘made in Africa’ spas will deliver services compatible with people’s beliefs, allowing the authenticity to shine through, entice and inspire the rest of the world.”

In fact, research shows Africa is the fastest growing region for spa and wellness even though it’s most often overlooked. According to the 2014 *Global Wellness Economy Monitor*, the number of spas in sub-Saharan Africa quadrupled to 1,544 between 2007 and 2013.

Made in Africa

Many discussions over the two days focused on promoting home-grown talent. SWAA president Elaine Okeke-Martin, who’s passionate about raising the profile of spas in Africa, said: “African countries have so much to show the world and

Standards and education

Delegates heard that addressing therapist and product standards is essential if Africa’s spa industry is to reach its full potential. A training panel discussion outlined a particular challenge in this area. With no certification body for facilities or



Sourcing high quality local ingredients can be challenging said African skincare suppliers



The two-day event was held at the Lux Belle Mare resort (above); it included a full-day spa management training course by Wynne Business (right)

therapists, it's difficult for companies to substantiate spending on training, or to be able to recoup their investments.

Another fascinating discussion centred on standards for authentic African spa products which are increasingly popular with tourists. Local brand owners Stephan Helary of Terres d'Afrique, Amanda Khan of RoxSpa and Helen Cassan of Seven Colours were candid about the issues they've had in sourcing local ingredients, packaging and quality control.

The second day of the conference included a full-day spa management training course by Wynne Business for 29 students. The course covered best practices in operations management, understanding financial metrics and the latest marketing concepts to help them better position their spas for the international tourist market.



Overall, it was agreed that the whole conference provided delegates with a rare opportunity to be further educated on many aspects of spa operations.

The next SWAA networking event will take place in Nairobi, Kenya on 21-22 January. It's one of a number of events planned by this growing association which expects to have 50 members signed up by 2016 and 100 by 2017. ●



Lisa Starr is a senior consultant at spa management training company Wynne Business
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DEEPAK CHOPRA

In a *Spa Business* magazine exclusive, alternative health guru Deepak Chopra tells Katie Barnes about his latest venture with Leonardo DiCaprio and why he's focusing on anti-ageing

In alternative therapy circles they don't come much more famous (or controversial) than Deepak Chopra. The outspoken spiritualist uses quantum theory to explain his beliefs on everything from the nature of God to holistic healing. Scientists heavily criticize him, while others love him: he's the author of more than 80 books read by millions worldwide.

Chopra's approach to wellbeing combines the principles of mainstream medicine – the Indian-born American is trained in internal medicine and endocrinology – with ayurveda, meditation and yoga. Although not such a groundbreaking idea today, it was deemed radical in the early 90s when he gained much notoriety after appearing on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Since 1994 guests have sought out specialists at his Chopra Center for Wellbeing at La Costa Resort & Spa in California to help them address their health concerns from a physical, emotional and spiritual perspective. Recommendations on diet, stress management, exercise and emotional



REYNOLDS REYNOLDS/CORBIS

■ The project with Delos is the first time in 10 years that Chopra has put his name to a new wellbeing centre

wellbeing are offered alongside a wide variety of mind-body healing classes and ayurveda treatments, including a panchakarma detox programme.

Given Chopra's popularity, it's surprising he's only put his name to one wellbeing centre in the last 10 years. That's about to change, however, as he embarks on a project with Well Building Standard® firm Delos (see SB14/1 p28) and actor Leonardo DiCaprio. The partnership will see him open the Deepak Chopra Center for Renewal and Anti-Aging as part of one of the world's greenest resorts that's being built on DiCaprio's private island, Blackadore Caye, in Belize (see p38). Here, he reveals details of the deal and what consumers can expect.

When and why did you first get involved with Delos?

A mutual friend introduced me to Paul Scialla [owner of Delos] about six years ago. We met for breakfast in New York and he told me about his vision for creating environments that support biological sustainability. I was immediately very interested. I've always believed that we need to look at the environment as something that's a part of us, not separate, and that we should think of it as our extended body.

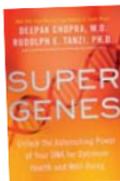
We had a wonderful meeting and kept in touch about the progress of his company and its work. At a certain point, I decided that Delos fitted in very well with what I've been doing my whole life. It's essentially removing the schism between organism and environment and between nature and nurture. It was at that point that I became very involved with the company.

What does your role on the Delos advisory board entail?

I'm a very active advisory board member and Paul and I are constantly in touch about all of Delos' endeavours. I'm very hands-on with many of the projects, including the Stay Well [healthy hotel rooms concept] and the Stay Well Meetings programme.

Why was Blackadore Caye the right fit for your second facility?

Blackadore Caye is the world's first truly restorative island development, meaning that it's powered entirely by renewable energy and designed to increase the biological health of species both on



■ Chopra's 80-plus books are read by millions, but scientists are more sceptical about his work



“

I've always believed that we need to look at the environment as something that's a part of us, not separate, and that we should think of it as our extended body

”

PHOTO © WWW.VICTORBUJUEZ.COM



■ Delos founder Paul Scialla

► the island and in the waters around it. The entire project is centred on health, wellness and sustainability. It's an honour to be a part of a project this powerful and to be able to contribute to the restoration of the people visiting Blackadore Caye in a very meaningful way.

What's your vision for the Deepak Chopra Center for Renewal and Anti-Aging at Blackadore Caye?

As you can tell from its name, the centre will focus mostly on renewal and anti-ageing. We'll teach visitors practical ways to change their behaviours and help decrease their biological age through things such as stress management and meditation techniques, pranayama breathing exercises, yoga, exercise, healthy cuisine, emotional wellbeing, restful sleep, mind/body coordination and detox procedures. We'll also offer our SBTI (self-directed biological transformation initiative) programming.

Even though we all have genetic predispositions, it's now known that biological ageing is influenced by lifestyle and habits and daily activities such as meditation, movement, diet, emotions, stress management and quality of sleep. By making conscious choices and focused awareness we choose to have a joyful energetic body, a restful alert mind and lightness of being.

How will it differ from the original Chopra Center?

All of the programming, classes and experiences at The Chopra Center in La Costa integrate the healing arts of the east with the best in modern western medicine to help people find peace of mind, physical balance and emotional wellbeing. The

BLACKADORE CAYE PHOTOS: MCLENNAN DESIGN



■ There will be 68 villas and 48 homes at Blackadore Caye

Blackadore Caye: a Restorative Island

Deepak Chopra is to open his second wellness facility in 10 years in a collaboration with actor Leonardo DiCaprio and wellness real estate firm Delos - the company behind the Well Building Standard*. It will form part of a larger wellness centre and luxury amenities within a green development that's being built on DiCaprio's private island in Belize.

Dubbed Blackadore Caye: a Restorative Island, the site will offer 68 villas and 48 homes with construction set to begin this year and completion scheduled for 2018.

Delos owner Paul Scialla has founded Restorative Islands LLC to build the resort and Restorative Hospitality - a Delos subsidiary - to operate the facilities and also manage the wellness programming offered at the resort.

All buildings on the island will be powered by renewable energy. They will also promote the health and wellbeing of guests by incorporating features such as circadian lighting for better sleep and advanced air filtration systems to minimise allergens.



■ Blackadore Caye will open in 2018



ANIRBA SARTINI / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

■ Leonard DiCaprio owns the island

"It's leading a new way in eco-tourism, development and green building," says DiCaprio

Architect and designer Jason McLennan will use sustainable building techniques with a view to regenerating the surrounding ecosystem and reversing the effects of climate change.

DiCaprio, a passionate environmentalist, says: "This project is leading a new way in eco-tourism, development and green building and demonstrates that human development can be truly restorative and beneficial for the environment."

DiCaprio is an investor in Delos and serves on its advisory board, he also reportedly bought one of its first wellness apartments in New York. Chopra and McLennan also serve on the same board.

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spa.loccitane.com

 SPA LOCCITANE

spacontact@loccitane.com.hk

spa business uniting the world of wellness

The goal of Blackadore Caye is to put life into perspective and remind visitors what it means to be alive and human and mindful

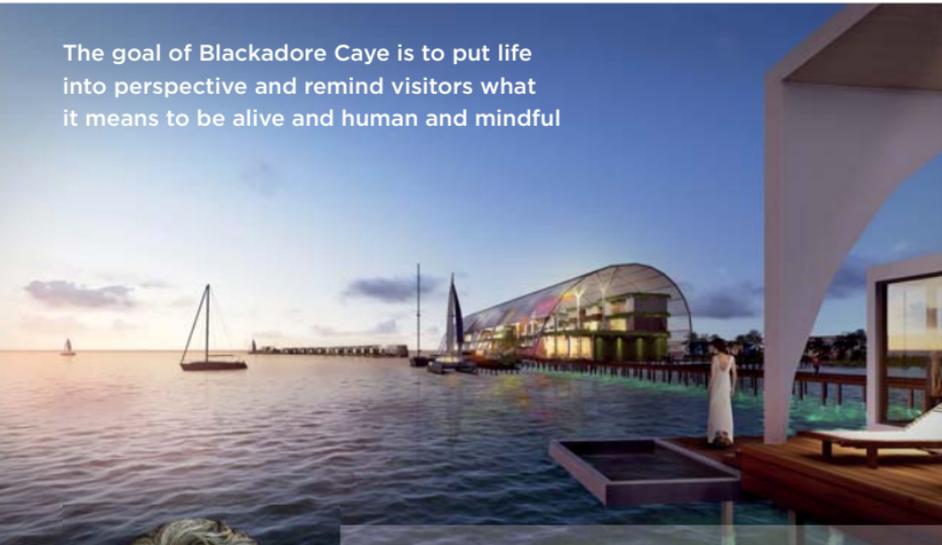


PHOTO © JEREMIAH SULLIVAN



■ Chopra's anti-ageing centre will sit near the plaza (right); villas are on a platform arcing through the water (above)



► centre at Blackadore Caye will do the same, but will focus more on renewal and slowing down the ageing process. This programming will be a great complement to the 'restorative intention' of the entire Blackadore Caye development.

Why focus on anti-ageing?

Only a few decades ago, conventional medicine viewed the body as a machine whose parts would inevitably break down until it could no longer be repaired. We were taught that random chemical reactions determined everything that happened in the body, that genes largely determined our health and lifespan, and

that heart disease, many cancers and other illnesses were incurable.

Thanks to the groundbreaking clinical research of Dr Dean Ornish and many other pioneering minds in the medical community, we now know that through comprehensive lifestyle changes, we can prevent and reverse disease – and live longer and in better shape.

We're eager to teach visitors practical ways to help decrease their biological age and live healthier and happier lives.

Will you be creating any new treatments and programmes?

Yes. But it's too early to be specific.

What have you learned about ageing since starting this venture?

Since I began my work in epigenetics overall, one of the most exciting things I've learned is that only 5 per cent of disease-related genes are gene mutations that are fully penetrant, which means they're unstoppable if you are born with them (ie guaranteeing a disease when inherited). The rest confer risk which can be offset by lifestyle changes. Some chronic illnesses including coronary artery disease, bronchial asthma, rheumatoid arthritis type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome and several autoimmune disorders connected to inflammation can even be reversed. ►

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■ Advice on diet, stress, exercise and emotional wellbeing is offered at the original centre

▶ **What excites you most about the new centre?**

The goal of Blackadore Caye is to put life into perspective and remind visitors what it means to be alive and human and mindful. This is so important to our health, wellness and personal rejuvenation. There will be endless opportunities to engage in meditation, personal health and restoration programmes, while also relaxing on the exquisite beaches of one of the most beautiful islands in the world and enjoying time with loved ones.

Can you tell us anything about the facility itself?

It's just one component of the larger Wellness Center at Blackadore Caye, which will be run by Restorative Islands LLC [under the subsidiary Restorative Hospitality]. It's too early to share other details, but I can tell you that it will be built with healthy materials and that the architecture of the building will be inspired by divine proportions.

Will it adhere to the Well Building Standard® or other green benchmarks?

This will not be a Well Certified™ building. However, much like the entire facility, the centre will be built to promote the health and wellbeing of guests and residents in every way. Evidence-based wellness features will be curated by Delos and included in the architecture of the centre. These will include amenities such as water purification systems, which ensure only the highest quality of water is consumed, advanced lighting systems that use

We're doing a study that shows that a healthy lifestyle can change the expression of your entire genome

state-of-the-art LED circadian lighting and advanced air filtration systems which minimise allergens and deliver purified air, among many others.

What other new projects are you working on at the moment?

Right now, my current projects include research, education and the Deepak Chopra Center for Renewal and Anti-Aging. I'm personally very involved in research on epigenetics and research on the effects of the microbiome.

My main effort is a scientific study called self-directed biological transformation (SBT). We're doing a study that shows that a healthy lifestyle – good sleep, daily meditation and yoga practice, exercise, healthy emotions and a good diet – can change the expression of your entire genome at a cellular level. You can shift the markers of ageing into a more youthful direction. You can decrease cell inflammation. You can increase an enzyme called telomerase that can lengthen your life span (see SB13/1 p54). All this can be done in a matter of days. We're collaborating with scientists from Harvard, Mount Sinai, Scripps, UCSD and UCSF on this study. I don't think medicine will ever be the same again once it's done.



■ Chopra's first centre opened in 1994 and became popular after he appeared on Oprah

What developments do you foresee in the field of complementary medicine?

We've already discovered that we can transform our own biology. The next frontier will be to discover how deep and lasting such changes are, how much control we have over them individually, and how they can be passed on to future generations through so-called 'soft inheritance', in which the parents' life experiences and behaviour directly influence the genome of their offspring. ●



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Everyone's talking about

Customised treatments

More spas are offering bespoke treatments, but how can brands protect quality without standard operating procedures? And at what point do you let a therapist freestyle? Katie Barnes asks the industry



Bulgari Spa:
It's not easy to offer customised treatments, but it's worth it

A greater need for differentiation in the market and consumers demanding more effective results from their spa experience has led to a growing trend in personalised therapies in the global spa industry. At the start of their customised journey, clients are asked to identify skincare concerns or particular parts of the body they'd like their therapist to focus on – or simply how they'd like to feel after their treatment: relaxed, balanced or re-energised.

The extent to which facilities take this bespoke approach differs. Some might simply offer variations of a set treatment, such as switching a calming lavender essential oil for a zesty, awakening one depending on the client's needs. Or they might allow guests to mix and match

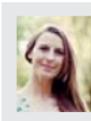
services on the menu. While others go the whole hog – blocking out a set time and letting therapists work their magic for a truly tailor-made experience.

It's a great idea. Who wouldn't want a personalised approach? After all, scripted, robotic treatments, where it feels as if the therapist is simply going through the motions, are far from appealing. But at what point should spa operators decide to let their employees freestyle?

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are put in place for quality control, consistency and safety purposes – especially when spa brands operate in multiple locations around the world. Start changing them and you risk upsetting loyal customers who like what they know, or administering a substandard service or, at worse, injuring people.

There are other operational considerations too. If a therapist gets over-zealous with product, customisation becomes a cost-control problem. Plus, given that it's difficult to find good quality therapists, it's likely that employees will need days, weeks or even months of extra training before they're given free reign.

So while it sounds good on paper – especially the marketing collateral kind – do the benefits of offering customised treatments outweigh the practical challenges? We canvass industry opinion.



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Mandarin Oriental was ahead of its time when it started offering customised Time Rituals around 10 years ago. Guests can reserve a 2- or a 3-hour window and the experience is completely customised from there. The treatment is usually better because their journey is programmed based on how they are feeling at the time of their appointment and with the advice of their expert therapist.

The role of the therapist in personalised treatments should not be underestimated. To me, one of the secrets to the success of the Time Ritual is that the therapist is able to veer away from structured protocols and practice their 'art' in an intuitive way.

Today, personalised treatments are becoming more mainstream and our approach is to think about how we go from being personalised to being more



Jeremy McCarthy

Group director of spa, Mandarin Oriental

'personal'. Personal means we not only consider the unique needs of each individual guest, but we also consider the unique passions and skills of each therapist. The best spa experience comes when we can match the best of what an individual therapist has to offer with the specific needs of a guest.

Unlike many spas, our goal is not consistency, but quality. And we think the best quality comes when we recognise, celebrate and even cultivate the diversity on our teams. This is not easy, as it means we have to look at our teams of therapists

as groups of unique experts, each of whom has their own style, their own skillsets and their own passions. But by giving our therapists a chance to specialise and improvise along these lines, we help them become artists, constantly honing their craft and delivering uniquely tailored experiences to our guests.

McCarthy oversees 30 facilities for Mandarin Oriental globally. Prior to joining the group in 2014, he headed up spa operations at Starwood for eight years. Details: www.mandarinoriental.com



It's simply not realistic to be 100 per cent certain that all therapists stick to all standards all of the time... their style and experience will impact even the tightest of scripted treatments, customised or not



Customised treatments are a niche service and I can see that they would be an excellent differentiator for luxury spas to meet the needs of high-end customers. But they're not suitable for every spa. While Danubius recognises that the personal touch is a vital part of any experience, we cater for large volumes of guests on packages and are yet to consider introducing tailored treatments.

