

# spa business

## HOT NUMBERS

### 2011 SPA-GOER TRENDS

Spa deals and retaining customers



## TOP TEAM

### Hilton Worldwide

Ryan Crabbe, Dave Horton,  
Tyra Lowman & Vanessa Main

### ESPA Life

Susan Harmsworth on her  
new wellness concept

## SPA SPOTLIGHT

Dubai, Japan  
and Jordan

# Parisian spas

Andrew Gibson introduces Mandarin Oriental; and Spa My Blend by Clarins

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### ON THE COVER

*Spa My Blend* by Clarins launched at *Le Royal Monceau, Paris, in June (p64)*

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## spa business

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## EDITOR'S LETTER

# Budget spas

**W**e've had budget airlines, budget hotels, and budget health clubs. Now we're predicting spas will be next.

All indicators point to a coming revolution when the spa market will follow other time-based leisure businesses into the disruptive phase associated with the emergence of a budget or low-cost model.

The sector is ripe for change given the situation which exists: high prices, low volumes, marginally profitable businesses and masses of pent up demand – all the signs are there.

When budget operators launch, with their pared-down offers, they grow fast, forcing existing operators to adapt their pricing and business models to tackle the new competition.

So what happens when a market is attacked by operators running budget businesses?

Typically at the top of the market, the high-end operations remain largely unscathed, while at the value end, existing low-cost businesses with loyal clients can compete relatively well. It tends to be the mid-market operators who feel the pressure and either sell their more marginal or loss-making sites to the budget operators so they can be relaunched as part of a new budget chain or pivot and rebrand as low-cost themselves.

This second option can be a smart move, as it enables them to leapfrog the budget entrants by creating an 'instant' budget business with little disruption to trading, while new businesses are faced with the slog of development.

In this issue we pick up the theme of a great conference session from this year's Global Spa Summit, which was moderated by Pete Ellis from SpaFinder, Inc



When budget operators launch, with their pared-down offers, they grow their businesses fast, forcing existing operators to adapt both their pricing and their business models to tackle the new competition

(see p22). The topic was franchising and many of the points raised in the discussions are pertinent.

In the session, Massage Envy's CG Funk explained how her business has grown to employ 16,000 therapists and turn over US\$652 a year (€464m, £406m).

Given it's taken the most popular treatment spa offer and built a profitable business around it, Massage Envy may well turn out to be the first budget spa operator in disguise. However, more direct competition will follow, with franchising being an obvious way to scale.

Online deal sites are already disrupting the sector and educating people to expect cheaper prices, so the stretch required to accommodate the arrival of new businesses based on this pricing is not so great.

And it's not all bad news – budget businesses grow markets, they don't just cannibalise them – 22 per cent of Massage Envy's clients had never had a massage before.

Liz Terry, Editor twitter: @elizterry

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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/YURI.ARCURI



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## GO GREEN



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## *Why Europe's No.1 luxury skin care brand should be your No.1 spa partner?*

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**CLARINS**

# Letters

Do you have a strong opinion, or disagree with somebody else's point of view on topics related to the spa industry? If so, *Spa Business* would love to hear from you. Email your letters, thoughts and suggestions to [theteam@spabusiness.com](mailto:theteam@spabusiness.com)

## Refusing cancer patients is not a long-term solution

Tracy Walton, owner, Tracy Walton & Associates LLC

The unique vision and target market of the Inspiritas spa featured in the last issue of *Spa Business* (see SB11/2 p46) invites spas to examine their ability to accommodate clients with cancer and cancer histories. Our ageing population brings a growing incidence of cancer. Among spa services, massage therapy has the potential to ease symptoms, improve sleep and generally help people cope with the disease.

As a specialist in massage therapy in cancer care, I recognise several barriers to serving this population well and safely, including the poor level of preparedness in massage therapy. Many massage therapists were taught an old myth, that massage might spread cancer by promoting circulation. Although the myth is slowly fading, people with cancer are often turned away from massage services.

In reality, safe, effective massage therapy for people with cancer takes skill, including asking key questions about the client's medical history and making important massage adjustments. Moreover, spa services involving heat, claims of detoxification and skincare product ingredients – such as parabens, phytoestrogens and sulfates – can be



PHOTO: © 2011 TRACY WALTON & ASSOCIATES LLC

*Safe, effective massage for cancer sufferers takes skill*

contraindicated, aggravating symptoms and causing lifelong complications.

These skills and considerations are not addressed fully in most massage training programmes, and therapists must turn to continuing education in oncology massage. Advanced training addresses important safety issues, such as how to avoid triggering irreversible lymphedema (with the wrong pressure or heat treatment), adapt to effects of cancer treatment, adjust to blood clot risk and

**Forcing a therapist to work beyond their skill level is not the answer. Refusing services is not a long-term solution... spas should support staff with readily available literature and training**

modify massage pressure for bone involvement and fracture risk.

When faced with a client with cancer or a history of it, massage therapists lacking this background are in an uncomfortable position, and their refusal to serve such clients is understandable. Forcing a massage therapist to work beyond their skill level is not the answer. Refusing services to this population is not a long-term solution. Instead, spas should support massage staff with readily available literature and training on the topic, centralised at the Society for Oncology Massage, [www.s4om.org](http://www.s4om.org). Aesthetics staff can turn to groundbreaking work by individuals such as Mórág Currin, who specialises in medical conditions and massage – see [www.touchforcanceronline.com](http://www.touchforcanceronline.com). By preparing staff for this work, spas can then respond better to the market, reduce liability exposure and, most importantly, truly welcome an appreciative and deserving client population.

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*The Inspiritas cancer care spa has set high standards for the rest of the industry to follow*

## Opportunities and challenges in treating cancer patients in spas

Lisa Starr, senior consultant, Wynne Business

I read with great interest and pride the story on Inspiritas (SB11/2 p46), as I consulted on this cancer care spa for 18 months.

I've opened and re-engineered many spas in the US and beyond, but this was a one-of-a-kind project from the inception. Typically owners are very focused on their ROI, as they should be, but in this project the client/patient experience took centre stage. Located in an existing medical building, the spa was purpose-built to serve all the needs of the patients in a comfortable and conscientious manner.

Certainly, there are complications to a project of this scope. A cancer diagnosis is just the first step in a journey that involves learning a new language, understanding all of the options available, negotiating with insurance carriers, and meeting an array of medical people. A large practice

**Retail-orientated businesses are open in the evenings and weekends, not typical medical office hours. Also, medical establishments are not used to a sales-driven model**

becomes adept at guiding patients through this process, but because of sheer volume, patients can feel a bit lost. Also, there's not often a chance to think about customer-facing issues like retailing, marketing, and the service-delivery cycle common in the spa world.

According to cancer.org, cancer cases are expected to grow to 21.4 million by 2030. Clearly, there is an opportunity for spas to create services and programmes that are specific to cancer patients and their caregivers, or for other diseases or conditions, especially as spas move more firmly into the wellness business. But there are many challenges to these hybrid businesses that must be considered.

At Inspiritas, employees include a registered dietician, mind-body medicine practitioners, spiritual counsellors, acupuncturists, oncology massage therapists and t'ai chi instructors. Almost all of these modalities are overseen by different state boards, most of which have licensing requirements. Retail-orientated businesses are open in the evenings and weekends, not typical medical office hours. Also, medical establishments are not used to a sales-driven "pay for service" model for staff which is common in spas.

All of these concepts need to be addressed by operators from the onset. But I've no doubt that we can overcome those hurdles, as the worlds of spas, wellness and healing morph into a new type of business model. Inspiritas has certainly set a high standard to follow.

## Machines give results and reduce therapist RSI

Angela Barbagelata-Fabes, chairman, The Carlton Group

I recently noticed *Spa Business*' editor's letter and feature on the use of more traditional beauty therapies in spas (SB11/1 p5 and p20). Yet it didn't touch on the value of combining manual and mechanical treatments. For many spas, machines are simply not part of their remit. But in a results-driven industry, isn't it possible to be 'holistic' with both man and machine?

In recent years, we've seen more spas placing orders for machines, suggesting an increase in their use. Spas may wish to differentiate themselves from salons by their holistic approach, but this doesn't mean that they need to disregard machines – especially as they can take the pressure off therapists at risk from repetitive strain injury.

Nothing can replace a hands-on treatment, but by combining manual and mechanical treatments spas can offer clients enhanced results. A manual facial plus microcurrent technology, for example, can aid facial lifting. Furthermore, a course of anything from six to 10 electrotherapy treatments may be required, which can encourage client retention and increase revenue.

With one-off treatments, such as microdermabrasion more can be charged per session than for a manual treatment. Profit margins will vary as prices can range from £30 (US\$50, €34) per treatment to £160 (US\$261, €184) in top-end establishments in major cities. Also, as microdermabrasion merely hastens the natural process of skin renewal, a spa wouldn't compromise its holistic ethos. Diamond microdermabrasion – using precise diamond-tipped rotational heads – could also be offered.

Other examples include colour therapy, where coloured light – a natural source – can be used to stimulate the skin's cells to facilitate change. In the treatment, LED lights are set at varying wavelengths to offer a wide range of benefits. Green light, for example, has an anti-inflammatory effect, while red stimulates the lymphatic system and yellow promotes collagen production.

For our focus on non-invasive, anti-ageing equipment see SB10/3 p78.

## Construction underway on new spa at Miraval

KATIE BARNES

Philippe Bourguignon, CEO of the Miraval destination spa in Tucson, Arizona, has revealed that construction has started on a brand new "state of the art spa".

In an interview with *Spa Business* (see p44), Bourguignon said the new spa is set to open at some point next year, but wouldn't confirm any other details.

The new spa will complement existing wellness facilities at the 117-bedroom resort which already include a spa with 24 therapy suites and six outdoor treatment rooms. There are also three pools, Zen and desert gardens, a yoga and pilates studio and a health club.

Miraval opened in 1996 and in 2004 Steve Case, co-founder of AOL, became the majority shareholder.



The spa will have 11 treatment rooms

## Hyatt Hotels plans luxury launch in Kuala Lumpur

PETE HAYMAN

Hyatt Hotels Corporation (HHC) has revealed that its Grand Hyatt brand is poised to enter the Malaysian market with a new 412-bedroom property in Kuala Lumpur by the end of 2012.

Grand Hyatt Kuala Lumpur will join the two current Hyatt Regency properties in Malaysia and will incorporate a spa with 11 treatment rooms and a swimming pool.

A 289-cover speciality restaurant; a 74-cover Sky Lobby Lounge; and a 102-seat pool side bar and restaurant are also proposed, along with over 33,000sq ft (3,066sq m) of meeting and event space.

The opening of Grand Hyatt Kuala Lumpur follows an agreement with Bahagia Investment Corporation to manage the property, which is already under construction.

In addition to this hotel, a further 12 Grand Hyatt properties are currently being developed around the world.

