

spa business

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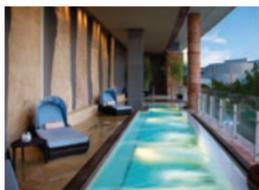
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All about the people

With global staff shortages threatening to stall economic recovery, it's time to reboot our commitment to driving improvements in pay and working conditions across the spa and wellness industry

As we surge out of lockdowns around the world, extreme staff shortages are being experienced across a large number of industry sectors, including spa and wellness.

The US Chamber of Commerce is reporting around 11m open vacancies, for example, while the UK government says job vacancies have broken the 1m mark for the first time since records began.

During lockdowns, many staff who were let go took work in other sectors, found the grass greener and are not returning. This is increasing the competition for talent and seeing the spa and wellness sector at a disadvantage due to low pay.

The 'quit rate' is also soaring in some areas of industry, as people realise jobs are plentiful and move on if they're not happy, giving good employers a clear advantage.

The spa and wellness industry has had a chronic challenge with recruitment for the past decade, with staff shortages commonplace even before the pandemic. This layering on of post-lockdown staffing pressures is simply exacerbating a fundamental weakness in the sector and bringing things to crisis point for some operators.

Lack of staff means turnaways and empty treatment rooms, reducing margins, dissuading investors and disappointing customers who are unable to get treatments.

This systemic problem has been undermining profitability for years. PricewaterhouseCoopers - in its profitability research studies for ISPA - has regularly flagged up the fact that the industry has not been optimising its capacity, due to operators' failure to hire enough staff, with this putting the brakes on growth.

In 2017, I wrote an editorial for this page highlighting the existence of a range of poor employment practices in parts of the sector - from modern slavery to bad pay - and



Attracting and retaining talented people must be an industry priority

“We’re calling on industry leaders to build the sector’s reputation as an excellent employer”

calling on industry leaders to make a commitment to building the sector's reputation as an excellent employer.

Unfortunately, little progress has been made and this situation has now escalated to the point where we must recognise this isn't only a recruitment challenge, it's an existential and reputational crisis.

Until we can establish the industry as a great place to work - across the board - with fair pay and good working conditions, the behaviour of unethical operators will continue to harm the prospects of the entire sector ●

Liz Terry, editorial director @elizterry

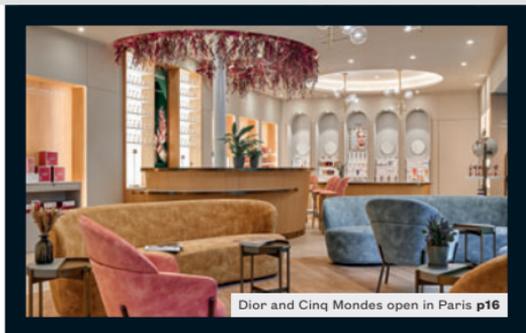
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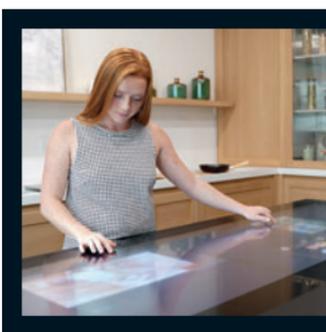
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spa people



We can start a wellness revolution by making sure more people are exposed to the benefits of functional medicine

Dr Mark Hyman

In 2021, the world is still grappling with the pandemic and its consequent mental and physical health effects. Plus, one in three adults globally suffer from at least one chronic condition.

In the midst of this health crisis, Dr Mark Hyman MD believes functional medicine has the power to be life-changing in the health and wellbeing of patients.

Hyman is a practising family physician, leader in the field of functional medicine, 14-times *New York Times* best-seller and head of strategy and innovation of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine.

Functional medicine is a patient-centred healing approach that takes all aspects of a person

into account, including lifestyle, genetics and the environment to determine the triggers of diseases or chronic conditions, and also to help healthy individuals stay well.

Once triggers are identified, a customised healthy living plan incorporating components of traditional, holistic and alternative medicine practices is created to address physical, mental and emotional needs and stressors.

For Hyman, nutrition is functional medicine's first-line therapy, but it also has a vast array of different modalities ranging from acupuncture to iridology and magnet therapy to body and breathwork.

"Food is the most important tool in my medical toolbox," he explains, "It works faster, better and is cheaper than most medications."

"I believe we can start a wellness revolution by making sure more people are exposed to the benefits of functional and integrative medicine, and by making sure top facilities have the most qualified candidates to help lead this charge."

To put words into action, Hyman recently joined forces with hospitality recruiting firm Hutchinson Consulting to



Hyman says food is the most important tool in his medical toolbox

help source and refer facilities that need certified functional and integrative medicine physicians, nurse practitioners and other health professionals.

The partnership came to fruition after Hutchinson Consulting partner Michael Tompkins and Hyman reconnected, after working together 20 years ago, to address the fact that demand for functional medicine recruitment specialists is outpacing the number of certified providers.

"We noticed a deficit in pairing functional and integrative physician and nurse practitioners with the best resorts, spas and wellness centres around the US," said Tompkins.

"For over two decades, patients have been seeking answers to chronic health conditions and experienced little benefit from traditional approaches. Instead they've found success with functional medicine treatments."

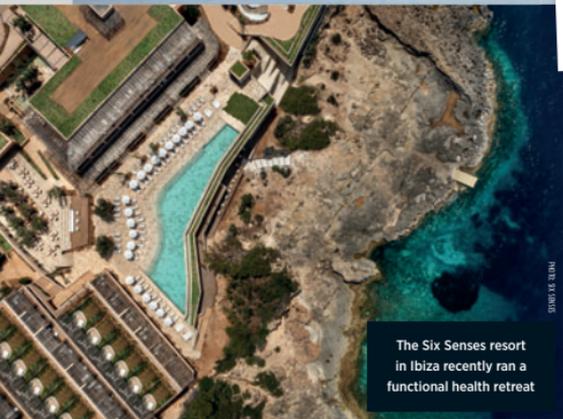
"The process of weaving a web of modalities to treat



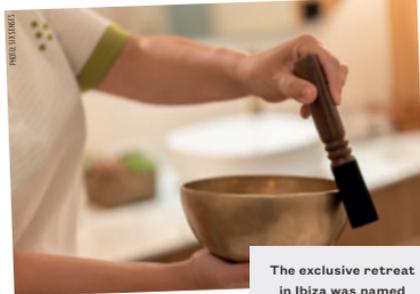
PHOTO: JENNIFER SMITH

Michael Tompkins

PHOTO: JAMES HARRIS



The Six Senses resort in Ibiza recently ran a functional health retreat



The exclusive retreat in Ibiza was named 'Grow a New Body'



the whole person to restore homeostasis is why functional medicine is such a remarkable form of treatment," he added.

"Our collaboration with Dr Hyman is spurred on by a joint effort and desire to place the best with the best, as pairing the brightest talent with admired wellness destinations is a win/win for both the providers and the properties."

So far, the partnership has placed specialists in wellness centres or independently owned functional medicine physician practices.

Most candidates have been sourced via the internet, private practices or through following graduates of the University of Arizona's Andrew Weil Centre for Integrative Medicine or the Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM). The majority of employers seek board-certified physicians with additional certifications in functional or integrative medicine from the University of Arizona or the IFM.

Ultimately, Hyman and Hutchinson Consulting are on a shared mission to find functional medicine practitioners who are adept listeners, scientific investigators and team players open to collaboration with a role-model 'practice what you preach' lifestyle.

In other industry news, luxury resort brand Six Senses recently tapped Hyman's functional medicine expertise to launch a retreat at its brand new Ibiza resort in Spain.

Named 'Grow a New Body', the exclusive programme was limited to just 10 participants and designed to help attendees boost their mood and energy levels, strengthen the immune system, prevent inflammation, relieve chronic pain and slow down the ageing process.

Hyman and Six Senses collaborated with medical anthropologist and Shamanic energy medicine specialist Dr Alberto Villoldo to conceive the retreat.

The programme was designed to lay the foundation for a healthy body that ages slowly and joyfully

The programme was designed to lay the foundation for a healthy body that ages slowly and joyfully and push the boundaries into less visible fields such as sacred energy and reconnection alongside cutting-edge science, detox strategies, and power-plant foods that can switch-on every cell's ability to regenerate and repair.

Costing €3,800 (£3,260, US\$4,487) per person, the retreat included three shaman/energy medicine sessions, four oxygen altitude training sessions, four IV infusions, six lectures with Villoldo and Hyman and daily group morning yoga, hike or walk and evening meditations.

Guests also underwent a wellness screening, three glutathione infusions, seven bodywork sessions and entry and exit energy-medicine evaluation.

The offer included full board accommodation, neuro-nutrients and supplements, and access to daily wellness activities and the spa's thermal experiences.

We were ahead of our time creating the spa – the idea of creating a space simply to take care of your wellness seemed outlandish at the time – but for me, it felt natural and innate

Carole Bamford founder, Bamford



Carole Bamford set up her first spa in 2004, after a trip to India

The story behind luxury lifestyle and wellness brand Bamford began in 2004 after Lady Carole Bamford decided to explore her passion for meditation, healing treatments and holistic therapies sparked by a trip to India in her twenties.

Bamford – wife of billionaire and chair of JCB Sir Anthony Bamford – was inspired after meeting yoga instructor Vетtri Selvan during her travels. So, in 2004 she invited Selvan to England to help her set up the first Bamford Spa and bring what she'd learned about healing in India to the UK.

The brand was launched as a branch of the Bamford's original organic farming business Daylesford Organic, one of the first real trailblazers in the organic movement in the country.

Daylesford Organic was born after Bamford convinced her husband to begin transforming their family estate in the picturesque Cotswolds into sustainable, organic farming land. Since then, the Bamfords' 2,500-acre Daylesford Farm has blossomed into a thriving working farm that produces a rainbow of fresh produce, available to buy in an onsite farm shop, gardening shop, kitchen, bakery and creamery.

Guests can also stay over in luxury cottages, make their way

to a cookery school and, most importantly, visit the birthplace of the Bamford brand, its flagship spa called The Bamford Wellness Spa – formerly The Haybarn Spa – which has recently undergone a multi-million-pound renovation.

The new 1,150sq m facility has doubled in size and gained a wet area with a herbal steamroom, crystal sauna, wellness pool as well as new treatment rooms and a café. The spa is housed in an agricultural barn complete with a palette of cool white tones, flecks of greenery and exposed woodwork, all bathed in light after the architects maintained the original structure's imposing high ceilings.

The destination offers a host of Bamford spa rituals blending eastern and western modalities, retreats and a schedule of indoor and outdoor classes, including gong therapy, meditation, pilates and yoga.

The spa also encompasses a new Bamford Outdoor Wellness Tipi and a Crystal Hut for healing sessions with a clairvoyant.

Bamford feels the spa's atmosphere is calming and soothing, due to the views out to the greenery of the orchard and countryside which root the space in nature, creating a sense of peace and mirroring the healing aspect of the space itself.



PHOTO: BAMFORD

The organic spa's offering blends eastern and western modalities and rituals

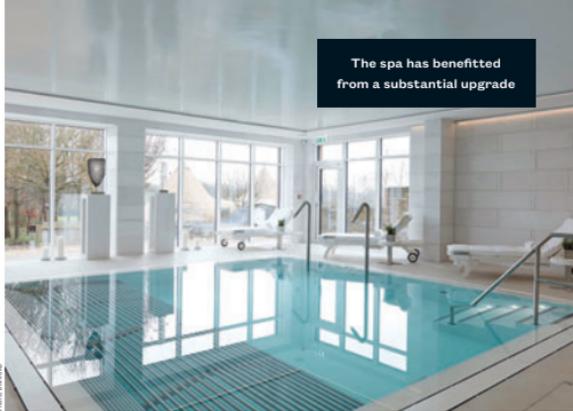


PHOTO: BAMFORD

The spa has benefited from a substantial upgrade

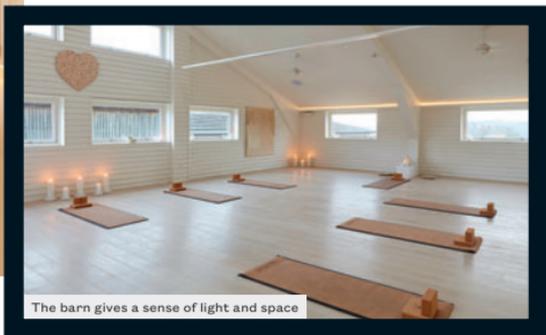


PHOTO: BAMFORD

The barn gives a sense of light and space

"Bamford was a natural evolution from Daylesford," she explains. "After we'd made the decision to farm organically, my interest and concern for the way I was doing things grew and I began to look at other areas of my life and question the choices I was making."

"Sometimes I think we were ahead of our time with creating the spa - too early in fact. The idea of creating a space simply to take care of your wellness, as opposed to your medical health via a doctor, seemed outlandish at the time. But for me, it felt natural and innate."

"Part of being organic is about being kind to your body and a spa is rooted in the same belief; the need to nurture ourselves and nurture each other."

She also strongly believes in nurturing nature in all her endeavours, which has led to sustainability becoming the green beating heart of both her businesses. "Everything we do at Bamford is led by nature and

by a desire to work in harmony with it, to harness its powers and use them to nourish and soothe our bodies, but also to protect and support it - to ensure we are not the last generation to enjoy its beauty and might."

Nowadays, Bamford has expanded to encompass a second branded spa in London, an app, a sustainable luxury clothing and homeware collection and a natural beauty line powered by aromatic botanicals - available both online and in stores.

The Bamford beauty collection includes massage oils, body creams, oils, balms, gels and scrubs, supplements and fragrances, as well as haircare, wellness tools - such as Gua Shas - and a comprehensive skincare line.

To date, Bamford is supplying eight global spa locations ranging from Tokyo and Brooklyn to the Maldives.

Lockdown afforded the brand the time to focus on and nurture

Everything we do at Bamford is led by nature and by a desire to work in harmony with it



its digital offering, which saw it roll out online classes and virtual skincare consultations to keep its spa offering accessible.

"Our online offering and product range are ever evolving in response to customers' needs and in response to changing wellness concerns," explains Bamford.

"We're witnessing really creative ways of doing or producing things more sustainably and that gives me great hope. We need to keep identifying the game-changing solutions - the nature-based solutions - and technologies that are going to help shape that future."

Looking ahead, her goal for Bamford is for it to continue to innovate and work towards using its products and spas to help people live more sustainably while nurturing their wellbeing.

"Nobody can do things perfectly, but by continuing to question yourself you can adjust and improve," she says.

The company has a second property under development in Klaipėda

“
We’ve long had a dream to create a destination spa hotel for younger clients

Egle Rukšėnaitė

The E77 Company owner and founder

After three years in development, the doors have opened at the Spa Hotel Esė, a purpose-built spa property for millennials in Lithuania, owned by Rūta and Vytenis Zalaga.

The concept for the hotel was developed by consultancy E77 and masterminded by E77 owner and founder, Egle Rukšėnaitė.

She says the opening was borne out of a desire to create a hotel that fulfils the need for a spa destination targeting younger clients.

“At E77, we’ve long had a dream to create a destination spa hotel

for younger clients,” she says. “In my opinion, this new space is somewhere where traditional luxury does not shine, but instead luxury is expressed through art, cosy spaces, natural design and a high-quality spa offering an unadulterated and sustainable experience full of innovation.”

Spa Hotel Esė is located in the spa town of Birštonas known for its clean air, therapeutic mud and mineral water springs. The Lithuanian word Esė actually translates to personal story or own reflections and helped inspire E77 to conceive the spa hotel

as an opportunity for guests to create, compose and share.

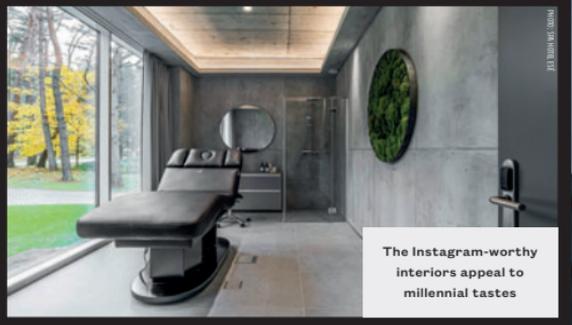
The new destination is complete with a 300sq m spa including four treatment rooms, an aromatherapy sauna, Finnish sauna, Jacuzzi, steam bath sauna and swimming pool.

The destination has been conceptualised specifically for the modern tech-savvy millennial customer, with details including automated self-service check-in and check-out for the hotel, an electronic entrance to the spa and smart door locks to cater to a millennial mindset.

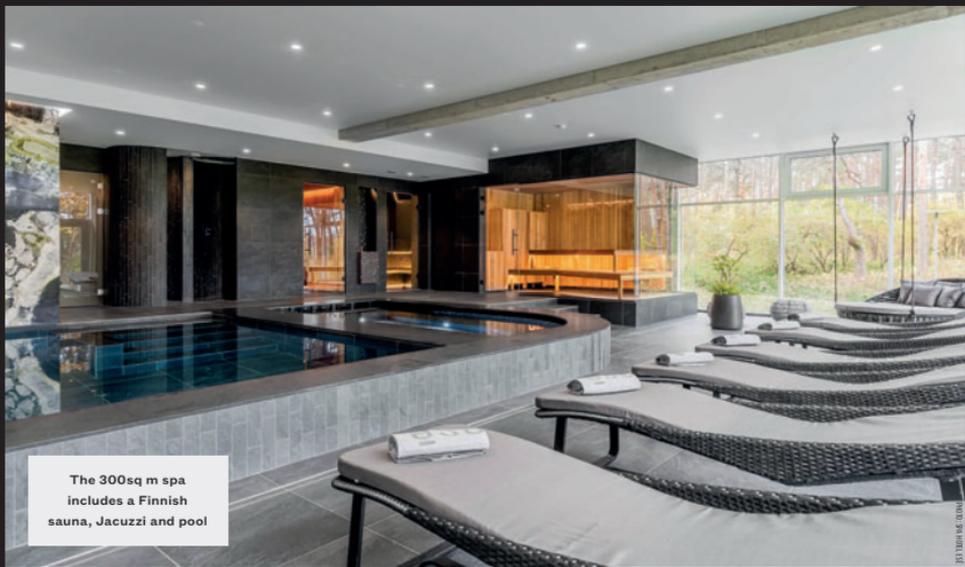
Guests may also check how busy the pool is through screens online, by the entrance to the spa, or inside elevators, and decide when to visit.

“This is no ordinary hotel, but a truly Instagram-worthy hotel,” says Rukšėnaitė. “It’s the very first hotel designed for millennials in the Baltic States and serves as a point of art – no boring plain walls here.”

Three spa treatment rooms include massage beds provided by Netherlands-based Bellezi while one unique room offers access to Meden-Inmed’s Aquai hydromassage membrane bed. Rukšėnaitė says that



The Instagram-worthy interiors appeal to millennial tastes



The 300sq m spa includes a Finnish sauna, Jacuzzi and pool

© J. THORP/REUTERS

the latter room was realised after E77 acknowledged that some millennials may be more introverted, so the team decided to include a private spa treatment room for guests to spend time alone and experience touchless treatments without a therapist present.

Other spa treatments include a menu of organic treatments supplied by organic Irish marine skincare brand Voya.

When guests arrive at the hotel they choose between 40 minimalist guestrooms each designed to tell a different story. "By having five unique room

options – Sea, Mountain, Labyrinth, Green Room, Ocean Blue and Camping Apartment – guests have enough variety to pick a room based on their mood," she says.

Rukšėnaitė is also consulting on the creation of a thermal spa resort and hotel for developer, Releven. The hotel will be built in historic pine forests in Lithuania's coastal region of Klaipėda.

Due to launch between 2023-24, this project is being developed with architects Basalt, who were part of the team that worked on Iceland's iconic Blue Lagoon resort.

The centrepiece of the 168-room resort in Giruliai will be a

It's the very first hotel designed for millennials in the Baltic States and serves as a point of art – no boring plain walls here



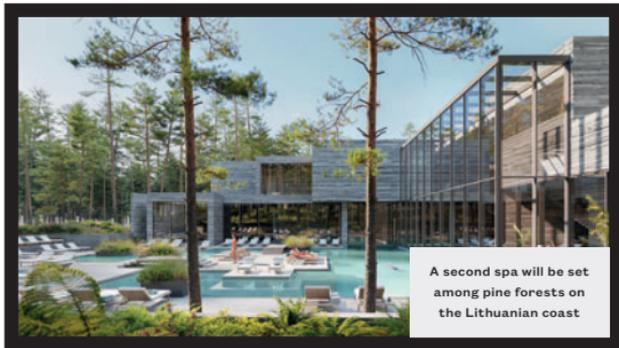
3,000sq m spa complete with 25-30 treatment rooms and 1,700sq m of indoor and outdoor thermal pools. The pools will be filled with local geothermal mineral water extracted from 1km underground.

After a €40m (£34.4m, US\$48.7m) investment, Rukšėnaitė says Releven's vision is to create an oasis of natural wellbeing which immerses guests in lush green forest and invigorating sea air, offering a retreat from busy life.

Klaipėda is known as a healing destination thanks to both its mineral water and invigorating sea air which is enriched with a high iodine concentration – a trace mineral that is important for regulating thyroid activity.

The new resort's philosophy will centre around whole-body wellbeing, sustainability and harnessing the healing power of the natural environment to rebalance guests.

"The opportunity to enjoy exceptional service, local history, nature in all seasons and a distinctive thermal wellness offering will together create a completely different and unique spa and wellbeing experience," says Rukšėnaitė.



A second spa will be set among pine forests on the Lithuanian coast

LVMH unveils two spas in its overhaul of iconic Parisian department store

In the heart of the French capital, bordering the Seine, the iconic Parisian department store La Samaritaine reopened its doors recently after a prestigious ceremony hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron. Luxury goods conglomerate LVMH (Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton) owns the site and has poured nearly €500m (US\$587.5m, £425.6m) into the project during a 15-year overhaul.

Situated between the Louvre and Notre-Dame, the building was built in 1870 and features a mixture of Art Nouveau and Art Deco styles. La



La Samaritaine's renovated interiors blend Art Nouveau with Art Deco style

PHOTO: STEPHAN RABIER



The store now boasts Europe's largest beauty floor

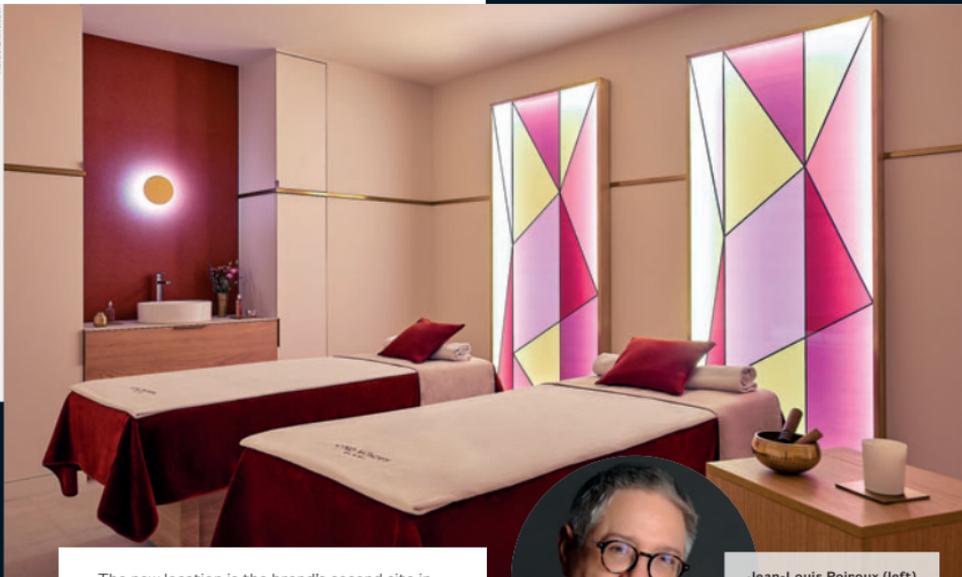
Samaritaine has since reopened as a DFS-operated luxury department store, offices and social housing units along with a decadent five-star hotel – operated by LVMH's hotel brand, Cheval Blanc.