In our busiest spa we deliver up to 4,000 treatments a day. It's important for us to know as much as possible about our projected treatments so we can schedule our staff and facilities accordingly.

For spas that want to offer tailored treatments, I could foresee services which incorporate baths or multifunctional equipment being a major obstacle. These would have to be freely available at all times or just not included in the customised offer. And you'd need adaptable treatment rooms.

There would also be challenges in configuring spa software, especially in terms of scheduling as it's difficult to preplan parameters such as treatment room, therapist and equipment availability with customised treatments.



Mike Wallace

Spa director & brand manager, Danubius Hotels Group

Product usage can become an issue with bespoke approaches too. We have to ensure our prices stay competitive and, with the exception of facials and cosmetic treatments, we cannot afford to offer customised treatments in partnership with an international product line where they try to push up their product usage. Instead we use cheaper, local products which enable us to control the amount used and protect our profit margins. But, on the flip side, this does mean that we have to rely solely on the therapist's experience and our own internal training and protocols.

It should be pointed out that it's simply not realistic to be 100 per cent certain that all therapists stick to all standards all of the time. Mystery shops and guest feedback can help you keep track, but the therapist's style/experience/professionalism will impact even the tightest of scripted treatments, customised or not.

For spas that do offer customised approaches, the real work would be in putting together the concept - deciding what treatments can be individualised, what parts can be shortened and lengthened, which services can be integrated or upgraded and at what point a therapist can 'break off' and make an adaptation.

Delivering personalised treatments is certainly not for every therapist. It requires considerable experience, diversity and, most importantly, sophisticated communication skills to really tune in and connect with the guest. For therapists who do have the capability, however, I can see that giving them the freedom to adapt their skills to the guest's wishes would definitely be motivating.

Wallace has worked for European hotel chain Danubius for 16 years and oversees 18 spas in his current role. Details: www.danubius-hotels.com

We adapt our sequences and products depending on the client's presenting condition and their genetic constitution (body type). Variations are taught to therapists for alternative situations/conditions, however, in order for the therapy to be effective these are still set around strict protocols. We do not allow for general freestyling as we need to provide a certain level of consistency to guarantee the results that we base our reputation on.

Fully customised treatments make it difficult to audit a service because there are no criteria to test them against. The client can also keep requesting techniques that are not always beneficial for their body.

While some believe a scripted treatment might feel as though a therapist is simply going through the motions, we disagree. A strict protocol and well-designed therapy, with intent behind every move, could produce the opposite if it's designed as a journey with techniques which can engage guests at each stage. Plus a freestyle treatment doesn't mean you'll get a unique



Khursheed Irani

Global training & development director, Subtle Energies

experience – especially if the therapist falls into the habit of using their favourite methods and repeating them without intent.

Our main concern with fully customised treatments is that it really does depend on the therapist's understanding, qualifications and experience.

When we first launched, spas were hungry for in-depth training, but soon realised that this requires time. We ourselves have learned from this and have adapted our training so it's progressive and more commercially viable. For example, our original signature massage *Abhyang Fusion* was 2.5 hours long and took up to seven days to teach in a spa environment. We recently introduced a new massage based on this which is still results-orientated but only takes two days to learn. The treatment has been designed

to be the base of the *Abhyang Fusion* so spas which wish to take on the more advanced learning can do so in less days.

Overall, do the benefits of offering fully customised treatments outweigh the practical challenges? It really does depend on the set-up and the style of spa. If the spa's goal is wellness then they would benefit from set sequences which allow a certain level of customisation, because they're effective in delivering consistent results with a diverse therapist team who have varying skill levels.

Subtle Energies supplies products and treatments to top spas worldwide. Irani has been a clinical practitioner for the company for 17 years and in her current position for six years. Details: www.subtleenergies.com.au



For the therapy to be effective, our treatments are set around strict protocols. We do not allow for general freestyling as we need to provide a certain level of consistency to guarantee the results that we base our reputation on



If you're not offering unique treatments in Asia people don't spend money. Especially in places like Thailand or Indonesia, where you can get a massage down the street for US\$10; or where you're competing with other resort experiences such as a diving trip or cooking classes. So my tactic is to create signature treatments that you can't get anywhere else; and to also offer a Bespoke Spa Treatment which we've implemented in the last 18 months. Before that, all of our services were scripted.

The Bespoke Spa Treatment is a personalised body massage based on a consultation which takes into account areas a client wants to focus on, preferred techniques and health and safety issues. But we can't go to the extent of a salon in the UK or Australia where clients can request any specific technique/therapy because some therapists aren't formally trained, we educate them in-house and can only expect a certain level of capability.



Kathryn Moore

Group director of spa – Asia, MSpa International

Some employees are amazing therapists. Our spa specialists hold formal beauty therapy diplomas and are highly trained in everything from body treatments, massage, facials, anatomy & physiology, theory, waxing, mani/pedi etc. But others will only ever be able to follow A-Z steps, especially when English is their second language. They could suggest something in response to a basic request such as a sore back or neck, but if you get more technical they get lost.

We'd only offer bespoke treatments in a property where we're confident that a therapist is able to carry out a detailed consultation well, truly understand the guest's needs and tailor a therapy

accordingly. So far we've been able to add it to the menu in half of our properties.

But as our teams focus on driving signature treatments, receptionists might not feel comfortable explaining what a bespoke therapy is, while others don't want to carry out an in-depth consultation. All of this can impact on the take-up/bookings. That said bespoke treatments do seem to be popular and when someone spends US\$300 on a treatment, they expect something personalised.

Moore has worked at MSpa, the spa management arm of Minor Hotels, since 2009 and oversees 60 facilities. Details: www.mspa-international.com



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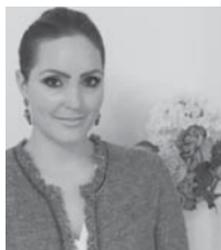
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Nicole Rodriguez, Store Manager who brought RICE FORCE to Parfümerie Schnitzler, Dusseldorf



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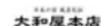
Travis Kono, Spa Director of Moana Lani Spa, Honolulu



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In our first years, Massage Envy's only menu item was customised massage. Massage education and licensing in the US varies greatly. All therapists have their own unique approach and this can make it difficult to promote specific modalities as there are very few that they've all been trained in.

We took the customised approach early on in order to not only allow our therapists freedom in their design of a massage but also to be able to offer our clients a massage service that uniquely addresses their specific needs and requests.

Massage Envy's facials are a different story. When we developed these services with Murad, we determined the best strategy would be to have consistent protocols to allow us to offer the safest, most therapeutically effective and cost-efficient services while still using highly effective and professional products. In addition, we now have Enhanced Therapy add-on treatments for massage to address



CG Funk

Vice president of industry relations, Massage Envy Spa

conditions such as chronic pain, insomnia and stress and these do have set protocols.

The only way to ensure therapists adhere to these protocols is constant training and auditing. We have a very robust training department and a multitude of educational programmes.

The way to manage health and safety requirements for customised services is to have strong guidelines to work within. These might include product usage, precautions and contraindication information, sanitation and product care. When higher therapeutic products are used, training needs to be ramped up. Our procedures are meant to give therapists parameters and within those boundaries

they still have much freedom to get creative and to design a beautiful massage.

Do the benefits of offering customised treatments outweigh the practical challenges? It depends on how the spa organisation works. If they have adequate training systems, if their operations have set and detailed policies and procedures and if they have experienced enough therapists to handle the responsibility then I would say yes.

There are now more than 1,000 Massage Envy Spa franchises in the US. Funk has worked for the firm for 10 years and was a massage trainer for over 15 years before that. Details: www.massageenvy.com



Nothing is simple when you offer customised treatments - we're not booking back-to-back straightforward services... Although it takes a lot more organising, it's worth every penny



We've always offered customised treatments with ESPA, but in our second year we began introducing new/specialised brands which enable us to mix and match and tailor services even more. We refresh the menu every three to six months and currently offer products and treatments by Georgia Louise, a celebrity facialist; high-end anti-ageing line Swiss Perfection; and cosmeceutical brand iS Clinical.

Our facials are especially customised because we look at skin conditions and lifestyle and have advanced machines for LED, radiofrequency and cryo facials.

The main thing for us is to make sure all therapists are really skilful. Every product house and machine has its own specific guidelines so the basics are covered. But we combine those protocols and give therapists free rein on what to do depending on the client's needs.

To do this, you have to really trust and train your therapists. We look for level 3 NVQ [the UK's highest national vocational qualification] so they're already competent



Shelley Hepburn

Spa director, Bulgari Hotel, London

in galvanics and more technical equipment. Then when staff start with us, they automatically train at ESPA for two weeks and within six months we start to get technical and cover more advanced treatments such as mesotherapy which is taught by a doctor. The product houses offer a week's course and refreshers, and in-house each therapist sets aside at least two to four hours a week for education.

We have six to eight girls who specialise in facials and they're trade tested and mystery shopped to within an inch of their life to ensure standards are met. We also monitor guest feedback and repeat custom - if they're not hitting the numbers we know it's time to investigate.

Nothing is simple when you offer customised treatments - we're not booking back-to-back straightforward

services. It takes a lot of co-ordination behind the scenes to make sure we have the right information about clients in advance and that we have the right therapists and machines available.

But because we're not necessarily focused on volume, schedules are a bit more flexible and customisation works well for us. Seventy per cent of our clients are repeats and they're booking courses. Because we offer more technical treatments, profit margins are higher also: our facials range from £140-£950 an hour. So although it takes a lot more organising, it's worth every penny.

Hepburn has 19 years' experience in the UK spa industry and has been at the Bulgari Spa in London since its opening in 2012. Details: www.bulgarihotels.com



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Moving on: Tompkins' new projects focus on medical wellness and immersive experiences



MICHAEL TOMPKINS

Just 12 months after joining Hilton Head Health as CEO, Michael Tompkins is on the move again - but not without leaving his mark. The ISPA chair explains to Rhianon Howells about the difference a year makes and why his new role could be his most exciting yet





The PALM centre opens in December and Tompkins thinks it'll be the next big thing in true healthcare

As a spa and wellness industry veteran of more than 15 years, Michael Tompkins – chair of the International Spa Association (ISPA) – might not have seen it all, but he's certainly seen a lot. So it speaks volumes that PALM, a concierge medical practice/wellness centre set to open this December in Missouri, has not just managed to surprise him. It has, in his own words, blown him away.

Standing for Personalised Advanced Lifestyle Medicine, PALM is the brainchild of cardiologist Dr Lauren Munsch Dal Farra and is, says Tompkins, “a true integrative wellness practice” combining general medical services and cutting-edge medical technologies with alternative therapies, lifestyle programming, nutrition, fitness and spa services all under one roof. In fact, so impressed is Tompkins with the concept that, after just a year as CEO of South Carolina-based weight loss retreat Hilton Head Health (HHH), he's joining the company as co-CEO along with owner and founder Munsch Dal Farra.

Tompkins first came across PALM while serving as CEO of Tucson-based destination spa Miraval, where he spent seven years before joining Hilton Head Health (HHH) in July 2014.



PALM founder Munsch Dal Farra

Alongside his role at Miraval, Tompkins was (and still is) a partner of Huffman Hospitality Concepts and has juggled his day job with consulting work for spa and wellness projects over the past few years.

PALM was one such client, and may have remained just that, had Tompkins not taken the decision earlier this year to return home to St Louis to be closer to family. The distance from HHH to his home made it impossible to remain as CEO, while the first PALM centre is located in Ladue, just six miles from downtown St Louis. The move came at the perfect time and despite the unexpectedness of it Tompkins could not be more excited.

Essentially a concierge medical practice with a completely integrated spa, PALM already has a number of physicians on board, including a cardiologist, neurologist, headache specialist, psychiatrist, functional medical practitioner and two general practitioners. A dermatologist is due to join shortly after opening. As well as a number of dual-use rooms, which will be used by both doctors and massage therapists, the centre will have a DEXA scanner, two hyperbaric chambers, a cryotherapy chamber, infrared saunas and a salt room, as well as a full range of spa and fitness facilities.

“This is the first time I've ever seen a product like this anywhere,” says Tompkins. “And I so hope it works as we plan, because it's going to be the next thing in true healthcare.”

Wellness journey

It's fair to say that Tompkins' understanding of what constitutes “true healthcare” has evolved over the course of his career. A registered nurse for 15 years, he became disillusioned with patient care in American hospitals and left to become a landscape gardener. But after a few months, the role of nursing director at Canyon Ranch in the Berkshires caught his eye. He got the job, loved it and over the course of seven years worked his

INTERVIEW: MICHAEL TOMPKINS

► way up to the role of associate managing director at the Lenox property (gaining his licence in massage therapy along the way).

After Canyon Ranch, he confesses that he “chased the money”, overseeing the build and operations of Turning Stone Resort and Casino in New York state. Shortly afterwards, Miraval came calling and in 2007 he became vice president and general manager of the Tucson-based destination spa and later CEO.

During his seven years at Miraval he guided the business through a number of milestones, including the creation of the Andrew Weil, MD Integrated Wellness Center; The Villas at Miraval, one of the fastest-selling luxury lifestyle real estate developments in the country; and, in May 2012, the new Life in Balance Spa with strategic partner Clarins (see SB12/4 p60). But when KSL Capital announced it was buying a controlling stake in the company from Revolution in 2014 (see SB15/1 p30), Tompkins decided it was time to move on and resigned from his post in June just before the deal was announced.

A month later, John Schmitz, the owner of HHH invited him to look around. “I



Lose Well guests are kept in small groups to help with emotional support

there was an incredible sense of community that I had not experienced at any other resort

went there for a week, lost 9lbs, and fell in love with the programming,” says Tompkins. He was smitten, he says, because, “number one, it works, and number two, there was an incredible sense of community that I had not experienced at any other resort.”

Losing well

Opened in 1976 HHH started life as “a fat farm where people came and they walked a lot,” says Tompkins. “It transitioned when it was sold to the current owner about 18 years ago. He started to build programming models that included exercise and nutrition as well as a behavioural component.”

Over the past year HHH has undergone another period of transition under Tompkins’ stewardship. A renovated restaurant – complete with demonstration kitchen – was added, as well as the new, standalone 3,000sq ft (279sq m) Indigo spa, with six treatment rooms and a salon. Existing fitness facilities were upgraded and a 30-room inn is in the pipeline.

In addition, Tompkins repackaged the programmes to attract new market segments without alienating the old. Guests can now choose from two programmes: Lose Well and Live Well.

Lose Well is the resort’s core weight loss offering, requiring a minimum 30-day stay and a commitment to sticking with the programme or risk being asked to leave and instead move to the Live Well programme (according to Tompkins, this happens maybe every other month). While the programme involves a fairly scientific approach to weight management – everything is monitored, from blood work to fitness levels to caloric intake, and measured (pounds and inches) – it also places an emphasis on emotional support, not only from staff but also from the



The less strict Live Well package with spa services accounts for 70 per cent of HHH’s business

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A new study shows
62 per cent of HHH
Lose Well guests keep
healthy after their stay

It's clear the HHH programme works: women on a 30-night stay typically lose 10-20lbs, while men lose 15-30lbs

► guests themselves, who are placed in small groups for the duration of their stay.

The Live Well programme, meanwhile, is more akin to a typical destination spa offering. Guests can stay for one night or several and can take their pick of services. It's the more popular option and accounts for 70 per cent of business.

These changes, combined with a new website and marketing strategy, have already had an impact on the business. According to Tompkins, the resort saw double-digit growth last year, with the same projected for this year.

But when reflecting on his tenure at HHH, it's the resort's human impact of which he sounds most proud. It's clear the HHH programme works: women on a 30-night stay typically lose 10-20lbs, while men lose 15-30lbs, and Tompkins himself lost an impressive 43lbs during his year as CEO. However, it's HHH's success in facilitating real lifestyle change that really gives it an edge.

An independent study which was published by the University of South Carolina in April showed that 62 per cent of Lose Well guests maintain a wellness-based lifestyle after they leave. "[That makes HHH] completely different from any of the other weight loss programmes out there," says Tompkins.

Immersive concept

Although sorry to leave HHH so soon, Tompkins is nonetheless excited about the future – not only about his role at PALM, but also about a number of other wellness projects he has underway, including two with US film director and cinematographer Louis Schwartzberg.

The first of these is Moving Art, an immersive room concept which uses time-lapse cinematography of natural images projected onto floor-to-ceiling screens to create moods suited to the space, such as waterfall imagery in a water-based treatment room (see SB14/1 p102).

Michael Tompkins on...