## Jumeirah to manage Zabeel

TOM WALKER

The Dubai-based Jumeirah Group has been appointed by Zabeel Properties to manage Jumeirah Zabeel Saray – a new luxury hotel featuring an 8,000sq m (86,111sq ft) spa as its focal point.

The property, located on the west crescent of Dubai's Palm Jumeirah, is Zabeel's first hotel in the emirate.

In addition to its 405 bedrooms, the hotel offers 38 villas situated on the beach and around a lagoon pool; and a Talise Ottoman Spa with 42 individual treatment rooms plus four VIP double suites.

The spa, like the rest of the hotel, has been designed to reflect the grandeur of the Ottoman Empire and incorporates three authentic Turkish hammams. There will also be two indoor thalassotherapy pools,



The spa has 42 single treatment rooms and four opulent VIP suites (above)

a floatation pool and eight hydrotherapy rooms, as well as an array of steamrooms, saunas and snowrooms.

Elsewhere, Jumeirah is to operate the Jumeirah Thousand Islands Lake Resort in Qiandaohu, China, that's expected to open in 2014.

## Clarins' new €40m Parisian flagship spa

KATIE BARNES

Spa skincare brand and operator Clarins revealed its new €40m (US\$58m, £35m) spa at the Le Royal Monceau – Raffles Paris hotel in June.

Currently in its soft-opening phase, the 1,500sq m (16,000sq ft) spa – described as a "white paradise" – has been created by French designer Philippe Starck, who also worked on the €69m (US\$100m, €61m) refurbishment of the five-star Le Royal Monceau (see p64).

Spa My Blend by Clarins is a flagship for the group and the launchpad for My Blend – its premium customisable skincare and treatment line that's targeting luxury operators (see p88). It's also Clarins' first full-service spa complete with seven treatment rooms; a 28m pool – one of the largest



Spa My Blend by Clarins was designed as 'white paradise' by Starck

in a Parisian hotel – male and female hydrothermal suites; a gym; and four training rooms.

The aim is to slowly roll out the concept in luxury hotels with London, New York and Singapore on the hit list of locations.

## Raison d'Etre to reveal four-star spa brand in Q4

TOM WALKER

Anna Bjurstam, the sole owner of spa consultancy Raison d'Etre, has announced that the company will launch a new four-star spa brand this year. Bjurstam said exact details are yet to be confirmed but added that she was looking at

a number of models for a roll out – including a partnership with a four-star hotel chain.

"The concept will be geared towards the younger market," she told *Spa Business*. "Our aim is to introduce an aspect of socialising into the spa journey."

## First carbon neutral hotel and spa

TOM WALKER

Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa, a conservation-based resort in New South Wales, Australia, has secured a carbon neutral status with a carboNZero-Cert™ certification.

The resort is the first hotel and spa in the world to be recognised by carboNZero – an internationally-accredited greenhouse gas certification scheme. Wolgan Valley was given the accolade after a full year of operation.

The carbon neutral status was made possible through a combination of initiatives, including large-scale environmental rehabilitation programmes – to date, 175,000 indigenous trees have been planted – and protection of existing remnant vegetation areas. Wolgan Valley also aims to source the majority of its produce and ingredients within 100 miles.



The hotel and spa achieved the accolade in its first year of operations

The carboNZero certification was developed at Landcare Research New Zealand, a climate change research institute.

Joost Heymeijer, general manager, said: "Sustainability is no longer an optional concept in our industry; it's become a basic expectation and we're proud to set the global benchmark."

## Jeff Butterworth joins Naiade Resorts

TOM WALKER

Jeff Butterworth has left his position as well-being director of Jumeirah to become the new chief spa and wellness officer at Maldives-based Naiade Resorts. He has been tasked with establishing a new spa brand for Naiade.

Butterworth is a naturopathic doctor with more than 16 years of experience in the spa and wellness industries.

He's known for his work in nutraceuticals and before Naiade was responsible for growing the portfolio of Jumeirah's spa brand, Talise.

## Starwood takes over Six Senses Sanctuary

TOM WALKER

Starwood Hotels and Resorts has confirmed that it has secured a 20-year management agreement for the former Six Senses Sanctuary resort in Phuket, Thailand.

The resort, on the island of Naka Yai in Phuket, is owned by Thai property company Erawan. Erawan announced in June that it would terminate a previous management deal with Six Senses and that Six Senses would no longer be in control of the resort from 31 July 2011.

Erawan owns 13 three to five-star hotel and resort properties in south-east Asia.

Jeremy McCarthy, director of Starwood's global spa development and operations, told *Spa Business* that the resort would be rebranded as The Naka Island, A Luxury Collection



The resort is now closed for a revamp and will reopen on 1 November

Resort & Spa, Phuket. He added that the resort will reopen on 1 November 2011 following a THB70M (US\$2.3M, €1.7M, £1.4M) refurbishment funded by Erawan.

The works will include enhancing the food and beverage facilities in the hotel to provide a wider range of dining and bar options.

## English Heritage grant for Buxton spa hotel

PETE HAYMAN

English Heritage has confirmed a £500,000 (US\$819,550, €566,900) grant for the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa scheme, which will create one of the UK's first genuine spa hotels for more than 100 years.

The funding is to go towards the £35m (US\$57m €40m) transformation of Buxton's Grade I-listed Crescent buildings and the adjacent Grade II-listed Natural Baths and Pump Room. When complete, the development will feature a 79-room spa hotel incorporating the Natural Baths; a thermal, natural mineral water spa; eight specialist shops; and a visitor centre.

Trevor Osborne Property Group, CP Holdings and Danubius Hotels are currently working on the scheme in partnership with the local High Peak Borough Council.



Personalised experiences are getting more popular

## Future of luxury travel predicted in report

PETE HAYMAN

Travellers who look for authentic, personalised experiences and consumers with "limitless budgets" have been identified among the new trendsetters emerging within the luxury travel market in *The Future of Luxury Travel* report by leisure consultants Horwath HTL.

It highlights the most likely profiles of luxury travellers for the next 18 months.

The four profiles are: Independent Minded – those seeking the authentic, active and personalised; the Explorer – who seeks incredible experiences at limitless budgets; Candidates to Luxury – in search of high-quality, high-service; and Streetwise Purchasers – younger, social media experts.

The Independent Minded segment seeks authenticity and a commitment to the local environment, while The Explorers have even more spending power. For Candidates to Luxury, time is tantamount and there is a need for all elements of their travel plans to work seamlessly.

## October debut for new Spa Association of Africa

TOM WALKER

A new trade association looking to develop and maintain standards in the African spa industry will be launched at an event in Ghana this October.

As part of its mission statement, Spa Association of Africa (SAA) will look to work alongside national and regional tourism boards as well as operators to set quality standards and encourage education and preventive health measures within the spa, health and wellness industry.

The association is the brainchild of Elaine Okeke, founder of spa consultancy SPALOGIQUE; and Dzigbordi K Dosoo, founder and CEO of day spa operator, trainer and distributor Allure Africa (see S809/4 p27). The pair have named Alison Ng'ethe, founder of ACI International College of Beauty, Fitness and Holistic Therapy, as the first board member.



The property will have a Willow Stream Spa

## Fairmont to expand Chinese portfolio

TOM WALKER

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts is to a new property in the historic city of Taiyuan in the northern Chinese province of Shanxi.

Scheduled to open by the end of 2014, Fairmont Taiyuan will form part of the Sumeru project, a mixed-use development currently being built by Shanxi Jun Lian Real Estate Development. Facilities at the 330-bedroom hotel will include a Willow Stream Spa, Fairmont's signature spa brand, as well as fitness and pool facilities.

The first Willow Stream Spa entered China in early 2010 at the Fairmont Yangcheng Lake in Kunshan. This was followed by a 12-suite Willow Stream Spa at Fairmont Beijing and an 11-treatment room spa at Fairmont Peace Hotel, Shanghai.

## Taj to manage Marrakech resort

TOM WALKER

Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces has confirmed that it will take over the management contract of a 161-guestroom luxury resort in Marrakech, originally planned as a Mandarin Oriental resort.

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group (MOHG) pulled out of the contract it had with the property's owner, the privately-owned Moroccan company JK Hotels earlier this year. The resort, which is due to open in October 2011, will now be launched as Taj Palace, Marrakech.

Live Haugen, a spokesperson for MOHG's Middle Eastern operations, told *Spa Business* that the action it's taken in this project doesn't rule out a future MOHG property in the region.

"We have withdrawn the management contract for our Marrakech project, but the city remains a suitable location for a Mandarin



The resort was originally developed as a Mandarin Oriental resort

Oriental resort property, and the group is already exploring further opportunities in the destination," she said.

Taj Palace Marrakech will have an extensive Jiva Grande Spa – its in-house ayurvedic and Indian spa concept. The 3,800sq m (40,903sq ft) facility will comprise 14 treatment rooms, two large hammams and a fitness centre.

## NWH acquires Rosewood Hotels and Resorts

PETE HAYMAN

Hong Kong-based management company New World Hospitality (NWH) has completed a purchase and sale deal to acquire Texas, US-based Rosewood Hotels and Resorts (RHR).

The deal will see NWH take control of the luxury hotel management company from current owners Rosewood Corp and Maritz, Wolf and Co. The deal was completed and approved on 31 July.

Following the completion of the US\$230m (£160, £141m) purchase, RHR will operate as the premium luxury brand – complete with its signature Sense spa brand – within the NWH portfolio.

There are currently 22 RHR properties, 10 of which boast Sense spas and four offering



Sense is the spa brand for Rosewood and is part of it Little Dix Bay site

other spa facilities. The first Sense spa opened at Rosewood Mayakoba in Mexico in 2008.

NWH chair Sonia Cheng said: "This acquisition represents a strategic direction for our company to establish a robust presence in the international luxury hospitality arena."

## ESPA to open Resorts World Sentosa spa

TOM WALKER

ESPA is developing a 45-treatment room spa at the Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore.

Due to open in 2012, the spa will be located on the west tip of the integrated resort with the treatment villas and therapy rooms being

spread over an indoor/outdoor area. The spa has been designed by DP Architects and facilities include traditional onsen in the spa garden as well as vitality and plunge pools; saunas; hammams; experience showers and ice fountains – all supplied by Barr+Wray.



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## Ritz-Carlton teams up with Foursquare

TOM WALKER

US-based hotel and operator Ritz-Carlton will add to its social media presence by introducing a new service called World Concierge on Foursquare.

The luxury operator – which considers spas an essential part of its offering – has teamed up with the location-based social network Foursquare to provide a service which will enlist concierges from all of its 75 hotels around the world.

Each hotel concierge will be asked to add tips to Foursquare about the cities surrounding the company's hotels from Toronto and Miami to Berlin and Dubai. Users will be able to find local information by visiting the profile of The Ritz-Carlton or by 'checking in' to its numerous sites.

This is the first time that a luxury hotel brand has extended its exclusive services to a mobile public audience.