The 72-key Cheval Blanc Paris is home to a Dior Spa (another LVMH subsidiary) boasting six treatment rooms, each with a unique design influence and finish.

Designed by Peter Marino, the spa is inspired by the spirit of a Parisian apartment and includes a swimming pool encrusted with waves of handcrafted mosaics.

However, the jewel in La Samaritaine's crown is its vast beauty wing – claimed to be Europe's largest beauty floor in a department store – which is home to the new Spa Cinq Mondes à la Samaritaine.

Founded in 2001 by Jean-Louis Poiroux and Nathalie Bouchon-Poiroux, Cinq Mondes is a premium French skincare and spa brand found in 35 countries with a philosophy rooted in the duo's shared passion for innovative, sustainable formulations and traditional medicines.



The new location is the brand's second site in Paris, joining Cinq Mondes historic flagship which the couple opened after a two-year trip around the world to discover global beauty rituals.

Poiroux told *Spa Business* the vision for the new 400sq m spa was to "develop a unique urban spa retreat for both travellers and Parisians wanting to unwind amidst the bustle of the city".

With its contemporary decor and refined styling, Spa Cinq Mondes à la Samaritaine has been realised by Suprem Architectures as a place of healing with a unique personality.

Each of the seven treatment rooms – including one for couples – has been completed with a backlit feature wall reminiscent of Art Deco stained glass.

Poiroux says all facilities – including a hammam, double exfoliation room and private relaxation areas with views of the interior garden – have been conceived to create an immersive healing journey in the heart of Paris.



Jean-Louis Poiroux (left) says Spa Cinq Mondes offers an immersive healing journey in the city

PHOTO: JAMES GIBSON/PHOTOLIA

Spa rituals include a selection of massages, scrubs, wraps, facials and hammam treatments drawing on global healing techniques from places such as Japan, India and China.

In addition, Cinq Mondes has curated an exclusive treatment for the new opening, called The Great Ritual from Okinawa to revitalise the body and naturally lift and sculpt the face. The €124 (US\$147, £106) experience lasts 50 minutes and includes a thorough traditional Japanese ko bi do facial and amma back massage.

The new spa also includes a 100sq m retail boutique with delicate metallic design details and a palette of warm pastel tones.

Complete with illuminated alcoves showcasing Cinq Mondes' products, the retail space has been conceived to guide guests on a journey of discovery to create their own personalised routine. Here, they can also find an interactive table to help them independently explore the range.

"This opening is really exciting for Cinq Mondes, since La Samaritaine is a space of such unprecedented magnitude in Europe," Poiroux says.

"After winning a very competitive tender for designing and operating the spa, our new facility benefits from a unique and exciting space which perfectly showcases our beauty rituals and skincare range."

The site includes a five-star Cheval Blanc hotel



REUTERS/ANTHONY



The spa offers views over the Arava Valley and ridges of the Edom Mountains

Six Senses' Israeli desert oasis debuts with CBD-infused camel milk massages



Nina Shapiro

Six Senses has opened the doors to its new 60-key retreat in Israel's southern Negev Desert, complete with a 1,900sq m, two-level spa and wellness sanctuary.

Six Senses Shaharut and its spa have been designed by Tel Aviv-based Plesner Architects to offer a contemporary interpretation of nomadic structures, reminiscent of those built by the Nabateans, a Bedouin tribe that roamed the area over 2,000 years ago.

The design reflects the majestic natural desert setting, with views across the Arava Valley and Edom Mountains' ridges.

Built using on-site natural materials, the six-treatment-room spa reflects the landscape and deep red palette of the mountains in its structure. Alcoves complete the curved walls, which are home to Nabatean animal statues, acknowledging the habitat as it once was.

Facilities include an open-plan relaxation area, indoor pool, boutique, outdoor courtyard

pergola and an alchemy bar, alongside a gym, wellness studio, nail bar and separate-sex changing facilities with hammams and saunas.

Nina Shapiro, Six Senses Shaharut wellness director is most excited about the spa's unique locally-inspired signature treatments, incorporating jojoba oil and camel milk cream infused with CBD oil.

"The CBD camel milk formula is especially intriguing because the milk creates a moisturising product which is rich with proteins and vitamins, to keep the skin healthy and supple," she says.

Spa guests are offered massages, facials, wraps, scrubs and rituals, supplied by Biologique Recherche and local product house Lavidó. Six Senses has also worked with Lemi to source equipment for the spa and collaborated with Fashionizer Spa for uniforms.

The resort complements the wellness offering with sunrise yoga, stargazing, hikes and desert camel treks along the ancient Incense Route used by traders until the second century AD.

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Bob Henry

QC NY is the Milan-based brand's first wellness outpost outside of Europe

QC Terme unveils US\$50m Italian thermal spa on NYC's historic Governor's Island

A 74,000sq ft Italian day spa will open soon on New York's Governors Island after a US\$50m (€42.3m, £36.1m) investment and seven years of planning, building and restoration.

Named QC NY, the destination will be the 10th property in the portfolio of Milan-based wellness thermal spa operator QC Terme Spas & Resorts. It marks the brand's US debut and its first outpost outside Europe.

Just minutes from the bustle of Manhattan and Brooklyn via ferry, QC NY has been designed as an enchanting oasis complete with lush grounds, outdoor thermal pools with sweeping skyline views, themed saunas and relaxation rooms – each with its own curated personality, scent and music.

The location includes three historic army barrack buildings dating from the early 1900s, once used as officers' quarters.

New York architect Bob Henry led the project's design with a remit to bring the brand's signature Milan wellness experience to the US. He says: "I was inspired to re-purpose three landmark

buildings into a 'wellness campus' and integrate QC Terme's unique hydrotherapy pools within this landscape to deliver a therapeutic aqua-journey with delicious views back to Manhattan."

Other wellness experiences will include Vichy showers, infrared beds, foot baths, hydro jets, steam baths and more.

In addition, guests will be able to purchase massage treatments, Italian bites and alcoholic beverages while they relax. The spa menu will offer 25-, 50- or 75-minute massages ranging between US\$100 (€85, £72) and US\$250 (€212, £181). Powered by sustainable Italian skincare brand Comfort Zone, each ritual will be customisable with a choice of music, technique and aromas.

Day passes, which start at US\$88 (€74, £64), will include access to all spa amenities for the whole day and a roundtrip ferry ticket.

Francesco Varni, QC Group CEO, says: "We're delighted to bring the quality and integrity of our spas to North America and have plans to expand the experience not only in North America but also worldwide."



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Island sanctuary

Hailed as The Maldives' first pure health retreat, Joali Being is set to open in late 2021, with the property spread across an entire island

A new nature-immersive wellbeing retreat is being built on the Maldivian island of Bodufushi. Scheduled to open in late 2021, Joali Being has been conceptualised and designed by Spa Strategy's Claire Way while uplifting programmes have been created by Gerry Bodeker.

The Joali brand is the brainchild of owner and entrepreneur Esin Güral Argat, from Turkish-based Gürallar Group and complements the conglomerate's mid-range Ali Bey Hotels & Resorts.

Joali Being will be a sister site to Joali Maldives which opened in 2019 with a signature ESPA Life spa.

The upcoming 68-villa destination is billed to be the brand's biggest commitment to wellbeing yet – the spa itself features 39 treatment rooms – and has been designed to go beyond the scope of other tropical wellbeing retreats.

Transformational spaces

Way has been working on the project for more than three years. She says the beating heart of Joali Being will be the expansive Areka spa. Aside from the 39 treatment rooms, with equipment by Lemi, there will be a large hydrotherapy hall, including a sensory deprivation room, Russian banya, water therapies, halotherapy suite and a hammam. Guests will also have access to a Sound Therapy Hall and Discovery Sound Path (designed by the Svar Academy, India), fitness offerings and an over-water meditation deck.

Areka will be complemented by Aktar, Joali Being's dedicated herbology centre. Here, guests will be able to address wellbeing concerns with a resident herbalist who specialises in preparing natural remedies using plants, spices and essential oils.

Way describes Joali Being as a stunning location that's a complete break from everyday life and which is both remote yet accessible. In her opinion, the property will be one-of-a-kind, because the retreat will be the island's only destination.

"There are no distractions, only transformational spaces spread across the island, where everything you do enhances your health," she says, "the entire location is dedicated to enhancing wellbeing."

Sense of weightlessness

The retreat's philosophy is underpinned by four wellbeing pillars – mind, skin, microbiome and energy – and the project has been conceived with a sense of purpose and synergy, so all elements work together to help guests leave feeling healthier and happier, even if they decide not to deeply engage in wellbeing services.

Programmes will last between five days and three weeks and consist of a range of scientific therapies, diagnostic

The resort focuses on the four pillars of mind, skin, microbiome and energy

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SHUTTERSTOCK



The resort will offer fresh earth-to-table cuisine in a variety of dining spaces



Joali features 68 luxury villas and 39 treatment rooms



The island's wild forest has been left untouched during construction



The resort's design connects to nature

services, educational sessions and specialised therapeutic and complementary healing treatments.

All begin with an intelligent movement analysis and an integrative health assessment.

Going weightless

A concept of weightlessness has been developed with the help of Bodeker – researcher, industry figure and chair of the GWI's Mental Wellness Initiative.

"We created programmes that would enable guests to experience transcendence and lightness, a sense of having lifted out of the weight of everyday cares and entered into new experiences of clarity and joy that could be carried home with support from the Joali wellbeing specialists," he says.

"The pathways to these experiences include a unique world of programmes and experiences designed to ease away fatigue and tensions."

Educational elements

Susanne Fisch will be spa and wellness manager, supported by industry consultant and founder of Spa and Wellness Collective, Melany Martinez Thomas, who is Joali's director of wellbeing for both the company's properties.

With a curated library and a calendar of interactive workshops, guests will also be able to discover the benefits of herbal teas and learn to make natural body creams, face masks and massage oils. In addition, a boutique will offer a handpicked selection of dried herbs, oils and natural cosmetics for purchase.

Guests will have access to a Learning Centre and a schedule of educational workshops and experiential classes with wellbeing experts and culinary maestros.

To round out the offering and cater to the microbiome pillar, Joali Being will offer fresh earth-to-table cuisine

at a range of dining concepts where all menus have been curated by the retreat's on-site nutritionists.

"Joali Being will be a perfect destination for everyone," Way adds, "because everything they do comes from a place of positive wellbeing".

Nature-immersive

Way says the design is inspired by the island setting and integrates nature throughout. During construction wild forest has been untouched and architects Cuneyt Bukulmez and interior design studio Autoban are realising the destination with biophilic principles to achieve harmony with nature.

Conservation and sustainability will play a major part in the retreat's operation, with plans for a turtle sanctuary, a reef restoration project, greywater recycling system and food waste composting, among others.

More: www.joalibeing.com

Miami to become home to world's first Blue Zones Centre to help people live better for longer

Downtown Miami is set to welcome the world's first Blue Zones health and wellbeing centre, dedicated to helping people live better, longer lives.

The 120,000sq ft facility is a product of a joint venture called Blue Legacy Ventures (JV), signed between mixed-use development Legacy Hotel & Residences and faith-based nonprofit integrated health system Adventist Health.

Adventist Health acquired Blue Zones as a subsidiary in 2020.

Blue Zones employs evidence-based ways to help people live longer, better.

The company's work is rooted in explorations and research done by National Geographic fellow Dan



Buettner, who identified the 'blue zones regions' around the world where people live extraordinarily long and happy lives.

Blue Zones applies this research to transform populations by empowering people to live longer, healthier, happier lives, resulting in double-digit drops in obesity and smoking rates, increases in



Dan Buettner

activity and happiness and lowered healthcare costs.

The estimated US\$100m (€84.6m, £72.8m) Blue Zones Centre will offer the following services: diagnostic, surgical, medical, spa, fitness, lifestyle medicine and wellbeing improvement programming.

More: <http://lei.sr/H1hb>

Italian Government rolls out thermal spa vouchers

Adults living in Italy can cash in on a €200 (£170, US\$235) spa voucher thanks to the Italian Government's recent €53m (£44.9m, US\$62.2m) stimulus package to help the country's thermal wellness industry recover following the pandemic.

In April, Federterme – the Italian Federation of Industries Spas and Hot Springs Healing – attended a government hearing to put forward the industry's urgent case for economic support. It explained that Italy



is home to 320 thermal spas which generate over €1.5bn (£1.3bn, US\$1.8bn) annually and employ 60,000 employees. Federterme said the industry had experienced a 70 per cent drop in demand for thermal spas due to the pandemic.

Citizens can take advantage of one voucher each to pay for or discount a thermal spa service

of their choice from a list of accredited establishments on the government's website.

Interestingly, Italy is not the first country to roll out this kind of initiative. Last summer, the Czech Republic was injected with a package worth CZK 1bn (€38.3mn, £34.5mn, US\$45.3) to help stimulate its historic health tourism industry. More: <http://lei.sr/X1Clo>



PHOTO: MASSIDE - HEIGENTSOFF PINK

CG Funk joins Massage Heights' executive team

Massage Heights has appointed industry veteran, CG Funk, to its leadership team.

Funk, who has 25 years' experience in the spa, beauty and franchise industries, has been named senior vice president of culture and industry relations.

Prior to joining Massage Heights, she operated a boutique spa consulting business, working with companies in the wellness, spa and beauty sectors.

She also had a 10-year stint as VP of industry relations and product development for Massage Envy Franchising, where she played a key role in three brand acquisition sales.

More: <http://lei.sr/W9o4T>



Golden Door features 600 acres of nature

Golden Door joins Healing Hotels of the World

Iconic Californian wellness destination Golden Door is the latest location to join Healing Hotels of the World.

Golden Door was originally opened in 1958 by industry veteran Deborah Szekely, who is a long-time member of the International Spa Association and co-founder of wellness retreat and spa Rancho la Puerta in Tecate, Mexico.

"We saw so much synergy between our goals and the philosophy of Healing Hotels of the World, and we knew it was a perfect fit," says Kathy Van Ness, COO of Golden Door.

"Joining will help us spread our message of healing and transformation."

In other industry news, Healing Hotels has rescheduled its summit to May 2022 and launched a certification to help its members communicate their commitment to healing, not only through holistic programming but also by conforming to COVID regulations.'

More: <http://lei.sr/q1W7k>



Kathy Van Ness

PHOTO: GOLDEN DOOR



PHOTO: PLUS ARCHITECTURE

\$25m hot springs retreat and spa planned for Perth to set new standards for Australian wellness scene

Proposals have been submitted for a AU\$25m (€15.5m, £13.4m, US\$18.3m) hot springs development on the banks of Swan River in Perth, Australia.

Formerly Dalkeith Hot Pools, the site used to be a popular bathing spot for tourists and the local community in the 1920s and 50s.

After reading about the pools' history, local investor and director of FJM Property Barry Jones was inspired in 2018 to redevelop the destination.

Now, plans for Tawarri Hot Springs project are under assessment for approval by the West Australian Government.

Designed by Plus Architecture, the 5,500sq m development will be open to the public and house a two-floor spa, a range of indoor

and outdoor geothermal pools, saunas, hammams, steamrooms, cold plunge pools, treatment rooms and relaxation areas, as well as a restaurant and cafe.

Experiences will be both indoor and outdoor, with audiovisuals, subtle lighting and fragrances to stimulate the senses and evoke relaxation.

"We want to create a classic European-style wellness centre that will be unique in Australia," said Jones. "The design vision is to create an atmosphere of tranquility using geothermally heated water and natural building materials."

It's hoped construction will kick off in late 2021 if the proposal is successful. Jones anticipates the project will take two years to complete.

More: <http://lei.sr/2n3n3>



The tropical resort will open in 2021 Q4

Anantara to open first resort on World Islands in Q4

Anantara is growing its Middle Eastern portfolio and opening the first resort on the World Islands giga-project in Dubai.

The World Islands is a man-made archipelago located four kilometres off the coast of Dubai featuring 300 islands constructed into the shape of six continents on a world map which can be seen from space.

Named Anantara World Islands Dubai Resort, the resort will be the first



Dillip Rajakarier

hotel in the South American continent of the development.

The 70-key resort will offer in-room signature Anantara spa treatments.

Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels, parent company of Anantara, said:

"Showcasing Anantara's authentic luxury while maintaining a tropical island vibe, the resort is a unique proposition for this location."

More: <http://lei.sr/k8Y3c>



The city of Bath in South West England

PHOTOS: BATH THE AGENT/LEO SOMMERICH/CONTOUR

11 European Spas added to UNESCO World Heritage List

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has honoured 11 European spa towns and added them to its esteemed World Heritage List.

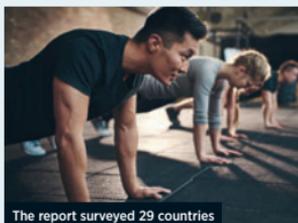
The new transnational serial World Heritage Site is composed of The Great Spa Towns of Europe which comprise 11 famous historic thermal spa towns and cities in seven countries.

Each town was founded around natural mineral springs and their inscription onto the list will bring them better protection and enhanced cooperation in the fields of heritage conservation, balneology/health, tourism and promotion.

The group includes the following locations:

- Baden bei Wien, Austria
- Spa, Belgium
- Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic
- Mariánské Lázně, Czech Republic
- Frantiskovy Lázně, Czech Republic
- Vichy, France
- Baden-Baden, Germany
- Bad Ems, Germany
- Bad Kissingen, Germany
- Montecatini Terme, Italy
- Bath, UK

Inscription on the list is the highest international recognition for global cultural and natural heritage sites. The list is managed by UNESCO on behalf of the UN. **More:** <http://lei.sr/ABx1S>



The report surveyed 29 countries

SHUTTERSTOCK/ANNASIMONOV

New fitness report by WEF

Fitness is the world's most popular physical activity and more than 50 per cent of people would like to spend more time exercising.

The figures come from the new *Global Views on Exercise and Team Sports* study by Ipsos – conducted with the World Economic Forum – which explores attitudes to physical activity and sport in 29 nations.

Among the findings were that the five most frequently practiced team sports and activities in a normal week are fitness (20 per cent of those questioned), running (19 per cent), cycling (13 per cent), football/soccer (10 per cent) and swimming (9 per cent).

It also showed that almost six in 10 citizens across the 29 markets say they'd like to do more exercise (58 per cent), with the biggest obstacle being lack of time (37 per cent).

When it comes to differences between genders, men spend on average 6.9 hours per week doing physical activity – almost an hour a day. Women spend 5.4 hours per week doing exercise – 1.5 hours less than men.

More: <http://lei.sr/w6r9H>



The new retreat will stand in 230 acres

SENSEI/OLSON

Sensei to open second retreat in Californian desert

Sensei, the wellness brand owned by tech billionaire Larry Ellison will open its second retreat called Sensei Porcupine Creek in early 2022.

As the brand's first standalone retreat, the destination will encompass a 230-acre private estate, nestled against the Santa Rosa mountains in California.

The resort will feature 22 rooms in the former estate house as well as private villas clustered throughout which will blur the boundaries

between the indoors and outdoors to reconnect guests with nature.

Sensei Porcupine Creek will feature a diagnostic centre, spa gardens, yoga and fitness pavilions, swimming pool, golf course and tennis facilities.

The destination will offer similar spa, nutrition, movement and other wellness and sports programmes found at its sister facility, Sensei Lāna'i, A Four Seasons Resort in Hawaii.

More: <http://lei.sr/t4g8N>

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www.worldspawellness.com

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[- Green Spa Network](#)

[Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, Ojai, US](#)

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www.greenspanetwork.org/buyers-conference/

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www.thefitssummit.com

30 November - 03 December

[Global Wellness Summit](#)

[Encore Boston Harbor - a Wynn Resort, Boston, United States](#)

Spa and wellness professionals from around the world gather to discover innovations and network.
www.globalwellnesssummit.com



Construction is yet to start on the project

PHOTO: SHIBUI QUINN

Therme to expand global footprint into Canada

Global wellbeing organisation, Therme Group, has today announced plans for a CAN\$350m (€236.3m, £201.8m, US\$280.8m) waterfront wellbeing resort in Toronto, Canada, at Ontario Place.

Therme Canada Ontario Place will be a family-friendly experience with indoor and outdoor pools, waterslides and a wave pool, natural spaces to relax, sports performance and recovery services and botanical gardens.

Working with the Government of Ontario and City of Toronto, the group will contribute to the revitalisation of Ontario Place, to further Therme Group's vision of bringing wellbeing to all.

Programming will include fun and healthy activities for all ages plus affordable wellness therapies. Healthy and sustainably-produced food options will also be on offer.

It's estimated that the site will take 24 months to build, once the approval and permit process is completed.

Dr Robert Hanea, CEO of Therme Group, said: "Therme is a unique, all-season experience: it's an urban oasis where people can relax - boosting their physical and mental health."

Ontario Place has historically been a destination for recreation, entertainment and leisure.

More: <http://lei.sr/TOJ7Q>



The new research facility will open in Q3 2021 in Parma

PHOTO: SHIBUI QUINN

Davines Group and Rodale Institute join forces

The Davines Group has partnered with the Rodale Institute to unveil a dedicated regenerative organic agriculture research facility at Davines Group's headquarters in Parma, Italy. This integrated partnership is an effort to propel the regenerative organic movement beyond just food to both beauty and personal care.

Regenerative agriculture is not intensive, and is respectful of biodiversity, while also contributing to soil fertility, meaning it can capture as much, if not more, CO2 as trees, while also keeping soil nourished.

The new facility will encompass a 10-hectare site and focus research and education on small- to mid-size European farms growing speciality crops for beauty, nutrition and food.

Supporting farmers in the region, this centre will also focus on organic management in a Mediterranean climate.

Headquartered in Pennsylvania, US, Rodale Institute is a nonprofit dedicated to growing the organic movement through research, farmer training and consumer education.

More: <http://lei.sr/JOJ3h>



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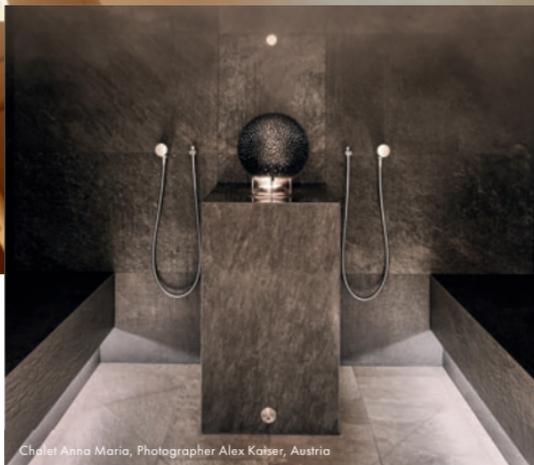
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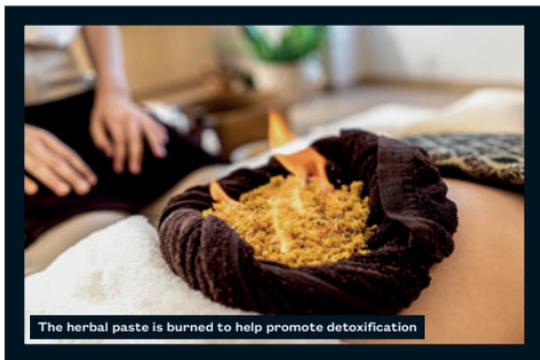
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At your service



The herbal paste is burned to help promote detoxification

RAKxa reveals Long COVID retreat

Bangkok's medi-wellness facility RAKxa has created a Long COVID package that uses traditional Thai medicine's (TTM) ya-pao ritual where a herbal paste is placed on guests' stomachs and then lit to help detoxify respiratory systems.