Trends to watch

"Massage-on-demand services are going to continue to be a trend and grow in a much bigger way. I also think medical or medi-spas will continue to diversify and [that we'll see growth in the number of] healthcare entities incorporating alternative therapies and spa, creating a new market segment. And I think, because of massage-on-demand and the medical spas pieces that are coming out, that the day spa market will change; it will be interesting to see how it does."

Challenges to look out for

"The number one challenge is [creating] a qualified pool of candidates to lead and expand our organisations and our industry; we don't have enough people. I also think that the rise in massage-on-demand services will cause the cost of labour to go up, in an area where operators are trying to limit the cost of labour simply because they want to have a profitable entity.

"[The challenge with the growth of] medical spas and wellness-based [medical] facilities is how that will relate to spa. How is it done so that it's a cohesive, non-disjointed industry during that growth – so that the chaos doesn't outweigh the benefits?"



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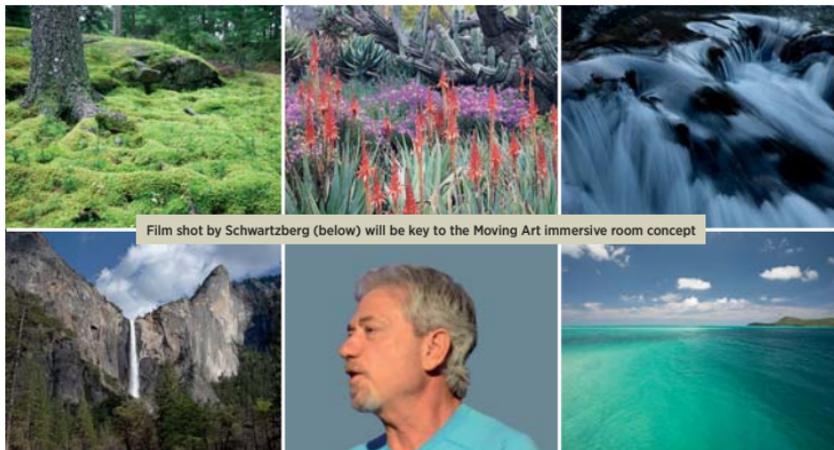
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Film shot by Schwartzberg (below) will be key to the Moving Art immersive room concept



▶ Because Schwartzberg shoots using 4K digital film, the images are clearer than the human eye can see, says Tompkins – so clear that they actually look real.

A second collaboration Tompkins is working on with Schwartzberg – along with a third partner, an LA-based “think-tank product design company” called Boombang – is a concept called Aura. An immersive pod, the product is designed to engage four of the five senses by combining Schwartzberg’s visuals with their corresponding sound, smell and touch. For example, images of the sea might be accompanied by the smell of salt, the sound of waves and a gentle breeze. The technology also incorporates sound vibration techniques. The result, says Tompkins, is a truly relaxing and meditative experience

At present, the partners are seeking financing for the concept, but Tompkins has confidence in its potential – not only as an authentic addition to any wellness

The Aura pod, yet to come to market, will combine visuals, sound, smell and touch to engage the senses (above)

offering, but also as a business investment. “Louis has the largest collection of film shot in 4K anywhere in the world, because he’s been shooting for more than 35 years, so there’s endless content that can be put in the pod,” he says. “So there’s a revenue source for the sale of the pod itself, which has a competitive retail price, including a certain number of downloads. And then [there’s a revenue source] for subscriptions [so customers] can download new experiences.”

And, of course, he continues to serve the industry as ISPA chair – a role he’s held since 2014 after two years as vice chair.

“I’ll continue to serve as long as ISPA’s board and its members will allow that,” he says. “And I have to say I’m extremely excited at the opportunity to align with global partners to bridge the international piece. This year, I’ve tried to go to every single event out there and not just within the States... I spoke at the Professional Spa and Wellness Convention in London and I’ve done everything from Live Love Spa to Green Spa Network events. Every one I attend inspires [and convinces] me more that I’ve chosen the right field to be in.” ●



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Dr Burgener Switzerland

True customisation of skincare

Leading skincare brand Dr Burgener Switzerland combines natural ingredients with advanced technology to produce exceptional results – and the company sees customisation as the way forward for each of its spa clients

Pick a country to develop a skincare range and Switzerland will rank high on the list; known for its nature, innovation and luxury, these same elements are at the core of the skincare brand, Dr Burgener Switzerland. Founded in Lausanne in 1955 by Dr Marc Burgener, a leading visionary in skincare and plastic surgery, his daughter-in-law, Dr Pauline Burgener, took over the brand 20 years ago. She tells *Spa Business* magazine why the brand is unique and leading the way in skincare customisation.

Originally from Lebanon, Dr Pauline Burgener joined the company on completion of a PhD in biology and postdoctoral research work on understanding the mechanisms of the skin. A firm believer that beauty comes from within, Dr Pauline Burgener says: “It’s good to know how the application of products onto the skin will move into the cells. If you understand the transport of these into the skin you can create a full treatment and line of products that will be really efficient.”



▲ A pearl serum signature product produced exclusively for Four Seasons Jumeirah, Dubai

Creating products and treatments exclusive to each spa is a major strength of the Dr Burgener brand

Dr Burgener Switzerland’s range consists of around 100 products for facial and body treatments for women and men – all free from parabens, artificial colours and perfumes. Dr Pauline Burgener says: “We are a scientific skincare brand based on treatments for the skin, using natural ingredients and mixing these with high-technology products and treatments.”

One line that was recently launched contains green caviar, which is extracted from beads that grow on algae on Okinawa island, Japan. Dr Pauline Burgener recognised that the people on the island have a high longevity which is down to lifestyle, but is also based on the products they eat, including green caviar.

Extra ingredients like hyaluronic acid, made by biotechnology, collagen, peptides and stem cells are combined with the natural products to improve the quality of the skin and to deliver exceptional anti-ageing results. Facial treatments are designed specifically to work with the products to deliver instant results. She says: “If you use the green caviar with the ultrasound machine – it works deeply into the skin to regenerate it. Other products and techniques include collagen, royal jelly, fruit acids, as well as peptides, amino acids, hyaluronic acid, among others.”



▲ Dr Pauline Burgener combines high end technologies with concentrates of Nature

Luxury spa partnerships

The biggest success for the Dr Burgener Switzerland brand this year has been its introduction into luxury hotels and spas outside of its Skin Clinic in Lausanne.

Now receiving a lot of international recognition as a luxury and cutting-edge skincare brand, the newest partnership was recently formed with The Four Seasons Hotel in Moscow – following on from partnerships with other Four Seasons Hotels in St Petersburg and Dubai.

In addition to this, there are several Relais & Chateaux hotels in Switzerland, as well as the Hilton Beirut Habtoor Grand, which have partnered with the brand.

Dr Pauline Burgener believes in the philosophy of personal partnerships with the hotels and spas the skincare company works with.



Training is a key part of this. Therapists receive full training with the Dr Burgener experts coming from Switzerland.

The unique part of the skincare brand is the personal presence of Dr Pauline Burgener to support the training of the therapists and to share with journalists and guests the values of the brand.

Dr Pauline Burgener says: "If we support the hotel and the spa manager and if we can really support them with the training of the staff, we can have an excellent service with the best results."

Signature products for each spa

The hotels that are working with the brand receive an exclusively adapted signature line of Dr Burgener Switzerland specifically for their spa, which includes an element of the heritage of the country in which they are located.

Earlier this year a full range of products based on the Dubai Pearl was created by the skincare brand for The Four Seasons Hotel in Dubai.

The treatment includes precious pearl serum beads (including ingredients extracted from pearls) enriched with hyaluronic acid as well as a natural extract of lily flower.

"The future of skincare is around customisation. Each place has different needs and I think this is a very important part of our brand - how to customise to the spa," explains Dr Pauline Burgener.

Dr Pauline Burgener is personally present on site to give all the support to therapists and to share the values of the brand

Haute Couture

Looking ahead to the rest of this year and to 2016, Dr Pauline Burgener is planning the launch of the Haute Couture line - a made to measure treatment for the skin. Following a full analysis of the client's skin - measuring hydration, lipids and elasticity - a customised luxury therapy bag is prescribed which includes a full line of products to fight against skin ageing. Dr Pauline Burgener has been working on this concept with top notch researchers and dermatologists for the past three years, and she lights up when talking about the range.

She says: "The main purpose for 2016 is to find the right partners and locations to launch the Haute Couture line with, because it is the future."

Sustainability

Thinking about this future, Dr Pauline Burgener is passionate about protecting the environment and has adapted the packaging of her products to reduce waste. She explains: "I worked a lot to find a way

to produce a product that does not need a cardboard box. I created a bag similar to those used on luxury jewellery and watches in Switzerland, which you can reuse." Instructions on using the product are also printed on recycled sugar cane and eucalyptus paper.

So would Dr Marc Burgener be proud of the brand today? Dr Pauline Burgener smiles. "I think so. He created a line to prepare the skin for surgery and for treatment against anti-ageing.

"I did things another way with high-end products and techniques, but we are coming back with the Haute Couture line which pushes the limits of age by offering a top luxury personalised product for each individual," she says. This revolutionary concept is scheduled for a new opening in the Grand Hotel du Lac, Relais & Châteaux in Vevey, Switzerland on the border of Lake Geneva, in February 2016.

Dr Pauline Burgener adds: "We offer a treatment that is customised for each individual to complement the use of aesthetic medicine. This complementarity makes all the difference."

DR BURGNER
SWITZERLAND

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WORKPLACE WELLNESS

Wellbeing in the workplace – a key wellness trend – is new territory for many operators. Neena Dhillon asks how spas can get involved

Driven by rocketing healthcare costs, record levels of preventable disease and high absenteeism, the provision of corporate wellness services has grown into a US\$8bn (£7bn, £5.1bn) plus industry.

According to the Families and Work Institute, more than 60 per cent of US employers offer some type of wellness initiative to staff.

As yet few inroads have been made into addressing the conditions of blue-collar workers as equally as their white-collar

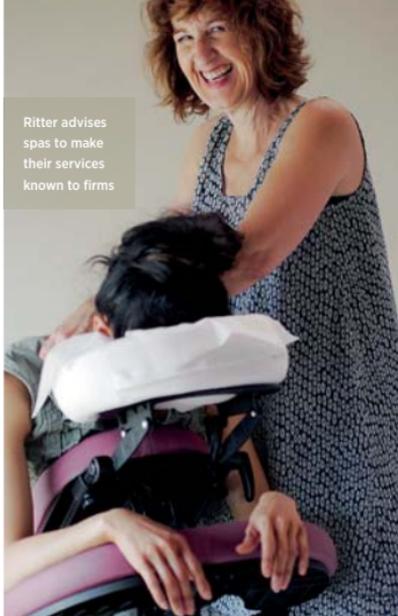
counterparts. This widens the opportunities for providers and means more companies – in the US and beyond – will be seeking to diversify both the reach and scope of their programmes.

In this article, we look at two award-winning employee programmes and ask how spas can become partners to similar schemes.



Neena Dhillon is a spa, hotel and travel journalist
Email: ndhillon@spabusiness.com

Ritter advises spas to make their services known to firms



LESLIE RITTER

Wellness director

Eileen Fisher clothing

Our extensive 20-year-old programme was established because Eileen Fisher is interested in employee wellbeing and in giving them access to alternative healthcare solutions outside medical cover. Today this means our full-time employees are each given an annual US\$1,000 (€883, £643) wellness benefit, which can be spent on a broad list of pre-approved activities covering anything from a spa weekend to gym membership, an air purifier or exercise equipment for the home. Then there's also a US\$1,000 personal growth benefit, which can be used on cooking classes, learning to play an instrument or a mindfulness retreat.

Initially, a lot of people weren't taking up the benefits. So to improve awareness, we took the activities to them. In our three main locations – corporate headquarters, the design studio and warehouse – we schedule one-on-one sessions with an array of wellbeing practitioners. They can be for life coaching, yoga, massage, reflexology, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, astrology or PT, and employees exchange them for their benefits. These take place three or four days a week in a designated



Eileen Fisher employees are entitled to US\$2,000 of wellbeing benefits for pre-approved activities



A broad list of activities are offered in the workplace to kick-start employee wellness



quiet room. We bolster this with free yoga, pilates, tai chi or fitness classes twice a week in our main locations as well as a calendar of wellbeing workshops, again free and offered four to six times a year. Finally, we also have therapists come in and give 10-minute neck and shoulder massages on the house, I send out a brief weekly newsletter and I regularly talk to employees about their changing needs.

Last year, 80 per cent of our employees used their wellness benefits and we paid out approximately US\$722,000 (€645,380, £478,830) for the year. As a clothing company with 1,200 employees, our population comprises almost 85 per cent women. When we look at our annual

Spas need to be flexible enough to send their teams to different locations and offices

medical insurance review – key indicators of how much we've used – our numbers are notably healthier than average taking into account our age/gender profile. We have high staff retention and have been regularly included as a top 20 Fortune Great Place to Work.

Lots of businesses don't yet do the equivalent of what we do here, so there's huge room for growth. The practitioners

I work with are largely people I know from the wellbeing community and a part of my job is meeting with providers. We partner with YogaWorks and Manicube practitioners and I would do the same with spa experts in the future. My advice to spa operators is to email or call wellness programme directors and make them aware of what services you can provide

Typically, spas need to be flexible enough to send their teams to different locations and offices but if they're able to offer scheduling of several wellbeing sessions, so much the better. As companies, we don't have a good relationship with time – spas that can take care of scheduling for us will make great partners. ▶

► TRENDS:
CORPORATE WELLNESS

JENNIFER PATEL

Director of wellness engagement,
Hallmark Business Connections

The programme created for our Hallmark employees is award-winning, targeted at 5,300 people across the US and includes those in field sales, manufacturing and fixed locations. We offer three main areas of support – lifestyle, clinical and preventative – which employees are encouraged to focus on through the incentive of a gift card, up to US\$450 (€397, £289) annually at corporate level.

When employees are geographically diverse, you need to start with small initiatives in individual locations built over time. Linking into 'lifestyle', we



■ Hallmark's wellness programme is targeted at 5,300 people across the US



Spas need to focus on the quality of information and the activity they provide, says Patel

schedule one event per month with a focus on a single issue, such as breast cancer, anxiety or men's health. There'll be a free related activity during the lunch hour, say mini massages during stress-reduction month or an educational workshop on anxiety. We'll then continue to raise awareness. We've started filming workshops so colleagues who work shifts don't miss out. Lifestyle champions have been appointed in the organisation to help us spread the word and motivate their peers to get involved. Then there are related challenges, such as a pedometer challenge where people who walk the most may win a gift card incentive.

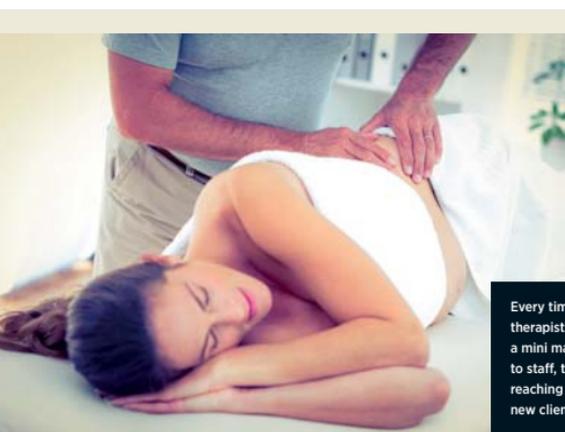
When it comes to the 'clinical' strand, employees can earn points towards an incentive by attending biometric screening. The 'preventative' aspect involves taking a more in-depth health visit once a year offsite, with points being earned for appropriate exams such as a

There's a great opportunity for the spa industry to partner with programmes like ours

mammogram or colonoscopy. It's about encouraging employees to take up what is available to them through their insurance.

We have an 84 per cent participation rate and although we've only just started gathering data, we've already seen a year-on-year reduction in blood pressure among participants. We're careful to ensure that our gift cards are linked only to healthy activities, such as spa, massage, nutrition or sports equipment. We have merchant partners who offer gift cards and we've seen people redeem their points in exchange for yoga, a facial, even a boutique class such as learning the trapeze.