The resort boasts an Asian-inspired luxury spa

## RAK government acquires Banyan Tree resort

TOM WALKER

The Ras Al Khaimah (RAK) Hotels and Tourism Development Authority has completed the acquisition of one of the UAE's first desert resorts – Banyan Tree Al Wadi.

Facilities at Banyan Tree Al Wadi incorporate a 3,960sq m (42,625sq ft) Asian-inspired spa with 10 treatment pavilions and the Rainforest Experience featuring 16 various heat and wet experiences.

The purchase follows an agreement with previous owners Rakeen Development. The RAK authority – on behalf of the emirate state's government – will own and operate the property as part of a wider 10-year strategy to quadruple visitor numbers.

The aim is to invest millions of dollars into hotels and tourism schemes and to position itself as a lower-cost destination to its neighbour Dubai.

## HHoW targets corporate market

KATIE BARNES

Healing Hotels of the World (HHoW) has launched a corporate wellness package for Marbet – a German events company with 160 staff.

Marbet is a branch of multinational firm Würth and if the partnership with HHoW goes well, the package will rollout across its 160,000 workforce.

Under the agreement, executives at Marbet will be invited on a cost-free, two-week break at one of 63 HHoW properties every two to three years. Initially, packages will be offered at HHoW's 30 European sites.

The focus of the break will be on preventing illness. Employees will have a consultation with a naturopath or doctor covering details about lifestyle, diet and wellness. They will then be prescribed a personalised two-week programme including spa treatments, nutritional



Executives of the first package went to Alpen Karawanserai in Austria

food, fitness classes and lifestyle coaching sessions, plus a take-home plan.

HHoW is a partnership of hotels, resorts and retreats offering holistic health in luxury surroundings. The group looking to rollout its corporate wellness package and is currently in talks with McCann-Erickson and Nestlé.

## Orient-Express' Peruvian convent resort

PETE HAYMAN

Orient-Express Hotels has announced that Palacio Nazarenas – a 55-suite hotel housed in a former palace and convent in Cuzco, Peru – is to open its doors in June 2012.

It will be the group's sixth location in Peru and follows a three-year restoration of the venue guided by archaeologists and Peru's National Institute of Culture.

Palacio Nazarenas facilities will comprise a spa with four single treatment rooms as well as a double treatment room and hot tub. Treatments have been inspired by Inca and Andean cultures and use indigenous ingredients such as pink Peruvian salt and purple corn. There will also be an 11m infinity-edge pool.



The hotel is located in a former palace and convent in historic Cuzco

Located 11,000ft (3,353m) above sea level, Palacio Nazarenas will include oxygenated suites (to combat altitude sickness) and a restaurant under a conservatory roof offering organic Andean cuisine.

## Four Seasons Marrakech opens

TOM WALKER

The Four Seasons Marrakech resort in Morocco has opened. The resort has 141 bedrooms and suites and facilities include a luxury spa.

The us\$15m (£11m, €9m) spa boasts 17 treatment rooms with the main pavilion offering 15

treatment rooms. There is also a large beauty salon and hydro-pool.

Montana, US-based Blu Spas has been working with architect Didier Lefort of DL2A Paris and the UK-based GA Design firm on the interiors of the property.

## Travaasa's second 'experiential hotel'

TOM WALKER

Travaasa, operator of a new collection of 'experiential hotels', has opened its second site in Maui, Hawaii.

The Travaasa Hana, Maui hotel features 70 cottages and suites and the experiential element is delivered by a range of different activities that are "designed to enrich the mind, stretch the imagination, feed the psyche, move the body and spa-ify the visage".

The spa, with its nine treatment rooms, offers therapeutic native Hawaiian treatments with local healing herbs along with exercise regimes as part of its holistic approach. It covers 7,700sq ft (715sq m) and other facilities include two steamrooms, a cold plunge pool, indoor and outdoor showers and a relaxation area.

Resort activities such as throw net fishing demonstrations, hula and ukulele lessons



Accommodation at the resort is offered in 47 plantation-style cottages

and stand-up paddle boarding, all highlight Hawaii's rich cultural heritage.

Accommodations at Travaasa Hana consist of 47 plantation-style Sea Ranch Cottages and 23 low-rise bungalow Garden View Suites.

Travaasa Hana is a refurbishment of the former Hotel Hana Maui property, which first opened in 1947.

## Residential spa for TUI's Tuscan eco-resort

TOM WALKER

A residential spa will form a "significant part" of a €250m (US\$362m, £221m) eco-project currently being built in Tuscany, Italy.

The initial stage of TUI's Castelfalfi Resort will include the construction of a 32-bedroom

boutique hotel, country houses and apartments. Two further hotels, plus a large spa for the use of residents and resort guests, are to be built in the second phase.

TUI Resorts & Hotels is a subsidiary of travel giant the TUI Group.

## PUBLIC brand unveiled by Schragr

TOM WALKER

American hotel entrepreneur Ian Schragr will launch a new luxury hotel brand called PUBLIC later this year.

The first PUBLIC property will open in Chicago by 2012 at site of the iconic Ambassador East Hotel.

Schragr describes PUBLIC as being a "revitalisation of the hotel concept itself and another worldwide wake-up call for the entire industry".

The news comes just weeks after it was announced that Schragr is to be sued by the owner of his first Edition hotel – the boutique brand he launched with Marriott International in 2010.

M Waikiki LLC, owner of Waikiki Edition in Hawaii, has filed a lawsuit against Schragr and Marriott. The claims are that the 353-bedroom



The owners of Waikiki Edition have sued Schragr and Marriott

hotel had been a "failure" on the grounds of gross mis-management and Marriott's "inability to successfully launch the Edition brand". It's also alleged that Schragr was not involved with the development of Waikiki Edition, despite contractual obligations to the contrary.

## DIARY DATES

7-10 SEPTEMBER

**SPATEC North America Fall**

Ritz - Carlton Laguna Niguel, USA  
A forum featuring one-to-one, 20-minute meetings between spa owners, directors and design/management firms and suppliers.  
Tel: +1 603 529 0077  
[www.mcleaneventsinternational.com](http://www.mcleaneventsinternational.com)

8-10 SEPTEMBER

**SpaChina Summit**  
Brilliant Resort & Spa,  
Kumming, China

This summit will include keynote speeches and panel discussions in both Chinese and English.  
Tel: +86 21 5385 8951  
[www.spachina.com](http://www.spachina.com)

12-14 SEPTEMBER

**European Spa Exhibition & Summit**  
Porte de Versailles, Paris, France

This event covers the challenges in setting up and managing a spa.  
Tel: +33 1 44 69 95 69  
[www.beyondbeautyparis.com](http://www.beyondbeautyparis.com)

25-27 SEPTEMBER

**Wellness Asia Exhibition**

NSIC Exhibition Grounds, Okhla,  
New Delhi, India  
An exhibition combining wellness products, services and technologies.  
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[www.wellnessasiaexpo.com](http://www.wellnessasiaexpo.com)

6-7 OCTOBER

**Natural Beauty Summit America**

Sheraton New York Hotel, USA  
Two days of debate dedicated to natural beauty topics and issues for top executives.  
Tel: +1 646 895 7468  
[www.naturalbeautysummit.com](http://www.naturalbeautysummit.com)

7-9 NOVEMBER

**ISPA Conference & Expo**

Mandalay Bay Convention Center,  
Las Vegas, USA  
Three-day conference covering spa business strategy and management, plus a trade show with over 300 exhibitors.  
Tel: +1 859 226 4326  
[www.experienceispa.com](http://www.experienceispa.com)

8-9 NOVEMBER

**Spa Life UK**

Center Parc, Elveden Forest, UK  
More than 400 professionals are expected at this spa and wellness industry event.  
Tel: +44 8707 804490  
[www.spaconference.co.uk](http://www.spaconference.co.uk)



Pürovel reflects the company's Swiss roots (above) and products include local herbs (below); the spa in Tallinn is one of four openings in 2011 (right)



## Swissôtel to roll out Pürovel spa brand

Resort operator Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts is to roll out its Pürovel Spa & Sport brand across its global hotel portfolio following the opening of its first site in Basel, Switzerland

The new brand will reflect the company's Swiss roots and its commitment to natural materials and resources. Stone, wood, water and flowers will all be used in the design as a reminder of the pure nature and invigorating mountain air of the Swiss Alps.

There will be two different types of Pürovel facilities. Pürovel Sport spas will be 500 to 700sq m (5,382 to 7,535sq ft) in size and will feature up to four treatment rooms. The larger, Pürovel Spa & Sport sites will cover around 700 to 2,500sq m (7,535 to 26,910sq ft) and boast a minimum of five treatment rooms.

The Pürovel brand aims to combine a restorative spa experience with sports and exercise. The signature treatment experiences are loosely based on the four seasons with each one incorporating four different stages: spring (prepare), summer (perform), autumn (enjoy) and winter (hibernate).

Lilian Roten, Swissôtel's vice-president of operations, explains: "Nature in Switzerland goes through four stages in order to survive, flourish and reproduce. We should do the same in order to restore our wellbeing.

Pürovel is all about vitality. It will not be marketed as a pampering service."

Swissôtel partnered with local company Swissessences to produce a Pürovel-branded line of essential oils incorporating Swiss herbs such as lemon balm, wild bergamot, lavender and Douglas fir.

All Pürovel spas will also have a fitness element. The size of each fitness facility will vary, but every gym will boast CV, resistance and weight areas. The larger spas will also

in Tallinn, Estonia; Moscow, Russia; and Osaka, Japan have recently been revealed, while a launch in Bremen, Germany is planned this month (August).

Further sites will follow, starting with an opening in Kolkata, India and Dresden, Germany in April 2012. The target is to have 20 Pürovel-branded spas by 2013. Roten revealed that all existing spas across the Swissôtel portfolio will eventually be either converted into Pürovel spas or, if they "do not fill the criteria", they'll be realigned as purely fitness centres.

Roten also said that the majority of the sites will be operated by Swissôtel, but some of the smaller Pürovel Sport facilities might be run by local spa specialists.

Swissôtel is owned by Fairmont Raffles Hotels International (FRHI) and FRHI's vice-president of spas, Anne McCall Wilson, was involved in the development of the Pürovel brand. Also, Swissôtel's interior designer Karsten Schmidt created the look and feel of the new spa concept.

Roten concludes: "Words are critical in conveying our brand essence. Key words for Pürovel include vitality, vigour, uncomplicated, natural, sport and healthy lifestyle. Words that Pürovel is not, include all the predictable spa words – such as relax, luxurious, pampering, mind body soul and tranquility." ●

The target is to have 20 Pürovel-branded spas by 2013... all existing spas in the Swissôtel portfolio will eventually be realigned or converted into fitness centres

include class spaces for group exercises such as yoga, as well as separate exercise zones.

The sports programmes will be modelled on "the four steps to building vitality" – emerge, peak, cool down and rest. Roten says: "A 20-minute walk, for example, is to emerge like a breath of fresh air; a 30-minute run is to invigorate your body and get your heart rate up; and a 40-minute workout is to reach peak performance.