The practice follows TTM's philosophy which upholds that the body is based on the four elements.

The heat from the treatment is to help 'remove excess water elements' such as phlegm and mucus. After the ritual, guests also spend time in a herbal steamroom to encourage total body detoxification.

As part of RAKxa's integrative approach, the package also includes IV treatments, hyperbaric therapy, acupuncture, abhyanga and more.

We share some of our favourite treatments, programmes and services that spas are launching



📍 RAKxa Wellness and Medical Retreat, Bangkok, Thailand

🕒 Three days

**💰 THB150,000
(US\$4,542, €3,821, £3,261)**



📍 Euphoria, Greece

🕒 Four nights

💰 €950 (€820, US\$1,163)

The Feel Alive retreat helps guests with negative emotions

Euphoria tackles pandemic-induced trauma

Holistic destination spa Euphoria has launched a Feel Alive retreat to help purge and process negative emotions built up during the pandemic.

Between July and November, the retreat is being hosted by Euphoria's founder Marina Efraimoglou and spiritual mentor Mary Vandorou, who guide guests through a daily three-hour one-on-one session.

Every morning guests do meditation, qi gong and breathwork, bodywork, forest walks, capoeira and expressive dancing.

With a maximum of nine participants, activities include emotional expression work and theatrical improvisations, and creating personal mandalas with a vision of guests' future. In the afternoon, attendees are encouraged to spend time at the spa or immersed in nature.



Forestis introduces stimulating tree ceremony

Italy's woodland inspired hotel and spa, Forestis, has a signature Tree Circle Ceremony body treatment which begins with guests choosing an indigenous tree they physically and emotionally align with – mountain pine, spruce, larch or Swiss stone pine – after smelling, seeing and touching each wood.

Each corresponds to its own treatment using therapeutic wood, healing stones, acoustic frequencies and movement.

During the ritual, guests are treated to a foot bath while sipping on a drink containing their chosen tree's sap in a room spritzed with its refreshing fragrance. This is complemented by an energy-balancing massage using the tree's corresponding healing tools and Forestis' in-house bodycare line, powered by tree essences.

PHOTO: FORESTIS

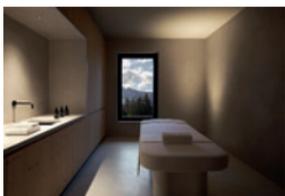


Forestis, South Tyrol, Italy

110 minutes

€220 (US\$250, £188)

The ceremony incorporates therapeutic wood, healing stones and movement



STYLING: LUDOVIC BERNARDINI

STYLING: LUDOVIC BERNARDINI



The assessment includes heart, brain, bones and thyroid

PHOTO: ECHOLON HEALTH

Echelon Health, London, UK

Two days

£14,000 (€16,400, US\$19,400)

Echelon Health offers £14k health assessment at MO London

Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park in London is collaborating with Echelon Health to offer guests a comprehensive personal health assessment using state-of-the-art medical screening technology.

Guests receive Echelon's comprehensive Platinum health assessment and a two-night stay at the hotel.

Assessments include imaging of guests' heart, brain, bones and thyroid, among others.

Within two weeks of testing, Echelon founder, chair and medical director Dr Paul Jenkins follows up personally with a detailed health analysis and healthcare suggestions.

If treatment is required, Jenkins will refer the client to selected specialists and practitioners. ▶

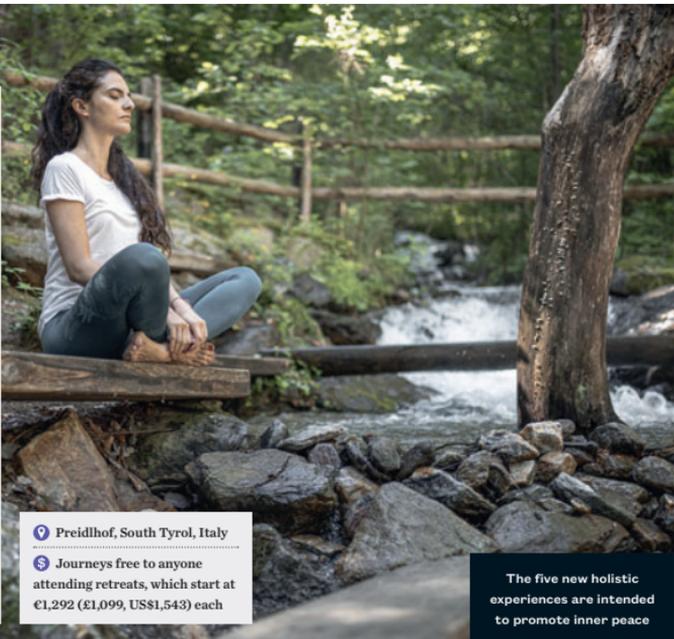
Preidlhof guests get the silent treatment

Preidlhof has been certified as a "Quiet Stay" by Quiet Parks, a non-profit committed to the preservation of quiet places.

To protect the essential need for silence, Preidlhof's spa director, Patrizia Bortolin has created five new holistic experiences.

Available to guests on retreats or programmes, the journeys promote inner peace and communion with nature, including woodland walks at night, trails along mountain streams, mindfulness practices in the Mediterranean herb garden and Kneipping amidst natural waterfalls.

Each one embraces silence and teaches guests to observe and appreciate the benefits it can bring to their wellbeing.



📍 Preidlhof, South Tyrol, Italy

💰 Journeys free to anyone attending retreats, which start at £1,292 (£1,099, US\$1,543) each

The five new holistic experiences are intended to promote inner peace



The retreat draws on revered local wellness traditions

Anantara taps into African massage

Anantara's new retreat on the banks of the Zambezi River includes three 60-minute spa treatments from a menu that draws on revered local wellness traditions, including the African ukuchina massage.

In this treatment, warm towels are used in kneading and compression movements to relieve muscle tension.

Traditionally performed to rejuvenate and cure malaria, inflammation and other ailments, ukuchina is also a postnatal treatment and has been passed down through generations.

📍 The Royal Livingstone Hotel by Anantara in Zambia, Africa

🕒 Three days

💰 US\$1,108 (€937, £802)

The package also includes riverfront meditation sessions, a sunset cruise, soothing evening aromatherapy turndown service and a self-guided nature walk.

The retreat is completed with a private cooking demo, express spa treatment and a wellness dinner on the final evening.

Maldives resort gets moving with dance therapy

The Ozen Collection's Bolifushi resort has unveiled a visiting practitioner programme that features Lorelei Bulan - a specialist in dance therapy, organic movement and breathing.

Bulan's daily Therapeutic Movement and Contemporary Dance sessions will draw on her 26-years' experience as a dance artist.

"For me, dance is one of the most therapeutic forms of movement and art as it involves all the senses, using the body and space where the body exists," she says.

In this session, Bulan will help participants develop individual freedom and confidence through mirror-imaging, contact improvisation and grounding, to help them release inhibitions and achieve harmony of mind, body and spirit.



Lorelei Bulan specialises in dance therapy, organic movement and breathwork

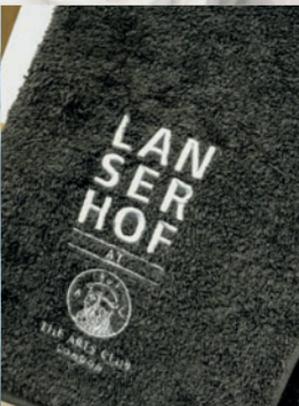
📍 Ozen Reserve Bolifushi, Maldives

💰 Starts at US\$170 (£143, £122) for 30 minutes

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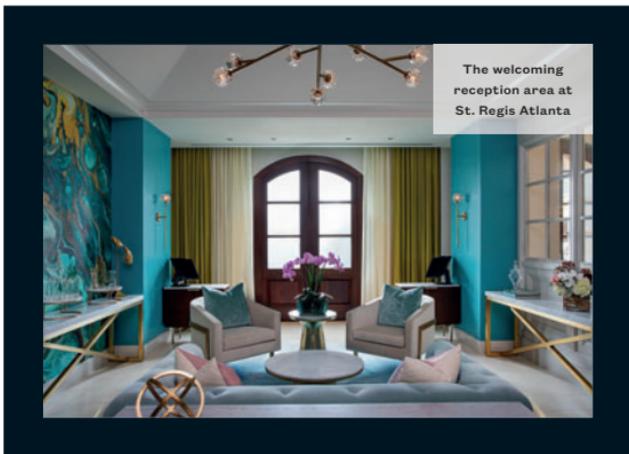
INTERVIEW



Ryan has 25 new Marriott projects to focus on in the next two to three years

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY S. SMITH

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Kenneth Ryan

As the industry returns to some kind of 'new normal', *Spa Business* talks to Kenneth Ryan, global head of spa at Marriott, about navigating lockdowns, re-imagining the company's portfolio and what it will take to succeed in the aftermath of COVID

With well over 500 managed spas worldwide, a top tier leadership team across all continents, on-site management personnel in over 130 countries, and at least 25 projects in the pipeline, it's fair to say that Marriott's global head of spa Kenneth Ryan's burgeoning workload has not diminished in the past 18 or so months of COVID woes.

Five years on from the US\$13.6bn (€11.5bn, £9.9bn) acquisition of Starwood Hotels and Resorts - which added brands such as St Regis to Marriott's already significant luxury hospitality portfolio - no-one could have predicted how swiftly a global pandemic could have put a brutal halt to the company's current trading and ambitious development plans.

Financial results

But like every other business in the sector, Marriott's global empire was not immune to the devastating effects of the pandemic. In Q2 2020, after months of global lockdown, Marriott reported an operating loss of US\$154m (€131m, £112m), though this was followed by a strong bounceback to US\$486m (€413m, £354m) operating income in Q2

2021. "The COVID impact was unbelievable," says Ryan. "Never in my 20 plus years in the spa and wellness industry would I ever have imagined the impact of such an event. At the height of this crisis we had just about every single spa in our company closed and most, if not all, of our staff on furlough including myself and my spa leadership team."

But as the COVID dust now starts to settle, Ryan says the initial bounceback to spa business has been equally swift and even more buoyant than expected. "Our second quarter results showed that in our largest region, the US and Canada, demand stepped up significantly, particularly at our resorts."

Back to 'normal'?

At the time of our interview, Ryan had just taken his first international flight in 16 months - for a holiday to Costa Rica - and was beginning to fill his calendar with work trips for Q3.

He says: "For a person who was used to being on a plane every few weeks visiting sites and partners across the world it was quite a change! I feel I'm having to relearn many of my travel habits in this unfamiliar environment and I know many Marriott customers will be feeling the same way as they return to our properties." ▶

The new St. Regis spa concept was recently rolled out at the Bermuda resort

- “We’re currently seeing the largest growth opportunity in our luxury resorts. Spas are a must-have for all our luxury brands, and since COVID-19, our luxury guests value wellness more than ever before,” says Ryan. “The current boom in spa bookings and resort occupancy goes further than simple pent-up demand. I believe our guests are now looking for a deeper, more meaningful wellness experience and they trust the Marriott brands to deliver elevated services in a safe environment.”

So what’s in store for Marriott’s growing family and its diverse portfolio of brands – that include both exclusive luxury (The Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis, JW Marriott) and contemporary luxury (W Hotels, Edition). “We do see all our Marriott brands rather like family,” says Ryan. “They all come with their own offerings and personality to attract a distinct kind of guest.”

And with all the excitement of a proud parent (Ryan himself is a father-of-four), he’s keen to tell *Spa Business* about two major additions to the Marriott Spa portfolio.

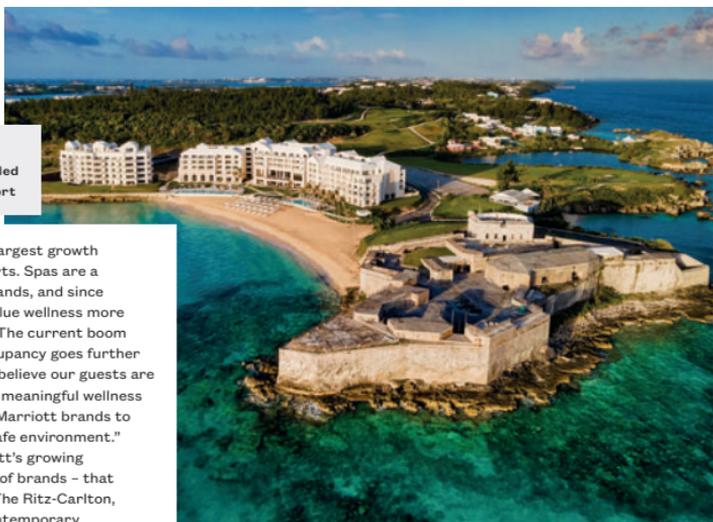
Spa concept innovations

The first is a new concept for St. Regis – called simply, St. Regis Spa – which will be rolled out to all St Regis hotels (currently 44 destinations), with the first unveiling recently launched at the St. Regis Bermuda Resort in June 2021.

“The new spa concept will layer the rich patina of St. Regis traditions with a sheen of contemporary glamour to meet the needs of the modern customer.

Ryan knows wellbeing will be an even greater priority post-COVID-19

THE RITZ-CARLTON GROUP



THE RITZ-CARLTON GROUP

We do see all our Marriott brands rather like family, they all come with their own offerings and personality to attract a distinct kind of guest

“Celebration is a big brand pillar of St Regis, so we focused on bringing celebrations into our spa by asking ‘what does that look like in a spa?,” says Ryan.

The narrative of the new spa, he says, will be “comfortable, familiar, entertaining and residential. In the spirit of The St. Regis founder, John Jacob Astor, guests will feel as though they’re being invited into one of his private estates.”

To bring the concept to life, he adds: “We didn’t want the imposing formality of a traditional reception desk. Rather, we want guests to feel as though they’re entering a grand foyer and the celebration is waiting for them. It won’t be devoid of a check in area, but the desk will be more for staff to perform admin duties, rather than act as a transactional space for guests, as this can take place in other areas of the spa.

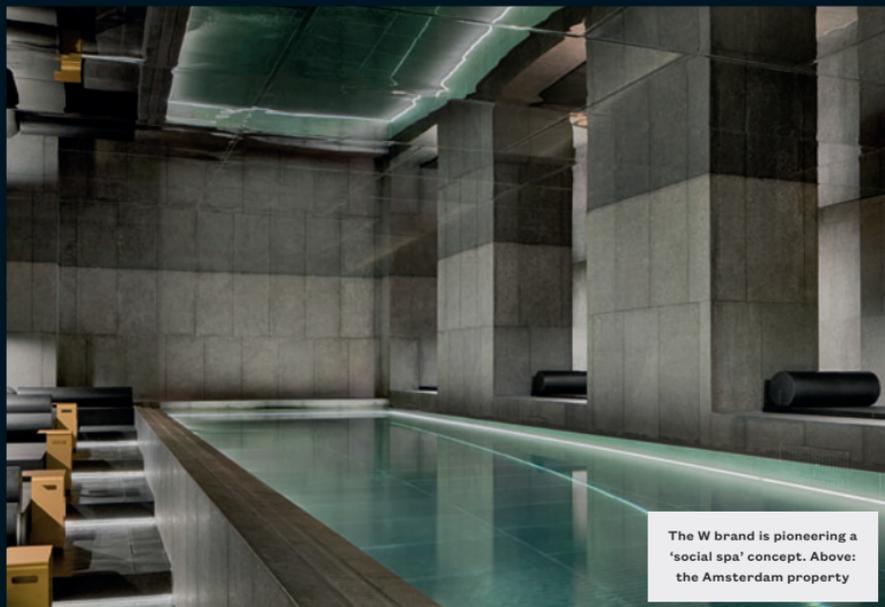
“There’ll be a Celebration Bar, where guests can receive a fresh-pressed juice, or a glass of champagne if it’s that time of day (all St. Regis sites still honour the sabring of the champagne ritual at 4.00pm).”

All upcoming openings – including Dominican Republic, Dubai and China – will have the new spa concept, while all existing spas in the collection will be gradually transitioned over time.

The second standout concept to be rolled out this year is a re-imagining of the Away Spa at W Hotels. “The Away Spa concept has been



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The W brand is pioneering a 'social spa' concept. Above: the Amsterdam property

around for quite some time and will now undergo a complete transformation. The only thing that will stay the same is the name," says Ryan.

W customers, he says, "want everything available to them all the time, they don't like rules and they don't want to miss out."

To meet some of these demands, the Away Spa will move away from a tranquil concept towards a livelier 'social spa' experience. Dallas, Texas will be the next site to showcase the new concept, followed by a new build project in Philadelphia.

Ryan says: "The arrival point will offer a social hub, with areas for quick fix treatments (things you can do fully clothed) and open areas with upbeat music where friends can socialise and have a giggle."

However, Ryan is mindful that 'social spa-ing' is not for everyone, and that Marriott International must also provide for 'the other half'. "Our research shows we have two main types of spa clients - those who want to switch off and have 'alone time' and those who want to relax and have fun with friends. And sometimes these two requirements can be found in the same guest, during the same visit.

"Away Spa will provide for both guests - there will be more private spaces and cabanas away from the social buzz, where guests can escape and feel safe in all ways - physically and mentally."

And speaking of 'safe', how does Ryan think that 'social spa-ing' will fit in a more

cautious world since the coronavirus outbreak, where most have become used to social distancing, masks and periods of isolation?

"For one thing, social spa-ing is not a new thing - it's a trend that we've seen at Marriott International for the past three to four years. Increasingly our guests want to 'social-spa' with family and friends - those who they know, like and trust - and of course the desire to do that will become even stronger as we come out of COVID-19."

Working in partnership

That same 'know-like-trust factor' is also key for Marriott International when it comes to choosing its partners, which it only does after a huge amount of research, consideration, and personal contact.

"It's really important that we find the right people. Partnering with us is not a quick solution, it's a long road and companies must be prepared for that.

We look for a true partner, not just a supplier, high quality products that will appeal to our luxury guests and brand values that match with ours," says Ryan.

"We now have some phenomenal partners on board, such as Sothys (for St. Regis) Comfort Zone (W hotels) and ESPA (for The Ritz-Carlton). We also work considerably with Spa Collaborative (Lauren Moloney) and Book4Time (Roger Sholanki).

"When I visited France pre-COVID I was struck by many similarities between the original founders ▶

Subscription boxes are booming. Even my printer company knows when I'm running out of ink and automatically ships me some more. This model totally makes sense for spas

► of St. Regis, the Astors, and the Mas family of Sothys. Both are proud family companies, with a strong focus on traditions and exceptional quality.

"And Comfort Zone was a perfect brand culture fit for W, with its pioneering product ranges, superb ingredients and focus on the personality and needs of the individual."

All treatments developed with spa partners are always bespoke for Marriott's individual brands and cultures, he adds. "For example, the Comfort Zone treatments for the Away Spa will offer a special opening and closing ceremony to help ground clients in the moment. They are offered a detox elixir, and regardless of what treatment they're having, they'll receive a special mud mask (Bagne di Montalcino) on the feet to draw out toxins and enhance the overall detox experience."

Stepping up the tech

Cloud-based spa software provider, Book4Time, is now Marriott International's preferred global IT partner and Ryan says the company is in the process of transitioning spa systems. He says: "Book4Time is a really innovative company and Roger and I have similar perspectives on tech. We both believe in adding tech where it makes sense – automating many of the basic transactions and moving those resources to create more enhanced service levels."

And Ryan feels that as we come out of COVID-19, the time to step up the tech has never been better, or more needed. "Whoever thought you could take an office of 3,000 people at Marriott

Ryan says Marriott looks for excellence and brand alignment in its partners

HQ and go remote? It's one of the successes that could never have been tested on such a grand scale – until it became an imperative," he says.

"People got used to using Skype and Zoom and maybe did their grocery shopping online for the first time. Many of our customers who'd previously waited on hold to contact our spas are now more comfortable booking online. I'd estimate online spa bookings are up 20 per cent in our major markets."

Online spa retail is another area that Ryan sees as ripe for development. "The old model just doesn't work. The client coming out of a massage or facial clutching a few recommendations scribbled on a piece of paper is becoming antiquated. By the time they've gone for a cup of tea they've lost the paper, can't remember why it was recommended, or they aren't in the mood to search the product shelves anyway.

"Imagine those recommendations being sent to the client's phone and they simply have to click once – Amazon-style – to make the purchase and receive it the next day.

"Subscription boxes are booming. Even my printer company knows when I'm running out of ink and automatically ships me some more. This model totally makes sense for spas. They can make it their business to know when a client is running out of eye cream. It would also cut down the amount of inventory they need to carry as it could simply be drop-shipped directly from the supplier."



St. Regis resorts are based in stand-out locations. Below: St. Regis Qingdao

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Many of the clients walking through our doors right now haven't travelled for 12-plus months. The experience you deliver to them has to really count

► Lockdown successes

It's clear that Ryan is buzzing with fresh ideas post-lockdown and sees the potential to make Marriott International brands even better in this 'new normal'. And as a true wellness professional, he took the opportunity of furlough to focus on his own personal care (he likes to meditate) and professional development, as well as forging stronger relationships with industry peers.

"In spite of being locked down, I felt like I became much closer to colleagues and peers. We had many fun social online activities for our remote staff and I had more time to connect and chat with others in the spa industry in a way that doesn't always happen at a busy, in-person industry event.

"At one point during the pandemic I started writing some guidelines for spas reopening. I was going to do it alone, but then teamed up with Lynne Mcnees and the ISPA team, along with other industry professionals and through collaboration we created something so much better. I'm proud to say the ISPA reopening toolkit has since been downloaded over 68,000 times and has been a huge help for spas trying to navigate the current climate.

"I also recently heard that Peigin Crowley and Anita Murray took this document to the Irish Government and it became the official roadmap for spas being able to open up again across the whole of Ireland. That makes me feel extremely proud to have been a part of this team and work."

So putting fruitful new Marriott collaborations and exciting new spa builds aside, what does Ryan feel the wider spa and hotel industries need to focus on as they try to get back to the 'new normal'?

"It's probably no surprise that service will be key. Service levels suffered horribly through COVID lockdowns, and oftentimes for good reason.

Marriott knows guests are longing for exceptional service now more than ever

But companies that use COVID-19 as an excuse for poor service going forward will suffer, while those who work out what customers need right now will thrive," he says. "Many of the clients walking through our doors right now haven't travelled for 12-plus months. The experience you deliver to them has to really count.

"We also anticipate that cleaning will become front and centre of the customer-facing spa operation. It used to be something we hid away so as not to disturb guests, but now people want to see it happening around them, all day, every day."

So the future is looking bright for Marriott, and Ryan has more than enough to work on with 25 new projects in the pipeline in the next two to three years - all underpinned by the strong foundation of the 'superpower' merger of Starwood and Marriott.