There's a great opportunity for the spa industry to partner with programmes like ours. First, incentive-based initiatives need to work with providers and merchants who can offer rejuvenating or replenishing outlets in which employees can use gift cards. Second, companies need wellbeing experts to come onsite and share information via workshops and activities. Some employers will pay for speakers and workshops, others prefer a reciprocal approach whereby spas can offer discounts – an incentive to go and try out the spa's facilities. Every time therapists give mini massages to our staff, they're reaching potential new clients. As a proviso, I would point out that spa partners need to focus on the quality of the information or activity they've been programmed to provide. The worst thing I can do is to put off our employees from engaging in lifestyle change by compromising on the quality of the content or experience. ●



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Every time therapists give a mini massage to staff, they're reaching potential new clients

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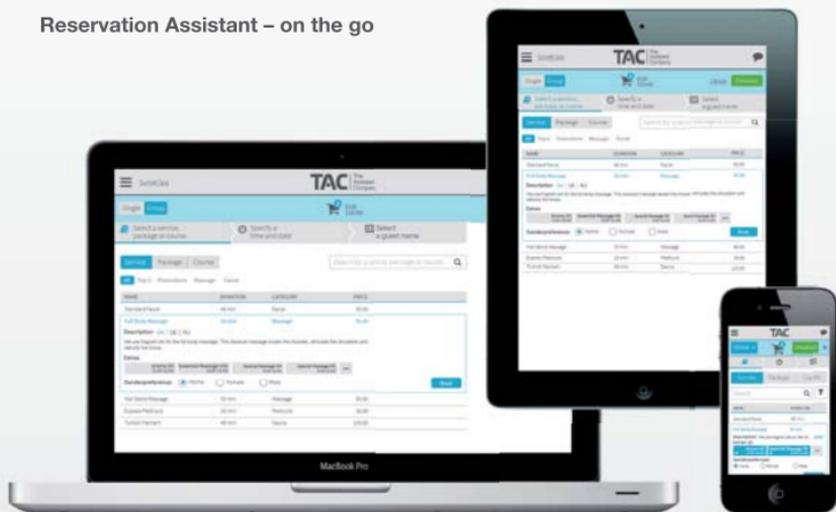
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Michael Harmsworth

ESPA International has always been a leader in the global spa business but has never been averse to change.

The CEO and son of its founder explains how the company he joined 22 years ago is adapting to meet the challenges facing the industry today



Michael Harmsworth has risen through the ranks of the family business over the past two decades to become CEO

Ever since Sue Harmsworth founded ESPA International in 1993, the company has struck a fine balance between consistency and change.

On one hand, more than two decades on, this is still a family-run business with an unwavering focus on delivering authentic, effective spa experiences for guests and strong commercial returns for clients. On the other hand, it has grown from a small spa consultancy with a modest natural product line into a world-leading spa management company and product giant, with more than 450 spas in around 60 countries, and clients including Peninsula Hotels, Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton and Mandarin Oriental.

Part of the reason for this success has undoubtedly been ESPA's ability and willingness to adapt its business model to the changing needs of both consumers and the industry. In 2009, the company opened its own factory to keep an even tighter control over quality standards and respond even more quickly to its customers' needs. Over the past three years, it has also introduced a much more solutions-based approach, offering product-only partnerships and tailored business support alongside its full design, development and management services.

Someone who has been central to guiding ESPA through these evolutions

is Sue's son Michael Harmsworth, who joined the company on day one and has risen through the ranks to managing director and most recently CEO. Here, he talks about ESPA's continuing journey, and how the company is tackling some of the industry's biggest challenges.

Our approach to wellness is to put the guest at the centre then look at what our partners can deliver

You recently became CEO of the company. Has your role changed?

I was appointed last December after KSL Capital Partners [the US private equity firm that bought a majority stake in Miraval last year] invested in the business in a refinancing exercise. At that point, Sue became chairman and I became CEO, but to be honest it hasn't made a great deal of difference. I joined ESPA when I was 27, after starting my career in a

management and marketing consultancy. Sue had created the first products and asked if I would help her with some teething problems, so I agreed to give her a hand for six weeks. Six weeks became six months and here we are. Since then, I've had every job title going. In the early days, I called myself business development director because everything I did was about trying to develop the business!

What's the biggest change you've seen?

The industry has gone through its infancy, through a period of discovery and is now reaching a state of maturity, where the expectations around what spas can achieve are more realistic. At the outset, the world fell in love with spa. Every hotel operator was saying: "We need one of those. We don't know what it is, but we know we want a shiny one!" Spas now are much more commercial, and investors are looking at them in much more commercial way. Consumer knowledge has also grown dramatically, and consumers are much savvier about what they want to buy.

ESPA at Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore offers a range of specially developed spa and wellness services



What does the rise of 'wellness' mean for spas?

The question of "what is wellness?" causes the same problems as used to be caused by the question of "what is spa?" It's one of those things the industry is hell-bent on defining, whereas I would question whether it really needs a definition. If you focus on the needs of the consumer and let them drive what you're supplying, you don't need a definition. If our guests are looking for healthier lifestyles, we simply need to ask ourselves how we can help them achieve that.

Whereas spas used to focus on massages and body treatments, there is now more of a focus on the whole person. But you don't need to employ a doctor to help somebody achieve wellness. If you go down the medical route, offering functional medical testing and so on, then that might be necessary. But some people just need help with fitness, nutrition, relaxation and stress management, and you don't need a doctor for that.

The way we approach our wellness

You can't pay lip service to local experiences. It's not enough to come up with a different name

concept, ESPA Life, is to put the guest at the centre, and then look at what our hotel or resort partners can realistically and commercially deliver. For example, we know if a resort with a small number of bedrooms isn't 100 per cent dedicated to wellness, there is no point requiring a doctor to be on site, because commercially it doesn't make sense. As a result, the range of what we can deliver, and have delivered, with ESPA Life is very broad, going from the truly medical to more of a mind-body-spirit offering.

But whatever form the offering might take, authenticity has to be at its heart. The danger is that everyone starts offering 'wellness' and consumers become disillusioned because it's not done well. Our view is that it's better

to offer less and do it well than to over-promise and under-deliver.

What challenges does the globalisation of spa and wellness present?

It's no secret that the more people are travelling the more authentic they want their experiences to be. It's gone beyond 'sense of place'; the hotel, the resort, the spa has to be in that place. But the number one challenge for the spa industry is quality, as the experiences people get are so varied, and if we don't collectively deliver to a high enough standard people will not engage with the industry in the same way. Spas are no different from restaurants; as a customer, you want to experience something truly authentic and local but you want the core to be there as well, and getting that balance right is absolutely key.

The other point about local experiences is that you can't just pay lip service to it. It's not enough to come up with a treatment that's just got a different-sounding name; it has to feel more local. ▶

ESPA PROMOTION

► Doing this safely and consistently and to a high standard has obvious challenges, depending on where in the world you are. You can do it, but it takes effort. For example, when we developed our ayurvedic rituals we met with an Indian ayurvedic expert before creating our own in-depth procedures and protocols. We also developed our own oils using traditional ingredients and methods, but we did it in our own factory so we could control the quality. Because if you're going to roll something out across the world there needs to be that degree of control.

Transient travellers are increasingly important within the hotel market. How can spas better cater for that segment?

The first thing we need to do is get better at engaging people. As an industry, we've built a mystique around what we do which hasn't necessarily engaged people in the right way or shown them the benefits. So we need to simplify what we're doing.

Regarding transient travellers specifically, there is definitely an opportunity for hotels to start thinking about wellbeing in a wider sense, outside of the spa. When you look at the design



Gieneagles in Scotland was one of the first resorts to open ESPA Life, the company's wellness concept



■ Authentic local experiences are key at sites such as One&Only Reethi Rah, the Maldives

of hotel rooms – the air-conditioning, the lighting – there is still huge room for improvement. I always travel with a block of post-it notes to cover all the lights that I know will keep me up! On the other hand, I've stayed in hotels that not only have a yoga channel on the TV but also leave a yoga mat in the room, which is a great example of keeping things simple.

When it comes to the spa itself, it never ceases to amaze me that more hotels haven't de-gendered what they offer. You only have to look round business class to realise that a lot of transient travellers are male, and yet in so many hotel spas the spaces are still very female.

Another problem is that many hotel spas are not set up to cater for business guests, so when a guest does want a treatment – say at 9pm after a long day of meetings – the spa is usually closed. Or if it isn't, they can't get a treatment at short notice. So adaptability is key.

The core market for spas has traditionally been Baby Boomers. But as this generation ages and new generations come up, how should spas and product houses be responding?

We have to continue to evolve and offer people what they want to buy, rather than expecting people to buy what we want to offer. The Gen-Xers and Millennials are helping to demystify the industry, because they can see spa for what it is: their expectations are more realistic, but they're also a lot savvier. Another effect of these younger generations coming up

We have to continue to evolve and offer people what they want to buy, not what we want to offer

is that spas are taking themselves a bit less seriously and becoming more social spaces. There's a new sense that spas can be fun and don't have to be dictatorial; you can allow guests more choice.

From the product perspective, there's a growing emphasis on saving time and ease of use. The appetite for multi-functional products has grown massively, though there's still a demand for more luxurious, slower-paced products – with younger people, it's striking a balance between doing things on the hoof and occasionally taking time for themselves too.

Strangely enough, at ESPA, the piece that has remained right at the heart of what we do all along is helping people to achieve a 'life in balance'. We're committed to making products that are very natural, ethical and of the highest quality, and we won't compromise on that. But we understand that consumers have changing needs and we adapt accordingly.

ESPA

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ONWARDS & UPWARDS

US spa visits, employment and industry confidence are at an all-time high according ISPA's 2015 US Spa Industry Study. Research author Colin McIlheney outlines the findings

Last year the International Spa Association (ISPA) reported that the US spa industry was back on track after the recession (see SBH15, p96). And now its 16th annual US

Spa Industry Study shows that in 2014 the sector continued to perform strongly across key areas including overall revenue, spa visits, spa locations and employment. This is almost a mirror image of topline indicators in the US economy, with increases in GDP, employment and personal consumption expenditure.

The big five

Four out of the 'big five' key statistics show impressive increases on 2013 figures, with revenue now estimated at US\$15.5bn (£13.8bn, £10bn), employees at 360,000, 20,660 locations and visits hitting a record high of 176 million (see Table 1).



The number of self-employed therapists has been in decline since 2010

MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

“ There are an estimated 37,780 unfilled positions in the US spa industry ”

Total revenue has gone up by approximately 5.3 per cent from US\$14.7bn (£13bn, £9.5bn) in 2013. This was driven by strong growth in the number of spa visits, which rose to around 176 million in 2014, up from 164 million in 2013 (+6.7 per cent) and representing an all time industry high.

Almost 500 new spas opened in 2014, bringing the total number of facilities to 20,660, up 2.4 per cent from 20,180 in 2013. These new sites have assisted in boosting spa revenues and visits.

Once again the survey results show that day spas are the backbone of the sector, accounting for 79.5 per cent of all spa locations. Resort/hotel spas and medical spas both account for around 8 per cent and club spas for around 3 per cent.

Despite the rise in income overall, the average revenue per visit declined slightly, by US\$1, or 1.3 per cent, to US\$88 (€78, £57) in 2014. It's likely that there are several reasons behind this and the survey data alone cannot explain precisely why this is the case. Clients visiting more often, but experiencing fewer or shorter treatments likely played a role. In addition, the increasing use of incentives and discounting are also likely to be contributing factors.

National employment in the US overall has grown by 2.3 per cent and this is also

TABLE 1: 2015 US SPA INDUSTRY STUDY - THE BIG FIVE STATISTICS

| | 2013 (Year End) | 2014 (Year End) | % Change |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Revenue | US\$14.7bn | US\$15.5bn | 5.3% |
| Spa visits | 164 m | 176 m | 6.7% |
| Locations | 20,180 | 20,660 | 2.4% |
| Revenue per visit | US\$89 | US\$88 | -1.3% |
| | 2014 (May) | 2015 (May) | % Change |
| Total employees | 349,900 | 360,000 | 2.9% |
| Full-time | 148,300 | 153,800 | 3.7% |
| Part-time | 157,000 | 164,500 | 4.8% |
| Contract | 44,600 | 41,700 | -6.5% |

* Source: ISPA 2015 US Spa Industry Study



Many spas in the US are thinking of adding stress management services in the future

PUBHHA/SHUTTERSTOCK

reflected in spa industry numbers with an estimated total of 360,000 employees – a record high for the sector. Both full-time and part-time positions have been created by spas, with full-time jobs increasing by 5,500 and a total of 7,500 part-time positions being added to the workforce. This is in line with ISPA's previous study findings where part-time employment has seen greater growth than full-time. Positions which are filled by independent contractors in spas continues to decline, as has been the case since 2010.

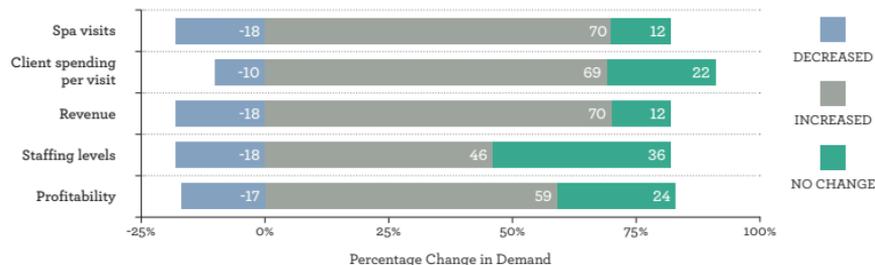
Turning a profit

The positive trend carries on when looking at spa profits. When considering all spas except for hotel/resort spas, almost three-quarters (73 per cent) report a 10 per cent profit or more, a sharp increase from 57 per cent in 2013. Two in three resort/hotel spas reported a profit in excess of 10 per cent, but this was slightly down on 2013 (71 per cent). Net losses in day, medical and club spas fell to 7 per cent from 13 per cent in 2013, and remained largely unchanged in resort/hotel spas at 6 per cent.

Recent trends

While the ISPA research mainly looks at the key statistics from the previous 12 months (in this case, 2014), spa operators were also asked about their more recent experiences between September 2014 to March 2015. Around six in 10 spas said that in this time frame profitability had improved compared to the same period a year ago (see Graph 1) and this was consistent across different spa types, providing more evidence that the industry continues to grow.

GRAPH 1: CHANGE IN DEMAND OVER PAST SIX MONTHS



* Source: ISPA 2015 US Spa Industry Study



Almost two-thirds of spas said they intend to add or create new employee training opportunities



Continuing the positive tone, seven out of 10 spas reported an increase in revenue, visits and client spend per visit in the six months. Each of these key indicators are at their highest since ISPA first asked spas these questions for its research in 2010. It's clear to see that spas have recovered from the recession and are going from strength to strength.

The big five statistics have shown that employment in the spa industry is at its highest level and facilities are persistently hiring new staff in response to demand. Almost one in two spas (46 per cent) said they had increased staffing levels in the last six months compared to the same period in the previous year. However, demand for more service providers in the industry is evident, with an estimated 37,780 unfilled positions of which 41 per cent are full-time and 59 per cent are part-time. Massage therapists are particularly sought after, representing half of all the unfilled positions. While this is a challenging position for many spas to find themselves in, it's another indicator of the rise in demand for spa services.



PHOTO: ASPERA

More spas are looking to partner with local companies to source ingredients for skincare and therapies

Looking ahead

Spas are well aware of industry growth and are planning to take advantage of this in the future. Almost three in four spas businesses (74 per cent) said they'll add or create new treatment offerings, 60 per cent said they'll introduce new product lines and 55 per cent have plans to create a new spa menu in 2015.

On the theme of employment in the spa industry, almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of spas said they intend to add or create new employee training opportunities along with 57 per cent saying they plan to create new job opportunities. Competition to fill vacancies in the workforce may have led to this heightened focus on employees and their key role in the spa experience.

More than one-third of spas are concentrating on community engagement, such as seeking out local suppliers for ingredients for skincare and meals.

Thirty-five per cent of spas say that they plan to add or create new community partnerships in the near future.

Yet the overwhelming next big trend was, perhaps unsurprisingly, found to be related to wellness, health and fitness and projecting spa visits as part of a healthy lifestyle. Many spas are proposing to offer a wider range of services aimed at health and fitness including stress management, integration of medical treatments, therapeutic treatments and healthy ageing.

Confidence at all-time high

The positive outlook continues with an overwhelming majority of spas stating that they're confident that revenues will continue to increase in 2015. Close to nine in 10 spas (89 per cent) said they were 'very confident' (53 per cent) or 'confident' (36 per cent) of an increase in revenues in the next six months. Confidence levels are therefore at their highest since tracking began in the 2012 industry study. ●

ABOUT THE RESEARCH AND ISPA

The 2015 ISPA Spa Industry Study, which takes in a detailed performance of spas in 2014, was based on 1,592 spa surveys and a database of more than 17,000 spas. Facilities also gave an account of their business performance

in the six months from September 2014 to March 2015 to provide a more recent perspective.

This year's full report with a technical appendix is available at experienceispa.com. ISPA members can download a copy for free.

Based in the US, ISPA represents operators and suppliers in over 70 countries, covering all aspects of the spa experience. Its first national study launched in 2000, followed by updates and other surveys ever since.



Colin McIlheney is the global research director at PwC and has headed up a number of studies for ISPA. Email: ispa@ispastaff.com Tel: +1 888 651 4772



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spa business uniting the world of wellness

PHYTOMER

Director of international development, Tristan Lagarde, explains how PHYTOMER has become a leader in the field of technological skincare development, and how spas can benefit from the brand's success

What's the family history of PHYTOMER?