The first Pürovel site opened in Bern in 2009 and four new Pürovel spas are to open at Swissôtel-owned hotels during 2011. Spas

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Dragonfly has 21 franchise spas in China and aims to have up to 80 within five years

## ASK AN EXPERT...

# FRANCHISING



Delegates at this year's Global Spa Summit (see p38) were gripped by a panel session which highlighted franchising as a new model for spa businesses.

Set up and delivered by GSS board member Pete Ellis, the session revealed that while franchising is still in an embryonic stage in the spa industry, it is growing quickly and can be extremely lucrative. CG Funk, VP of industry relations and product development for Massage Envy – a US chain which launched eight years ago – said that her business had a network revenue of US\$652m (€464m, £406m). As an established brand, it also attracts a wider audience compared to most other spas – 22 per cent of Massage Envy's clients, for example, have never had a massage before.

Other expanding spa franchise chains represented on the panel included Wood-

Could franchising be the best way to grow your business? We pick the brains of companies which have cracked this model

house Day Spas – also from the US – Dragonfly Therapeutic Retreats based in China and Malaysia's Skin Essentials Spas.

Another advantage to franchising is that owner/operators are likely to be more hungry than a general manager, since they have a financial stake in the business. So they can be great ambassadors for the brand and brilliant at building and motivating a team.

But, could this mean they would be harder to control than a manager? Certainly, in Malaysia and China this would appear to be

the case, with franchisees receiving all the business details, but then wanting to take matters into their own hands or not doing all they can to develop a territory. If it does go terribly wrong, how easy is it to end a franchise agreement? And what kind of paperwork and legalities should be drawn up in the first place?

Also, is it a gamble to leave your brand reputation in someone else's hands? How do franchisors retain control and ensure franchisees are upkeeping the brand and maintaining standards? How do they make sure that therapists stick to treatment protocols and don't start freestyling with the signature service? In addition, how can franchisor keep control of an ever growing portfolio?

We ask the people on that original GSS panel about their companies and advice...

**W**oodhouse was formed 10 years ago and has 26 locations in 13 different states in the US. We set out to take spa from luxury to necessity.

Later this year we will open our first site overseas, in Punjab, India. This 15,000sq ft (1,393sq m) spa has been adapted to suit the local market: it will offer memberships, a salon, a gym (for male appeal), yoga, pilates, a café and a bridal suite, as this is a big market in India. The day spa franchise concept is new to India and we chose to start our international development there as our franchisee is very familiar with the area. After eight years of setting up our systems, we are now ready to really focus on the development side – domestically and internationally.

We offer 35 treatments – mostly ayurvedic and very results-orientated – and we worked with holistic and certified organic lines like Amala, Naturopathica and Arcona. What sets us apart is what we call the Woodhouse Experience: little details, such as our signature oil and handwritten thank you notes.

### JENI GARRETT

Founder and CEO,  
Woodhouse Day Spas, US



franchisees with their budgeting on an annual basis. There's an online support village where they can blog with each other. There are eight marketing promotions a year with tools to deliver

this. Franchisees do their own recruiting, but we provide the tools and resources for this.

Protecting the brand is our job, so we have a very fixed policy and procedure manual and all staff are well trained and drilled to stick to protocols. We ask franchisees to do compliance surveys and all guests are given a comment card. All of our treatments are costed-out down to the cotton balls, so if we see a deviation in product costs we can trace it.

A decentralised system and dealing with many personalities is the biggest challenge of franchising. We have to make sure that we protect the brand by clearly communicating our vision and making sure this is properly understood. We have been very selective with our franchisees, which is why we haven't grown as fast as we could have. We're in constant contact with our franchisees: studies show that the happiest franchisees are those who feel they are heard.

All of our franchisees are from outside the industry: some have been in corporate America and laid off, retired, or just want to be their own boss. Others are entrepreneurs

*Garrett launched Woodhouse Day Spas in 2001 as a young student at the University of Houston and University of Victoria, and a year later took the concept nationwide. Details: www.woodhousespas.com*

**D**ragonfly launched in 2003 (see SB09/4 p20) and we currently have 21 'spa shops' in seven cities in mainland China and Hong Kong. With the fast economic growth of China's second tier cities, we believe we will have 50 to 80 shops in China within five years.

A typical retreat is 250 to 350sq m (2,690 to 3,767sq ft). We don't offer water treatments, our core services are Chinese (tui na), shiatsu, head and shoulder, Oriental foot and aroma oil massages. A standard massage, without oil, is US\$25 (£18, £16). We also combine treatments into one or two-hour packages and sell memberships, which entitle customers to discounts.

The decision to start franchising was down to interest from customers wanting to get involved. Our first franchisee didn't have any spa or retail experience, but lived in one of the expat enclaves within Shanghai. We decided this would allow us to expand into a new loca-

### RANDAL EASTMAN

Vice president, Dragonfly  
Therapeutic Retreats, China



found ourselves shut out of lucrative markets while franchisees sat on their hands.

We provide our franchisees with a turnkey solution and ongoing services include maintenance of

tion and provide a test bed for us to learn some of the nuances of franchising first hand.

A passion for the brand is one of our main franchise requirements, as well as enough working capital. They also need to have a commitment to top notch customer service, respect for the system, attention to detail and show initiative to develop their business.

An initial franchise fee is charged, along with a design fee. Ongoing costs include a monthly royalty fee, monthly advertising minimum spend and training for new hires. If the franchisee wishes to secure a territory, they must negotiate a territory development fee, which is tied to an appropriate number of shop openings, with annual milestones they must meet. We learned to set territory milestones by painful experience, as we

the IT system, as well as support for marketing, graphic design, CAD for renovations, recruitment, staff training, benchmarking, management coaching and quality control. In 2007, the Dragonfly Academy was established to deliver in-house training. However, franchisees are still responsible for recruiting.

Maintaining the consistency of the spa experience is one of the biggest challenges, as sometimes franchisees want more independence. We use a number of tools to maintain standards: daily sales reports, weekly staff meetings with managers, weekly visits to all shops, mystery shopping reports and customer feedback forms.

*Eastman has been a partner in Dragonfly for six years. Details: www.dragonfly.net.cn*

**M**assage Envy started franchising in 2003, and continues to expand at an impressive rate in the US. As of June, Massage Envy had 686 locations offering massage therapy and facials and around 220 locations in the pipeline.

The average unit size is 3,000sq ft (279sq m), with 12 to 14 treatment rooms. A number of massages are offered, as well as Murad facials. Massage Envy has a membership programme with monthly fees varying by region – between US\$49 to US\$99 (€35 to €42, £30 to £37). Members are entitled to a one-hour massage session each month and can receive additional massages at a 40 to 50 per cent discount. Early on, the franchising model was chosen in order to allow for faster expansion and gather partners committed to business growth and development.

The spa franchisee fee is US\$45,000 (€32,000, £27,950). Financial criteria include a minimum of US\$500,000 (€355,750, £310,800) net worth, US\$150,000 (€106,750, £93,250) liquid capital and a minimum credit

### CG FUNK

VP industry relations and product development, Massage Envy, US



score of 680. Once a franchise license has been granted, additional investment costs can range from US\$340,000 to US\$560,000, (€241,950 to €398,500, £211,350 to £348,150) which includes real estate, build out, equipment, supplies and working capital.

Many support systems are offered, through corporate departments and regional developers. Ongoing training relating to operations, marketing, therapist development and service development are available through field training and a proprietary internal learning management system. In addition, all franchisees receive a week of franchise training at our corporate headquarters before opening.

We employ 16,000 massage therapists and 1,200 aestheticians nationwide. In the early days, Massage Envy was met with apprehension – schools, therapists and associations didn't understand our business model and

employment parameters. Through continued focus and support of associations, conferences, research and media, however, we have now grown positive relationships nationally and locally within the massage and spa industries.

A main focus with spa franchising is ensuring consistency with services and consumer experiences. Massage therapists and aestheticians may have their own unique way of providing massage and facial modalities which might be contrary to internal policies, procedures and protocols. By developing inclusive training programmes for massage therapists and aestheticians, as well as front office staff, Massage Envy is able to provide consistent, high-quality services to its members and guests maintaining brand standards on a large national scale.

Massage Envy was a trailblazer in bringing franchising and membership to the spa market. The company's early success came from visionary leadership and passionate franchisees committed to the brand. The continued growth and expansion is due to having a solid business plan, effective support and training programmes, creative marketing, service and systems innovation and structured auditing procedures.

*Funk has worked in the spa industry since 1992. Details: [www.massageny.com](http://www.massageny.com).*

Massage Envy was a trailblazer in bringing franchising and membership to the spa market. Early success came from visionary leadership and passionate franchisees

**S**kin Essentials was formed in 1994, by myself and my wife,

Kim. It was a modest start: a floor area of just over 200sq ft (19sq m) within a hair salon. Now we operate 14 beauty salons in Kuala Lumpur and three in other states of Malaysia and have a further 45 franchised salons throughout Malaysia. We grow at an average rate of three beauty spas year.

The sites range from 1,000sq ft (93sq m) to 5,000sq ft (464sq m) and from six to 24 rooms. We offer 10 facials, costing US\$23 to US\$46 (€16 to €33, £14 to £26), fish reflexology and aromatherapy. We only sell our own skincare products called Herbaline.

We collect a franchise training and set up fee and, thereafter, supply products and provide periodic ongoing training and business meetings, sharing the hands-on experience from our 17 beauty spas and 8,000 monthly customers. The investment franchisees need is around US\$4,000 (€2,850, £2,500) per

### CHEE KWONG LOW

Managing director,  
Skin Essentials Spas, Malaysia



100sq ft (9sq m). Typically, in our own beauty spas, we make a return on investment (ROI) within 18 to 24 months. For franchisees it depends on their willingness to learn and attitude at work – we don't promise them a ROI. We look for sincerity, willingness to learn and to work hard and some business foresight in potential franchisees.

Every new therapist has to go through the same standard training for one month to ensure uniformity in our customer service.

Franchising does open up spas to a new market, but I'm not sure this market is reliable. In not so well developed countries, including Malaysia, the attitude for beauty and spa franchising is not mature yet and it is difficult to create uniformity of service and achieve the same level of customer satisfac-

tion in all of our franchised beauty spas. Also, we have found that after franchisees have learnt the business from us and have set up a few sites, they then start to establish their own brand.

Franchising was the original plan during the infant stage, mainly to generate more revenue. But this is not the best way to build a good brand in Malaysia. At present, our 17 branches contribute 75 per cent of the total turnover, while the remaining 45 franchised beauty spas contribute only 25 per cent of our sales turnover.

In the last few years, we have stopped recruiting new franchisees. Now we are putting more effort into setting up our own beauty spas and retaining control by giving branch managers the opportunity to run them, which has improved sales and helped build a good brand reputation.