"We joined forces with a phenomenal company," says Ryan. "Starwood were blown away by our culture, how much we cared for our associates and our operational excellence. And from them, we inherited an amazing culture of innovation and preparedness to push boundaries and act quickly. In the past, Marriott has been guilty of spending too much time before taking things to market.

"The blend of these two cultures is really where the magic happens and with the post-lockdown boom becoming more evident day by day I really believe we're set for phenomenal growth."



Julie Cramer is a contributing editor at *Spa Business* magazine
 ■ juliecramer@teisuremedia.com

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Everyone's talking about...

Sustainability

According to UN scientists, we're at a code red situation. Everyone needs to act now if we're going to avert climate catastrophe, so how should the spa industry respond? Kath Hudson reports

This year there have been uncontrollable fires raging in Greece and California and catastrophic floods in Germany – among other things. Added to this we have melting icebergs, a major pollution problem from single-use plastics, which COVID-19 is adding to, and a continued reliance on fossil fuels.

The latest climate report from the UN says the ongoing emissions of warming gases could see a key temperature limit broken in just over a decade, while a rise in sea levels approaching 2m by the end of the century cannot be ruled out. It's depressingly sobering stuff and we need to act fast to avert catastrophe.

Behaving in a more environmentally conscious way can seem costly and inconvenient, yet there are tangible business benefits, including attracting the best new talent, adopting lean business techniques which save money on

waste and procurement, inspiring team and client loyalty and elevated brand recognition.

Everyone has a responsibility to be part of the solution, but with the spa industry's emphasis on promoting good health and wellbeing, we should be leading the way.

Spas which are doing it well are not making piecemeal changes, they are embedding sustainability as part of their business DNA, from the top down so that it's a consideration in every decision. Success is measured not just in the bottom line, but the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit. It's a radical mindset change, but an essential one.



Kath Hudson is editor of the *Spa Business Handbook*
 ■ kathhudson@leisuremedia.com

Sarah Watterson Master trainer, EarthCheck

Responsible sourcing and consumption is important: as an industry we need to understand the value chain of the business and the impact of all the stakeholders, including suppliers, and create responsible sourcing policies, engaging with suppliers to encourage them to share information about their own sourcing practices and products.

Many suppliers are implementing change to make their products and packaging more environmentally friendly and we can engage, collaborate and advocate changes by supporting these businesses. Support



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Fairtrade and source locally, check the provenance of products and look at the lifecycle, whether it could be recycled, refilled, repurposed or returned.

Waste auditing is one way to reduce spa waste, increase profits and protect the planet. Facility management teams

A good waste audit can be the best catalyst in supporting sustainability goals

worth their salt are always looking to identify the most effective business models. However, what some might have overlooked is how a good waste audit can be the best catalyst in supporting sustainability goals.

More long-term and challenging actions involve governance. Some industries are mandated to cut emissions and receive grants and incentives to achieve goals. Collaborations with partners such as EarthCheck provide frameworks for environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting

and action plans for the tourism and hospitality sectors, including spas.

We need to embody sustainability in every aspect of our industry: concept, design and operations and adapt the 3 P approach aiming to be successful in people, planet and profit versus profit only and in doing so create a circular economy.

■ *As an EarthCheck master trainer, Sarah Watterson works with organisations to develop and establish a culture of sustainability*

Stelian Iacob CEO, Thermo Group

At Thermo Group the key driver of sustainability is the availability of our resorts close to where people live. We incorporate local customs but also materials, trades and especially suppliers, which drastically reduces the carbon footprint of projects. Taking a long-term view, we design, build and operate using sustainable materials and locally sourced crafts. Combined with energy conservation and innovative technology solutions, this creates some of the most natural and healthy buildings in the world.

Our structures are designed and operated under LEED Platinum standards and the strategy around



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water conservation, reuse, ozonation and treatment allows us to reduce water use by 80 per cent. We use trigeneration, green roofs and photovoltaic systems to produce electricity. Efficient automation of advanced machinery (HVAC heat recovery), together with a clear and sustained

Incorporating local materials, trades and especially suppliers drastically reduces the carbon footprint of projects

waste control strategy and recycling are initiatives we are implementing in our facilities worldwide. The low carbon strategy we're currently implementing throughout the group, combined with the explorations of botanical applications in energy use and conservation are setting new industry benchmarks with a view to becoming net-zero carbon.

Thermo Group is actively engaged in a number of ventures to explore the frontiers of sustainable

design, construction and operation, including biomimetic, dynamic, reactive structures, 3D printed technology, kinetic buildings, research in usage of alternative sustainable materials and waste management, as well as botanical application for air purification, water treatment and energy production.

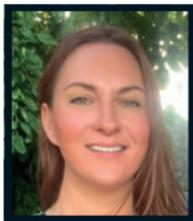
■ *Stelian Iacob has been with Thermo Group since 2010, the company operates thermal resorts around the world*

Lucy Brialey Co-founder and director, the Sustainable Spa Association

With the spa industry having its roots in health, vitality, the natural world and quality experiences, it's a natural fit for us to be actively leading the way in the area of sustainability. This will be a foundation to grow the industry in years to come.

Although isolated actions such as single-use plastic packaging, waste and using materials or ingredients which are harmful to communities or the environment are problematic, what does the most damage is an attitude that sustainability is someone else's responsibility. It's up to all of us to make a difference.

Sustainability is more than caring for the environment,



STYLING: LINDA

it's a set of core business values. The pillars of sustainability are people, planet and profit. In advanced stages some businesses also look towards regeneration.

A purpose-driven approach to business is the best route to sustainability. Spa businesses should embark on a comprehensive plan with business policies which support sustainable

What does the most damage, is an attitude that sustainability is someone else's responsibility"

development and allow a timeline for change to be communicated and delivered.

Two spa operators that are doing this very well are Six Senses and Ikos and Sani Resorts. Sustainability shines through everything that they do, thanks to having dedicated directors and departments to continuously develop the business through the lens of sustainability.

Their endeavours cascade from head office right through to each individual team member.

Our industry should be aiming for business-to-business encouragement and support so we can all be proud of the results we produce together. It doesn't take one large company to make big efforts it takes lots of companies making as much effort as they can at any one time to bring about large scale improvement and positive impact.

■ *Lucy Brialey is chair of the GWI's UN SDG initiative and head of the Sustainable Spa Association*

Bryan Hoare Area director of wellness, Soneva

Sustainability has been a part of our culture since we started bottling our own water in glass bottles 25 years ago. Now we're always on the hunt for ways to be more sustainable and bring in experts from science, technology and even the arts.

There are some easy wins spas can make in terms of sustainability, for example switching to using compostable underwear from Zero Waste and speaking to suppliers to package deliveries in reusable or recyclable packaging.

While we're working with suppliers to receive products in glass, aluminium or plant-based plastics, it's



STYLING: LINDA

still very difficult to have the whole container plastic free. Many pumps, which are used to keep the product air locked, contain plastic so we're always on the look out for new brands which may solve this problem.

We use glass and plastic packaging for building materials and artwork at

There are some easy wins spas can make in terms of sustainability

our amazing glass-blowing workshop. We also produce our own coconut oil at Soneva Fushi which is used as the base for many of our treatments.

There are many exciting innovations happening, such as the use of Mycelium as new sustainable packaging which is a completely organic, farm-grown material made from the roots of a mushroom.

As an industry we need to continue to educate and inspire consumers to make sustainable choices and find value in re-use,

downsizing and finding magic in creating their own lifetime of rare experiences, as well as engaging with our programmes when they stay with us.

In the longer term we need to hold one another accountable for any overuse or unnecessary consumerism, giving people what they need without excesses.

■ *Bryan Hoare oversees wellness operations, development and new projects at Soneva Group in the Maldives*

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Mark Sands Vice president of wellness, Six Senses

An industry is only sustainable if it operates in that sweet spot where people, planet and profit overlap. The spa industry is responsible for a great deal of carbon and we all need to stop thinking it's someone else's problem and act. Now.

The biggest issues are plastic use in packaging, sometimes in the products themselves, and the shipping of these items all around the world, often multiple times. Plastics come from fossil fuels and will take up 15 per cent of the world's carbon budget by 2050. Six Senses has a bold target to be free of plastics by



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

2022, with reductions at the operations and supply chains.

Six Senses has always made and bottled its own water, so we avoid the shipping, packaging and plastic involved in the drinking water industry.

We have a bold target to be free of plastics by 2022

We work with suppliers like Ecolab which provide a dehydrated product which is then hydrated onsite reducing carbon relating to shipping.

Spa skincare product suppliers like Subtle Energies provide options to our spas to sell products online and have drop-shipped to guests homes directly. We work with our suppliers to help them change packaging in line with our goal to be plastic free in 2022. No easy task and one we will no doubt gloriously

fail to achieve but we have made huge strides and we have not gone backwards during the pandemic.

Six Senses also has a sustainability fund, to which we direct 0.5 per cent of our revenues, to be used on local projects to help address climate impacts in our local communities.

■ *Mark Sands joined Six Senses in 2011 as area spa director, prior to this he worked at Ananda in the Himalayas.*

Daive Bollati Chair, Davines Family Group Companies – Comfort Zone

Sustainability is not a choice any more, it's an absolute need. The beauty industry and the spa sector should feel this need even more, as our mission is people's wellbeing.

The starting point is to evaluate all the possible impacts on environment, people and community, define clear objectives, create an action plan to achieve them and then measure them regularly. The challenges of carbon and water footprint, people and community welfare need to be addressed at the same time. It's a huge commitment, but absolutely necessary.

Sustainability has always been part of our DNA, and we have been B Corp certified since 2016. We're committed



MONDRIEN/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES

to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, which is a very challenging goal for a beauty company, especially when it comes to packaging. However, this autumn we start a new plastic compensation programme, collecting more plastic from all over the world than we are leaking in the environment. At the same time we continue to reduce and recycle, looking

We're committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, which is a very challenging goal

for more sustainable packaging solutions.

One of our new and most interesting projects is a partnership with Rodale Institute to promote regenerative organic agriculture. Starting this autumn, the first European Rodale-Davines Group Center for Regenerative Organic Agriculture will begin its activity in Parma. Ten hectares of land dedicated to growing and studying ingredients specifically for the beauty industry – but not exclusively – will inspire

our new formulas, while also contributing to soil carbon sinking and biodiversity. Our Comfort Zone Sacred Nature formulas are already based on regenerative agriculture ingredients, as well as our Sublime Skin line which launches this October. We want to extend this choice to all of our products.

■ *Daive Bollati is an Italian entrepreneur and pioneer in beauty, wellness and sustainable business. His family founded the Davines Group in 1983.*

Sustainability Innovation Satisfaction Quality



Aromee®

Fragrances for steam baths, saunas, whirlpool, hot tubs and experience showers



Technico®

Sauna, spa and wellness technology: Technology for experience showers, saunas, hammam, steam baths and rhasoul, dosage systems, inhalation systems, light technology



Pure

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TIME OUT

Answering a growing demand for non-invasive, anti-ageing skin care, Comfort Zone is relaunching its Sublime Skin line with a new filler-like natural formula that reverses cellular degeneration

Comfort Zone Sublime Skin, originally launched in 2015, has been completely reformulated and improved by scientists at the Davines Village Scientific Garden and Laboratory in Parma, Italy.

Dr Maria Bucci, a dermatologist, PhD in Plastic and Aesthetic Dermatology and longstanding member of Comfort Zone's Scientific Committee, worked with the company on the creation of the original Sublime Skin products and facials and has collaborated again with the R&D team on the new reformulation.

The range, which is available both in spas and online, benefits from the company's latest research into senescence and skin regeneration and its new proprietary Archi-Lift technology that Bucci says "promotes the creation of collagen while producing a 'natural filler' effect and reducing the causes of wrinkles and loss of tone at a cellular level".

As she explains: "The Sublime Skin line acts on several levels - it can counteract cellular senescence by giving cellular protection from premature ageing, thanks to new generation peptides, while the presence of Hyaluronic acid and active ingredients stimulate the production of collagen and elastin, helping regain the skin turgor that gives the face a younger appearance.



Sustainability is a high priority for Comfort Zone. Left - owner Dr Davide Bollati



Sublime Skin's new Archi-Lift technology promotes the creation of collagen while producing a 'natural filler' effect – Dr Maria Bucci

The research

To create the reformulation, the team focused on finding a treatment for the cellular degeneration – or senescence – that occurs as we age.

This is caused by the presence of inflammatory substances and the lack of cell replication which affects the three basic components of our skin's architecture: water, proteins and lipids.

This process leads to a weakening of the structure of the face which the Comfort Zone team has named 'Degener-Aging', as it gives rise to the appearance of wrinkles and loss of tone and definition in the face, meaning it no longer has clear contours.

Bucci explains: "When cells become senescent, studies have shown that they release harmful substances which contaminate neighbouring cells, accelerating ageing in all skin layers."

Age-defying active ingredients

Bucci says Sublime Skin, with its Archi-Lift technology, is a natural alternative to aesthetic injections, fillers and Botox, thanks to a unique synergy of high-tech and botanical ingredients.

These include the innovative Acetyl Hexapeptide-8, which inhibits muscle



Comfort Zone has reformulated its Sublime Skin anti-ageing range

Sublime Skin – in-spa and at home

Professional Double Peel Method
- Professional facials from Sublime Skin include new customisable solutions: Glow Peel, specific for radiance, and Super Peel with a Peel Booster followed by Delicate peel (25% acids) or Age Peel (38.5% acids) according to specific needs.

They are also ideal before the Pro-Lift Facial which includes a peel-off mask and Kobido massage to deliver exceptional firmness and volume.

The Rejuvenating Home Care

When it comes to retailing, the Intensive Serum – with Hexapeptide-8 and Achillea Millefolium to correct wrinkles and expression lines – and the Replumping Cream are recommended daily along with the Micropeel Lotion for delicate daily micro-exfoliation.

As for special at-home spa care, the range offers Double Exfoliation Pads to intensively correct loss of radiance and photo-ageing, the Lift and Firm Ampoules with epidermal growth factors and peptides increasing firmness after just one application.

The rejuvenating Eye Cream is suggested daily, while the Eye Patch with peptides and Hesperidin are for an immediate SOS correction of puffiness and signs of fatigue.





All botanicals are cultivated through regenerative agriculture

► contractions to immediately reduce wrinkles and expression lines, and counteracts cell degeneration by reducing the presence of inflammatory molecules by more than 55 per cent. It also features extracts of Achillea Millefolium, which has been proven to stimulate collagen production by more than 35 per cent.

The beneficial effects of using Achillea Millefolium were observed during experiments at the open-air laboratory at the Davines Village when – during testing under 24 and 48-hour stress conditions – Achillea Millefolium-treated cells showed an increase in collagen synthesis and a decrease in the secretion of the enzymes that destroy collagen.

Proof of concept

To prove the efficacy of the new Sublime Skin line, Comfort Zone tested out the 'hero' product – Sublime Skin Intensive Serum – on more than 100 women across the world.

Results showed a 25 per cent reduction in wrinkles, a perceived rejuvenated look and improvements in the skin's elasticity after 28 days of use.

Comfort Zone's marketing director, Luisa Poisa, believes the company has reached an important milestone, due to its research into the cause and effect of cellular senescence.

"The creation of Archi-Lift and the relaunch of Sublime Skin has raised the profile of



The creation of Archi-Lift and the relaunch of Sublime Skin has raised the profile of Comfort Zone within the international anti-ageing market

Luisa Poisa, Comfort Zone

Comfort Zone within the international anti-ageing market," she commented.

Clean and carbon-neutral

In line with Comfort Zone's long-term sustainability mission, Sublime Skin products are clean and vegan, with up to 99 per cent natural ingredients and a natural fresh fragrance.

More specifically, they are all free from silicones, parabens, animal derivatives, artificial colourants and do not contain acrylates and PEGs.

Product packaging is easily recyclable and carbon offset through the Davines Group's proprietary reforestation and social development project, Ethio Trees [www.spabusiness.com/ethio].

Furthermore, the serum comes in a refillable version and the glass vases have been re-engineered to be lighter and have a lower carbon footprint.

More: www.spabusiness.com/sublimeskin



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Total Impact

PwC's Colin McIlheney and Russell Donaldson home in on the economic fallout of the pandemic in the US spa industry but also map out a road to recovery



Colin McIlheney and Russell Donaldson

The spa industry is, by its very nature, a close contact industry built around the in-person experience. So it should come as no surprise that a global pandemic, characterised by social distancing and stay-at-home orders, brought a year of turmoil to a sector that had seen sustained growth in recent years.

New data published in the International Spa Association (ISPA)'s *2021 US Spa Industry Study* offers a nationwide overview of the economic fallout of the pandemic. With the economy now reopening and strengthening, it also crucially examines what should be in the playbook for the industry's road to recovery ahead.

The findings are based on a survey of spa operators with more than 2,000 locations in early 2021. The study gathered valuable business insights on financial performance, employment, and growth, in addition to ownership structures, product and service offerings in the 12 preceding months, as well as identifying emerging trends.

Openings and closings

The COVID-19 crisis severely restricted spas' operational capacity through 2020, with widespread temporary closures and most facilities completely shut down from March to May as coronavirus raged. The stop-start nature of the restrictions made planning incredibly difficult. But by December, as the economy showed clear signs of reopening, the

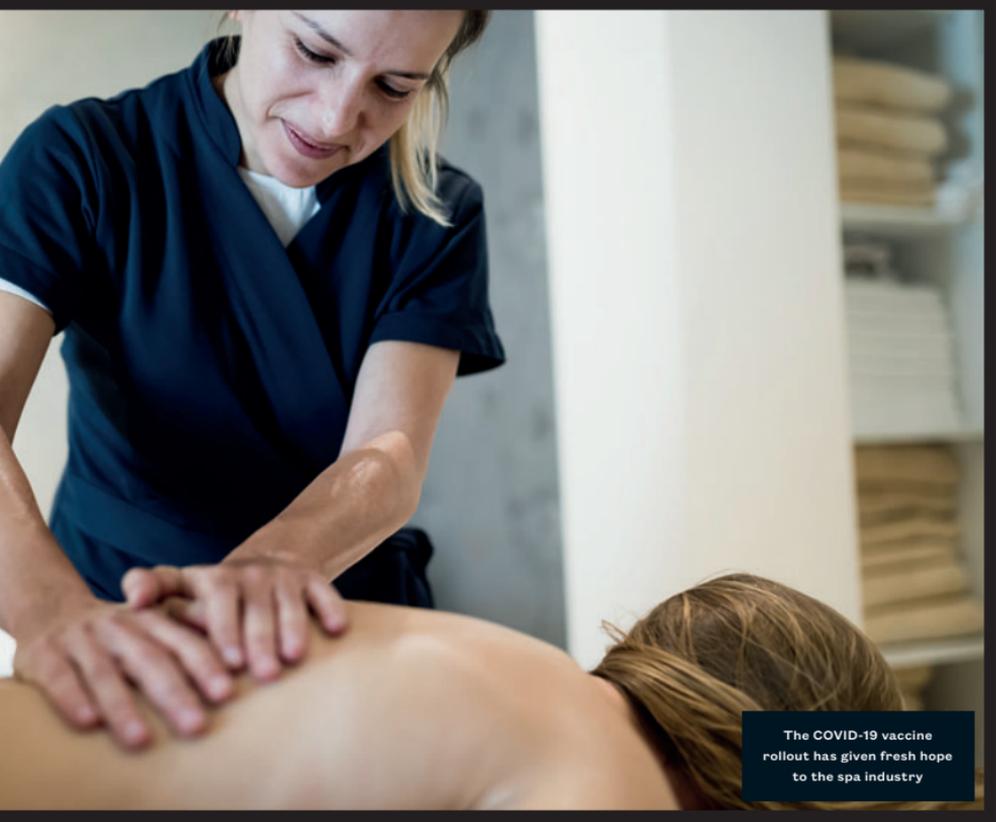
majority of US spas (79 per cent) were also open again. By the end of a turbulent year, only 6 per cent of spas were estimated to have remained closed and these were still deemed viable in the study in anticipation of reopening at some point in 2021.

Five key statistics

The US spa industry's pre-pandemic position in 2019 had seen each of the industry's so-called Big 5 statistics hit record high levels. Unsurprisingly, all five metrics fell in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 (see www.spabusiness.com/USbigfive2020).

Spa revenues took the biggest hit, falling US\$7bn (£5.9bn, £5bn) to US\$12.1bn (€10.2bn, £8.7bn) – a drop of 36 per cent. With travel at times virtually grinding to a halt, the effect of the pandemic was most acutely





The COVID-19 vaccine rollout has given fresh hope to the spa industry

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

felt in the resort/hotel sector, where revenues in 2020 fell by 46 per cent.

Stay-at-home orders and temporary closures meant 68 million fewer visits to spas were estimated to have taken place in 2020 – that's a fall of 35 per cent. Of those who were able to visit a spa in 2020, almost three quarters (74 per cent) of those were local residents or walk-in guests, with out-of-town guests comprising the remaining 26 per cent. Given the resort/hotel sector's reliance on out-of-town guests, it's no surprise that it once again bore the brunt – visits in that sector were down 43 per cent compared to 34 per cent in day spas.

The combination of this fall in revenue and guests saw a marginal decline in revenue per visit in 2020, falling by 2 per cent to US\$97.50 (£82, £70). That said, such a

marginal reduction goes some way to show that guests' spending held up when they were able to visit.

On spa locations and employment, it may still be some time until the pandemic's full impact is truly known. In 2020, spa closures outpaced openings, leading to a net drop in the total number of spa locations. But with many of the industry's spas able to open up again, there are now estimated to be a total of 21,560 spas in the US (4 per cent fewer than in 2019) employing a total of 304,800 people (21 per cent fewer than in 2019).

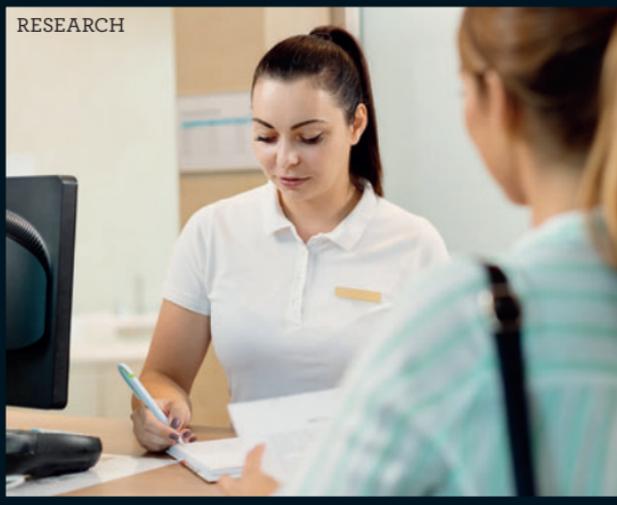
With the sharp decline in revenue and visits, the vast majority of US spas (79 per cent) took the decision to reduce their employee headcount. Twenty-five per cent of spas said they'd taken more

drastic action and reduced their staff complement by more than a quarter – half of those spas (51 per cent) were in the resort/hotel sector.