We're a third generation skincare company based in St Malo in Brittany, France. Over 40 years ago, our founder Jean Gédouin began a hands-on scientific study into the benefits of seawater and different seaweeds on the skin. He was inspired by the effect on his own health, and set out to introduce city dwellers, notably Parisians, to the remarkable benefits of the sea's trace elements and minerals. From there, the PHYTOMER story and range has grown globally, with the subsequent involvement of Jean's son Antoine, and Antoine's daughter Mathilde, who still run the company.

What's special about your products?

We use all-natural ingredients and develop them using natural, non-chemical processes to create highly results-driven products. In particular the products that we've developed in the past three years truly represent the cutting edge of skincare.

Our foundation is the unique marine habitat here in Brittany, and the diverse ecosystem of seaweed, algae and sea micro-organisms that form the basis of our ingredients. The mineral properties of seawater are very similar to the mineral levels in our blood, so there's a degree of bio-mimicry at play that has very exciting implications for the future of skincare.

The real alchemy happens in our extensive R&D laboratories where we've successfully isolated molecules from the marine environment and applied them to modern skincare requirements. To give an example, a species of seaweed called *Armeria maritima* is found thriving in abandoned industrial sites on the coast, and it appears that it has a clear function to eliminate pollution. We isolated this molecule and used it very successfully to the same effect in our products.

Can you explain the key processes in your marine biotechnology?

PHYTOMER made a real breakthrough in the use of marine biotechnology by using micro-organisms extracted from the sea to produce unique marine sugars. This involves a very complex process in a sophisticated large-scale laboratory, where the optimum conditions we create enable the harvested micro-organisms to grow and produce a biofilm.

The biofilm produced is a complex chain of sugars called exopolysaccharides (EPS). EPS cannot be artificially copied by traditional cosmetics, they are eco-friendly and provide an almost infinite number of possibilities for new skincare applications.

The PHYTOMER research team has identified 800 micro-organisms that can each produce a unique marine sugar, and patented 30 of those for future developments. For example, our XMF marine sugar (Extra Marine Filler) is the star ingredient of PHYTOMER'S PIONNIÈRE XMF premium range. It visibly smoothes wrinkles in one hour, and once absorbed by the skin, it reinforces the firmness and density of skin layers.



Tristan Lagarde (left) and PHYTOMER's pioneering laboratories (right) where marine sugars are used in high-tech skincare





PHYTOMER's recently refurbished flagship spa in St Malo embodies the brand's aims of wellness and results

What are some of your most popular products, and what's new for 2015?

We first launched PIONNIÈRE XMF in 2012 and it's expanded to become by far our best-selling range.

Given its amazing success, we decided this year to add to the range with our PIONNIÈRE XMF WHITE – a biotech anti-ageing cream with the power to target hyper-pigmentation and erase all visible discolouration. It includes two exclusive marine sugars: XMF, and WHITECH, a UV and anti-pollution shield that ensures optimum control of the production and transfer of melanin.

With a 'second skin' texture, enriched with golden pearls, PIONNIÈRE XMF WHITE envelops the face in a halo of light and leaves a matte, velvety finish on the skin for a 'photo-finish' effect. The skin appears transparent and refreshed, with a subtle scent of jasmine and citrus.

Why should spa businesses partner with PHYTOMER?

We see ourselves as the new frontier of professional skincare, as we innovate in all the key areas that are relevant to developing a successful spa in today's competitive market.

PHYTOMER is one of the only laboratories in the world that perfectly masters marine biotechnology to produce unprecedented natural ingredients with record effectiveness. We entirely control the manufacturing process, and aim at

The PHYTOMER research team has identified 800 micro-organisms that can each produce a unique marine sugar, and patented 30 of those for future developments

limiting our impact on the environment. The results are outstanding products using an eco-friendly method. It's the future of manufacturing and we have long been a leader in this area.

Our brand is also renowned for its strong focus on business, and increasing our partners' profit is a constant priority for us. Our treatments are cutting edge, but they are typically 20-100 per cent less expensive than those of our competitors.

Finally PHYTOMER has been investing heavily in the digital field and deploying an ambitious digital strategy to enhance the brand's visibility online, and help drive business to our partners' facilities. For example our web-to-store application allows customers to reserve products on our website, and they are then directed to their local PHYTOMER retailer for pick-up.

For our partners, we offer a highly developed range of on-line training applications as well as our specialised, hands-on assistance.

How do you plan to further develop the PHYTOMER brand?

Our strategy is focused on three core areas. The first is our continued investment in innovation to increase performance: biotechnology, enzymatic synthesis and green manufacturing.

The second area relates to our treatment menu. We will continue to offer even more in terms of a sensorial experience, both for the consumer and the therapist, to provide effectiveness with systematic clinical tests, and to increase profitability for our partners by controlling treatment costs.

The third area involves the ongoing upgrading of the brand through its image. The packaging has been redesigned with a lot more sophistication, and our visuals are increasingly high-end.

Our premium positioning is of course reinforced with the continued opening of luxurious spas around the world, including our own 500 sq m flagship spa, PHYTOMER Spa & Wellness, which we extensively re-developed and reopened this spring in Saint-Malo as a clear expression of our brand and wellness philosophy.

PHYTOMER

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Lilian Roten

Jane Kitchen talks to Lilian Roten, the brains behind the brands for Swissôtel's in-house Pürovel spas and its boundary breaking Vitality wellness programme

Swissôtel launched its in-house Pürovel spa concept in 2011 and now features the branded spas in 12 of its 32 hotels, with 12 more in the pipeline.

The company has also been integrating touches of wellbeing into every aspect of a hotel stay as part of its Vitality programme since 2012 – making it one of the first wellness hotel groups.

With a nod to the company's Swiss roots and Alpine heritage (Swissair and Nestlé were the original owners of the group) Pürovel spas are designed to remind guests of the invigorating Swiss Alps.

Lilian Roten is vice president of the Swissôtel brand. Born in the mountains of Switzerland, she's been with the company more than 20 years, focusing first on operations and more recently, on brand strategy. Roten works closely with Andrew Gibson, vice president of spa and wellness for Swissôtel's parent brand, FRHI Hotels & Resorts, to ensure all spas stay on-message and convey that sense of alpine vitality.

Roten tells *Spa Business* how the Pürovel concept was developed, where it's heading and how it fits with Swissôtel's push for wellbeing through its Vitality programme.



■ Roten, born in the Swiss mountains, has been with the hotel group for 20 years

Why did Swissôtel develop a spa concept?

We really wanted to make sure we had something that we could hang our hat on – otherwise, we're just selling a massage, and everybody else sells a massage. We didn't want to bring in a consultant who just said, 'this is a concept – see how it fits'. We looked at what we're really good at and the essence of the brand. And if you're born in Switzerland – I mean the brand, and myself as well – you deal with nature all the time. The inspiration was really about the four seasons and

the rejuvenation that happens between spring, summer, fall and winter. The name actually means "a gently floating mountain stream" in Rumantsch – the language spoken in the mountains.

What makes Pürovel a Swiss brand?

In my eyes it starts with physical aspect, and then treatments need to be in place as well. Pürovel is Alpine-inspired in its look and feel, but we also incorporate unique elements from each country – in Turkey, you will have a hammam, in Thailand, you will have Thai massage, in Sri Lanka, you might have ayurveda.

For the design we draw inspiration from the mountains and valleys of Switzerland, using soothing shades like greens and adding a touch of colour, like flowers in a forest. There's an element of freshness and vigour. At the entrance to our spas, we have images of the landscape that reflect the seasons in Switzerland. So when we open in Dubai in a few years, it will be hot, but in the Pürovel Spa you'll first see a beautiful winter landscape as if it's December in Switzerland. The uniforms are also more of a sporty outdoors uniform, rather than an Asian-inspired look.

In terms of materials, we use honest materials – if it looks like wood it is wood. Authentic materials are essential to the



The Pürovel concept launched in 2011 and the spa brand is now in 12 out of 32 Swissôtel properties



In the Dresden spa (above), the treatment rooms (right) are built with different wood so each has a distinct, natural scent

atmosphere and we want things that are timeless and beautiful to look at, but that also inspire people to touch. We don't just like surfaces that are all shiny or polished, we also like rough edges.

So honest materials you can touch are important - what else?

We also have sounds from the woods and mountains like a bird's song or a mountain stream or the wind rustling through a spruce. It's also about scent and using materials that have a natural scent. In Dresden, we have four treatment rooms and each of them is built with a different wood, so they each have a different smell as well. And if you can combine that fragrance with the material or the actual physical aspect, that's perfect.

We draw inspiration from the mountains and valleys of Switzerland, using soothing shades like green and adding a touch of colour, like flowers in a forest

How did you develop the Pürovel product range?

We found Suissessences, a toiletries line made by nine Swiss farmers and Brigitte Schulthess, who's an aromatherapy and skincare consultant. Together they created two scents for us - summer and winter - which use lavender, lemon balm, clary sage, yarrow and the needles of the spruce, silver and Douglas fir. The oils are blended with rapeseed oil that's also grown locally - it's a great oil with great benefits.

What's the difference between the two spa models?

If you're in an urban environment, the fitness component is more important because our customer base is very much business-driven during the week, so we have a Pürovel Sport - but it still has a spa component. At Pürovel Spa & Sport, we have things like steam showers, hammams and different treatment offerings - but there's still a sport component. Both concepts offer revitalising massages. ▶



The branded products have been made by nine local farmers who are also behind toiletries line Suissesences



▶ **What role does spa play in Swissôtel's Vitality programme?**

The essence of Pürovel is about revitalisation and vitality. If you have a massage it really is about giving energy back to your body and our rituals are designed take our guests through a revitalising journey.

For business hotels, we have Vitality Moments where we offer 20- or 30-minute massages, because corporate clients don't always have time for a one-hour massage.

And how does Vitality translate to other hotel departments?

We introduced Vitality in our cuisine, which is not about dieting, but about healthier options. For conferences, we introduced Vitality Breaks, which pay attention to food's nutritional value and what the body needs at different times of the day to keep up energy.

We also introduced a Vitality fitness component: we deliver fitness gear from the Pürovel Sport facilities to guests' rooms, we have jogging maps at our hotels and many of the GMs offer morning jogging tours. This year we launched destination maps, so it's about walking in the surroundings and getting fresh air and exercise and at the same time, experiencing some culture. .

We know that within our portfolio we have a higher average spend in our Pürovel-branded facilities, more loyal guests and higher satisfaction scores too



■ Vitality programme: healthy cuisine helps guests keep up their energy

How do you measure the success of Pürovel?

Profitability on the one hand, on the other, engaged colleagues and low staff turnover.

We know that within our portfolio of Pürovel-branded and non-branded spa facilities, we have a higher average spend in Pürovel, more loyal guests and higher satisfaction scores too.

We also notice a lower turnover among team members, especially when it comes to managerial positions. We see that our Pürovel spa managers stay with our

brand for up to five years; this is quite unusual in our industry, where there's an executive rotation usually every two to three years. If our colleagues are engaged with the brand, they're attached to it and it becomes more than just a service. Happy colleagues stay longer and have a more personal interaction with our guests.

We also look at what it adds to Swissôtel in general. From a business perspective, we know that affluent travellers typically consider fewer than four hotels when deciding where to stay. With this in mind, ▶

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Pürovel spas

CURRENT PORTFOLIO

Pürovel spas operate in Swissôtel properties in:

- Basel, Switzerland (Sport)
- Bremen, Germany (Sport)
- Dresden, Germany (Spa & Sport)
- Tallinn, Estonia (Spa & Sport)
- Moscow, Russia (Spa & Sport)
- The Bosphorus, Istanbul, Turkey (Spa & Sport)
- Izmir, Turkey (Spa & Sport)
- Ankara, Turkey (Spa & Sport)
- Resort Bodrum Beach, Turkey (Spa & Sport)
- Osaka, Japan (Spa & Sport)
- Merchant Court, Singapore (Spa & Sport)
- Kolkata, India (Sport)

FUTURE OPENINGS

Swissôtel will launch 12 Pürovel spas in the following sites over the next four years:

- Citystars Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt (2016)
- Bodrum Hill, Turkey (2017)
- Changsha, China (2017)
- Chengdu, China (2017)
- Bali, Indonesia (2018)
- Al Jadaf Dubai, UAE (2018)
- Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (2018)
- Sofia, Bulgaria (2018)
- KozaPark Istanbul, Turkey (2018)
- Dhaka, Bangladesh (2018)
- Katameyah Cairo, Egypt (2018)
- Hangzhou, China (2019)



Most hotel spas are in Europe, but new ones are planned in Asia and the Middle East



Affluent travellers typically consider fewer than four hotels... Having a strong, differentiated spa product is a driver of hotel occupancy for us

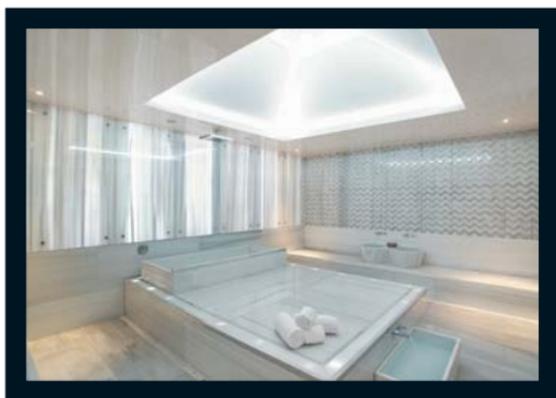


The Pürovel Sport model for urban hotels has more of a fitness component

▶ having a strong, differentiated spa product is a driver of hotel occupancy for us.

What obstacles have you encountered?

The biggest challenge is to stick to your beliefs. There are certain features that you must have for the brand experience. We also don't want to forget the essence behind Vitality. We want to make sure that it doesn't just become a marketing slogan, but that people know why they're doing what they're doing and how important rituals are. Andrew Gibson and Lindsay Madden-Nadeau (FRHI's director of spa integration and operations) and I meet regularly, so we're all aligned about what the brand really is. It's really now Andrew's team who executes all the strategy that was developed for the brand.



■ Wellness facilities are more prominent in the Pürovel Spa & Sport resort concept

What are your future plans for Pürovel?

We still need to grow. Although we've been selective with locations, most Pürovel spas so far have been renovations. To really have a 100 per cent Pürovel spa – the picture-perfect Pürovel – we need a new build, but that takes time. The Pürovel in Chengdu, China, will be beautiful, because it's a brand new property and it's going to be a flagship five-star, as will the Dubai location (see future openings above).

Overall, the more Pürovels you have, the more spas colleagues become engaged. It's just as exciting for them to see the brand grow as it is for me. ●



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Jane Austen

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Elevating the customer journey with technology

Technology has changed over the years, but very few in our industry have kept up with innovations available today. More than ever, your ability to use technology to support the business, employees, and even your clients will determine how successful you can meet evolving customer expectations. Consider these three ways technology can help elevate your customer journey.

1 Make booking an effortless experience. Your clients want to be able to call the front desk, but also book online from their laptop, tablet and phone. This allows them to book when they want to, whether it's after you're closed or just moments before they walk in.

Similarly, your employees expect to easily schedule a client appointment directly from their mobile phone.

2 Deliver highly personalised experiences. Maintaining a client profile digitally, along with intake forms, consultation data and treatment preferences equip your providers to deliver high quality treatments.

If you have more than one location, that client profile should be accessible from anywhere, which ensures that visit history, notes, preferences are all used to deliver a consistent experience.

3 Engage with clients between visits. Every client that you see came in for a reason. It's your job to capture, understand and act upon that. If a client came in because of dull skin, be sure to send home care instructions after the visit, followed by a series of educational tips via email. Nurture their interest in a meaningful manner. Remind them when it's time for their next visit. Encourage them with special notices.

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VP of Marketing, Saritha Katikaneni

“With technology, you can make every digital communication seem like a personal conversation”

ABOUT ZENOTI

Zenoti helps business providers in the beauty, wellness and fitness space grow their business. The founding team brings expertise in building enterprise solutions that have

been used by 200 of the Fortune 500 companies.