*Prior to Skin Essentials, Low was a qualified accountant. Details: [www.herbaline.com.my](http://www.herbaline.com.my)*



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# HILTON WORLDWIDE

Hilton Worldwide boasts 256 properties that offer spa services and has over 110 spas in development. Key figures tell us about the creation of eforea – its first branded spa concept – and its ambitious spa rollout plans across the group

"I'd known Hilton Worldwide as a hospitality giant, but the reason I joined is because they clearly demonstrated to me that they were saying much more than 'spas are important to us' – they were obviously committed to evolving that side of the business," says Ryan Crabbe, senior director of spa operations and development (the Americas) at Hilton Worldwide.

Crabbe's response echoes the thoughts of all of the people in this feature and the numbers are compelling too: Hilton World-

wide has 256 properties that offer spa services, operates 245 spas in-house and has 113 more in development.

While the veteran hotel company has been running spas for decades (see p33), it has stepped this part of the business up a gear in the last few years – most notably with the arrival of its first in-house concept 'eforea: spa at Hilton' in 2010, which has 50 sites in its development pipeline.

Eforea is the first branded spa concept for Hilton Hotels & Resorts, the flagship

brand of Hilton Worldwide. It is also available for DoubleTree by Hilton and Embassy Suites Hotels, Hilton Worldwide's other full-service brands. As the company's spa development pipeline is rapidly growing overall, there's also talk of more branded, in-house concepts to follow – with Conrad the next obvious candidate.

Here, top team members talk to us about creating eforea, the challenges of developing and operating spa facilities worldwide and what else we can expect in the future.

## VANESSA MAIN

Director of spa operations and development  
(Asia-Pacific)



When I first joined in 2008 I was a one man band and I soon realised that we needed to grow our infrastructure in the field to effectively handle the volume of projects that are spread over such a large geographical region.

A year ago Sean Walsh started with us as senior manager of spa development and his sole focus is

to ensure we have a solid commercial strategy for development in China. I've now got the same position permanently based in Shanghai. Operationally we have independent spa managers who are property based and three

people in regional roles who all assist in delivering operational efficiencies and initiatives.

Today, my job is much more strategic – ensuring we have the right tools to deploy and execute new spa development and further establish Hilton Worldwide as a premium spa operator.

### HOW DO YOU WORK WITH THE REST OF THE SPA DIRECTORS AT HILTON?

There's no set rule, but we talk at least once a month. I'm regularly in touch with Tyra on the brand team, and [Hilton's other spa operations and development directors] Sharon, Louise, Ryan and I are good at sharing best practice examples across regions. We've just had a week of face-to-face meetings to cement our global spa strategy and these usually only happen once or twice a year due to our intense travel schedules.

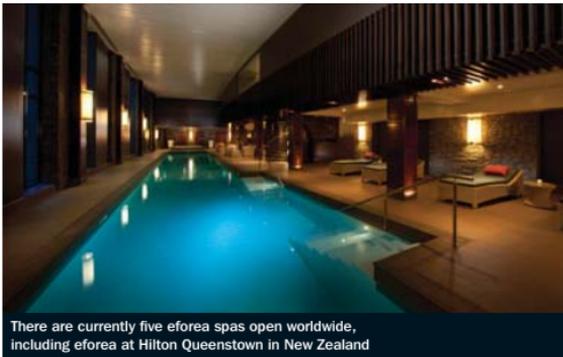
### WHAT'S YOUR ROLLOUT STRATEGY FOR EFOREA: SPA AT HILTON IN ASIA-PACIFIC?

We have an equal focus on new builds and converting our existing spas. Our next openings will represent our entry into the Chinese market and I am very excited about that.

### WHAT'S YOUR OVERALL ROLLOUT STRATEGY?

The volume sits within the Hilton Hotels & Resorts brand, but we're seeing a lot of movement within Conrad too. I've got 14 Conrad spas under development and the other brands are also growing rapidly.

**WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?** I have many hats as I work between spa development and operations for all Hilton brands across Asia-Pacific – a region that's reasonably large and growing very rapidly. We typically launch one or two spas a month and I currently oversee 39 spas and have 58 due to open between now and 2014.



There are currently five eforea spas open worldwide, including eforea at Hilton Queenstown in New Zealand



Eforea at Hilton on the Park Melbourne launched in April and the brand is poised to rollout in China

## I've just launched a graduate certificate in management specialising in spa operations with the William Angliss Institute. This will roll out across Asia-Pacific and there's every intention to make it available globally

### WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPING AND OPERATING SPAS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION?

Out of the \$8 pipeline spas, the majority are in China and one of the main issues there is the sheer pace in which the country does business – we've recently had two projects that opened eight months early which is unheard of in development! So it's key to ensure your team can move and adapt very quickly. Product registration, licensing regulations and laws, such as hygiene and fire standards, change almost hourly in China. Being out of contact for five days is like being out of contact for a year, so we make a point of building strong relationships with people in the market who understand what's happening and who we can work with to stay up to date.

The Asia-Pacific region presents cultural nuances that we need to be aware of and these influence both the way we design

our spas and the menus and treatments we deliver. In addition, each country – especially China and India – has its own traditional interpretation of spa which can differ greatly to westernised spas. We work closely with our owners to deliver spa concepts that are locally relevant and globally consistent.

### WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN GOALS OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?

Education and training. If you do the maths, I'm going to need 58 new spa managers and at least 176 more therapists in the next three to four years. I want to develop our talent internally, which is why I've worked with the William Angliss Institute – a specialist centre for tourism and hospitality with presence in Australia, Singapore and China. The aim of this partnership is to develop and deliver a graduate certificate in management specialising in spa operations that we've just launched. Over the

nine-month course, spa managers will complete two full weeks of face-to-face tuition and then set aside about five hours a week to work on assignments that cover six modules including human resources, financial management, innovative business practices, business planning, sales and marketing and risk management. The plan is to roll this out across Asia-Pacific, but I think there's every intention to make it available globally. I don't know of any other group that's doing something of this standard at this level.

### WHAT IS YOUR OVERALL AMBITION?

To show that if you focus on spas, they can be a real commercial driver to your business, rather than just providing a nice massage. While we are definitely growing very rapidly, I think we are preparing for it well and I like working for such an innovative group that operates with integrity. ▶

We're looking to develop more spa concepts that range from brand-wide solutions, to a single concept for an individual property. My long-term goal is to drive the spa discipline forward within Hilton Worldwide and the industry

#### TYRA LOWMAN

Senior director global spa brands, luxury and full service, Hilton Worldwide



**WHAT IS THE EFOREA: SPA AT HILTON CONCEPT?** The new spa solution features an exclusive menu of treatment journeys and innovative design elements, all providing a turnkey spa solution owners can easily implement and customise.

One of the elements that distinguishes the eforea concept is the approach to treatments, which are categorised under three customisable spa journeys: The Escape Journey for the urban guest who may need a moment away from a busy day, The Essentials Journey for the more seasoned spa aficionado or vacation guest focused on longer-term results and the Men's Journey offering problem-solving solutions created specifically for men.

We created the concept following extensive consumer research and targeted focus groups. We also drew on the knowledge of our regional spa directors and their best practices.

**WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR CREATING AN IN-HOUSE SPA BRAND?** With the most recognised name in the hotel industry, it was a natural extension for Hilton to create its

own spa concept. We saw great opportunity to create a distinct spa identity for our full-service brands – Hilton Hotels & Resorts, DoubleTree by Hilton and Embassy Suites Hotels – that represent a key cross section of our business and leisure guests.

**HOW WILL YOU MAINTAIN BRAND CONSISTENCY?** As well as our brand standards and identity guidelines for spas, we have a group of quality assurance auditors who regularly audit our hotels and spas.

**WHAT DIFFICULTIES DO YOU FACE?** With such a diverse and wide-reaching collection of hotels globally, it can be a challenge to work with various departments and brands, but this close coordination helps us to implement changes quickly and raise the bar on our guest experience.

**WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?** Currently, we are looking to develop more spa concepts that range from brand-wide solutions, to a single concept for an individual property. My longer term goal is to drive the spa discipline forward within Hilton Worldwide and the industry.

**WHAT DOES YOUR ROLE ENTAIL?** I joined Hilton Worldwide in mid-2009 to shape the direction of spa across the company. I lead the strategic vision and long-term plan for spas within the full-service and luxury brands (see p33). I write all spa standards, develop metrics for measuring our success, create and manage new spa concepts and more generally serve as the spa discipline champion for our hotel brands.

**WHAT'S THE OVERALL COMPANY VISION AND HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT IT?** Our goals are to continue to be a globally recognised leader in the spa space, achieving this through high standards of quality, innovative products and services and smart use of the Hilton Worldwide engine – all leading to strong returns on investment and an elevated image for our brand.

#### EFOREA: SPA AT HILTON



Unique selling points of eforea: spa at Hilton include three customisable journeys: Essentials, featuring Kerstin Florian products; Escape for holistic experiences using Li'Ya; and the Men's journey incorporating the VitaMan line. Each of these journeys are made up of a number of face, body and massage treatments with prices starting at US\$125 (€89, £78) for a 60-minute massage.

A typical layout includes a series of lounges – arrival, changing, transition and thermal – the treatment rooms and a retail

area accompanied by thoughtful design touches. The arrival lounge, for example, features a dynamic retail space, while treatment rooms will boast integrating music speakers with aroma diffusing systems. In some spas, the arrival lounge will also feature a custom-designed lighting element that brightens as guests walk in.

As a turnkey concept, eforea is also backed up with a design and construction manual, standard operating procedures, global supply agreements (with negotiated pricing) and a treatment menu plus training.

#### Eforea openings\*

- Hilton Short Hills, New Jersey, US (October 2010)
- Millennium Hilton Bangkok, Thailand (March 2011)
- Hilton on the Park Melbourne, Australia (April 2011)
- Hilton Pattaya, Thailand (May 2011)
- Hilton Queenstown, New Zealand (May 2011)

\*Nine more eforea spas are expected to be up and running by the end of 2011.



The performance of eforea spas will be measured using SPUR – the spa productivity and utilisation report – that launched in early 2010

## RYAN CRABBE

Senior director of spa operations and development (the Americas)



### WHAT ARE YOUR DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITIES?

The lion's share of my work focuses on our existing 98 spa businesses in the Americas, although I'm currently engaged with 20 new projects. With operating spas, I liaise with hotel owners, spa directors and team members to ensure our business is optimised and firing on all cylinders. For new projects, I work with developers to thoughtfully concept, programme and design the spa locations.

**HOW HAS YOUR JOB CHANGED?** I joined in August 2009 and in the first year I focused on travel and relationships. Connecting with key property stakeholders and learning their businesses and unique approaches was critical to getting the right kind of work done. After getting the topography down, this second year has been about creating tools and practices that improve the performance of our spas.

**HOW DO SPAS FIT INTO THE COMPANY'S VISION?** Any company wants to be really relevant to its customer. Guests at our full-

service and luxury hotels tell us that wellness is an increasingly important part of their lives. Our spas play a critical role here and allow us to deliver the meaningful experiences that speak to this growing group of customers.