Rethinking spa

The rollout of COVID-19 vaccines has helped the spa industry see hope beyond what perhaps seemed to be an existential crisis. The immediate aftermath of the pandemic could also be a chance for the industry to rethink and find innovations and new ideas that help return it to sustainable growth like it so successfully did after the global economic downturn a decade ago. The *2021 US Spa Industry Study* offers a glimpse into some of these possible 'silver linings' and hints at three areas where spas are making innovations that could last well beyond the pandemic. ▶

The pandemic has been a time for spas to rethink and innovate



AT A GLANCE

US spa revenues fell by 36% in 2020 to US\$12.1bn

There were 68 million fewer visits to spas – a drop of 35%

Yet, only a marginal decline of 2% in revenue per visit

Spa employment levels dropped by 21% to 304,800 people

There are an estimated 36,500 service provider and 2,820 management vacancies in the US spa sector

The spa industry is again showing its resilience; its ability to bounce back and continue to be a vibrant contributor to the US economy

● The first is **efficiency**, driven largely by the adoption of new technologies, whether that's for online booking, contactless payments or customer databases. These changes not only create a more service-oriented approach for spa-goers, they reduce the demands on staff leading to a more efficient running of the business. It's clear that spas may well stick with some of the new protocols they introduced alongside augmenting their core offering by using for example outdoor or curb-side treatments (40 per cent) or touchless therapies (21 per cent).

● The second is the **connection** with the customer. Due to the US government's direct relief payments, those who were able to work through the pandemic experienced a 7.5 per cent rise in disposable income according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Many economists are therefore expecting a demand-led recovery since the outbreak as consumers work through higher levels of disposable income and have a chance to do the activities they missed through 2020. This is a crucial

difference between 2021 and the years after the global economic downturn. Now the mantra appears to be 'open it and they will come', whereas the previous crisis was characterised by a collapse in disposable income which, of course, had a negative impact on the uptake of spa services. Understanding and tapping into the aspirations and needs of the consumers as we emerge from COVID-19 will be vital for survival and indeed future growth.

● The third is the chance to further **diversify** the spa workforce. There's a golden opportunity to cast the net wider in the search for potential employees. Many sectors are already reporting that the single biggest hurdle they're having to overcome is a shortage of staff. And this is a topic already well known to the spa industry, with the significant number of unstaffed positions weighing heavily on industry leaders' minds in recent years.

Even with the drop in the workforce caused by the pandemic, this year's *US Spa Industry Study* identifies that there are still an estimated 36,550 service provider and 2,820

management vacancies. The number of unfilled service providers has proven a particularly difficult issue to resolve and currently equates to 12 per cent of the total workforce. With 62 per cent of spas saying they're actively hiring therapists, recruitment and retention will be absolutely at the top of the 2021-2022 agenda. It will need a new way of looking at the workforce and reaching out in novel ways to potentially thousands of new recruits and untapped talent.

The coming months will undoubtedly be an important period for the spa industry. It would be foolhardy to try to predict what the Big 5 numbers will be in next year's report, when the dust has (hopefully) settled on the pandemic. However, what can be said is that the spa industry is again showing its resilience; its ability to bounce back and continue to be a vibrant contributor to the US economy, as well as a positive influence on the lives of millions of Americans.

Colin McIlheney is the global research leader, PwC; and Russell Donaldson a manager at PwC Research
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We create environments where the wisdom of self-care and healing meets the 21st century – with huge benefits for customers and the creation of unparalleled guest journeys

Exceeding Expectations



Sammy Gharieni

The Gharieni Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of treatment tables and equipment for spa and wellness.

We talk to CEO, Sammy Gharieni, about his relentless drive to deliver innovative products to underpin operators' success

We live in challenging times," says Sammy Gharieni, CEO of Gharieni Group. "Not only are people more time-starved, but when they go for a wellness experience, they also want more personalised service.

"They want to experience moments that add value and exceed their expectations – success comes from always keeping the customer journey fresh for wellness seekers. This fosters customer engagement and loyalty, enhancing their lives and creating a sense of the spa as an oasis."

Shifting trends

"Gharieni Group began by specialising in medical and spa equipment, so innovation has always been deeply embedded in our DNA," says Gharieni. "We foresaw the shift in our industry from spa to the more holistic spa and wellness offering and we've been meeting the needs of the industry in delivering on this trend, by adapting our offering to keep one step ahead.

"This approach has accelerated the growth of both our company and our client's businesses and our capacity for responding rapidly to trends has seen us continue to lead the way in delivering

high-end tech-driven experiences through our wellness concepts.

"However, in spite of this focus on technology, we still value the human response above all else," says Gharieni. "Authenticity and quality of experience are cornerstones of everything we do. We create environments where the wisdom of self-care and healing meets the 21st century – with huge benefits for customers and the creation of unparalleled guest journeys.

"Spa investors should give more thought to individual or more personalised client treatments. One size no longer fits all."

Selling concepts, not products

"It's important to stay on top of trends and what consumers need," says Gharieni, "addressing these needs means higher returns for the operator and the creation of a fulfilling immersive environment for spa and wellness customers that keeps them coming back, so everyone wins.

"Combining holistic treatments with innovative technology is a key differentiator when it comes to the success of any wellness offering.

"Touchless treatments can also provide new options that can be integrated into wellness programmes to deliver proven benefits, with the assurance of knowing clients will be delighted with the results."



Libra Edge uses a unique choreography of water temperatures

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The Welnamis system is a binaural acoustic and dynamic stimulation device which calms the mind



PHOTO: RESEARCHER'S HEADLINE



Authenticity and quality of experience are cornerstones of everything we do

Research – an industry first

"We saw a unique opportunity during the early stages of the pandemic to start a programme of groundbreaking research to prove the efficacy of our products," says Gharieni. "This research began with an investigation into two of our key lines – the Welnamis system and the Gharieni MLX Quartz bed and we intend to continue to research more of our products going forward.

"The Welnamis system is used to calm the mind during treatments, while the MLX Quartz Bed is filled with warm quartz sand that cocoons the body and replicates the benefits of a day spent at the beach.



PHOTO: GHARIENI

Positive effects on the nervous system were seen after just one Quartz bed treatment

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Gharieni's study into two of its touchless spa treatment concept beds looked at their effects on the Autonomic Nervous System, which is responsible for regulating important bodily functions and stimulating fight-or-flight reactions.

Good health and prevention rely on a sense of balance throughout the ANS.

The trial investigated whether Gharieni's Welnamis (www.gharieni.com/welnamis) and MLX Quartz (www.gharieni.com/psammo-concept-quartz) beds initiate an anti-inflammatory effect in users and help rebalance their ANS.

Researcher and early human development specialist Sergio Pecorelli, MD, PhD, led the study, in collaboration with Alina Hernandez, vice-chair of the Global Wellness Institute's Mental Wellness Initiative.

Hernandez told *Spa Business* Gharieni launched the trial to provide scientific evidence to prove its products' efficacy. She added that

these kinds of studies will be crucial for spa and wellness going forward.

She believes this kind of evidence will help spa and wellness businesses stand out from the crowd and benefit the industry by reassuring customers that healing modalities are scientifically-backed, safe and worth their money.

"We immediately saw improvement in the ANS right after treatments. In fact, we saw peak improvement after three to four treatments, with maintenance and sustained improvement over the eight weeks of the study.

"Chronic stress is one of the greatest challenges to health and wellbeing, because it can trigger chronic inflammation which is ultimately the root of nearly all chronic diseases," she said.

"This study is especially meaningful during a time when value and authenticity are highly important to the end-consumer," said Hernandez.

To find out more about the research, go to www.spabusiness.com/Gharieniresearch

"Our research found they both positively impact the Autonomic Nervous System, leading to greater levels of healing relaxation," says Gharieni. "This is the first study of its kind in the wellness market, so we're pioneering in bringing these products to market, and undertaking research to prove their efficacy.

"We're committed to the highest standards and to creating verified wellness experiences through our ongoing clinical studies," he says.

● See Gharieni's product in action at its global network of flagship spas
Find out more at www.gharieni.com

PHOTO: GHARIENI



The MLX i3Dome treatment can have an anti-inflammatory effect on the body

Role model

New wellness businesses and propositions are cropping up daily. But what models are likely to stand the test of time? Lindsay Madden Nadeau investigates



PHOTO: ANDREW ROBERTS/ISTOCK

Steadily over the last three years, different types of wellness businesses have been showing up all over the world. Clinics are bringing together a variety of complementary medicines to support holistic treatment plans, while larger medical organisations in America and Europe predominately focus on diagnostics. In South America there's a movement towards plant- and nature-based medicine and in Asia the focus is on using ancient traditional therapies that have been passed down through generations to support and rebalance the body. Wellness is showing up everywhere and it certainly isn't slowing down.

The models mentioned above aren't unusual, in fact they're fairly standard. However, the onset of COVID-19 has led to the arrival of newer hybrids that are becoming more bespoke and are quickly evolving as the definition of wellness develops.

If you're in the business of spa, it's worth taking note of the hottest models in the marketplace which are currently in the process of creation. Perhaps they're new competitors? Or maybe they can provide inspiration for growing your own offering.



Cocoon hosts retreats for up to 24 guests and partners with farmers for produce

Purpose-built lease spaces

This no-strings-attached model is making its way into the retreat arena. Savvy investors are scooping up beautiful pastures of land and creating small, unique spaces specifically with retreats in mind. There's much interest from the likes of yoga and meditation teachers around the globe who want to lease easily accessible facilities to run their programmes.

The venue can be as simple as an existing old farmhouse in the countryside, a space for organic farming or a movement or yoga shala, accompanied by 10-12 guest rooms to host up to 20 guests. There's a strong need for this type of offering in Europe, as most practitioners have to travel across oceans to secure a special spot like this.

Cocoon, on the Atlantic coast of Portugal, is a lease-based retreat space that's done really well. Set on 275 acres of farmland, this special nest has 10 guest rooms with bathrooms hosting up to 24 people for retreats. There's an indoor and outdoor yoga shala and partnerships are formed with local farmers and to source produce for its plant-based menu. Plus the area hosts plenty of activities to keep retreat goers happy in their spare time.

Another shining star in the purpose-built lease space is Sutra House in Switzerland. Both this and Cocoon are booked out at least one year in advance to host retreats. It's a no brainer!

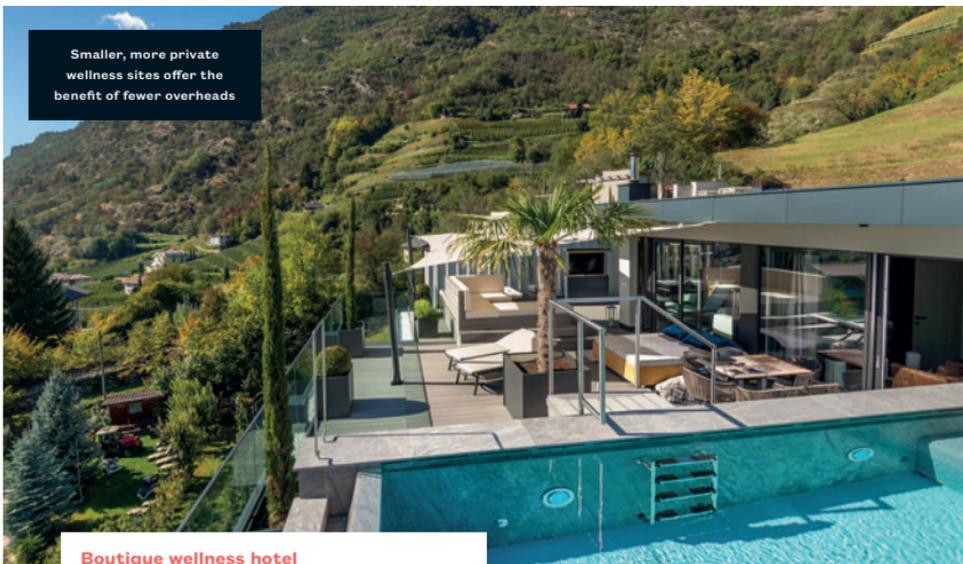


Cocoon is a successful lease-based retreat in Portugal set on 275 acres



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Smaller, more private wellness sites offer the benefit of fewer overheads



Boutique wellness hotel

Investors are realising not everything has to be large-scale to make money, what you need is a solid model that brings longevity to its concept and doesn't have the large overheads of larger medical wellness facilities. As a result of COVID-19, people are looking for smaller, more private locations where they can access a variety of activities and programmes with minimal other guests around.

Preidiholf, south Italy, is a great example. It has 71 hotel rooms and five penthouse suites, over 10 pools and whirlpools, medi-spa and a six-storey sauna, yoga and meditation area. Transformation programmes are led by Patrizia Bortolin, but there are also complementary therapies such as acupuncture and a deeper dive into laboratory testing with an in-house doctor. For those looking for a less diagnostic-based treatment, there's a full-service spa offering bodywork by visiting practitioners and facials, as well as a hammam and other Mediterranean delights.

There are benefits to investing in smaller wellness hotels – costs are generally lower and there's an opportunity to create a very bespoke model while differentiating yourself at the same time.



Preidiholf's wellness programmes are run by Patrizia Bortolin (pictured)



At Maison Ila in France, guest-led routines are favoured over set regimes

Intentional wellness

Intentional wellness propositions are popping up all over Europe, usually in a beautiful countryside setting in an old chateau which is set up to facilitate outdoor activities, healthy eating and mindfulness activities such as yoga or meditation. There's no set regime or routine, however, everything you need to retreat, to get away and focus on your own wellbeing, is available.

My favourite example of this in Europe is Maison Ila, created by Denise Leicester, the founder of therapeutic aromatherapy brand Ila. It offers anything from a short break from the city, a day spa using its amazing products or a private retreat booking.

Set in the rolling hills close to Montpellier, the small five-bedroom home features a bio café full

Ebbio is an organic
Tuscan farm where
guests work in the fields

of rich nourishing local foods, a beautiful garden abundant in healing plants and herbs, a thermal spring well and a petit lla spa. To top it off, there are endless outdoor activities, and to mention nightly yoga nidra, meditation and sound healing to help you drift off. After a weekend here you leave feeling refreshed and nourished. Leicester has a genuine passion for wellbeing and embeds this in the offer. There's no need for diagnostics or medical testing, or limiting diets – this is a sacred space harnessing the healing power of nature.

Cal Reiet a 15-room retreat in Mallorca Spain is an equally exceptional example of a purpose-built wellness model. Its flexible, soft wellness approach focuses on workshops, relaxation and restoration activities alongside natural gardens, yoga shala, gym and spa treatments.

360 wellness tourism

The shift towards wellness tourism brings a more specific model with a 360 approach – operations which not only enable guests to keep healthy during their stay, but which also have measurements in place to gauge their impact on the environment as well as the community around them.

There are only a handful of these gems that exist in Europe right now. A great example is Italy's Ebbio, a charming organic farm located in Tuscany offering a 'food as medicine' approach using Mediterranean flavours delivered fresh from the farm.

Ebbio offers a 'food as medicine' approach using healthy farm-fresh food

Ebbio's philosophy is sustainable living and it encourages guests to work in the fields and learn how to live a more sustainable life. Ebbio gauges its impact across nine criteria – energy, water, food, waste, carbon footprint, education, health, employment and happiness – and works with local farmers and artisans to raise the awareness of these principles.

When you stay at Ebbio you can participate in a range of activities from swimming, biking and hiking to massage and family constellations. Embedded in the story of Ebbio is a long history of artisans making it part of the programming to offer programmes and workshops that reflect their passion for art and sculpting. Visiting other local farms and sampling the olive oils and wines means visitors get to connect with the greater community that surrounds them with some amazing cooking workshops.

Wellness in hospitals

We've seen wellness in hospitals pop up in North America in the larger brands like Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic which incorporate complementary therapies as part of their treatment plans. After all, this is the era where medical meets wellness, offering a complementary treatment plan that uses the best of modern medicine and traditional therapies for a truly holistic approach.

We're now beginning to see similar movements in the Middle East where hospitals are looking to dedicate not only a particular floor to wellness, but also incorporating wellness in the values of the hospital and the patient, visitor and employer experience. This steps outside the traditional hospital model while making room for a more comprehensive offer throughout the entire hospital journey. ●

Lindsay Madden Nadeau owns wellness consultancy Meraki
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Beyond Sensitive



BIOLOGIQUE RECHERCHE

If you have a client with hyper-sensitive skin, we have a Toleskin treatment you can use to help them

Laure Bouscharain, Biologique Recherche

With an increasing number of people reporting hyper-sensitive skin, Biologique Recherche has created Toleskin, its first range targeting extreme inflammation. Laure Bouscharain, head of R&D, explains why these products are needed now more than ever

Known for its unique methodology and results-driven personalised approach, French skincare brand Biologique Recherche has something of a cult following among its discerning clientele, who love the highly customised solutions that cater to individual needs. The company has spent the past 45 years developing its rigorous methodology, investing in R&D to bring the most cutting-edge products to market. Now, Biologique Recherche has drawn on its decades of skin biology expertise to create its first collection designed specifically for those with intolerant skin - skin that goes beyond just being sensitive and overreacts with an inflammatory response.

The power of Skin Instants
In the world of Biologique Recherche, these overreactions are known as Intolerant Skin Instants - these clients have skin that needs to be



BIOLOGIQUE RECHERCHE

The Toleskin range includes supplements, topical products and rituals

soothed and rebuilt, often because they're coping with things such as cancer treatment, atopic dermatitis or medical-aesthetic treatment.

Biologique Recherche's new Toleskin range has been created specifically for Intolerant Skin Instants, and includes supplements, topical products and rituals, so it addresses problems from the inside out.

"We've noticed increasing numbers of people reporting that they suffer from sensitive skin - many are even having reactions to products that are specifically designed for sensitive skin," says Laure Bouscharain, head of R&D for Biologique Recherche. "One reason for this is that our world is becoming more and more sterilised. The human immune system needs to express itself, or it will break out against otherwise harmless substances that it comes

into contact with. In addition, many surfactants found in soap products can also damage the skin barrier, making it more permeable and susceptible to irritants.

"We've identified the factors that lead to intolerant skin," says Bouscharain. "There's often a hereditary link - more than half of children with atopic dermatitis have a first-degree relative who also suffers from it - and the physical structure of this skin type makes it particularly sensitive to external stress factors such as UV radiation or pollution. This skin type is healthy but fragile, and will react strongly when it's overwhelmed.

"We've designed products that relieve intolerance and tackle its causes in depth, restoring the skin barrier, rebalancing the skin microbiota, and reducing redness, roughness and inflammation."



BIOLOGIQUE RECHERCHE

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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/SHINA

The skincare brand has strong ties to the medical world and focuses firmly on product performance



About Toleskin

The new Biologique Recherche Toleskin range includes four innovative products

Toleskin [DS] - A dietary supplement based on lactic ferments to strengthen the immune system and reduce the inflammatory response

Toleskin [B] - Desensitising booster powder and sterile serum designed to improve skin tolerance and make it less reactive to aggressors

Toleskin [M] - A pre-impregnated mask which immediately calms discomfort caused by skin flare-ups

Toleskin [C] - A reconditioning sterile cream that reduces the skin's sensitivity and contributes to restoring the skin barrier



Detailed evaluation

The personalised Biologique Recherche programme begins with a 'Skin Instant' measurement session in which highly trained skin professionals assess the state of the skin with the help of the Skin Instant Lab - a medical device that can measure moisture content, transepidermal water loss, skin elasticity, melanin and sebum content - and then diagnose and prescribe products and treatments. The evaluation is backed by a visual analysis, photographs and a dermo-cosmetic questionnaire, as well as a cosmetological evaluation of the skin by expert therapists from Biologique Recherche.

Toleskin spa treatments incorporate manual techniques that are adapted to hyper-sensitive skin, including drainage to reduce inflammatory fluid retention, use of acupressure points,

no rubbing of the skin, and relaxation to bring down overall stress levels. As with all Biologique Recherche product lines, recommendations and treatment protocols are personalised for each client, and the therapist will determine whether to use the full range, or only certain products, depending on how the skin will tolerate them.

"Biologique Recherche is a brand that's primarily focused on performance," explains Bouscharain. "We listen closely to our customers' feedback, and we have strong ties to the medical world. With increasing numbers of people reporting intolerant skin, we knew it was time to create products and treatments targeting ultra-sensitive skin types. Now, if you have a client with hyper-sensitive skin, we have a treatment range that you can use to help them." More: www.biologique-recherche.com



STYLING: EMERENT / FORTY EIGHT, ROMA

Lorenzo Giannuzzi

CEO, Palazzo Fiuggi and Forte Village

The hospitality industry veteran dreamed of reinventing an historic Italian palazzo as a world-class medical spa. Lisa Starr went to find out more

Lorenzo Giannuzzi was immersed in the hospitality industry from an early age, working as an intern and restaurant busboy. He attended the renowned *École Hôtelière de Lausanne* and after graduation, found himself in 1988 as area general manager for a hotel group which included a property known as Palazzo della Fonte.

Built in 1913, the iconic hotel was located in a park on the edge of Fiuggi, a thermal spring village 70km south east of Rome. The hotel had been a destination for European celebrities for many years, as well as serving as a hospital and a headquarters for the

Allied Forces during World War II. At the time of his assignment, the hotel – then owned by Forte Group – was functioning with a business model catering for conventions and weekend leisure groups.

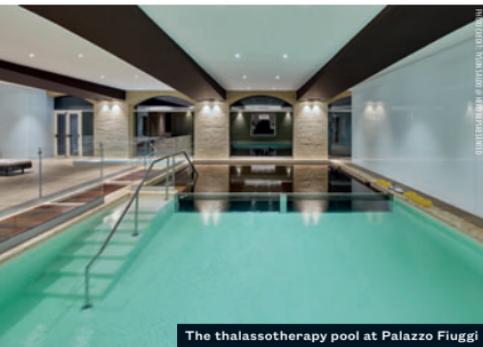
Eventually, Giannuzzi was promoted to be group director for the company's Caribbean operations and moved out of the beautiful valley to pursue his career, eventually finding himself on the island of Sardinia, managing the iconic Forte Village.

Forte Village

Originally opened in 1970 as a holiday club, Forte Village gained international status in the 80s and 90s with the addition of pools, a spa and thalassotherapy centre featuring six pools, making it innovative and ahead of the times.

Voted the world's leading resort twenty years in a row by the World Travel Awards, the unique family-oriented Forte Village comprises eight hotels, 21 restaurants, the services of a number of Michelin-starred chefs, a shopping arcade with 33 shops and a wide array of activities oriented to sun and sea. An arena seating 5,000 people showcases performing artists, while stars from a wide range of sports are available to coach guests.

Most are health-conscious couples and families and tend to come once or twice a year, so although it's only open for six months of each year, Forte Village generates a turnover of around €100m pa, with EBITDA of close to €40m. This has made the Village a hot property and it has been sold several times over the years as a result.



The thalassotherapy pool at Palazzo Fiuggi

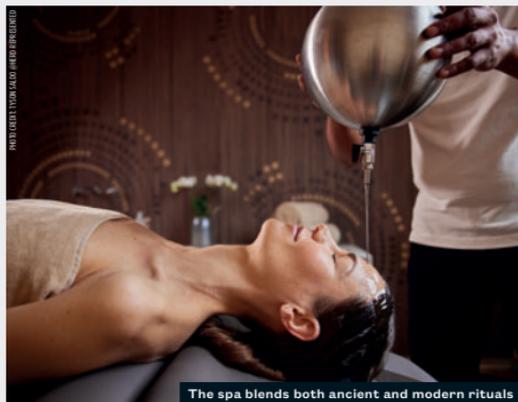
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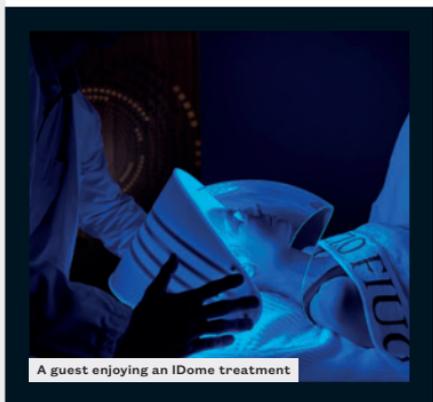
‘The Palazzo Fuggi motto is, ‘Longer Life, Better Lived’



The palace sits in a thermal location and is now a world-class medical spa



The spa blends both ancient and modern rituals



A guest enjoying an IDome treatment

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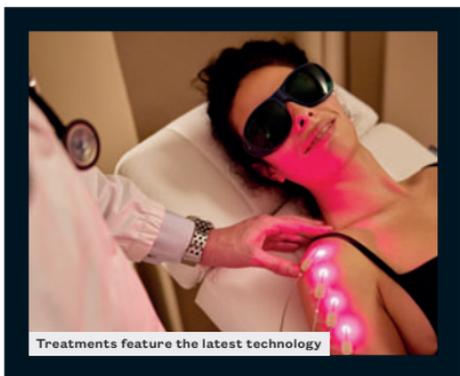
► **Purchase of Palazzo della Fonte**

With an eye on the future, Giannuzzi seized an opportunity to participate in the purchase, by the owners of the Forte Village, of Palazzo della Fonte in 2019, meaning this historic property became part of his remit once more, as he assumed the role of CEO of both Forte Village and the Palazzo.