Zenoti's solution addresses the needs of spas, salons, medical spas, fitness centres and yoga studios with technology based on three principles - reliable and speedy service,

capabilities that support end-to-end business processes, and ease of use. The core solution enables a business to deliver delightful customer experiences, achieve operational excellence and drive revenue growth. Zenoti

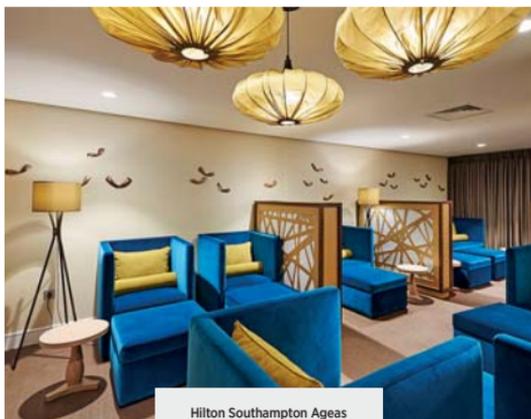
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Hilton's senior spa figures Ryan Crabbe and Louise Moore (left and right); master therapist Sean Jordan (centre)

eforea 2.0



Hilton Southampton Ageas Bowl, UK, is one of the first sites to have the new eforea spa



Five years after launching its in-house eforea spa brand, Hilton is offering a refresh – a more flexible, business-savvy model to underpin a rollout that will treble its number of spas. Jane Kitchen meets the team behind the reengineered concept

Since launching in 2010, Hilton's in-house spa concept, eforea, has grown from one location to 22 globally. Five years on, the company is looking to add another 42 sites and to facilitate this near three-fold expansion in the next four to five years, it's decided that the brand needs a makeover.

While it's kept key aspects of the concept – the signature butterflies, the catchy tag line 'emerge brighter' – the reimagined eforea is a much less rigid model. It's more appealing to Hilton hotel owners the world over, market specific and logistically viable. But what changes has it made and why?

Self-select spa

One adjustment of note has been to give properties the opportunity to self-select product partners based on their locale. Previously all eforea spas stocked Kerstin Florian, VitaMan and Li'Tya and while half of them still do, others have opted for different suppliers. In the UK, for example, all new eforea spas use Elemis.



While the concept already included local elements, more of an emphasis will be placed on this in the future



The reimagined eforea is a much less rigid model. It's more appealing to hotel owners, market specific and logistically viable

"We didn't want to entangle our spas in complex supplier relationships," says Ryan Crabbe, senior director of global wellness for Hilton Worldwide. "It's important that our owners and operating partners have a local partner – somebody who's in the market to educate the team, and who's passionate about helping the spa manager build the business."

The rethink fits in well with eforea's existing Escape Journey treatments which already enable each spa to create unique services that incorporate ingredients, products and therapies native to the area. At the eforea spa in Sedona, Arizona, for instance, The Manteadas Massage features 'curanderismo', a traditional Hispanic healing method that uses gentle stretching and unwinding, while at the Hilton Batumi, the Georgian Corn & Salt Scrub with Vichy includes a manual exfoliation using local corn husks, salt and hot water.

"We don't want any of our spas to have the same menus as the others – every location should be different," says Crabbe. "There are very distinct spa cultures in the world, and you can't be prescriptive."

He adds: "Previously with eforea, everybody was on the same page, but we've established a new format so that properties can self-express – even more than before. You don't want to force compliance to one method or back people into a corner with your programming."

To drive growth, Hilton has also introduced an eforea paid monthly membership for regular customers, which gives treatments, benefits and discounts.

Adding fitness

Also as part of the refresh, Hilton introduced an eforea spa & health club model. Crabbe says Europe, Asia Pacific and the Middle East are all important markets for this new element, along with select locations in North America like Sedona, which has a serious fitness culture.

Louise Moore, director of spa operations and development for Europe adds. "One of the important things from our perspective is to really ensure that the space that's being developed is market-relevant."

If Hilton has learned that a standardised model doesn't work for a worldwide

network of spas, it's betting that the same holds true for fitness. Crabbe says: "There are so many different ways of moving in a fitness space – so many trends, whether it's tribal classes or individual personal training with pilates – and the cycle of what's hot varies and swings wildly by region. And so just as we haven't applied global stencils to the spa programme, it's the same with the fitness programme; we want everything to be market-driven."

Powerful mini treatments

Despite its less-prescriptive approach to spa, Hilton is still looking for a "high degree of consistency" with the eforea brand. So a third element of the refresh includes the launch of three Journey Enhancements – mini-treatments that are available at every eforea spa worldwide.

Developed by master therapist Sean Jordan, the 25-minute Journey Enhancements take elements of ancient healing techniques from around the world and combine them with relaxation.

Moore says: "The Journey Enhancements is the common link globally that unites our ▶



► family, and the word that we've consistently used throughout is "authenticity."

Jordan knows his stuff: he's travelled and lived around the world since he was 18, studying Buddhism, meditation and healing massage, and has opened several healing and teaching centres, from India to Central America. He spent about nine months working with Hilton to create the Journey Enhancements.

Although short in duration, the new treatments target three specific areas of the body – feet; head and face; and shoulder, neck and scalp – where nerve endings are the most dense to have the greatest impact. Jordan has incorporated elements of ayurveda, Chinese acupressure, Swedish massage, trigger point therapy, Egyptian reflexology, Native American healing, Korean foot massage, Thai massage, and Indian head massage into the treatments.

The mix of the different techniques make for a powerful treatment and the

variation helps to protect therapists from repetitive strain injuries.

How they're packaged on the spa menu has been carefully thought through as well. The Journey Enhancements can be purchased à la carte, as a bundle of three, or as an add-on. Costs are competitive, but vary regionally. For instance, at Hilton Ageas Bowl Southampton, England – one of the first locations to trial the new eforea model – a single Journey Enhancement costs £45 (US\$69, €61), an add-on is priced at £30 (US\$46, €41) or all three can be booked for £100 (US\$152, €136).

"We want this to be a no-brainer add-on for the customer and we want them to feel that value if they add it on to an existing treatment," says Crabbe.

The Journey Enhancements also feature prominently at the front of each spa menu. And while still relatively new, therapists and receptionists alike have been inspired by the additions, which has

There are currently 22 eforea spas and the new concept will enable a faster rollout – 42 more will open by 2020

had a positive effect on take-up. They've been received "massively well," says Moore. Amy Phillips, spa manager at eforea in Southampton, concurs – Journey Enhancements account for 70 per cent of all booked treatments she says.

Global growth

Openings are planned everywhere from Argentina to Bahrain, with a couple in Africa: in Chad and Cape Verde. Key markets identified for the rollout are the US, UK and MEA (Middle East and Africa).

The refresh will allow for expansion in a way that's unique to each market – both through a choice of product partners and with the locally inspired Escape Journeys – but also allows for the consistency that a global entity like Hilton needs, with the signature Journey Enhancements and a strong brand presence.

"You learn pretty quickly that there are certain geographical challenges to global partnerships in the spa industry," says Crabbe. "And so we have adjusted, so that at the end of the day, the guest feels that they are spa-ing in that market." ●

Jordan developed the Journey Enhancements to focus on parts of the body with the most nerves



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spa business uniting the world of wellness

LIVING EARTH CRAFTS

Brian Paris, spa designer and VP of sales for Living Earth Crafts, explains how the company is helping spa operators become more efficient with space-saving but stylish spa equipment and accessories

As a leading spa equipment manufacturer, what problems does Living Earth Crafts seek to solve for operators?

One of the most frustrating aspects for operators is all the various components that have to be integrated into the treatments room, which are often already very challenged for space. So facilities end up with a room full of separate pieces of equipment and storage that don't have any cohesiveness about them.

For example, stone warmers and hot towel warmers have traditionally been large unsightly units, often made from white plastic, that don't fit into the kind of spa design that we've seen trending in recent years.

Simply making them in a different colour doesn't really work, as they still stand out in a room, and often have to be right in the middle of the floor. They tend to have a look and a style that's generations older.

What's the solution?

Eliminating the clutter and increasing functionality are two key aspects that we've been focused on at Living Earth Crafts. A crowded treatment room is something that really takes away from the experience element of the spa. A few years ago I started to study the trends happening in the home kitchen industry with all the clean lines and integrated cabinetry, and saw that I could create the same kind of integration with a massage table, with external components that slotted seamlessly in or underneath.

Tell us about your new launches?

We've just launched an integrated hot warming drawer that can be used for hot towels or stones, or to warm spa linens. It's a handcrafted warmer that looks beautifully modern, and slides seamlessly under any of our massage tables.

We were not able to find an acceptable unit that existed for a spa's needs, so we



Paris has experience in both design and operations

Sustainability is one of our core missions

set out to build a custom-created system. It has a complete digital control system, with temperature presets so there's no worry about scalding anyone. There's no more dings or ticking timers, as we've included a built-in digital timer for 2, 4, 6 or 10 hours with automatic cut off.

The multi-functional drawer is also available as a retrofit for any massage table. Currently, our drawer is able to mount in the side or fit at either end of a table. Its multiple heat settings are pre-adjusted for working with hot towels, a medium setting for stones, and a low setting for warming linens and robes.

Our other product is targeted specifically at the smaller spas and chains, many of which opt for the pedestal or scissor-lift tables, because they are more economical and create more floor space than traditional cabinet tables.

With these tables, traditionally therapists have had to use a bolster but there is no easy or convenient location to store them or keep them easily at hand.



The stylish new warming drawer slides seamlessly under the massage table and has a number of uses

Living Earth Crafts only uses sustainable wood in its spa furniture designs



So we've designed a very simple yet effective accessory to answer this problem. We've created a lightweight metal bolster holder that sits underneath the massage table. It can't be seen when the table is draped, yet it's very easy for the therapist to reach out with one hand and put the bolster into position when needed.

What's your background?

I've been involved in the designing, building and operating of spas for over 20 years, so I understand the problems from both sides. When I first transitioned to the spa/wellness industry, I also put myself through massage school and worked as a therapist so I could truly understand the operational issues at first hand.

Tell us more about the company...

Living Earth Craft and sister company EarthLite are the world's largest spa furniture manufacturers. We operate four spa equipment companies, and we're in 160 countries worldwide, selling more than 45,000 massage tables a year.

Living Earth Crafts is our brand for the high-end resorts, hotels, casinos and retreats. EarthLite is the biggest brand in the mid spa market and also supplies the training schools and independent therapists. StrongLite is our brand for therapists and schools only, and Inner Strength is a budget line for students or the home wellness market.

What are your eco credentials?

Sustainability is one of our core missions. Our message is that wood is a very

We use every bit of the wood with no wastage – even the sawdust goes to local farmers to local farmers

precious commodity. We do all our own sourcing, milling and manufacturing. We own a factory in China – it's the only way we can guarantee that we are dealing with 100 per cent FSC Forest woods. We use every bit of the wood with no wastage – even the sawdust goes to local farmers. Also, all our Living Earth Craft products are made in our factory in California.

About eight years ago we also completely eliminated polymers from our table tops and now only use PU vinyl, which is a recyclable product. The chemical additives in PVC are awful, and even though they may prolong the life of a table, we believe eliminating it just makes it a much better product.

Of course it makes a chink in our profit, but it's a really important message for us and we don't want to compromise. For the same reasons, we only use water-based lacquers on our woods.

Who are your clients?

We supply a large segment of the market, almost up to 80 percent of spas in the US, and we're also strong in China and Asia.

Europe was our biggest single focus last year, and we now supply a majority of major spas in Europe, working with the industry leading companies like ESPA International, Mandarin Oriental, Marriot

and Four Seasons for example, right through to smaller independent operators. All the big brands are entering Europe and as they develop, our partnership allows us to develop with them.

What about your client support?

In Europe, we have warehousing in Rotterdam, a factory outside Paris and carry live product inventories worldwide.

We've handpicked three really great European distributors to work with – Spa Vision, Ellisons and Beauty Express, who can really service our business on the ground and offer the best hands-on technical support and expertise to our clients. Each handles a variety of clients across the industry and they are all truly top-notch providers.

What do you love about the spa industry?

I really love the challenge of helping spa clients to bridge the gap between the technology, the furniture and the spa operations. Gimmicks and gaudy designs are easy to create, but I prefer to help spa therapists with practical solutions...ones that make a real difference in their work.



LIVING EARTH
CRAFTS

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L to R: Michelin-star chef Aduriz; Healthhouse marketing manager Sandra Huerga Kanzler; and director Raul Huerga

Haute cuisine regime

Guests of Spain's Healthhouse Las Dunas resort eat gourmet meals five times a day and still see an impressive amount of weight loss. So what are the chef's secrets? Julie Cramer reports

Most clients attending a weight loss retreat might expect to some form of food deprivation, even if the surroundings and treatments are five-star. However, the regime at Healthhouse Las Dunas near Marbella, Spain has taken a very different approach, with a gourmet menu created by a Michelin-star chef and a schedule where guests eat five times a day.

The resort, which offers 55 suites, the 3,000sq m (32,290sq ft) Naturhouse Spa and the 319sq m (3,430sq ft) Ekilum Spa, opened in May 2014 and has already seen some impressive results among guests, 85 per cent of whom come for weight loss.

"Our guests lose an average of five kilos a week, and we've had a high amount (80 per cent) of repeat visits in a little over a year of operation," says Healthhouse director Raul Huerga.

A large part of this success comes down to Healthhouse's decision to partner with renowned Basque chef Andoni Luis Aduriz who set up the two-Michelin star Mugaritz – rated sixth best restaurant in the world.

Aside from his accomplishments in haute cuisine, Aduriz has long had an interest in health and nutrition, having consulted on various health-related projects, including the national Senifood project to research the macro-nutrient



Just over a year old, Healthhouse already has an 80 per cent repeat visitor rate

profile of menus. So the partnership, says Huerga, "turned out to be a perfect one".

The extensive menu for Healthhouse's eight programmes – including those for detox, anti-stress and anti-smoking – was in full-time development for two months with a team of 54 of Aduriz's chefs.

Restricting calories not taste

The meals at Healthhouse contain no added salt or sugar, no high-fat dairy, there's no flour in the sauces or starchy carbohydrates served and yet guests are able to dine on appealing dishes like grilled vegetables with sea urchin, lobster

salad and caviar, cannelloni with a special béchamel, and Catalane cream.

Huerga says: "For the weight loss regime guests will either be on an intensive 900 calories per day or 1,300 calories, both of which involve a normal breakfast, a mid morning snack, a four-course lunch, mid afternoon snack and four-course dinner. The entire calorie count for dinner, for example, would be less than one cheeseburger."

For other programmes, like anti-smoking, guests might be eating up to 2,500 calories a day depending upon their individual nutritional requirements.



It took Aduriz and his team of 54 chefs a full two months to develop the eight cuisine programmes for Healthhouse



Some of our dishes take up to 72 hours to prepare under a slow reduction method, where we extract the unwanted calories like excess fat and keep the best nutritional content and flavour



Hueriga says that each day, not more than one teaspoon of olive oil goes into a guest's food on the weight loss programme, in addition to the naturally-occurring healthy fats in the organic produce such as chicken and fish.

"Our team of 11 chefs spend a lot of time on preparation. Some of our dishes take up to 72 hours to prepare under a slow reduction method, where we extract the unwanted calories like excess fat, keep the best nutritional content of the food and concentrate the flavour."

Sauces are thickened with kuzu, which derives from a Japanese plant, and is a

Menu engineering: the entire calorie count for a four-course dinner is less than a cheeseburger

naturally gluten-free starch, while desserts may be sweetened with low-sugar fruits such as berries and inulin, a naturally occurring polysaccharide. Herbs from the resort's garden also feature strongly.

Having set up the launch menu, Aduriz is still very much a hands-on consultant – creating around 50-60 dishes for each programme, for every season. The idea is that no one will eat the same dish twice.

Nutrition education

Food education is so central to the programme, that Healthhouse operates a genuine, open kitchen policy, where guests can wander in at any time of the day and see what the chefs are doing.

There's also a cookery class every two days, complete with take-home menus and even a cocktail making class that involves teas instead of alcohol. Local shopping tours are also included, so guests learn how to food shop for a healthier lifestyle.

Hueriga says: "The focus is not so much about reducing food here but about creating lifelong healthy habits."



The restaurant is a hub of the resort, but there are also two spa facilities as most programmes include treatments

▶ While the food is naturally a major part of the programme, Healthouse guests also undergo a series of tests and assessments overseen by an endocrinologist and GP. A psychologist is on hand too, to explore reasons why the guest perhaps cannot lose weight or stop smoking, and finally a nutritionist who devises a bespoke eating plan for their stay.

The spa offers therapeutic treatments such as shiatsu, reiki, deep tissue massage and seaweed baths, as well as individualised treatments according to the programme. For the Anti-Ageing package, for example, there's a focus on regenerative treatments for skin tone, and cellulite and wrinkle reduction, while for Anti-Stress there's floatation therapy.

"Within two days, we know exactly what a guest needs and how we can help them," says Huerga. "We're very proud of our results so far. When you reduce weight you reduce a lot of problems associated with diabetes [and other illnesses]. The pharmaceutical industry isn't happy with that, but we know this approach works."