### HOW DO YOU TACKLE YIELD MANAGEMENT?

We launched SPUR – the spa productivity and utilisation report – in early 2010. This report extracts 33 key data points from our spas on a daily basis. We then analyse these figures to identify property-specific yield management opportunities.

### WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CHALLENGES?

One of the obstacles for anyone who manages a large number of businesses is finding creative ways to influence your team. While you could sit in an office and attempt to manage from afar, I've found that one of the best ways to inspire commercial success is travelling a lot and spending quality time with leaders and team members. It helps me understand complicated issues and identify the tricky root causes at property level. So, I end up spending a good bit of time on the road.

**HOW WILL YOU SELL EFOREA: SPA AT HILTON TO OWNERS?** The brand really speaks for itself to developers building a new

spa. It has a strong identity and is a turnkey solution crafted to demystify the spa development process. It's a fantastic tool for new builds as constructing a spa can be complex. As eforea offers the entire package, speed to market is efficient and affordable. It's also a great opportunity for owners of existing Hilton spas, who are looking for a fresh identity and an evolved spa experience.

### WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN GOALS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?

We've just conducted internal research on what drives a great guest experience. We've engaged our spa leaders, therapists and front desk teams to help analyse our guest journey from digesting the treatment menu, reservations and arrival, through to the layout of facilities and the actual treatment. The next step is to accumulate the information to see what positive and innovative changes we can make that elevate the guest experience in our spas.

### WHAT ARE YOUR OVERALL AMBITIONS?

I'm propelled by the idea that the spa business is all about making people feel good. It's a simple, yet very powerful purpose to bring to the job each day and I don't think most get to punch in and generate that kind of work product. As long as I'm succeeding at that and making a difference on an organisational level, I'll feel very lucky. ▶

**DAVE HORTON**

Global head, Hilton  
Hotels & Resorts



**WHEN AND WHY DID YOU JOIN HILTON?**

I've been employed by Hilton for my entire 32-year career. I thought I was beginning a part-time job while in college, but fell in love with hospitality and the things we do as a company. I now oversee all aspects of Hilton Hotels & Resorts which comprises more than 540 hotels in 78 countries – more countries than any other upscale brand.

**WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT H360?**

H360 is Hilton's new strategic plan for continued relevance and leadership. We've conducted the greatest global consumer research in our history, interviewing 22,000 people, to help us understand the expectations that travellers have today and how we can prepare for their future needs. H360 is the name of this fresh global perspective that puts our guests at the centre of everything we do. Through H360 we will continue to innovate and lead and we're driving significant

change to the guest experience on a global scale from guestroom design, lobby and community spaces, food and beverage and so many other areas.

Eforea: spa at Hilton is also a direct result of H360. It pairs our understanding of global travel with leading [skincare] product partners to provide an innovative spa experience for the customer.

**HOW IMPORTANT ARE SPAS FOR THE HILTON BRAND?**

They're incredibly important for several reasons. Few people may realise that we're one of the world's largest spa providers. The Hilton Hotels & Resorts brand alone has more than 127 spas, so it's essential to provide owners with cost-effective solutions that are both easy to implement and best in class. From the guest perspective, spa provides unique opportunities to communicate our brand promise – to ensure every guest feels cared for, valued and respected – and build loyalty. Spas are about healing, caring and nurturing. Ultimately, we are in the experience business and these essential elements give spa a unique ability to deliver a refreshing, memorable on-property guest experience.

**WHAT DO SPAS BRING TO THE BUSINESS AS A WHOLE?**

Spas provide great value to upscale, full-service brands. For many consumers, they are a deciding factor when choosing a hotel. A compelling spa offering can increase length of stay and can be an important contributor to blended travel – the blending of business and leisure travel, which emerged in the economic downturn.

Through eforea, we are attracting male business travellers with our men's journey, spa aficionados who enjoy our technologically advanced treatments and our resort guests who appreciate our collection of wellness-focused experiences. Retail has also opened new doors for us. Our eforea locations feature interactive travel bars that encourage guests to explore product lines and we worked with our partners to create travel size products that are widely popular.

**WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN GOALS AND HOW DO SPAS FIT INTO THIS?**

We have a laser focus on the needs and wants of our customers and we will continue to evolve our brand and offering to meet and exceed these expectations. Spa is a core part of our journey because eforea is growing at such a rapid pace and because it will be a key element that differentiates us.

A compelling spa offering can increase length of stay and can be an important contributor to blended [business and leisure] travel that emerged in the downturn

**Hilton Worldwide's spa team**

As well as Lowman, Crabbe and Main, there are two other key regional spa directors who make up the core spa team at Hilton Worldwide.

■ **Louise Moore**, director of spa operations and development (Europe). Moore joined Hilton in January 2007 and initially worked on all markets outside of the US before focusing solely on Europe in 2010. She currently oversees 81 spas and has 26 more in development. Previously Moore worked in executive positions in the health and fitness, spa, leisure and hospitality industry in the UK.

■ **Sharon Barcock** is Hilton's director of spa operations and development (Middle East and Africa). Barcock took up the role in December 2009 and today looks after 27 existing spas across all hotel brands and has nine more in the pipeline. She has been based in Dubai for the last nine years and previous posts include spa director roles at Mandara Spa at the Monarch Dubai and The Fairmont Dubai.



Eforea spas provide Hilton with a unique opportunity to communicate its brand promise – ensuring guests feel cared for, valued and respected – says Horton

## HILTON WORLDWIDE: BRIEFING

Hilton Worldwide (formerly Hilton Hotels Corporation) was founded by Conrad Hilton, a hotel entrepreneur, in Cisco, Texas, US, in 1919. Over 92 years, Hilton Worldwide has become the leading global hospitality company, spanning the lodging sector from luxurious full-service hotels and resorts to extended-stay suites and mid-priced hotels. In 2006, the company's international and US brands came together for the first time in 40 years. The following year, a merger agreement between Hilton Hotels Corporation and affiliates of The Blackstone Group was finalised. Today, Hilton Worldwide is



London's 200-acre Syon Park features the newest Waldorf Astoria and it Kallima spa

headquartered in McLean, Virginia, US, and has more than 600,000 team members serving its brands at Hilton Worldwide's owned,

managed and franchised properties and corporate offices. Globally, the company has more than 3,750 hotels in 84 countries.



Hilton Surfers Paradise Hotel & Residences, Queensland. Opening October 2011



Hilton Baku, Azerbaijan. Opening September 2011



Hilton Hangzhou Qiandao Lake Resort, China. Opened July 2011

### Hilton Worldwide brands\*

#### Luxury

- **Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts\*\***  
(24 properties, with 10 in development)
- **Conrad Hotels & Resorts\*\***  
(16 properties, with 19 in development)

#### Full-Service

- **Hilton Hotels & Resorts\*\***  
(540-plus properties, with more than 145 in development)
- **DoubleTree by Hilton\*\*** (255-plus properties, with 70 in development)
- **Embassy Suites Hotels\*\***  
(210-plus properties, with more than 30 in development)

#### Focused-Service

- **Hilton Garden Inn**  
(Approximately 520 properties, with 150-plus in development)
- **Hampton Inn & Suites**  
(nearly 1,830 properties, with approximately 310 in development)
- **Homewood Suites by Hilton** (300-plus properties, with 70 in development)



- **Home2 Suites by Hilton** (launched in 2009, three properties open, plans to reach 100 properties by end of 2014)

#### Timeshare

- **Hilton Grand Vacations Company** (38 properties, more than 170,000 members)

**Conrad Koh Samui, Thailand, opened in the second quarter of 2011**

*\* Property and pipeline counts are as of 31 May 2011 \*\* Many of Conrad Hotels & Resorts, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts and Hilton Hotels & Resorts properties include spa facilities. DoubleTree by Hilton and Embassy Suites Hotels often offer spas also.*

# TREND WATCHING

In its latest report, Coyle looks at the habits of spa consumers in 2011 and finds out what entices them to spas and what makes them come back again

Understanding what drives and retains the business of the ever-savvy spa consumer is crucial to success in today's market. In last year's *2010 Global Spa Report*, the Coyle Hospitality Group (Coyle) conducted research on just that, breaking the spa experience down into marketing, pre-visit sales, on-site experience and post-stay follow-up contact.

In the newly updated *2011 Global Spa Report*, Coyle continues to address these topics, shifting the focus away from the actual on-site experience and focusing more on the hot topics of marketing and promotion. The new data offers insights into some of the questions that came up most commonly from the previous survey, such as what methods actually attract guests and do any of them retain them?

The goal of Coyle's *Global Spa Report* is to provide spa professionals with better insight into understanding their clients and suggestions on how they can promote greater customer loyalty and client retention.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Coyle research methodology recognises that consumers' decision-making processes differ for each industry. Consumer behaviour, when it comes to emotional purchases like spa, presents interesting challenges when conducting market research. So, the Coyle market research is not only based on simple multiple choice questions, but also on open-ended ones that provide insight into the various reasons a single consumer makes a decision.

In 2010, Coyle's online survey was completed by more than 1,275 consumers from 27 countries. In 2011, the online survey was completed by more than 1,000 consumers from 34 countries with the majority (89 per cent) from North America. The respondents were 80 per cent female and 20 per cent male. Topics addressed were spa deals; web research and booking; spa visit preferences and frequency; and post-spa impressions and preferences. Coyle's goal was to compare the trends in consumer sentiment year on year



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/PIRABARCUS

Fifty-one per cent of spa-goers want online booking

*“The most popular advert had a US\$25 discount and no minimum purchase requirement... today's deal savvy consumer still wants choice, simplicity and a valuable deal”*

## PLUGGED IN

This year's results highlight a continued shift in spa consumer behaviour and the movement towards technology. Search engines moved to the most widely used resource for spa information coming in at 56 per cent (see Graph 1), indicating that spa now need to focus on search engine optimisation more than ever. Also surprising, was the

tremendous growth seen by daily deal websites. In 2010, only 22 per cent of spa-goers used Groupon to resource spa information. Alarming, this figure more than doubled in 2011, with more than 52 per cent of spa-goers using Groupon to seek spa information. Meanwhile, a new addition to the survey this year, Living Social, has already surged past other competitors, with 28 per cent of respondents using it as a resource website.

The increase in the use of Groupon to find spa information may be eye-opening to many spa professionals. The power of these marketing tools is hard to deny; while a risk analysis on such a technique is certainly a good idea, the consumers are definitely looking to such avenues to determine which spa they will try, so a well executed deal may be worth considering if well thought out.

Further, when asked their main reasons for using websites, 71 per cent of respondents said they used these sites to find deals. Even more interesting is that this year, more respondents said they used websites to learn about spas altogether (up 2 per cent to 48 per cent) and to find new spas to visit (up 2 per cent to 43 per cent). This again indicates the importance of optimising your web pages and providing detailed information to attract consumers to your spa.