With inspiration from his oversight of Forte Village and awareness of the demand for wellness, Giannuzzi envisioned Palazzo della Fonte being renamed Palazzo Fiuggi to reflect its thermal location and reimagined as a world-class medical spa – anticipating a demand for the restoration of health well before we'd ever even heard of COVID-19.

The lovely structure needed some refurbishment, but more importantly, a spa and wellness area had to be conceived and built that could create, according to Giannuzzi, "a total wow! effect". Engaging GOCO Hospitality and consultant Thorsten Lipfert to guide the project, a 6,000sq m spa and wellness complex was added at a cost of €30m by completely reconstructing the lower level of the building.

The medical component includes the latest in technologies, such as MRI and infrared technologies for brain health, retinal scanning and diagnostic testing. An extensive hydrotherapy area includes thalassotherapy pools, Roman baths, private hammam suites and indoor and outdoor pools and lounges, while also incorporating



Treatments feature the latest technology

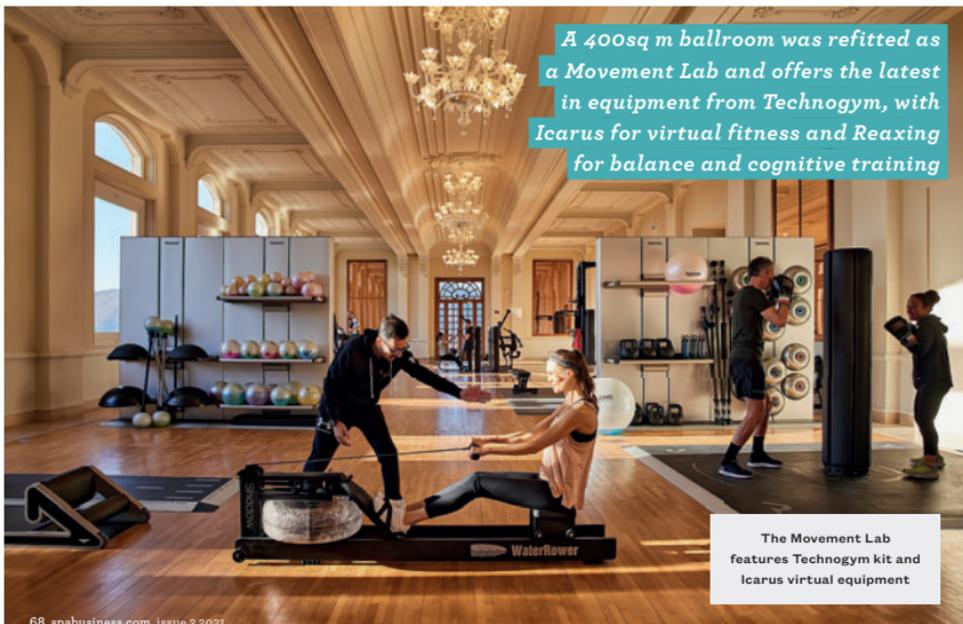
© GUSTAVO WANDER / GETTY IMAGES

the original outdoor pool – which at the time of its completion in 1936 was among the largest in Europe.

A 400sq m ballroom was refitted as a Movement Lab and offers the latest in equipment from Technogym, with Icarus for virtual fitness and Reaxing for balance and cognitive training – all with beautiful views of the countryside.

More than a spa

But Palazzo Fiuggi is more than a beautiful property. Already on top 10 lists of European spas, the goal is that it be considered a true destination health resort. Toward that effort, Giannuzzi collaborated with Professor David Della Morte, a specialist in senescence-related ailments and Heinz Beck, a three Michelin star chef renowned for his healthy cuisine.



A 400sq m ballroom was refitted as a Movement Lab and offers the latest in equipment from Technogym, with Icarus for virtual fitness and Reaxing for balance and cognitive training

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The Movement Lab features Technogym kit and Icarus virtual equipment

Chef Heinz Beck worked with a team of nutritionists to design light, healthy menus using biodynamic, natural ingredients following the Food as Medicine approach

There are four main wellness programmes on offer: Complete Life Rewind, Optimal Weight, Deep Detox and Immuno Boost. Each is designed to be undertaken over a minimum of seven days and incorporate elements from the medical, material, movement and holistic treatments sectors.

Chef Beck worked with a team of nutritionists to design light, healthy menus using biodynamic, natural ingredients following the Food as Medicine approach. These beautifully presented meals are automatically delivered to guests in the dining room by elegant waiting staff according to their wellness programme, meaning guests need not concern themselves with making the right food choices during their visit.

Palazzo Fiuggi was originally scheduled to open in November 2020, but of course COVID-19 slowed the process considerably. Very strict construction protocols were put in place in Italy, and the procurement and delivery of materials and equipment suffered incredible delays.

The resort was finally able to soft open in May of 2021 and as with Forte Village, all team members have been vaccinated, and COVID-19 tests can be administered at check-in for unvaccinated guests.

Healthy meals are tailored to a guest's particular wellness programme

Pandemic impact

How far back has the pandemic pushed their profitability targets? According to Giannuzzi, "We're ready in the market with the most innovative, beautiful spa. Having this product ready at the end of COVID-19 will be a big plus - but we can recover what we lost within a year."

It's early days at this point, but so far clients are especially attracted to the Optimal Weight programme, while Russian and Eastern European clients seem especially keen on the concept of an "anti-COVID-19 check-up" - wanting to ensure their immune systems are fully functioning, and taking advantage of the therapies on offer for this, including IV infusions.

When asked about the EBITDA expectations of Palazzo Fiuggi in comparison to Forte Village, Giannuzzi explains the model will function differently. "We expect healthy occupancy, 75 per cent year-round and think we can perform very well.

"Margin in the spa is less than a normal resort, given the costs of equipment and medical personnel, but Palazzo Fiuggi will become an acorn of the health resort concept." It is the intent that the resort will remain open year-round and attract a wide international following.

Does Giannuzzi believe many developers will be creating these kinds of properties? He says "Health tourism, prior to COVID-19, was increasing by double-digits every year and I'm sure this trend will continue - clients will pay more attention to prevention and remaining healthy.

"We don't cure people," he says, "The objective is to prevent them from getting sick - the Palazzo Fiuggi motto is, Longer Life, Better Lived."



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Chef Beck works with a nutrition team



OUTSIDE: PHOTOKIT/ISTOCK/LEON LEMM

The WOW FACTOR



Derek Barton, MD at Barr & Wray

Snow rooms are creating a 'wow' factor for customers, while reducing operating costs in the delivery of hot and cold experiences, says TechnoAlpin partner, Derek Barton from Barr & Wray

Hot and cold bathing is known to strengthen the Central Nervous System, so the value to people of using these types of facilities can't be understated," explains Derek Barton, MD at Barr & Wray. "Alternatively, if the guest just wants to use the wellness experience to get away from it all, then that's good too."

While Barr & Wray offers a variety of hot experiences, Barton says large-scale cold water experiences can be more of a challenge to deliver, due to the cost of cooling large volumes of water. "Wet areas typically have air temperatures of between 29-31 degrees," he explains, "so chilled pools cost a lot to run and to keep cool. Additionally, cold water experiences can be expensive when it comes to water usage and we find some are just not sustainable".



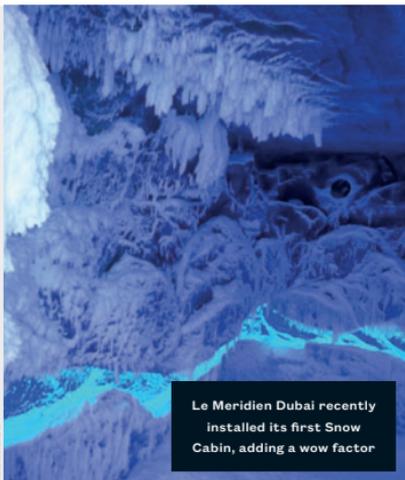
Cold bathing offers numerous health benefits

BARR & WRAY

Snow room solutions

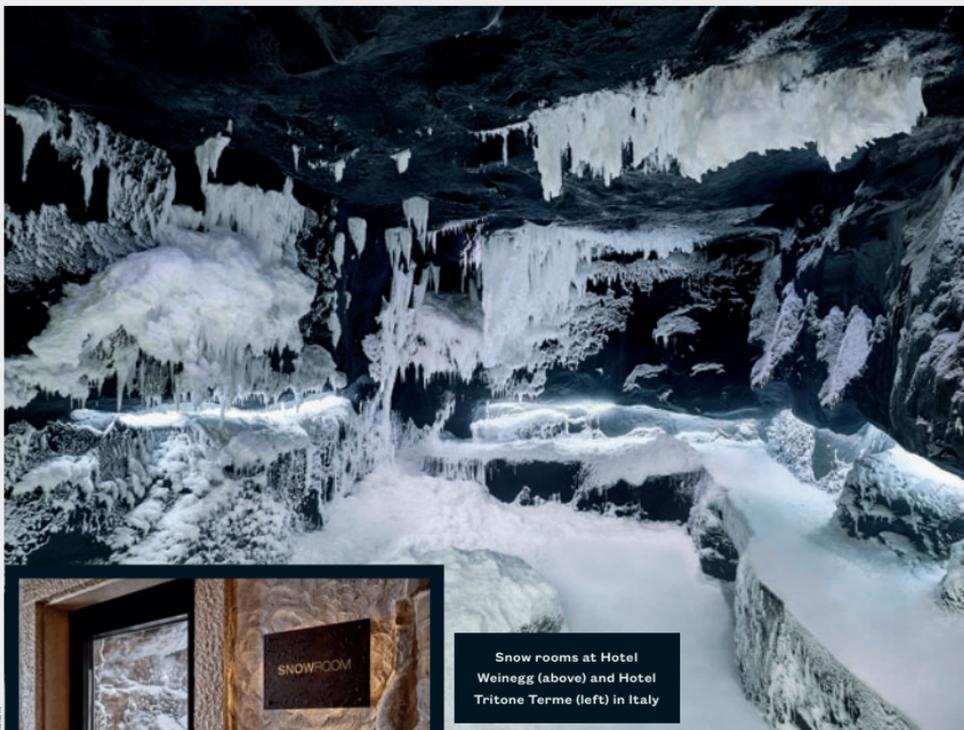
If operators want to optimise their spa and wellness installations in terms of operating costs, but still want to deliver hot and cold experiences, Barton suggests they consider snow and ice rooms. "They're a good fit," he says. "They deliver the wow factor while also being constructed and operated to ensure sanitary conditions. They also accommodate multiple users, when compared to cold plunge pools and showers, which generally only accommodate one person at a time."

When it comes to snow room trends, Barton – who partners with specialist TechnoAlpin to deliver these experiences – says larger wet areas are becoming more popular in the Asian and Middle East markets. "Whether this is to do with the pandemic and the need for more personal space, or simply that consumers are developing a preference for larger bathing areas remains to be seen," he says. "In this context, snow and ice rooms can be the jewel in the crown, offering a unique experience for many regular spa users who have become a little jaded from seeing the same facilities time and time again."



Le Meridien Dubai recently installed its first Snow Cabin, adding a wow factor

PHOTO: TECHNOALPIN



Snow rooms at Hotel Weinegg (above) and Hotel Tritone Terme (left) in Italy



PHOTO: TECHNICAL

New installations

Barr & Wray has recently installed a snow room with TechnoAlpin in the spa at Le Méridien Dubai Hotel & Conference Centre Dubai and is also working with them on a design project in Qatar, which will also incorporate snow.

So can a snowroom installation help the bottom line? Barton says although extra budget is required for the installation, it's not possible to underestimate the power of the 'wow' factor when it comes to the impact of these playful cold experiences: "In addition to providing guests with a curative treatment, a snow room can be incorporated into a spa or wellness offering to simply put the property on the map," he explains. "It could be the reason why guests make the journey to your spa rather than visiting another property."

More: www.technoalpin.com

About TechnoAlpin

TechnoAlpin's indoor snow concepts offer experiences for hotels and wellness areas, as well as indoor ski and retail venues, with solutions ranging from 10sq m snow cabins to snow-covered ski areas of 50,000sq m.

The company's SnowRoom can be manufactured in a range of sizes from 5 to 20sq m. Real snow provides an innovative, dry cool-down, as well as snow experiences 365 days a year that stimulate the senses in a wintery environment.

Room design options include Rock, Forest or the Cubic option, which was designed by renowned architects, Snøhetta. The rooms are cooled to between -5°C and -10°C and fresh snow 'falls' every night.

The EcoSnow2.0 multifunctional unit is the central controller for snow production, while cold air is also blown into the room via the snow nozzle to maintain the temperature, with no additional cooling required. When it comes to the layout of the spa, the unit can be installed up to 50m from the SnowRoom to give more flexibility in the installation.

A seven-inch touch display ensures easy control and monitoring of all of the EcoSnow 2.0's operating functions. A timed program allows for the automatic control of the production of snow and also the defrosting times.

For ease of operation, TechnoAlpin can access the device and update settings remotely for maintenance purposes.

Aire Ancient Baths, London

Aire Ancient Baths has unveiled its first UK outpost in London, Megan Whitby dipped in to check out the new spa

Since ancient times, public bathing has been an integral social and cultural unifier – bringing the powerful benefits of hydrotherapy to the masses.

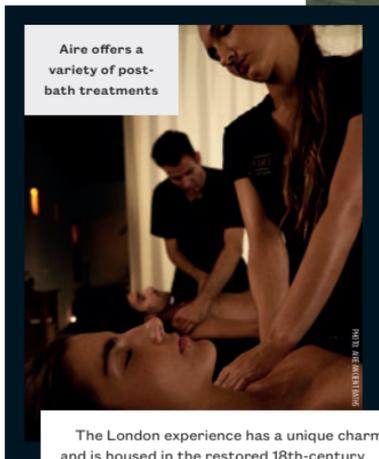
Drawing on this notion, Aire Ancient Baths launched its first bathing facility in Seville, Spain in 2000, taking inspiration from the best of Greek, Roman and Ottoman traditions. Today, it has a portfolio of eight urban locations in the US, Copenhagen and Spain and has just opened in London, UK.

First impressions

Entering Aire Ancient Baths London I'm welcomed with the comforting smell of orange blossom – a signature component of all Aire experiences – and face-masked staff greet me with elastic wristbands indicating my spa package and bathing duration.

Aire's traditional blueprint is evident as the spa is set within a restored historical building that reimagines the classic tradition of thermal baths in a contemporary fashion.

Aire offers a variety of post-bath treatments



The London experience has a unique charm and is housed in the restored 18th-century townhouse home of celebrated author JM Barrie who penned the childhood classic, *Peter Pan*.

Following the pandemic, the industry has been keenly monitoring interest in spas and staff proudly reveal Aire London has been fully booked since launch day. During my visit, only eight bathers are allowed during a 120-minute slot, which I'm pleased to hear after feeling uneasy about crowded spaces. Since then, restrictions have lifted and 14 bathers are now allowed.

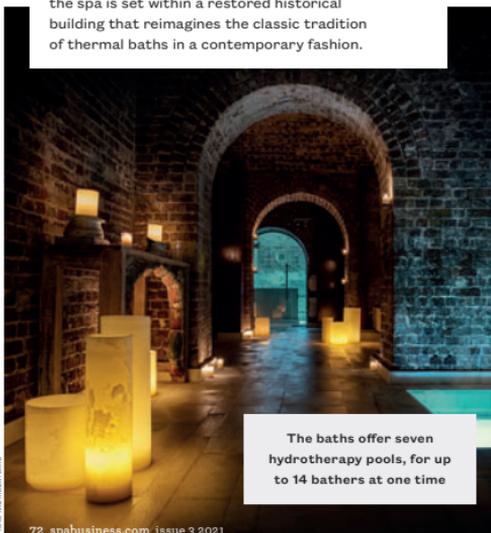
Down in sleek, grey and uncluttered locker rooms I shower and put on my costume and a pair of bathing socks (as politely instructed), before being escorted through a dark wooden door and down a candle-lit staircase to the softly-lit subterranean bathing area. The spa's heat and orange blossom fragrance wash over me as I'm given a brief tour of the facilities.

Hydrotherapy hideaways

The labyrinth-like, compact facility houses seven hydrotherapy pools, a steamroom and a relaxation room.

It's been restored with original features such as deep red vaulted brick ceilings with intricate details and these are cleverly juxtaposed by smooth pale marble and dark wooden furniture, illuminated by glowing candles and softly lit pools. Part of the spa's design remit was to transport guests

The baths offer seven hydrotherapy pools, for up to 14 bathers at one time





Aire evokes the classic tradition of thermal baths, along with a modern touch



The London baths are located in the former house of author JM Barrie

back to the simplicity and tone of the bathing experiences of antiquity and it does just this.

All visits are sold in packages consisting of a 90-minute free roam of the baths, with the option of treatments afterwards. I begin my thermal journey in the tepidarium pool (36°C) as recommended by the spa team to help my body prepare for contrast bathing. On first impressions, the lack of daylight, controlled numbers and abundance of private nooks makes for a soothing introduction, as it helps you switch off and disconnect.

I make my way to a marble peppermint-scented steamroom, then the vaporium, and its bracing in-built frigidarium (10°C) and progress into the balneum, aka the Bath of a Thousand Jets – which is surprisingly even more vigorous than the name suggests!

The treatment

Next I'm booked in for a 120-minute bathing experience incorporating a 30-minute massage for £150 (US\$207, €176). My therapist, Roxanne, begins by removing my socks and proceeds to work through knots in my back with sweetly-scented almond oil, while adding some invigorating assisted stretching. She's extremely attentive, checking I'm comfortable and that the pressure is just right.

After treatment, she places warmed socks back onto my feet – a pleasant finale. Personally, the treatment journey feels a little

rushed with no post-treatment advice or water, instead I'm politely sent to get changed so I can restart my bathing experience.

Feeling relaxed, I re-acclimatise with the tepidarium and then visit the caldarium pool (40°C) which is like stepping into a vast hot bath. The caldarium is the hottest pool on offer and is complete with a glass covered archway separating it from Aire's vinotherapy room. Stacked with vintage-style emerald green wine bottles, this is where guest can soak in a wine bath for 30 minutes as part of the 180-minute Wine Bath Experience costing £450 (US\$627, €528).

I make my way to the relaxation room, comforted by fragrant tea. The room has a soothing ambience, but would benefit from loungers or seating.

Finally, I head to Aire's salt-water flotarium where the pool's high salt concentration enables total weightlessness. The room is enhanced with a shower alcove with salt granules to exfoliate and reinvigorate yourself afterwards.

Just as I think to myself that I could float for hours, a delicate bell chime tells me it's the end of my session. When I emerge from the underground baths, my skin has a dewy glow, my mind is calmer and my upper back feels relaxed. It takes my eyes and body a few seconds to adjust to daylight and the bustle of modern London. I feel I've been transported – either that or perhaps this is how it feels to have travelled back in time. ▶

The need to relax and disconnect is universal and this gives Aire a wide appeal across all demographics

Amadeo Serra, CEO, Aire

Aire's global portfolio of eight properties have all reopened after respective regional lockdowns and, according to CEO Amadeo Serra, business is thriving and demand is flooding in once again. *Spa Business* spoke with Serra to get a deeper insight into the inner workings of the business and its growth plans for the future.

How would you describe the Aire concept?

All Aire Ancient Baths are temples of relaxation. In the beginning, we were inspired by ancient civilisations and their tradition of thermal baths and chose to recreate this experience in historical buildings, focusing on the benefits of water for both body and mind.

The Aire Experience was born as a result of the need that we all have in the modern world to disconnect. So we created an oasis in which you can escape and be transported to a place where time doesn't exist.

What makes the day spa bathing concept popular?

Unlike traditional day spas we offer a range of experience – baths of different temperatures which guests can sample as a standalone package or combine with one of our exclusive relaxing treatments or rituals. What makes Aire so popular is that it's one of the few locations that truly offers complete relaxation. Every step of the client journey is carefully considered so the guests are free to relax from the moment they're in our care.

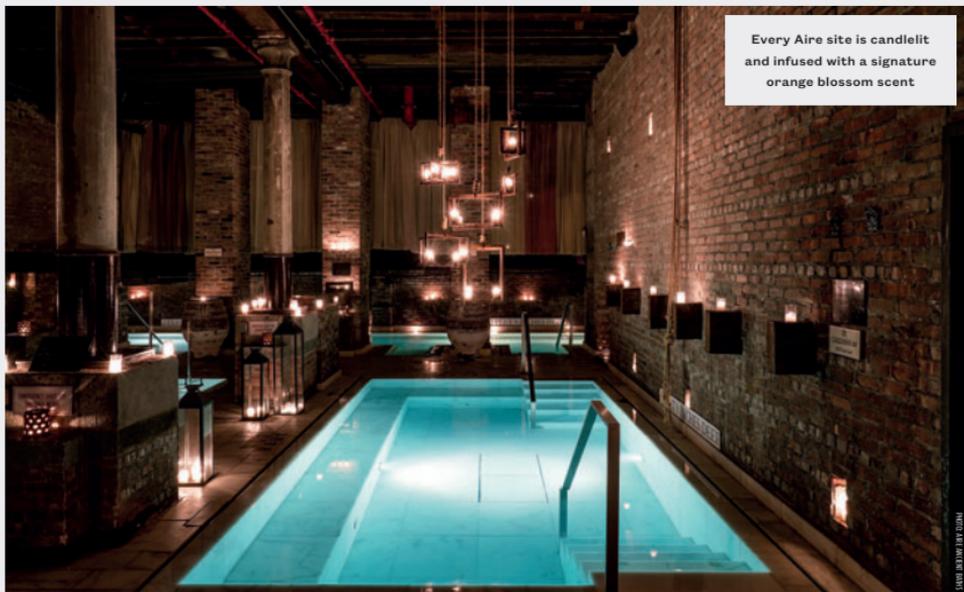
What are your development plans?

We've been growing steadily over the past couple of years, opening in Copenhagen last August and now focusing on establishing Aire in London as a key destination. We'll also expand further with an opening in Toronto planned for 2023.

What made you choose the international cities that you're located in?

After establishing four Spanish locations, the natural next step was to expand the brand to key international locations.

Serra says each Aire site is chosen for its historic connection to the host city



Every Aire site is candlelit and infused with a signature orange blossom scent

STEPHEN WATSON

We always look for cosmopolitan cities that have large populations, as well as a keen interest and investment in leisure and wellbeing. We began our expansion with NYC in 2011, followed by Chicago in 2017, Copenhagen in 2020 and now London in 2021.