Post-programme support

Another factor in the longer-term success of Healthouse will no doubt be the post-retreat support offered to all guests. Each will receive a weekly check-up call, and many will be linked up to a local Naturhouse diet and supplement shop

Andoni Luis Aduriz

Michelin-star chef Andoni Luis Aduriz says that while creating the menu at Healthouse Las Dunas wasn't straightforward, it was a task he relished. "The big challenge was to restrict the calories. Yet this limitation, far from being a handicap, became a great source of creativity. Dividing calories over several dishes, playing with portion sizes, using technical expertise to



develop fat-free versions were some of our strategies to develop the menus." He adds that another major obstacle was the mental aspect of the meal. "We worked on psychological means by using elements that satisfy hunger such as

broths and fibres, volumes through air and foam, offering dishes that take time to eat or creating the optical illusion of eating not what one sees. All without losing sight of the gastronomic perspective, indulgence and pleasure."

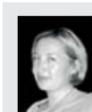
– part of a global network of over 2000 franchise shops managed by Healthouse's parent company Grupo Kilua.

Huerga says that while guests were initially around 70 per cent Spanish – perhaps down to the association with Naturhouse which is well established brand in Spain – there's now a wider spread of nationalities, including many from Britain and France.

Healthouse clearly sees a future in what it terms 'gastro-healthy' cuisine, and Huerga reveals that the company is already in discussions with Aduriz to open a chain of Healthouse restaurants, starting with the major Spanish cities of Madrid and Barcelona.

He concludes: "These plans are in the very early stages, and we will need to see how well the concept is received before we consider expansion."

"We are also currently searching for a new site for the second Healthouse, which is to be located in Miami Beach, Florida and will hopefully be open to the US market by next year." ●



Julie Cramer is a health, hospitality and travel journalist and a former BBC online news editor. Email: juliecramer@me.com



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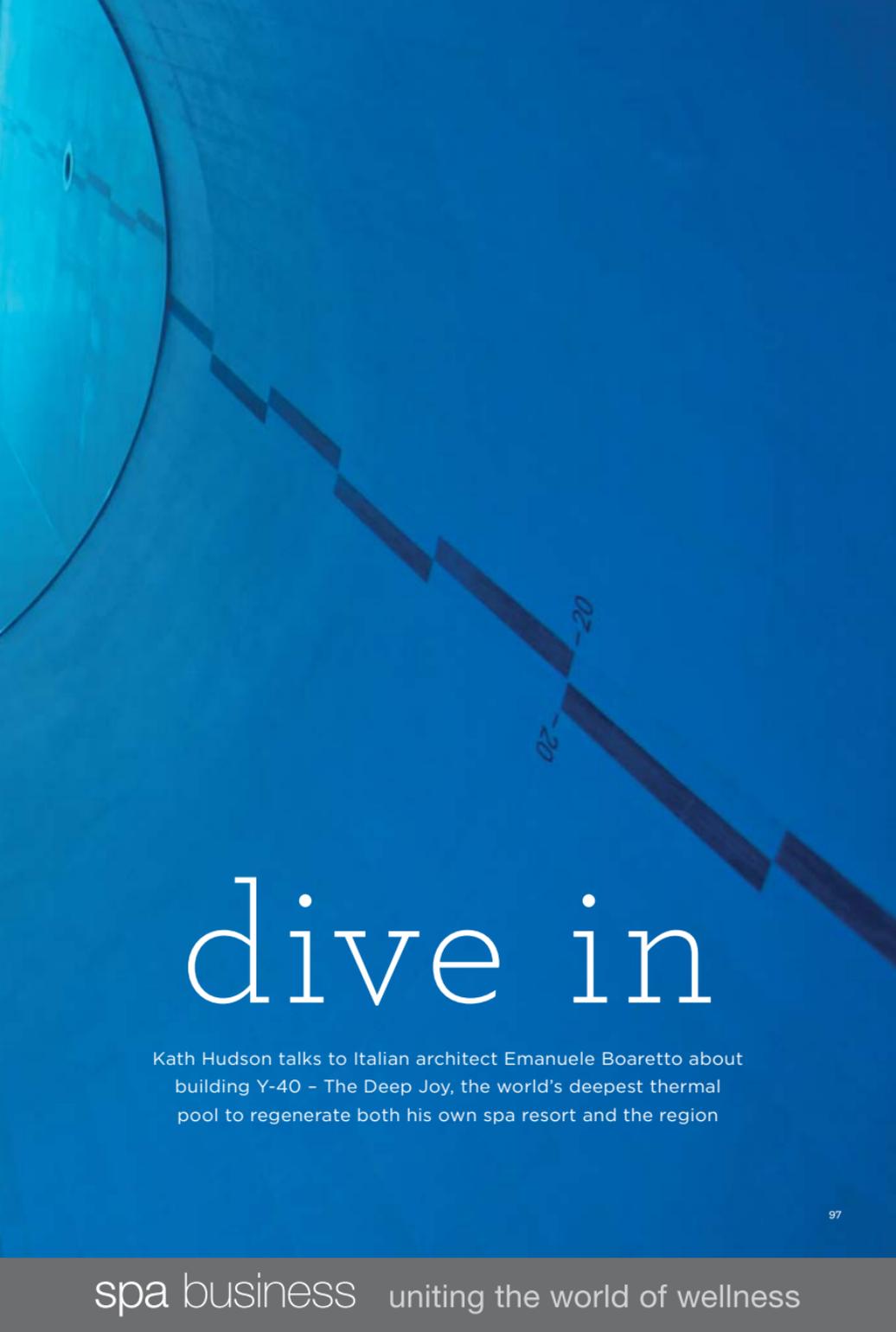


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spa business uniting the world of wellness





dive in

Kath Hudson talks to Italian architect Emanuele Boaretto about building Y-40 - The Deep Joy, the world's deepest thermal pool to regenerate both his own spa resort and the region

Italian spa resort, Hotel Terme Millepini, created an incredible, and ambitious addition to its portfolio of facilities in June 2014, when it opened a 40m diving pool, Y-40 – The Deep Joy. The goal was to turn the resort into an international diving destination.

Designed by the hotel owner, Emanuele Boaretto, with the help of diving instructor, Marco Mardollo, the facility is the world's deepest thermal water pool – the equivalent in height to nine double decker buses. It also incorporates four caves, for technical underwater diving and a transparent viewing tunnel, so people can experience the depths without getting wet.

Going to these lengths to boost business could be viewed as extreme, but Boaretto, whose family owns the resort, had nurtured the idea for almost 30 years. In many ways it was a natural progression for the business: the spa's speciality is thermal treatments using natural resources and this project allows visitors another, more active, way to experience the healing properties of the water.

A diving pool fits in well with the resort's existing hydrothermal experiences: three thermal pools whirlpools, waterfall and heat experiences.



Resort owner and pool designer
Emanuele Boaretto

FOLLOWING A DREAM

The resort, near Padova in north Italy, is located in Montegrotto Terme, one of the biggest thermal spa regions in Europe. It's these waters which made Boaretto's dream possible, as the 4,300 cubic metres of water needed for the diving pool are naturally heated to 32–34°C. This was crucial because Boaretto wanted the project to be environmentally sustainable.

"Emanuele had the idea in the 1980s, while he was studying architecture and the family was building the hotel," explains Giovanni Boaretto, his son and a Y-40 spokesperson. "The hotel is on a hill and

Y-40 is unique in its field thanks to the spa water, which cannot be outsourced

seeing the volume of earth being moved gave him the idea for a thermal dive pool."

People considered it an outlandish idea and so Boaretto didn't act on it until the hotel started to lose customers to cheaper spas in eastern Europe at the end of the noughties. While other operators could offer thermal treatments for less money, they couldn't replicate a 40m diving pool.

Emanuele Boaretto says: "Y-40 is unique in its field thanks to the spa water, which cannot be outsourced. We want to open up new medium- and long-term work prospects to try and guarantee prosperity, not only for my company, but also for the surrounding land and society."

Because economic regeneration was such an important part of the project, only Italian companies were used. To speed things up, Boaretto decided to privately fund the development, rather than try to get the idea past shareholders. After three years of planning and getting permissions in place, construction only took one year.

Up to 15 per cent of divers come on a dive & spa package. The pool has helped the resort to attract a new audience



The pool is 40m deep – the height of nine double decker buses (above); the resort already uses natural thermal water and mud in its spa (right)

HEALING WATERS

“Our water is 30 per cent more powerful than cortisone. It’s highly efficient as an anti-inflammatory, for soothing muscles and regulating hormones, without causing any bad effects” says Giovanni Boaretto. “Diving is another tool to experience the water and this is the message we’re emphasising in our marketing. Repeat visits will be from people who found something harmonious about the pool.”

The original source of the water is the uncontaminated basins of the Lessini mountains, at the foothills of the Alps, more than 80km (50 miles) away. The journey through the calcareous rock, at a depth of 2,000-3,000m (6,560-9,840ft), can take more than 25 years. During this time the water is held at high pressures and temperatures, so when it finally emerges it is enriched with mineral salts, famous for their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties.

The Euganean thermal mud, which is excavated from the thermal lake in the national park where Hotel Terme Millespini is located, is even more effective. It has a patented ingredient and provides the basis for the spa’s signature services – 14 out of



the 24 treatment rooms are set aside for mud therapy. In 2013, the mud received a European licence for its efficacy in treating arthritis, arthrosis and traumas.

SPORT AND SPA

To date yoga and pilates have been the physical disciplines used by most spas to create a union between the body and the mind. So diving is an interesting diversification, but already it looks likely to gather momentum, as more spas add diving to their programmes (see p100).

“We expect there will be more of a relationship between dive and spa facilities in the future,” says Giovanni Boaretto, explaining that 15 per cent of divers come on a dive and spa package.

“Y-40 has sparked a lot of interest and Emanuele is now consulting all over the world on similar projects, in Malaysia, Taiwan, China and Japan. Rather than replicate Y-40, he’s looking at how the pool could reflect each location.”

There are synergies between diving and spa, as a philosophy of mindfulness is conveyed through the free diving courses, which combine the discipline with meditation, massage and yoga.

“It’s not about pushing people to break records with free diving, but about making a connection with the depth. We teach them how to feel well in the water, which then allows them to go deep,” says Giovanni Boaretto. “In order to free dive, you must have a stable mind.”

It's not about pushing people to break records with free diving, but about making a connection with the depth

▶ Already Y-40 is being sought out as a training location for many athletes, including Italy's synchronised swimming team, the fencing team and international swimmers. Giovanni Boaretto says they are all coming to work on their mental (rather than physical) training in the water.

FINDING CUSTOMERS

Opening the world's deepest thermal dive pool has boosted business: visits have increased by thousands in the last year. Divers are one market. It's also ideal for photo shoots and for companies which want to test equipment.

However, the team is realistic that many people have visited because it's new and lots of divers only visit a location once. At €35 (US\$40, £26) per session, the pool must be kept busy in order to pay back the €15m (US\$17m, £22.5m) investment, so the pressure is on the marketing team.

Different markets are being actively sought, particularly in the US and the UK and free diving and spa packages are being designed, with the aim of keeping people at the hotel for three to four nights.

"People won't spend €700 just to dive here: we're not the Maldives and we don't have fish," says Giovanni Boaretto. "So we're selling a memorable and holistic experience: pushing the fact that the water offers a joyful, harmonious experience, our national park is a very calm place to be, the surroundings are beautiful, there's wine tasting and it's easy to visit Venice, Vienna and Padova."

Emanuele Boaretto's bold move could be the start of a new trend for spas to look for sports which complement their offering to broaden their market to a fresh audience of highly engaged customers. ●



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Sporting Trend

Taking advantage of their settings, a number of spa resorts in Asia have added free diving to their list of offers in 2015

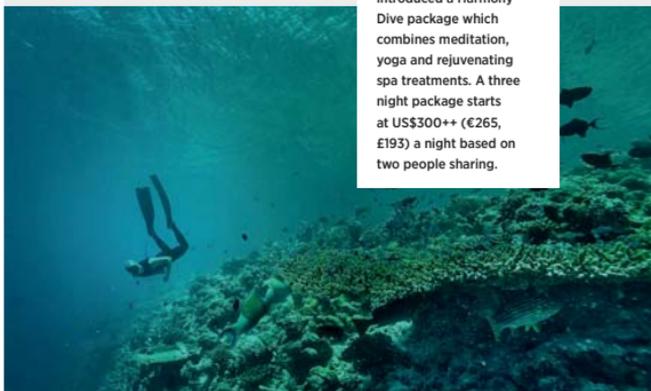
▶ Soneva Fushi has lined up a number of workshops in partnership with big names such as free diving world record holder Herbert Nitsch. A five day, all-inclusive course for up to five people at the Maldivian resorts costs US\$150,000 (€134,000, £99,000).



◀ Dusit Thani Maldives joined forces with free diving organisation Apnea Total to launch an internationally-approved free diving centre earlier this year. Basic, advanced and master courses are offered in packages of two days, three days and five weeks. The resort says prices fluctuate and are not fixed.



This September, Alila Manggis in Bali introduced a Harmony Dive package which combines meditation, yoga and rejuvenating spa treatments. A three night package starts at US\$300++ (€265, £193) a night based on two people sharing.





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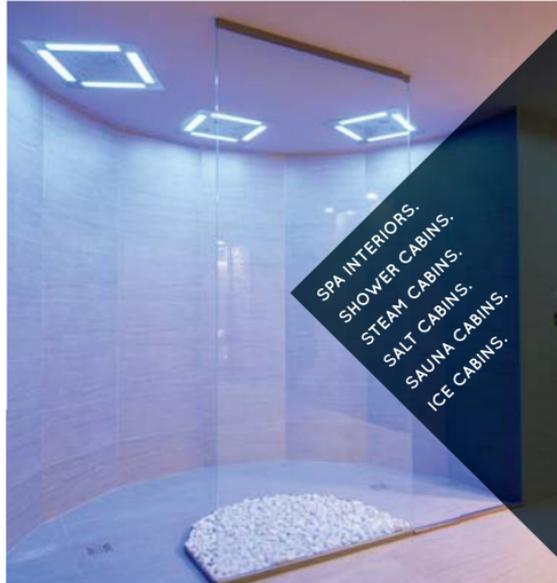
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Functionality Focus

PART
4

Spa software CEOs pick out their system's top modules and tell Kate Parker about what makes them stand out

Kate Parker, writer, kateparker@spabusiness.com

Hervé Colly

Executive officer
SequoiaSoft

Module: **E-Nymphea Collexion**

What's your top spa module?

E-Nymphea Collexion, our online booking system launched in late 2014, is a comprehensive solution for spas that includes a responsive website, online booking, gift vouchers and a marketing module, all connected with our spa software Nymphéa, in real time.



What are the key features of the module?

It allows spas to combine online booking of treatments and rituals and the sale of gift vouchers, in which the client can even add a personal message.

To maximise the profitability of wellness centres, E-Nymphea Collexion also enables users to book fitness and collective classes in real time, as well as manage their subscriptions.



■ The module includes a responsive website, real-time online booking, gift vouchers and marketing capability

In addition, there's an integrated marketing module for online promotions, novelties, automated cross-selling and up-selling, and also an alternative booking option in case the appointment slot isn't available – a key feature in online reservation, when nobody's there to guide the client in his or her purchase.

How do spas use it?

It's a very powerful tool for spa managers who are using it to galvanise their digital

“E-Nymphea Collexion is a very powerful tool for spa managers who are using it to galvanise their digital strategy and boost their sales”

strategy and boost their sales. As clients can manage their appointments whenever and wherever they want, it saves spas a lot of time at reception, allowing them to focus on welcoming their clients, and we are glad to take part in this.

Spa-kit.net keyword: SequoiaSoft



Stephanie Jennings

SVP of sales
Mindbody

Module: Mindbody Express

What's your top spa module?

Using Mindbody Express, spa owners can access their schedules, sales, reporting and marketing tools and client information straight from their mobile devices. The module, which launched in 2013, also lets spa owners and staff run mobile payment transactions from any location through the mobile credit card swiper and digital signature.



What are its key features?

Mindbody Express is a great tool for spa owners who are looking to manage all of their spa operations remotely. It gives them the freedom and flexibility to run their businesses via mobile devices from anywhere at any time.

They can check spa schedules, look up client notes and contact information and communicate with customers about appointment confirmations, reminders and cancellations. They can even run sales reports while grocery shopping!



■ Staff can stand with clients to take payments, providing a more personal exchange

“ The mobile payment transaction and digital signature tool also means purchases and interactions are not restricted to the front desk ”

The mobile payment transaction and digital signature tool also means purchases and interactions are not restricted to the front desk – they can take place in the ‘customer comfort zone’ such as in a treatment room or waiting room.

Staff can swipe cards, sell products, packages and gift cards, or update a client account while standing with the customer, providing a more personal exchange.

How does it make life easier for spas?

The mobile revolution is upon us. Consumers are increasingly using their mobile devices to find and book spa services, and business owners are increasingly using their mobile devices to manage their business operations and communicate with clients.