Coyle's take on the deal-savvy consumer is that you don't necessarily have to discount heavily to be 'seen' by the deal-seeking consumer. A presence on popular search websites, added value, and/or a high quality brand name or reputation seems to be enough to effectively produce the same result in terms of traffic – thus, you do not have to jeopardise your business by offering deals that negatively affect your bottom line.

Another continuing trend for spa consumers is the increased use of social networking. When asked how they would most likely communicate their spa experience, 97 per cent of respondents said they were either likely or very likely to do so by word-of-mouth, which directly correlates to the 90 per cent that said this method was very trustworthy. However, 47 per cent said they were likely or very likely



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/TUE ALCITUS

The number of spa-goers using Groupon has risen by 30 per cent since last year

to communicate experiences via online reviews, expressing the importance of monitoring these websites. Further, this method received a 4 per cent increase in trustworthiness from 2010 to 2011, emphasising the need for spa owners to address any negative comments.

The shift in spa consumer behaviour and their dependence on technological movements – such as social networking, search engine usage and deal websites – are here to stay and will continue to evolve the way a spa consumer purchases and books appointments. Ignoring these technological changes will certainly result in missed opportunities to attract and retain clientele.

### RISE OF THE NEW DEAL

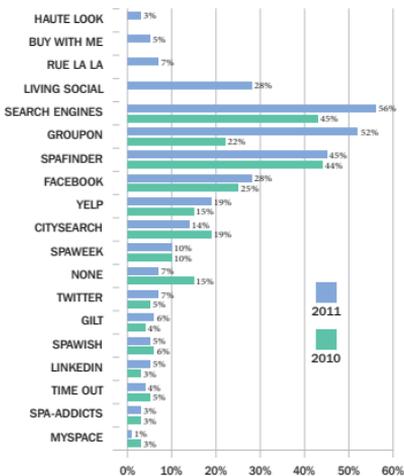
To address the evolving behaviour of spa goers, Coyle continued to ask their opinion on different advertising strategies. After presenting respondents with six different advertisements and asking them to rate each one from 'very appealing' to 'very unappealing', Coyle discovered which were perceived as the most effective.

The most popular advert in 2010 and 2011 had a discount with US\$25 (€18, €16) off the price and no minimum purchase requirement; 91 per cent ranked this advert at least 'moderately appealing' in 2010 and 89 per cent did the same in 2011. Our responses indicate that today's deal savvy consumer still wants choice, simplicity and a valuable deal. See the 2011 *Spa Business Handbook* (p38) for a more in-depth look at these different advertising strategies.

While many spa professionals are mixed about offering deals and discounts, the continuing trend brought on by new websites and technology is growing. The more prevalent technique, particularly in high-end spas, is to offer spa consumers 'added value' versus a discount, and to use these marketing techniques as methods to bring in new clientele and turn them into loyal customers. For the first time in 2011, Coyle asked consumers what marketing campaigns, if any, prompted their last several visits to spas and if they have returned or not.

Fortunately for spa owners, the overall reason consumers chose a spa for a treatment was a word-of-mouth recommendation at 70 per cent (Table 1). Perhaps disconcerting, however, is that online-deal sites were utilised by 58 per cent of respondents to book and receive a service. Also compelling is that 34

GRAPH 1 What websites do spa consumers use to seek spa information?\*



\*Respondents were asked to select all websites that they used, so percentages will not add up to 100.

per cent responded to a direct e-mail ad, 29 per cent to a direct print ad, and 30 per cent on a web search.

The question is, however, which of these consumers actually returned to a spa? Coyle asked respondents to think of a spa they visited because they were prompted by a certain

**TABLE 1** Marketing methods that prompted spa treatment bookings

Method	Massage	Facial	Nail service	Hair service	Waxing/hair removal	Makeup application	Medical treatment	N/A
Direct mail print ad with deals or coupons	16%	3%	5%	3%	2%	0%	0%	70%
Direct email ad with deals or coupons	18%	6%	4%	3%	2%	0%	1%	66%
Online deal site with limited time deal (ie SpaWeek, Groupon, Living Social, etc)	30%	9%	7%	5%	4%	1%	2%	44%
Word-of-mouth recommendation	33%	10%	10%	8%	6%	1%	2%	31%
It was in the hotel/resort/location I was near and I was in need of a spa	42%	7%	5%	2%	2%	1%	0%	41%
Reputation – branded spa	20%	9%	2%	3%	4%	0%	1%	61%
Read about it in a third party publication	7%	4%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	83%
Found it on a web search (Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc)	13%	6%	5%	3%	2%	0%	1%	70%

▶ marketing method. The respondents were then asked if they'd gone back to the same spa (see Table 2). Eighty-five per cent of those who went to a spa because of a word-of-mouth recommendation, returned after the initial visit – making this form of marketing the strongest. Also powerful were the reputation and brand of the spa, with an 80 per cent retention rate. Direct mail, email and online deal sites all yielded retention rates between 60 to 69 per cent.

The most important element, as Coyle points out, is delivering consistently superior service to each and every guest – deal user or not – to spark loyalty. Forgetting this important factor will lead to failed marketing efforts, resulting in an initial surge in business and trail off immediately afterwards with little retention and few word-of-mouth referrals, if any.

## BEFORE AND POST-SPA VISIT

In addition to offering superior service during the treatment and at the spa, how can spa professionals improve the experience both before and after the spa visit? When asked about the most important elements on a spa website, 74 per cent (up 4 per cent from 2010) of respondents said it was 'important' or 'very important' to have the cancellation



Customers who visit because of a word-of-mouth referral are most likely to return

policy listed. Additionally, the importance of 'general spa information' to consumers rose by 4 per cent to 78 per cent.

Coyle added online booking capabilities to the list for 2011 and found that 51 per cent found it 'very important' or 'important'.

The survey asked which treatments consumers have booked or would book online. Interestingly, the number of respondents who had booked a treatment online decreased slightly in most areas. This indicates that availability of online booking has not increased at the rate anticipated based on the demand for the service. When asked why they would not book a certain treatment online, strong responses were the inability to ask detailed questions about personal treatments such as waxing, hair colouring or medical treatments. If operators want to try online book-

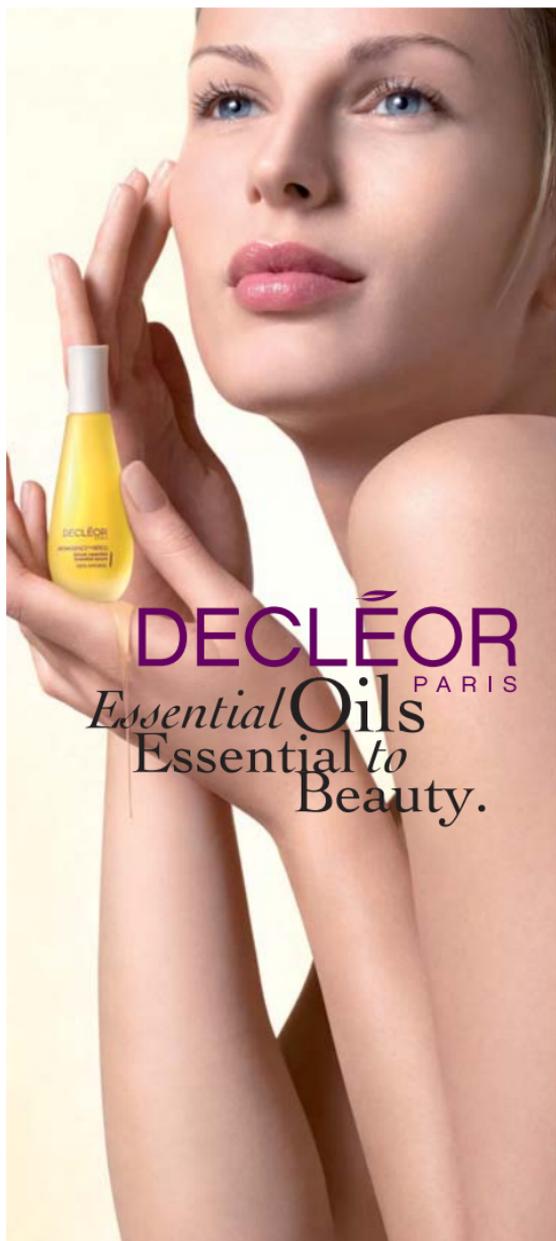
ing, a good start would be to do so with existing customers who already know what and with whom they wish to book.

As in 2010, Coyle again asked respondents if they would be comfortable receiving follow-up contact after their visit. Compared to 2010's response of 88 per cent, 2 per cent fewer respondents said they would be comfortable with this. Coyle then asked how they would like to receive this follow-up. Interestingly, 10 per cent fewer respondents would like to receive an email from a spa manager or concierge to check on satisfaction. Emails with special offers also saw a decline of 6 per cent this year. It is possible that consumers have been overloaded with email marketing over the past year. However, 73 per cent of respondents said they would continue to welcome an email from a spa manager or concierge to check on their satisfaction and 59 per cent would welcome an email with special offers. Email still appears to be the preferred method of contact over phone and can be a continued way of improving client retention. ●

To download the 2011 Global Spa Report for free, visit Coyle Hospitality Group at <http://www.coylehospitality.com/2011-global-spa-report/>

**TABLE 2** What prompted customers to visit a spa initially and did they visit again?

Method	Returned	Have not returned
Direct mail print ad with deals or coupons	65%	35%
Direct email ad with deals or coupons	69%	31%
Online deal site with limited time deal (ie SpaWeek, Groupon, Living Social, etc)	63%	37%
Word-of-mouth recommendation	85%	15%
It was in the hotel/resort/location I was near and I was in need of a spa	45%	55%
Reputation – branded spa	80%	20%
Read about it in a third party publication	53%	47%
Found it on a web search (Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc)	64%	36%



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With its strong wellness traditions and thriving spa scene, Bali, Indonesia, was a fitting setting for the fifth Global Spa Summit (GSS) – a conference and networking event for leading spa and wellness professionals from around the world.

Taking place on 15-18 May, the event was held at the Westin and Laguna Resort & Spa hotels in Nusa Dua in south Bali. And at a gala dinner on the first night, spa delegates received a warm welcome from Jero Wacik – the minister of culture and tourism said: “I open many events in Indonesia, but this one is special because you all come to Bali with a special smile. Usually it’s about solving problems, but you bring happiness.”

Similar sentiments were shared by Susie Ellis, GSS board member, in her opening speech: “The scenery may have changed, but our connection with each other feels so comfortable and stronger than ever.” With a record number of 275 delegates – including student attendees – from 35-plus countries, there was certainly an air of anticipation as Ellis introduced her co-chairs for the three days: Anne McCall Wilson, vice-president of spas at Fairmont Raffles Hotels International; and Jeff Matthews, president and chief operating officer of Mandara Spas.

## GET ENGAGED

‘Engage The Change: The Customer. The Money. The Future’ was the theme of the fifth annual Global Spa Summit. We report on the highlights of this year’s event which was held in Asia for the first time

### TANTALISING TRENDS

This year’s theme was ‘Engage the Change. The Customer. The Money. The Future’ and these individual topics formed the basis of talks on timely issues over the three days.