How important is the location in the city?

Very important, we're always in key destinations in the cities we choose and in the case of London, we chose Covent Garden as it's an iconic district in the heart of the capital that's loved by tourists and Londoners alike.

We also spend a lot of time finding the right buildings because the site needs to have historic importance and a dialogue with the city it's in. This is often one of the most challenging aspects of opening Aire, as it needs to be large enough for the facilities but also have an authentic story and connection to the city.

How are you staying true to the original concept as you grow globally?

The experience at Aire is the same in every location. Every space is candlelit, infused with our signature orange blossom scent and the client journey remains the same. We connect the experience to the city it's in through the historical building and local touches and naturally every space varies in terms of layout, but the core Aire experience remains the same.

Who are your visitors in terms of demographics?

Aire is unique because it's a very inclusive space. You can come alone, with your mother, a small group of friends or a partner. The need to relax and disconnect is universal and this gives us a wide appeal across all demographics.

Can you give an idea of your facilities' popularity pre- and post-COVID?

The Aire experience is based on privacy and relaxation and so we've only ever allowed a limited capacity at our locations. This meant we didn't have to drastically change the business model when reopening after the pandemic and demand has been very high in all centres since.

What have you done that's especially different since COVID-19?

We've reinforced our already strict cleaning protocols and amended staff rotas so they're in small groups to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We also do regular lateral flow testing, and the team wear masks throughout the whole location.

What percentage of people just come for the bathing experience versus bathing plus a treatment?

Most guests come for the full experience of the Ancient Thermal Bath tour and a treatment. Our 120-minute Relaxing Experiences are the most popular, combining time in the Ancient Thermal Bath Experience and a deeply relaxing almond-oil massage ranging from 30-, 45-, 60- or 70-minutes. We always encourage people to have a treatment alongside thermal bathing, as we believe it's the best way to experience Aire.



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Leading by example

Art of Cryo offers evidence-based whole body cryotherapy solutions, providing effective solutions for guests and an attractive investment for investors

When investigating the growing trend of whole body cryotherapy, Art of Cryo is the ideal place to begin your journey. Even though the brand has only been selling cryo chambers under its own name since 2020, the company brings 30 years of experience in manufacturing the highest-quality cryo chambers for the market. The results are high-performance chambers that deliver what they promise – real minus temperatures of -75°C, -85°C or -110°C. The premium German manufacturer invests huge efforts

into the research and development of cryotherapy, so that the very latest insights and innovations can be directly incorporated into its state-of-the-art products.

Art of Cryo's high-performance cryo-chambers are 100 per cent electrically-driven and made to the highest quality standards, making them both extremely efficient and eco-friendly.

Fields of application

Cryotherapy is typically known for use in the sport and health sectors to help with recovery, support pain relief and reduce inflammation. Furthermore, it can also help to ease



Art of Cryo supplies cryo chambers in three different product lines

numerous chronic health conditions and psychosomatic disorders such as anxiety and depression.

Recently, modern whole-body cryotherapy is being used more and more in the fields of beauty, wellness and lifestyle. The simple yet effective treatment lasts just three to four minutes in the cryo chamber and provides increased blood circulation and gives the skin a healthy glow. Results include rejuvenated skin and an anti-ageing effect, both of which can become visible after just a few sessions. This makes whole-body cryotherapy in an Art



Art of Cryo offers versatile, unique and effective treatments to customers



Art of Cryo offers manufacturing, research, service and training in one go

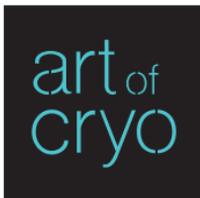
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Art of Cryo's high-performance cryo-chambers are 100% electrically-driven



The company is passionate about research and aims to constantly innovate



TESTIMONIAL

Paula Kasper, Cryodukt AG

Art of Cryo is innovative in its business ventures, providing first-class high-performance cryo chambers, backed up with excellent consultancy and project management support to help with stepping into the whole body cryo space.

While I was starting to establish my Cryodukt in Zurich, Art of Cryo always sought out the best and most effective solutions to support me and my business.

Their team understands the cryo market like no other and is, therefore, able to help create an efficient process for starting the whole body cryo business. The Art of Cryo Vaultz are unique, achieving real temperatures down to -110 degrees. Our customers love the real temperatures and immediately feel a significant difference to other cryo experiences after they've tried the vario Vaultz V3 with -110 °C for the first time in our centre.

of Cryo Vaultz an ideal treatment for modern biohackers who want to protect and optimise their health.

Art of Cryo models

Art of Cryo supplies its cryo chambers for whole body cryotherapy in three different product lines: single Vaultz, vario Vaultz and unical Vaultz.

The single Vaultz encompasses the V1 and V1 lux models which are superior, space-saving solutions for professional or private use. These innovative chambers work on a real room temperature of -75°C (V1) or -85°C (V1 lux).

The vario Vaultz line includes the V2 and V3 models, made for professional use, even in highly frequented cryotherapy facilities. With one (V2) or two (V3) anterooms, the vario Vaultz line offers real -110°C and a spacious treatment room to treat several customers at the same time.

These specific models can be upgraded with special features including a 22" display, CCTV, intercom and a sound module that allows guests to listen to

their favourite songs during treatments to make it a true Cryotainment experience.

The unical Vaultz are custom-made solutions for every customer who has special ideas or needs.

A reliable partner

As a manufacturer, Art of Cryo places particular emphasis on research and further development of its product range. New insights from the company's own research department flow directly into every product that leaves the factory – not only the high-performance cryo-chambers themselves, but also the company's operating software and its certified courses for cryo operators.

In this way, the company offers manufacturing, research, service and training in one go – reliable, fast and of the very highest quality.

Art of Cryo

- www.artofcryo.com
- contact@artofcryo.com



WHIT PHOTOGRAPHY

Gloria Caulfield

The executive director of Lake Nona wellness community talks to Magali Robathan about tapping into the latest innovations and technology to create healthy environments

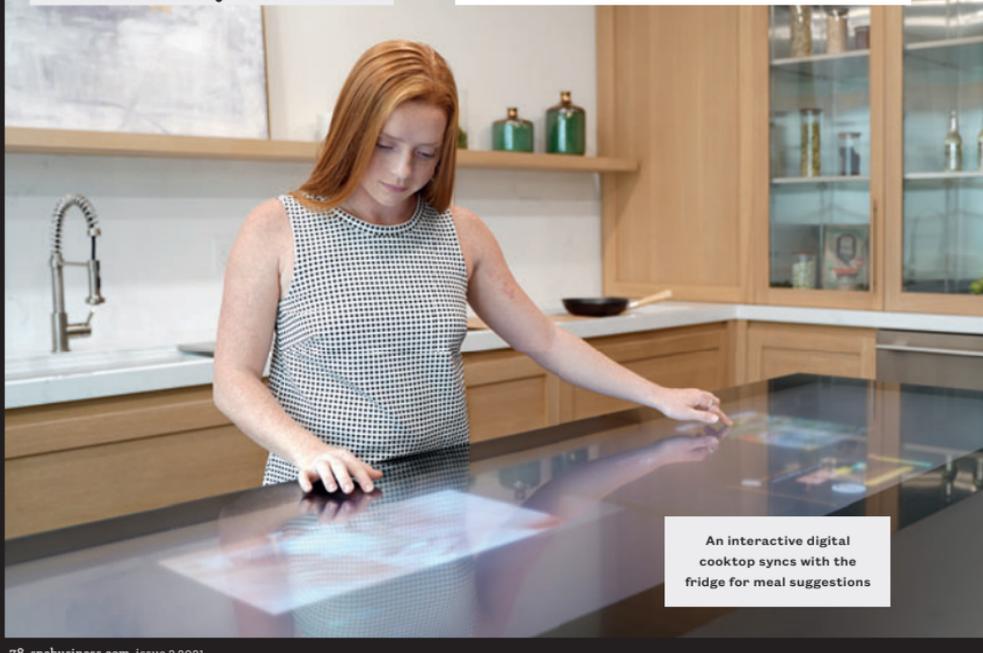
In the planned Florida wellness community of Lake Nona, stands what looks like an ordinary – if impressive – clapboard home, surrounded by palm trees and plants. The only clue that something a bit special is going on inside, is a sign inviting people look around.

This is WHIT, a prototype Wellness Home built on Innovation and Technology, where entrepreneurs test concepts that could transform the way we live – from a Wellness Kitchen and Sleep Sanctuary bedroom to green walls and View Smart Windows that tint automatically in response to light levels outside to reduce glare and keep the home cool.

It uses anti-microbial and mould resistant cork flooring and low VOC paint, has a state of the art Technogym gym and a room for meditation and relaxation, featuring technologies to clear your mind and refocus your brain.

“We spend more than 90 per cent of our lives indoors, yet so many of the designs of our homes and the spaces we occupy haven’t been planned with health and wellbeing in mind,” says Gloria Caulfield, executive director of the Lake Nona Institute, speaking to me from her Florida home. “We have to pay attention to these spaces by thinking about how we optimise our health within them.

“The idea of WHIT is to create a kind of living lab that focuses on optimising health and wellbeing within the living environment.”



An interactive digital cooktop syncs with the fridge for meal suggestions

PHOTO: GUYA BUNIA



PHOTO: LAKE NONA

PHOTO: LAKE NONA



Architect Veronica Schreiber Smith (above); hydroponic garden (below)

Behind the Florida clapboard facade lies a host of health-inducing tech

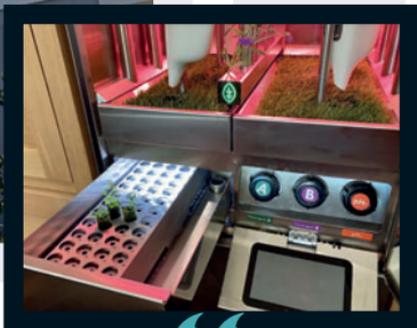


PHOTO: LAKE NONA

LAKE NONA

The WHIT could also serve as inspiration for any spa or wellness facility focused on a guest's health. It sits within Lake Nona in Orlando, which is in itself at the forefront of healthy living. Established more than two decades ago, Lake Nona is a 17 square mile community created with the vision of building the ideal place to inspire human potential through innovation. "It's about learning to live well, and about prevention," says Caulfield.

The population has steadily grown and now tens of thousands of people live, work and study in Lake Nona. The community is also home to the Lake Nona Institute, a non-profit organization which aims to inspire healthy communities, the Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute, where executives and athletes learn how to improve their health, and the USTA National Campus - one of the world's largest tennis training and tournament campuses. A wellness study, the Lake Nona Life Project, is investigating what makes happy and successful communities, and a huge fitness and wellness club is currently under construction.



Fred Maxik

PHOTO: JEFFREY BROWN

THE KITCHEN

Caulfield and the team at the Lake Nona Institute have partnered with a range of exciting architects, inventors and entrepreneurs to explore how our homes can support us in living our best, healthiest lives. "It's about thinking about your residence as the ultimate health coach."

Inside, there's a Wellness Kitchen developed in partnership with wellness architect Veronica Schreiber

The kitchen is the heart of the home, and one of the most important components of a healthy house

Smith. It has a state-of-the-art hydroponic kitchen garden allowing people to grow and pick their own fruit and vegetables, UV germicidal lighting technology to kill bacteria and viruses on surfaces without the need for cleaning products, and an interactive digital cooktop that syncs to the fridge and suggests meals based on your preferences. "The kitchen is the heart of the home, and one of the most important components of a healthy house," says Caulfield.

THE LIGHTING

Another innovator that changed the way Caulfield views the indoor environments is Fred Maxik, founder of Lighting Science. A former NASA scientist, Maxik - who's responsible for all the lighting in WHIT - views lighting as a nutrient for our bodies.

"As humans, we take our daily clock reset signal from the qualities of light surrounding us," he explains. "If the wrong signal (or light) is received at an inappropriate time of day, we throw our systems off."

Home wellness innovations

SERENITY COVE

A space designed for meditation and relaxation, this room features technologies including:

- **Innerspace Zero Gravity Chair**
Reduces body inflammation, helps with chronic pain and improves sleep

- **Deepak Chopra Dream Weaver**
Uses light and sound pulses at specified frequencies to help the user reach a variety of interesting and beneficial states of consciousness

- **Neuroverse Brain Station**
Wearable, intuitive EEG system that can assess mental function, featuring neurocognitive games, mindfulness training, neurofeedback and biometric control and sleep tracking

- **HumanCharger**
A bright light therapy device that can be carried around in your pocket for use anywhere

The bedroom has a sleep sound machine, air purifier and blue light-blocking bulb



SLEEP SANCTUARY

A partnership between **SleepScore Labs** and **WHIT**, the **Sleep Sanctuary** features products curated and validated by scientists including:

- **Foobot Indoor Air Quality Monitor**
Designed to show you what indoor air quality looks like and highlight pollutants

- **Sound+Sleep - Sleep Sound Machine**
Featuring Adaptive Sound, emits soothing white noise, dynamically adjusting the volume based on ambient levels in your room

- **Alen - BreatheSmart FIT50 HEPA Air Purifier + HEPA-Pure**
Eliminates toxins, allergens, bacteria, mould, dust and airborne irritants

- **SleepScore Max SleepScore Max Sleep Improvement System**

- **Dreampad Medium Support Pillow with Music & Sleep Technology**
Delivers music through the pillow via a gentle vibration (that only the user can hear) for a restful night's sleep.

- **Lighting Science's GoodNight bulb**
Reduces melatonin-suppressing blue light

- ▶ The company produces LED bulbs which eliminate certain wavelengths of light that disrupt circadian rhythms. Its GoodNight bulb, for example, greatly reduces melatonin-suppressing blue light. Other bulbs aid alertness or promote healthy plant growth. Most recently, its Healthe Cleanse sanitising product line, capable of killing viruses and bacteria in the built environment, is being used across the US following COVID-19.

Other lighting innovations in WHIT include the Cleanse air cleaning pendant light, that improves air quality and features circadian lighting technology; infrared therapy floor lamps that provide natural health benefits for inflammation, pain relief and cardiovascular diseases; and a sensing pendant light that can track and provide security information about the people coming in and out of the house.

Circadian lighting to help regulate sleep patterns features heavily in WHIT's Sleep Sanctuary bedroom, along with an array of other innovations from air purifiers and folders to pillows that deliver music and snoring solutions (see above).

HOME LIFE

I finish the interview by asking Caulfield how working on WHIT has influenced her own home and the way she lives? Has she incorporated any of the technologies into her life?

Her answer shows that sometimes it's the simple things that can make a big difference. "Several years ago, one of our entrepreneurs came to Lake Nona and gave a presentation saying that after World War II, around 70 per cent of people's produce was grown in their own garden. They had fresh fruit and vegetables doorsteps away and they canned what they needed for the winter. I'd always been interested in healthy eating, but that really resonated with me.

"I started to learn more about growing produce - you can grow a lot on a modest piece of land - and I've taken that into my own home and life," she says, adding that a hydroponic garden is an innovation people can tap into.



Magali Robathan is editor of Spa Business' sister magazine, Well Home (www.wellhomeglobal.com)
 ■ magalirobathan@leisuremedia.com

VERIFIED WELLNESS TECHNOLOGIES BY GHARIENI

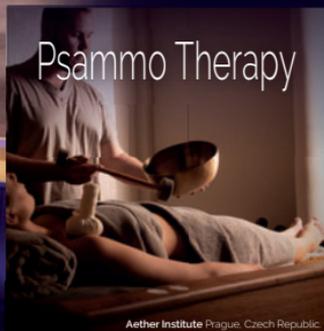


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Body Contouring



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Revenue management

Spas have been getting even more savvy about yield management since the pandemic began. *Spa Business* asks how software suppliers are supporting them

By booking a high-value facial versus a wax during peak times, the spa not only makes more profit on the facial, but also generates 45% of the treatment price in additional product revenue

Frank Pitsikalos

RESORTSUITE

Most software incorporates variable pricing (time of day and day of week), but ResortSuite also supports dynamic pricing and dynamic availability.

Dynamic availability is our key differentiator, as it's a more effective and powerful revenue management tool.

Menu and prices don't change, but the mix of when services are available changes, ensuring higher profitability during peak times and better use of non-peak times.

ResortSuite revenue management takes many decisions out of the hands of staff and we find spas that focus on dynamic availability, typically achieve a 20-30 per cent increase in profit during their high demand days/times.

As a side effect, more lower-margin services are pushed into non-peak dates/times, filling time slots that would typically go unsold. This creates an additional 10-15 per cent increase in profit during off-peak times.

Revenue management is also used to ensure that the mix of treatments on offer positively impacts retail sales. For example, by booking a high-value facial versus a wax service during peak times, the spa not only makes more profit on the facial, but also generates on average 45 per cent of the treatment price in additional product revenue relative to other types of services.



FRANK PITSIKALOS

Dheeraj Koneru

ZENOTI

Operators using our revenue management capabilities see a 30 per cent uptick on the average ticket size and an increase of 23 per cent in new customer acquisition.

That's because the system's dashboards present sales, projections, and trends at all business levels, meaning owners have access to data and a bird's eye view of where they're at, where the business is taking off and what can be done to fully leverage and optimise this success.

Zenoti offers several tools to help businesses drive revenue growth, including automated marketing programs that target customers based on their behaviour patterns, upsell add-on services for a visit and remind customers about their next visit.

EzPulse and ezAds are two unique functions the platform supports - with the EzPulse mobile app, business owners and employees gain revenue visibility and insight by tracking key metrics against goals and



DHEERAJ KONERU

Operators using our revenue management capabilities see an increase of 23% in new customer acquisition

collaborating across teams with messaging capabilities built into the app. They can compare current performance to past performance, congratulate employees who are doing a great job and support those who are struggling.

ezAds automatically manages digital ad placement across sites such as Google, Facebook and Instagram, helping the business acquire new customers. Spas only have to set a budget and ezAds takes care of the rest from allocating that budget across channels to figuring out keywords.



REVENUE MANAGEMENT

Data-driven strategies play a key role in a spa's financial and forecasting success

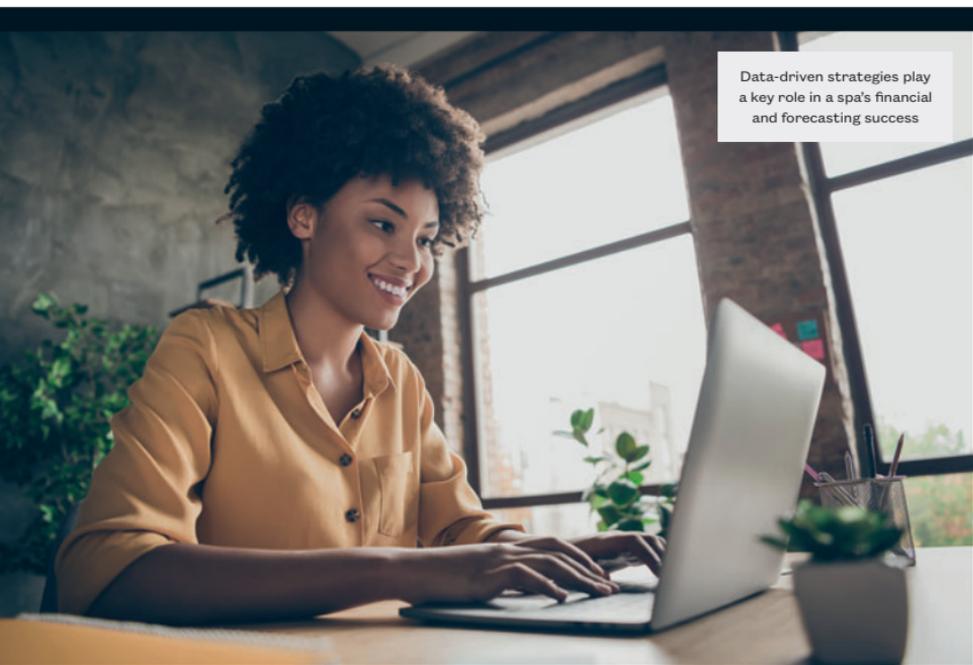


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/MIROSLAV

The software also has a referrals program to allow spas to issue credits to guests who refer new customers

Ryan Johnson

BOOK4TIME

Spas can manage revenue using a number of Book4Time tools. This includes day-of-week and time-of-day dynamic pricing, as well as service and guest analysis and restriction capabilities to pinpoint busy and slow periods and maximise high-yielding treatments.

Coupons and Automatic Discounts are core features that other software providers may not offer, to drive business or maximise revenues. Book4Time offers multiple types of coupons that the operator can issue, including incentive coupons, and 'gift with purchase' coupons.

For operators that offer memberships and other incentive programmes, spas can use the Automatic Discounting of Services/Retail function which automates the entire process, ensuring guests get the discounts they're entitled to, without staff having to verify or manually add them.

The software also has a referrals program to allow spas to issue credits to guests who refer new customers.



BOOK4TIME

Our SMS booking reminder service has seen spa no-show rates go from 14.1% down to 5.6%

Darren Pick

ISALON SOFTWARE

Ninety per cent of spas have had capacity reduced by 50 per cent since the start of the pandemic, so have had to increase revenue in other ways, using everything from marketing filters to monitoring team member performance. They've also needed to reduce no-shows.

Our SMS booking reminder service has seen spa no-show rates go from 14.1 per cent down to 5.6 per cent. This allows spa operators to forecast more efficiently and bring in more revenue with reduced last-minute gaps in their diary.

Being aware of revenue, yield management and



ISALON

forecasting is paramount to success and iSalon offers over 130 detailed reports.

The system also has multiple pop-up notifications - one of the most popular prompts staff to upsell things such as retail products when presenting guests with the bill, for example. Another encourages them to rebook clients and if charges for the service are above a specific amount, staff can send a Pay by Link to take a deposit. ▶



SPAS/GET SPAS/STYLING: SHANAHAN

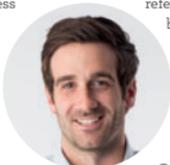
Real-time reports are served up in a customisable, actionable way so spa owners don't have to go digging to find information

Patrick Shanahan

DAYSART SOFTWARE

With DaySmart's Orchid Spa Software, spas have access to the data they need to manage revenue and make data-driven decisions.

The system's real-time reports are served up in a customisable, actionable way so spa owners don't have to go digging to find information: sales statistics are conveniently accessible in graphs that can be filtered by dates to quickly evaluate progress, for example.



Tracking client retention, referrals and sales benchmarks enables businesses to strategise and set goals for revenue growth. One key function is the connector for QuickBooks, which automatically pushes all tickets to QuickBooks Online, in real-time, for easy accounting. This integration allows spas to report revenue without complex processes.

SPAS/GET SPAS/STYLING: SHANAHAN

Spas can track the successes (and failures) of marketing campaigns and find out which employees are selling the most products and memberships

Graham Talley

HELMBOT

It's easy in business to take 10 steps in a direction, only to find out you were going the wrong way. Helmbot provides revenue data that's easy to understand and access to help spa managers establish where to productively spend their time.

Advanced reporting enables them to quickly answer even the most complicated questions to boost revenue. For example, which activities brought in the most revenue before the pandemic and where is it coming from now? What times of day produce the most revenue, for what types of services? Which regulars haven't returned recently? Who spent over US\$100 in the last year, but has never been a member?

Spas can look into which discounts have affected their average price paid per appointment, they can track the successes (and failures) of marketing campaigns and find out which employees are selling the most products and memberships.