Spa-kit.net keyword: Mindbody



■ Owners can access their schedules, sales, marketing and client information from mobile devices

Prashant Nandha

Senior director
Paradigm Shift

Module: eNgage

What's your top module for spas?

Our eNgage module, released in 2007, supports all aspects of spa customer recognition and engagement, from web reservations to mobile customer and member portals.



How does it make life easier for spas?

Customers want immediate access to reservations and loyalty points with the ability to make and change bookings at

any time in real time across the spa. This is a strong feature of the module that grows in functionality over time – we listen carefully to feedback in order to enhance the users' experience.

What are the key module features?

It offers web booking, mobile reservations and loyalty portal, member portals, SMS and real-time customer messaging.

Ease of use, best of class functionality, and an understanding of spa operator needs are its main selling points. Our solutions are for operators who have outgrown their current spa systems and are looking for greater power and functionality.

How do spas use it?

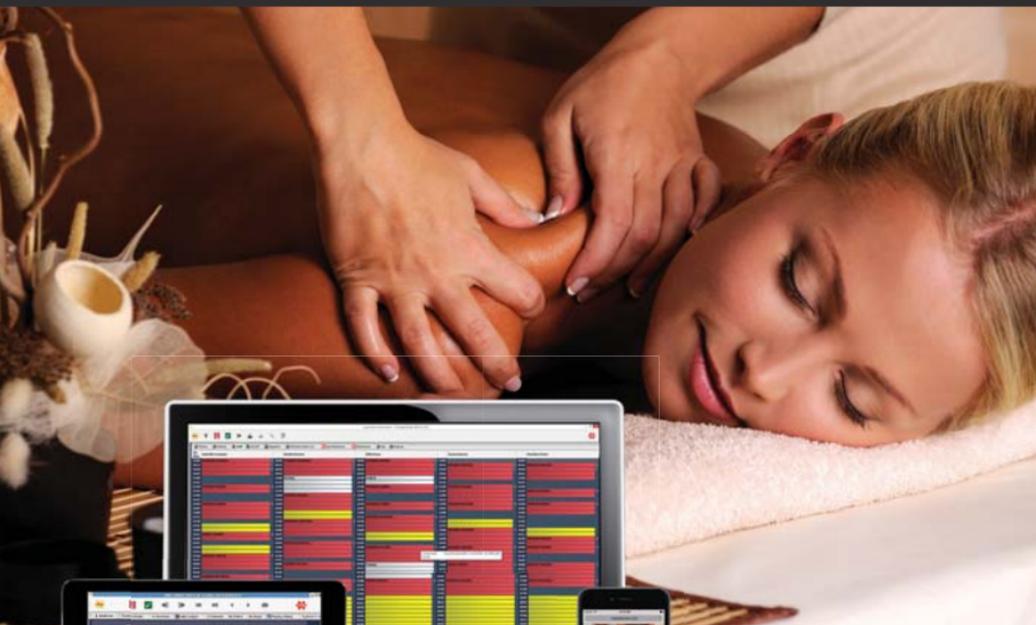
Our range of customers include large-scale spas with complex requirements including cluster properties connected over distances, integrated with multiple

“ Customers want immediate access to reservations and loyalty points with the ability to make and change bookings at any time in real time across the spa ”

third party solutions. They each use eNgage with its many facets to connect with clients in many different ways. For example, a spa in Singapore uses our module with SMS integration and messaging apps to keep in touch with customers. Meanwhile, certain spas in Japan use eNgage to provide a real-time booking engine on their site, together with multiple third-party websites, all of which are reflected in real time at the spa.

Spa-kit.net keywords: Paradigm Shift

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Tech update



Zenoti will now target fitness and wellness firms with its software

ManageMySpa rebrands as Zenoti

Software firm ManageMySpa has changed its name to Zenoti to reflect its growing customer base which now includes wellness, fitness and beauty operators.

Commenting on the rebrand, CEO Sudheer Koneru says: "Our solution has evolved significantly since we first started. Our new brand name allows us to move forward by acknowledging our solution for

new markets, while still satisfying our original brand promise."

Zenoti, which launched five years ago, has 5,000 clients in 40 countries. Its cloud software serves as the operational backbone for numerous spas. Zenoti will now actively pursue fitness, yoga and pilates studios as well as other businesses in the wellness and fitness sectors.

[Spa-kit.net](#) keyword: **ManageMySpa**



Marriott UK teamed up with Concept for its spa booking system



Marriott UK launches spa booking website

Marriott Hotels in the UK has teamed up with Concept Software Systems to enable spa bookings via its newly launched website.

Developed by Redberry, the new website uses the Concept API to connect directly to the Concept Spa and Leisure booking system giving real-time availability to clients. The software gives an enhanced service and convenience to

Marriott's spa clientele at its 18 spas across the country.

Concept's managing director Malcolm Rennie says: "The Marriott brand is known globally for its commitment to its customers, technology and innovation, and we're delighted that the company is leveraging our software to better serve its spa clientele."

[Spa-kit.net](#) keywords: **Concept Software**



PHOTO: FOTOFEST

Europeans use the search engine to find discounted spa treatments

TAC acquires online portal WellnessBooking.com

Software provider The Assistant Company (TAC) has advanced its position in the spa industry by procuring the German firm WellnessBooking.com.

A well-known online search engine of discounted spa treatments in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the web engine allows users to book services to their desired spa providers, health clubs or beauty studios and in return receive a voucher for redeeming the purchased service.

The two companies have worked together since 2012 on implementing a successful interface between TAC Reservation Assistant and the booking platform. Its overall function is simple: all spa, beauty and wellness establishments, including customers of TAC can set up daily discounted services which are then accessible through the online channel allowing the ability to reach specific target groups.

[Spa-kit.net](#) keyword: **TAC**



Macdonald has 23 spas which link to the Premier booking system

Macdonald Hotels joins forces with Premier Software

UK group Macdonald Hotels is now offering real-time spa bookings thanks to a partnership with Premier Software, the company behind the Premier Spa system.

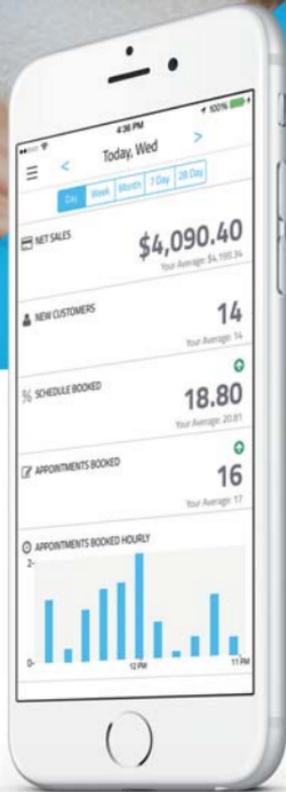
The booking platform is available for its 23 spa via [www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/spa-fitness](#) and offers instant access to customers wishing to make a reservation for spa days, spa breaks and treatments.

Jeanette Jones, managing director of spa and leisure at Macdonald Hotels says: "Our customers can instantly check availability and book what they want when they want. It really does take the stress and hassle out of booking - whether it's a much-needed relaxing night away, a day with the girls or a pampering treatment."

[Spa-kit.net](#) keywords: **Premier Software**

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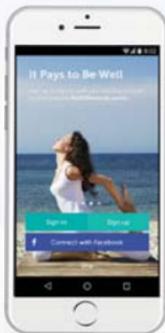
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Product innovation

Spa Business highlights some of the latest spa design, product, treatment and equipment launches

Kate Corney, product editor, *Spa Business*



Spashell – the modular, add-on spa facility

A pre-built, self-contained facility called Spashell is to debut in March 2016. The modular concept, developed by UK consultancy Spa Creators over the course of four years, is intended to provide an additional revenue stream for boutique hotels and venue-based businesses which might not have the time, money or expertise to design and build their own large-scale spa.

Spashell is a fully functioning spa with six to eight treatment rooms, thermal

experiences, deep relaxation area, juice bar and lounge with an outdoor terrace and hot tub. It has a footprint of 500sq m (5,382 ft) and requires no foundations, although owners may need to look at planning permission.

Its modular construction method means it can be installed in two weeks and operational in three. The client provides the mains electric and water which the hub is plumbed into.

Spa-kit keywords: **Spa Creators**

Deep Nature adds amenities

Spa consultancy Deep Nature, the company behind The Brando spa, has designed a line of luxury spa amenities to be distributed by Groupe GM.

The consultancy has been developing, natural and environmentally-friendly wellbeing products for its own spas for 10 years and is now launching the amenities range to include a shower gel, body lotion, shampoo, conditioner and soap.

The line is to be distributed to hotels and spas worldwide,



including its own Deep Nature spas and thalassotherapy centres to complement its bespoke treatments and sensory atmosphere, from 2016.

Spa-kit keywords: **Deep Nature**



Salis salt room provides sensory wellness offer

ISO Benessere has created a bespoke salt room with Himalayan salt walls called Salis. Made in Italy and now being exported worldwide, the Salis salt room consists of modular components designed to fit a spa space quickly and easily. It has a self-supporting structure and a programmable control panel to adjust the temperature and humidity levels. Music, chromotherapy and aromas complete this wellness offer. The microparticles sprayed into the grotto are said to penetrate the skin and enrich it with mineral salts and trace elements.

Spa-kit keyword: **Benessere**



Living Earth Crafts' gets comfy

Added customer comfort and customer satisfaction come to Living Earth Crafts in the form of its new FacePillow and Strata FacePillow. Both products use Cloudfill, a comfort filling comprising poly gel fibres to provide a downy soft, supportive cushion.

The FacePillow has premium needle stitching and is made with eco-friendly Natursoft upholstery. The Strata FacePillow (pictured) has viscoelastic memory foam as well as the Cloudfill blend.

Spa-kit keywords: **Living Earth**



Going going gong – Zen and Sounds new release

Zen and Sounds Records has released a volume of gong bath sounds for spas, *Sunset*, recorded by sound therapist Swann. Available on CD and as a download, it includes one hour of mindful sounds produced by the gong bath group therapy meditation technique. This is an ancient Asian sound method that aims to produce a sense of relaxation and wellbeing through the vibration of all the water within the body.



Spa-kit keywords: Zen and Sounds



Fashionizer uniform ordering made easier

Fashionizer, creators of hospitality uniforms, has unveiled an online ordering and stock management portal service letting clients work out their order and adjust their requirements on the web before submitting it. Clients can log in and see the full range of their own

uniform collection, from which they choose each size and style they need. A quote is generated automatically and the order can be placed or saved to amend later. Additional features include a look book, client reviews and measuring information.

Spa-kit keyword: Fashionizer



Comfort Zone finds a way to Sublime Skin

Sublime Skin is the latest programme of home care, professional treatments and lifestyle recommendations from Comfort Zone. The range is designed to restore the water, proteins and lipids in the skin by using a blend of natural oils and butters instead of silicones.

The products also combine hyaluronic acid and white peony extract to protect and stimulate the skin's water and fat content. The range includes Sublime Skin Serum, a skin cream and a rich skin cream and a skin peel pad.

Spa-kit keywords: Comfort Zone

Anne Semonin uses cryotherapy

Anne Semonin's new cryotherapy body treatments use ultra-cooling methods to naturally shock the body into action. The cold therapy constricts and then relaxes the blood vessels, allowing products

to penetrate the skin more easily. A Cryo-Lipoliss Body Treatment, performed with Cryo Massage Balls, is designed to detox and a deep-release



massage treatment uses the Lipoliss Firming Body Serum and the Lipoliss Anti-Cellulite Gel (left) in conjunction with the benefits of cryotherapy.

Spa-kit keyword: Semonin

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Scent and colour combined in GX Diffusers

Guoxin Electric, China, has designed and manufactured a range of aroma diffusers and humidifiers which use ultrasonic frequency (rather than heat) to create a fine, cool mist.

The newest GX Diffuser is the Petal Shape Oil Diffuser which has a flower-shaped base and a nozzle with colour-changing LED lights that are activated via a sound sensor when someone speaks or music is played. The base comes in natural and dark wood, black or white shades or with an abstract paint effect. It can hold up to 220ml of water and will make a 20-40sq m room smell nice for four to eight hours.

Spa-kit keyword: **Guoxin**

Seamless application with Gharieni's Corian Collection

The Gharieni Corian Collection features a new solid, non-porous material made by DuPont which uses natural minerals and acrylic resin. Benefits include a seamless application with no joins, making surfaces easier to clean, and a "sensual, almost organic texture".

The wellness bed MO1, the Libra hydro table and the new PediSpa, are now offered with Corian to give a "unique, warm-to-the-touch experience". Numerous modern colour shades and optical textures are available.

Spa-kit keyword: **Gharieni**



Thalgo goes medical with MCEutic

Thalgo has developed a medically-inspired, professional, cosmeceutical brand help combat the signs of ageing and target skin imperfections.

MCEutic has been designed to mimic mesotherapy, but without the injections, thanks to its patented Mésolift Marin ingredient. Mésolift Marin blends vitamins, minerals, amino acids, hyaluronic acid and an anti-ageing nucleoside to "break away from traditional cosmetics, deliver a rigorous cosmetic treatment capable of producing visible effects on the skin."

Also key is Néo-skin, a patented complex formulated to treat deep blemishes and skin irregularities.

These ingredients underpin MCEutic's Rénovation Radicale products - including an intensive peel, a 'detox regenerator' and resurfacing cream serums - and a diagnostic treatment.

Spa-kit keyword: **Thalgo**



Glass-ceramic covers by Schott to be used in saunas

International tech group Schott has developed a glass-ceramic for high-temperature applications. Capable of withstanding temperatures of up to 950°C, Nextrema can be used as a cover for infrared heaters in saunas. While conventional radiant heaters often emit a harsh bright light, covers made from translucent or tinted Nextrema

transform the glare of the heater into a pleasant glow, with little heat loss.

The component is already featured in infrared radiant heaters in health and wellness areas, in industrial drying and in outdoor heating where it's used to warm up terraces, winter gardens, and other private and public outdoor spaces.

Spa-kit keyword: **Schott**

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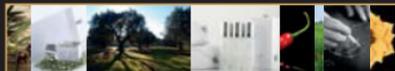


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NAP TIME

Power naps may help your brain retain new information say German researchers

Operators such as YeloSpa and Spa Eastman which offer short sleep sessions to weary customers (see below) could be helping them to maintain their memories and enhance their capability to learn as well as recharge their batteries, according to a new, albeit small, study.

A group of researchers at Saarland University in Germany have discovered that a snooze lasting 45-60 minutes leads to a five-fold improvement in how the brain retrieves information.

Memory test

The study involved a memory recall exam of 41 university students. The volunteers were asked to learn 90 single words and 120 word pairs and were tested on



JFKA/SHUTTERSTOCK

■ A 45- to 60-minute snooze produces a five-fold improvement in memory

what they could remember immediately afterwards. The word pairs were essentially meaningless, using random duos such as 'milk-taxi', so that participants would not have heard them before and would not recall them due to familiarity.

After the initial memory test, one half of the participants was allowed a brief nap, sleeping for an average of 64 minutes. The other half (the control group), sat down to watch a DVD. All of the participants

were then retested to see how many of the words they could recall again.

The results, published in the *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory* journal, showed that while there was no memory improvement in those who slept, they could still remember a similar amount of words from before. Their memory was "just as good as it was before sleeping," says research supervisor Axel Mecklinger.

In comparison, those who watched the DVD performed significantly worse when it came to remembering word pairs.

Sleep spindles

The researchers also used an EEG to measure the brainwave activity of those who slept to see if there was a correlation with how they performed in the memory test. They focused on the role of the hippocampus, a part of the brain where memories are consolidated and transferred into long-term memory storage.

Sara Studte, a graduate specialising in neuropsychology, who also worked on the research says: "We examined a particular type of brain activity, known as 'sleep spindles', that plays an important role in memory consolidating during sleep." A sleep spindle is shown on an EEG as a short burst of rapid oscillations. The findings confirmed that the greater the number of sleep spindles, the better a person can remember things.

Although the number of participants in the study was limited, Mecklinger still feels the overall findings are telling. He concludes: "A short nap at the office or in school is enough to significantly improve learning success." ●



A 20-minute power nap session at YeloSpa, NYC, costs US\$20

SLEEP TREAT

YeloSpa has offered power nap treatments since opening in New York in 2007. A YeloCab nap on a zero gravity bed can be customised with aromatherapy and sound settings and costs US\$1 a minute for a 20- to 40-minute session. The signature menu

item is also available at YeloSpa's newer locations in São Paulo, Brazil and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Spa Eastman in Montreal, Canada also offers a NeuroSpa treatment. A 30-minute session in its Power Nap Station with multi-frequency acoustic vibrations is priced at CA\$45 (US\$34, €30, £22).

*Studte S et al. Nap sleep preserves associative but not item memory performance. *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*. Feb 2015.

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