LONG/PER/STYLING: TALLEY



SPAS/GET SPAS/STYLING: MAI

Tracey Mai

MILANO SOFTWARE

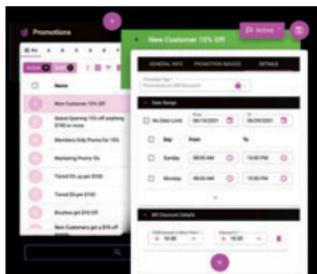
Our spas have seen a major increase in revenue after implementing strategic price changes using Klickbook's yield management feature.

The software calculates optimal pricing by utilising our service performance report, price history and sales data to forecast demand and consumer buying behaviour, as well as looking at seasonal and other factors affecting sales.

The yield management feature allows spas to set up automatic price updates based on capacity and demand.

The price can be adjusted automatically based on predefined values, regardless of day, month, or year. For example, the price could be lowered if there is more than 60 per cent capacity to drive custom

The price can be adjusted automatically based on predefined values. For example, the price could be lowered if there is more than 60 per cent capacity, to drive custom



SPAS/GET SPAS/STYLING: MAI

Klickbook makes it easier to manage spas by enabling businesses to measure room utilisation, client reservation rates, responses to promotions and other factors that indicate success.

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Crown Spa
Health Club

"Online integrates seamlessly with Core by Premier Software® and we have complete control of the date, time and treatments available. In the first month, we saw spa treatment booking increase by 20 per cent and we are looking to maintain this level going forward, whilst expanding the treatments that can be booked."

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Stuart Russell, Health Club & Spa Manager,
Crown Spa Hotel



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Oliver Cahill

PREMIER SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

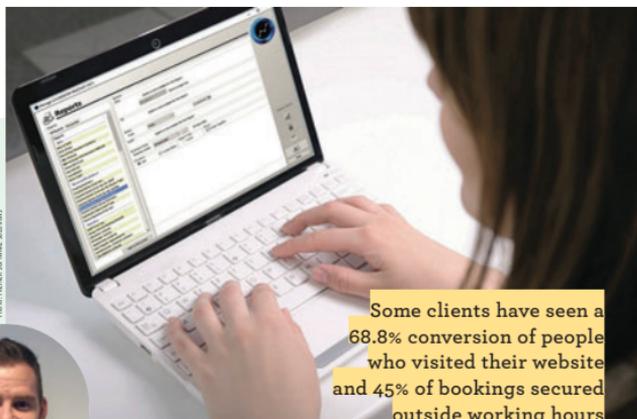
When used on its own, Core by Premier has the tools needed to help maximise profitability, manage day-to-day operations and highlight areas of growth. However, our clients also benefit from trusted third party integrations to boost sales.

Core is the only spa management software to partner with RevSpa and Smartbox and one of a limited few to partner with spa booking website Spabreaks.com.

Some Premier clients using Core's integration with online booking platform, RevSpa, have seen a 68.8 per cent conversion of people who visited their website. In addition, 45 per cent of bookings were secured outside working



PHOTO: PREMIER SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS



Some clients have seen a 68.8% conversion of people who visited their website and 45% of bookings secured outside working hours

PHOTO: PREMIER SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

hours. The use of RevSpa also results in large numbers of bookers opting for add-ons.

Smartbox's gift experience sites have a traffic share of 65 per cent. This means Core clients using the integration can not only be more efficient, but also confident they'll reach more buyers.

These partnerships put wellness operators' brands in front of a larger audience, while also saving the time that's usually associated with processing vouchers or taking bookings over the phone.

Everything becomes more automated for a seamless customer journey.

Operators have increased the number of appointments in non-peak times by 18-23% and increased the overall revenue during peak times by 15-18%

Penka Sevova

SPRINGER-MILLER SYSTEMS

In a quick study, we found that operators leveraging SpaSoft's yield management tools have increased the number of appointments in non-peak times by 18-23 per cent and increased the overall revenue during peak times by 15-18 per cent by adjusting availability and pricing.

They're able to do this because we offer a range of features to help spas respond to forecast demand.

Multiple reports help spas analyse guest segmentation, peak times and future demand levels to better determine yield. The yield management features can also be used to define business rules pertaining to service availability to keep resource schedules free for booking premium services during high demand periods.

With SpaSoft Online Booking, spa operators can also execute their yield management activities directly into their website, making it easy to accommodate demand.



PHOTO: SPRINGER-MILLER SYSTEMS

Using the Analytics BI tool to distinguish booking trends and patterns enables dynamic revenue maximisation, so the operator can focus on looking after guests

Audrey MacRae

MAESTRO

By minimising the time required to set up revenue strategies for multi channels, Maestro allows staff to focus on service delivery.

Using the setup options available in Maestro, pricing for services and treatments can be changed by time of day, day of week or by the season. Guests can also be 'assigned' different market segments which can also offer varying prices using the same criteria. The integrated setup ensures the pricing change occurs automatically without any intervention being needed by the spa operator.

Using the Analytics BI tool to distinguish booking trends and patterns enables dynamic revenue maximisation, so the operator can focus on looking after guests while ensuring the rates offered during peak- and off-peak times reflect booking volumes and assist with suggested 'sell times' to achieve higher occupancy levels.

Maestro offers selling strategies through an integrated booking engine - these are configured directly in the software for both direct and online bookings, ensuring consistent pricing, regardless of which booking channel is used.



PHOTO: MAESTRO

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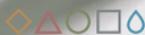
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Product innovation

Industry suppliers tell us about their latest product, treatment and equipment launches



Diana Mestre (R)
and her daughter
Diana Hool (L)

PHOTO: DIANA MESTRE

Diana Mestre's new book focuses on transformative wellness concepts

Spa and wellness consultant and industry figure Diana Mestre has penned a new book named *Wellness Codes*, alongside her daughter Diana Hool.

Drawing on their experience together at Mestre & Mestre Spa & Wellness Consulting, the duo wrote the book for both wellness experts and blossoming wellness enthusiasts.

The book is designed to offer an intuitive method to help readers find a path to achieve a state of holistic wellbeing

We want The Wellness Codes to open a new path of transformation, health and happiness

through five 'elements - air, water, earth, fire and ether.

According to Mestre and Hool, each element contains its own wisdom which can be tapped to help people reconnect with their natural

health and balance. This wisdom is communicated in the book through 21 wellness concepts to help guide readers to transform their health and wellbeing.

"We Want The Wellness Codes to open a new path of transformation, health and happiness," says Mestre.

She envisions the book would be ideally placed in spas, boutiques and hotel rooms.

spa-kit.net keyword:
Mestre & Mestre

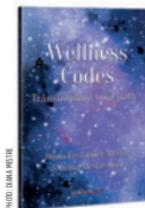


PHOTO: DIANA MESTRE

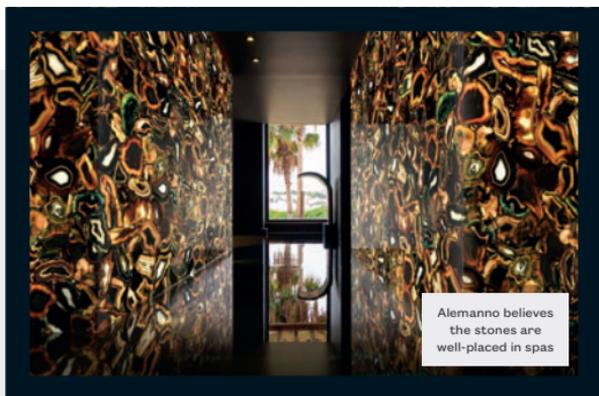


PHOTO: STEVE DEER / FORUM

Semi-precious stones add sparkle to Fabio Alemanno equipment

Fabio Alemanno Design has expanded its collection with semi-precious stones to enhance spas, wellness facilities, hotels and private residences.

The company is working with a range of semi-precious



Alemanno believes the stones are well-placed in spas

PHOTO: STEVE DEER / FORUM



PHOTO: FABIO ALEMANNI DESIGN

stones varying in colour, depth and texture, all of which can be complemented with delicate gold and silver details. Clients can choose from stones such as quartz, jasper, labradorite, malachite, lapis lazuli, aventurin, amethyst and more.

Fabio Alemanno, CEO, explains that the stones can be integrated into its hammam tables and heated loungers as well as spa feature walls, flooring, pools and bathrooms to enhance the destination's overall design and atmosphere.

"Semi-precious stones express the essence of elegance, class and beauty

Semi-precious stones express the essence of elegance, class and beauty

and are the perfect touch for any interior, from classic to modern or from romantic to contemporary," he says.

"The stones are also appreciated for their extraordinary metaphysical and medical properties, which positively support our state of physical and mental health."

👉 spa-kit.net keywords:
Fabio Alemanno Design

Ojmar's Aitor Elorza introduces smart device controlled lockers



PHOTO: STEVE DEER / FORUM

OCS SMART can be controlled via a phone, tablet or smart watch

Ojmar has launched OCS Smart, a next-generation smart lock that can be controlled via a mobile phone, tablet or smart watch using Bluetooth technology. It pairs with the OCS Smart app, to increase the ease of installation and usage.

The lock also has a keypad backup which is crevice-free and waterproof, allowing for an easy and efficient wipe down. The battery lifespan of the lock gives up to five years of use before changeout is required.

The lock is equipped with manager- and user-programmable features, including private and public settings, audit trails, rental durations, scheduled automatic openings and the ability to allocate lockers by QR code or permits



PHOTO: STEVE DEER / FORUM

OCS Smart allows your lockers to be hands-free

Aitor Elorza

sent via email, or social media. Ojmar's Aitor Elorza, says: "OCS Smart allows your locker system to be truly hands-free."

👉 spa-kit.net keywords:
Ojmar



SHARON HARRIS/ISTOCK

Sensory deprivation spaces by Blu Room provide much-needed sanctuary, says Sarah Shores

Calming, healing experiences such as sensory deprivation rooms have gained popularity during the global pandemic.

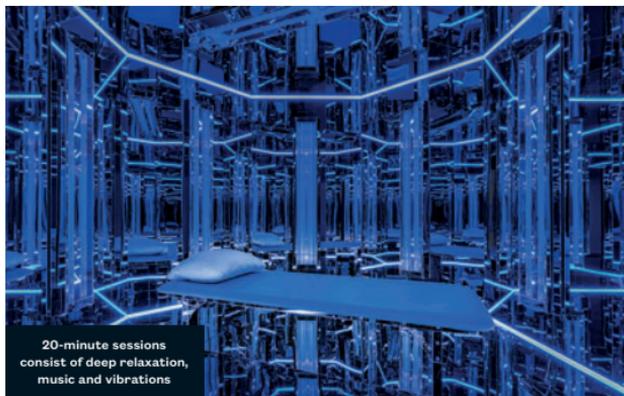
Blu Room, for example, features patented technology that shields users from the outside world and wraps them in an atmosphere of soft blue and ultraviolet (UVB) light so the mind is free to relax.

Sessions consist of 20 minutes of deep relaxation, music and

vibrations inside a futuristic octagon bathed in light.

Proposed benefits include deepened focus, a faster healing process, greater self-awareness, pain relief, alleviating stress and anxiety, as well as overall improved health.

Warrenton Wellness in Virginia, USA launched with a Blu Room last year and owner Sarah Shores says it's a particular USP. She says: "I knew that



20-minute sessions consist of deep relaxation, music and vibrations

ANDRETTA COSTANTINI/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES

"This is a stressful time and people need a calming and healing experience"

this would be a stressful time and people needed a calming and healing experience – a safe one too. Plus, ultraviolet light and viruses don't get along."

spa-kit.net keywords:
Blu Room

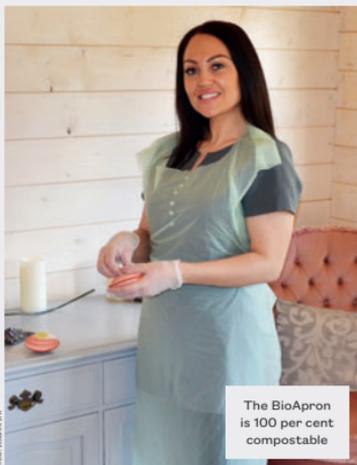


PHOTO: SCUMMI SPA

The BioApron is 100 per cent compostable

"Scrummi Spa wants to benefit both the global beauty sector and the planet"

Robert Cooper reveals Scrummi Spa's plant-based compostable aprons

Sustainable textile brand Scrummi Spa has introduced a protective apron for therapists in that it says is 100 per cent plastic-free and made from plant-based material.

Recognising the concerns of the professional beauty industry over the large volumes of plastic and non-recyclable PPE being used, the Scrummi team set out to provide planet-friendly alternatives.

The BioApron is independently certified by the internationally recognised Seedling standard EN13432 meaning it's suitable for composting in commercial and domestic waste streams.

"The global beauty sector is currently using thousands



KEVIN MAZUR/ISTOCK

of tonnes of plastic and non-recyclable PPE every month," says Robert Cooper, MD of Scrummi and co-founder of the Sustainable Spa Association. "Any dent we can make in this with more sustainable options is a benefit both our industry and the planet."

The BioApron is supplied in tear-off rolls of 50 aprons in outer cartons of five rolls – meaning 250 aprons per carton are supplied.

spa-kit.net keyword:
Scrummi Spa

Pent Fitness' new design-led workout kit unveiled by Marcin Raczek

Fitness supplier Pent has launched its portable multifunction Sophia fitness unit, designed with high-end hotel and spa guests in mind.

Available in four styles, Sophia is an ergonomically designed trolley which showcases a host of Pent's sleek workout gear made from steel, wood and leather, including dumbbell

and kettlebell sets of various weights, a medicine ball, balance ball, yoga block, recovery roller and exercise mat.

The trolley also includes drawers containing smaller items such as skipping ropes, a push-up device and a yoga belt.

According to Marcin Raczek, Pent CEO, the company has thought through all of customers' potential needs, which led it to incorporate a spot for towels, a water holder and an iPad slot.

He comments: "My team and I are excited to finally share with you the true evolution of modern solutions for the hotel and spa industry. Sophia sets a new standard in hotel service, innovation and design for a completely new world."



PHOTO: PENT FITNESS



Pent workout gear is made from steel, wood and leather

STYLING: LUDIA



PHOTO: PENT FITNESS

Sophia is the true evolution of a modern solution for the hotel and spa industry

Marcin Raczek

spa-kit.net keywords:
Pent Fitness

Matteo Brusaverri takes Lemi outdoors with new Bellaria table

Bellaria is the latest treatment bed designed by spa and beauty equipment supplier Lemi.

Created specifically to perform wellness treatments in outdoor environments, the bed is equipped with a seamless mattress and horseshoe headrest and is capable of withstanding the effects of direct sunlight, water and salt.

The waterproof base is electrically adjustable through a handset control that allows lifting movements and synchronised back-leg movements.

Lemi GM Matteo Brusaverri says the company was already working on Bellaria prior to the pandemic's outbreak – the aftermath of which brought high demand for outdoor spa treatments due to the minimised risk of virus transmission outdoors.



The bed can withstand the effects of sunlight, water and salt

PHOTO: LEMI



PHOTO: LEMI

The pandemic has brought high demand for outdoor spa treatments

Matteo Brusaverri

"After receiving requests from different parts of the world for the development of an outdoor spa bed, we agreed to undertake the design of a solution for tropical places," he says. "A product that could guarantee quality while enhancing relaxation in an outdoor environment."

spa-kit.net keywords:
Lemi



Iyashi Dômes offer multiple treatment possibilities

Iyashi Dôme's touchless infrared tech is the perfect investment for the post-lockdown world, says Florent Cornelis

Iyashi Dôme's head of training Florent Cornelis explains how the brand's hands-free, non-contact treatments combine profitability with safety

Why should operators invest in Iyashi Dôme technology?

High-tech touchless therapies allow spas to offer effective, hygienic treatments and seamless customer experience. This is especially timely today as they can cater to customers who are concerned about close contact with others but still looking for spa treatments.

What are the health benefits of using the Iyashi Dôme?

Far-infrared treatments are known to be effective for anti-ageing and slimming with real and proven results, as well as supporting the immune system, reducing muscle stress, encouraging restorative sleep and detoxification and improving skin issues. Ultimately, we help guests feel rejuvenated.

Who can operate the Iyashi Dôme and how much training is required?

Iyashi Dôme technology can be used across many different sectors including spa and wellness, health and fitness and the medical field.

Treatments restore guests' balance and help their body feel rejuvenated

Anyone can operate the technology following our mandatory training day received upon delivery and an additional half-day of training a few weeks later. We follow up with all partners to ensure they're confident using the technology and communicating protocol to customers.

Describe the Iyashi Dôme customer journey

The journey starts with a welcoming drink and hot refreshing oshibori towel, followed by a short interview with a therapist to complete the disclaimer and choose the correct intensity – either Intense or Soft.

A 30-minute Intense treatment is practised naked or in disposable underwear and is designed to trigger heavy sweating, while a Soft session is intended for those searching for a relaxing infra-red experience. The latter can be practised dressed and lasts from 15 to 45 minutes without stimulating sweating.

During both sessions, therapists check on guests halfway through to ensure they're comfortable.

The ritual is completed with a warm shower to help relax and invigorate users.

How can Iyashi Dôme therapies be combined with other treatments?

The device can effectively prepare the body to receive other treatments – including facials, massages or body treatments – and help enhance guests' experience of other treatments offered.

How much does an Iyashi Dôme and its treatments cost? How long does it take to achieve a return on investment?

A standard Iyashi Dôme device costs €28,000 (£23,698, US\$32,860). With a recommended price of €50 (US\$61, £44) per 30-minute session, Iyashi Dôme offers spas a return on investment in less than nine months, at the rate of just three sessions per day.



IYASHI DÔME
INTERNATIONAL

spa-kit.net keywords:
Iyashi Dôme

When creating our supplements we harnessed all our knowledge about the human body

Thalion's Laëtitia Têtedoux says new range is an 'ally for daily wellbeing'



BY NINA TUDMAN

Marine product house Thalion has launched a range of nutritional supplements containing super algae concentrate rich in over 112 minerals and trace elements.

The formula is designed to help balance and strengthen the skin from within while also nourishing the body with organic active superfoods.

Laëtitia Têtedoux, Thalion's marketing and communication director, says: "When creating our supplement range we harnessed all our knowledge about the human body and its optimal functioning in order to create a physiological approach to alleviate imbalances and deficiencies."



BY NINA TUDMAN

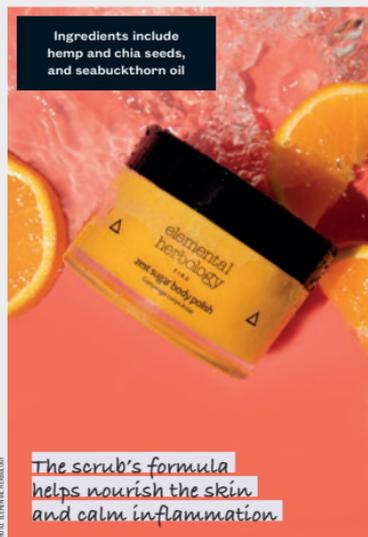
Thalion has unveiled three different types of supplement: Super Énergie and Super Bien-Être, both of which are ingestible vitamins; and the Super Équilibre ampoules which dissolve when mixed with water.

Super Énergie taps organic spirulina and chlorella to foster vitality and Super Bien-Être relies on marine magnesium to help relieve stress and fatigue.

Ingredients include spirulina, chlorella and marine magnesium

Meanwhile, algae extract powers Super Équilibre to encourage slimming, drainage and detox.

spa-kit.net keyword: Thalion



Ingredients include hemp and chia seeds, and seabuckthorn oil

The scrub's formula helps nourish the skin and calm inflammation

Elemental Herbology's Carlyne Beck reveals zesty body polish

Elemental Herbology's new Zest Sugar Body Polish is designed to help maintain skin health, reveal brighter, smoother skin and provide a soothing aromatherapy experience.

Elemental Herbology GM Carlyne Beck comments: "My idea of launching a zesty sugar body polish came to me as part of our rebrand plan of the building and aligning our elemental ranges. This product has been launched in the Fire Element range showcasing the delightful, uplifting zesty aroma throughout it."

Hemp seed, chia seed and sea buckthorn oils underpin the scrub's formula and have been incorporated to help nourish



BY NINA TUDMAN

the skin, calm inflammation and protect against environmental aggressors and pollutants.

Meanwhile, sweet orange, rosemary and marjoram essential oils complete the line-up to provide an uplifting sensory element.

As part of the launch, the polish is being showcased in a new invigorating 45-minute Fire Energiser Body Scrub treatment.

spa-kit.net keyword: Elemental Herbology

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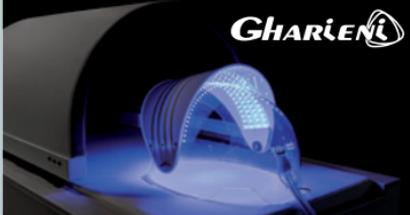
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Environmental impact

Leading wellbeing organisations launch research to investigate links between built environments and human wellbeing

Interest in how built environments can affect our health and wellbeing has become a major topic of discussion globally, especially as lockdown has seen people spending more time indoors. And wellness architecture is an upcoming trend in the spa industry.

To further this field's progress, two leading wellness organisations recently kicked off separate initiatives to investigate how wellness design and architecture can improve human health, wellbeing and performance.

Thermal resort operator Therme Group and COGITO – the epistemology research centre at the University of Glasgow, UK – were the first to announce their Dimensions of Wellbeing project which will run over the next five years.

The organisations wish to develop a novel, multi-dimensional theory of wellbeing, grounded in both philosophical and psychological research. Part of this will involve cutting-edge research into environmental psychology to investigate how wellbeing can be generated in the built environment through factors including room shapes, seating arrangements and light.

Therme will use the findings to enhance the customer experience at its facilities across the world.

Wellness real estate firm Delos, the company behind the Well Living Lab (WLL), has also expanded its reach in the field of wellness design by launching its first international outpost in Beijing.

The WLL is a controlled and simulated indoor environment that mimics office environments and residential living spaces with a view to researching how they impact our health.

The new site in Asia has been designed by Superimpose Architecture and its goal is to further the studies already conducted at the original WLL which Delos launched in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, USA, in 2014.

The lab researches, develops and tests both new and existing innovations designed to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals as they live and work within human-made structures.

Since its launch, the WLL has made the following discoveries:

- Access to daylight and views in an office improve cognitive performance and satisfaction
- Sound, light and temperature affect employees in an office environment
- Office lighting impacts cognitive performance and sleep.

Future studies will look into how indoor air pollution affects the body and mind and whether relaxation spaces incorporating elements of nature can help reduce burnout in healthcare professionals.

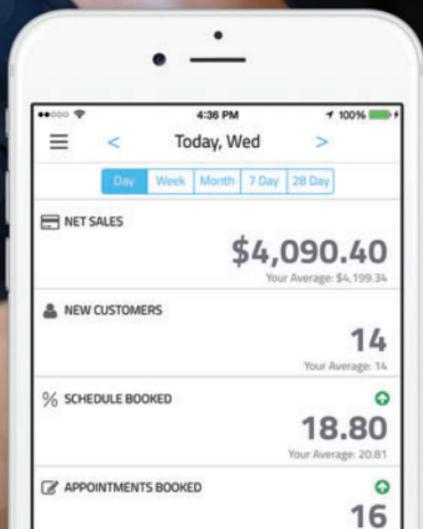
Findings from both Therme and WLL's initiatives have the potential to inform future spa design and operation as they uncover best-practice behind creating environments built to enhance human health and wellbeing.

Studies will look at whether relaxation spaces with elements of nature can help reduce burnout

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