Day one kicked off with an inspirational presentation by retail and trends forecaster Kate Ancketill, managing director of GDR Creative. Ancketill outlined how brands have innovatively used technology – mobile apps, iPads, social network sites and gaming – to increase their market share and explained how spas could get in on the act. She paid particular attention to gaming – the playing of virtual games – which she considers “to be the new form of deep engagement, especially for millennials [the future spa-going generation]... which is going to be huge in marketing.”

Customers who shop through Facebook, or ‘f-commerce’, are according to Ancketill more loyal and likely to recommend brands and 87 of the top 100 retailers are on Facebook. Spas should be listed on the website too she urged, and operators could take particular advantage of Facebook Deals which can create tailored deals for individuals, friends or loyal clients.

Her parting advice was for spa operators “to get your services on video”. Video, she says, has a “phenomenal” return on investment – sales went up by 26 per cent for Marks & Spencer when it featured a video for women’s clothing. Video marketing could also be an especially useful tool for selling lesser known, complementary therapies (see SB11/2 p14).



**Opposite (clockwise from top left):** Bali was an apt setting; GSS host Susie Ellis; a packed-out general session; and summit co-chairs Jeff Matthews and Anne McCall Wilson. **This page (clockwise from top left):** The board and sponsors; discussions at a networking lunch; debating industry issues in a breakout session; and Dave McCaughan on China



## A CHINESE PERSPECTIVE

Because of the location, there was a strong contingent from across Asia (46 per cent) – the fastest growing spa, hotel and tourism market in the world – and Mandarin translations were provided for the first time.

China was a popular topic in conference sessions and conversations. Delegates heard about the importance of learning and embracing the country's culture, ways of doing business and building trusting relationships. They also heard about how success in business depends on understanding government regulations and legal structures.

Dave McCaughan, executive vice-president at McCann Worldgroup, Asia-Pacific and James Kaplan, senior vice-president at Fairmont Raffles, both gave insightful talks on China. Kaplan who has worked in south-east Asia for many years spoke about its tourism – China has 56 million visitors annually and is the third in the world for international tourist arrivals. Interestingly, it also has around 56 million outbound travellers and numbers are projected to rise to 100 million by 2015. Global players, he says, need to have a presence in China so that when people travel abroad they will choose those brands they recognise. Chinese people consider Holiday Inn to be a Chinese brand, for

example, as the chain has been established there for a number of years. He also predicted that there will be at least another 25 years' growth in China as its infrastructure continues to increase and improve.

A panel of Chinese spa delegates also gave an insider's view on running spa businesses in China and their top tip was to "focus on quality and you will be successful". The ses-

82 per cent of delegates expect their gross revenue in 2011 will be 'significantly greater' or 'somewhat greater' than in 2010. 74 per cent also expect their profits to outweigh those in 2010

sion was chaired and translated by Tony Cheung, managing director of PA Wellness Consultancy.

## BUSINESS AND NUMBERS

Another highlight was a focus on franchising as a new business model, put together and chaired by GSS board member Pete Ellis, on day two. Four panellists from three countries gave insights including CG Funk from

Massage Envy, which has 679 day spas in the US. Delegates heard that the company operates on a membership model and topped 1 million members this April. Perhaps even more significantly, 22 per cent of Massage Envy customers had never had a massage before. We explore what this panel had to say further on p22.

As ever, new industry research grabbed the attention of delegates, including performance figures for the Asia hotel spa sector presented by Darlena Zhai, consultant at Horwath Asia-Pacific. Zhai disclosed that in 2010, urban hotel spas in Bangkok and Shanghai had the highest annual revenue per treatment room (RevPATH), while the highest annual Rev-PATH for resorts spas was recorded in Phuket and Koh Samui. In China, the highest yearly revenue per treatment room of US\$46,000 (€32,000, £28,250) came from hotel spas based in Sanya, with the lowest being Beijing at US\$33,000 (€22,950, £20,250). Yet these figures still fell below the leaders in the rest of the Asia-Pacific region.

New customer trends were the focus of the talk by Yulia Fransisca, from Euromonitor Singapore, who predicted that the youth, or anti-ageing, and wellbeing market is one to watch. This sector grew from US\$1.3bn (€904m, £798m) in 2006 in the US, to US\$2.8bn (€1.9bn, £1.7bn) in 2010. ▶



- The last day saw the unveiling of the GSS commissioned report – *Wellness Tourism and Medical Tourism: Where Do Spas Fit?* – Global medical tourism is currently a US\$50bn (€34.8bn, £30.7bn) annual market, while the global wellness market generates US\$106bn (€73.7bn, £65bn) annually. The term health tourism, however, was found to be a misnomer.

GSS delegates at the Indonesian Gala Night (top left); embracing traditional musical instruments (top right); and the live audience poll (right)

Ellis says: “The bottom line is that wellness tourism is a phenomenon sweeping the globe and it is a huge boost to the spa industry as it directly and logically promotes spas. Our industry should be thrilled and be ‘beating the drums’ to make sure governments are developing and promoting wellness and medical tourism... and that they recognise that wellness can be extremely lucrative.”

#### LIVE POLL

Overall, the atmosphere at the summit was positive and energetic. A live poll – delivered by GSS board member Richard Dusseau – revealed that: 82 per cent of the delegates expect their gross revenue in 2011 will be

‘significantly greater’ or ‘somewhat greater’ than in 2010. In addition, 74 per cent said their profits in 2011 would outweigh those in 2010.

There were mixed responses on what impact online deal websites have had. Only 14 per cent of delegates said engaging with social media has resulted in ‘major improvements’ in customers and sales, although 42 per cent said it had driven a ‘modest improvement’. Yet 26 per cent of delegates said they didn’t use social media campaigns at all. When it came to group buying or online deal sites, 27 per cent of delegates said they have driven a ‘modest improvement’ in business, yet a large number (58 per cent) avoided them altogether.

Delegates also voted on which industry segments they thought would experience greatest growth. Forty-four per cent said it



would be preventative medicine, 24 per cent said be beauty and cosmetics and 16 per cent voted for alternative therapies.

#### WHAT’S NEXT?

The 2011 GSS closed with two announcements. Firstly, that the 2012 summit will be held on 4-6 June in Aspen, Colorado in collaboration with The Aspen Institute – a global think tank that has attracted leaders such as Nelson Mandela and entrepreneurs such as Richard Branson.

The second announcement was that Philippe Bourguignon has been appointed to the GSS board of directors (see our interview on p44). Bourguignon is the vice-chairman of Revolution Places and CEO of Miraval. He’s also served as co-CEO of the World Economic Forum for two consecutive years. Bourguignon, along with Richard Dusseau – founder of Spa Strategy and GSS board member – will be the co-chairs for next year’s GSS.

Ellis concludes: “Highlights for me included seeing 275 like-minded people establishing and renewing relationships. Personal relationships form a strong bond that allow us to solve shared problems more easily and that end up leading to improvements in our industry. The value of this collaboration is greater than I might have imagined when the GSS began five years ago.

“We are thrilled to be planning our next summit alongside the prestigious Aspen Institute... it will be an outstanding event that will take us to yet another level of accomplishments and influence.”

#### GSS LAUNCHES SPAEVIDENCE.COM

The unveiling of the evidence-based medicine portal spaevidence.com at this year’s GSS is an example of how the event is achieving its goal to “positively impact and shape the future of the global spa and wellness industries”.

While the original brief was to create a database of published research papers which highlight the proven benefits of spa therapies and services, further investigation found that similar databases existed. Spaevidence.com, therefore, draws on four highly-respected, pre-existing databases to collate clinical evidence on the efficacy of 22 key spa therapies. There is also an option to submit papers for review and to access clinical trials devoted to spa/wellness therapies underway worldwide.

Susie Ellis, the GSS board member who launched it, says: “This will have a real long-term effect as the spa industry increasingly becomes recognised for its part in prevention and the lowering of healthcare costs.”

The idea of spaevidence.com was first proposed at the 2010 GSS in Istanbul by Dr Kenneth Pelletier (see SB10/3 p20), an expert in integrative medicine, and backed by spa consultant Dr Geraldine Mitton and Dr Marc Cohen, professor at RMIT University, Australia, and GSS board member. It was developed over the following year with the support of Pelletier; Cohen; Dr Daniel Friedland, founder and CEO of SuperSmartHealth; and Nader Vasseghi, CEO of SelfOptima – the company which tailored the technology for the platform.

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Competition winners from Hong Kong Polytechnic University, plus faculty advisor Dr Ada Lo and J Lee Rofkind of BUZ Design (third and second left)

The contestants in this year's GSS Student Challenge Competition came from four outstanding Asian universities: The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Cornell Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management, Singapore; Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia; and Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

The challenge was to develop a profitable spa concept and design in partnership with a spa architect. The students managed in-depth work and analysis of the concept, designed a spa – giving consideration to aesthetics and functionality – and its theme even as they finished finals. In addition, this was the first year that they were challenged to produce a strong financial analysis of their proposals.

The conference room was incredibly quiet as students and delegates awaited the announcement of the winning team. Privately the judges, which included leading spa operators, had deliberated at length as they praised the content of each project. Clearly these were difficult choices – the competition was close.

## STUDENT CHALLENGE COMPETITION

The entries for this year's Student Challenge Competition at the Global Spa Summit were of high-standard and the results were incredibly close. Mary Tabacchi, professor at Cornell University and GSS board member reports

The first prize of US\$1,000 went to The Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Hotel and Tourism Management.

The winning students created Yi Spa in collaboration with J Lee Rofkind, founder of BUZ Design Consultants in Hong Kong, and under the guidance of professor Ada Lo. Members of the student team were Carol Zhang, Joyce Ng, Kitsun Lau and Tommy Gu. The Yi Spa concept they created was, in their own words, "an intriguing urban day spa offering de-stressing treatments in a relaxing and unpretentious environment to those who live a busy life".

The spa had movable cubicles, where the walls could be retracted and folded to

merge the treatment rooms into a larger space or spa suites for more than one guest. According to the students: "This concept is responding to the increase in the demand for spa parties and social gatherings with spa suites, lounge areas, private showers and changing cubicles."

The unique selling point of the Yi Spa proposal was the idea of having a mobile spa, which could be parked near office complexes or restaurants or even the beach – a business that literally goes to its customers.

Second in line in the competition, receiving US\$500, was The Chinese University of Hong Kong, closely followed by a tie between Gadjah Mada University and Cornell Nanyang Institute which were both awarded US\$250.

Susie Ellis, GSS board member, adds: "This year's competition was especially impressive and the ideas for a profitable spa concept of the future were very eye-opening... The students turned out to be extremely good at fielding the judges' often challenging questions. This shows that the preparation of our future spa industry leaders is getting stronger all the time."

## SOUND BYTES

Social media expert Marc A Smith outlines the key topics he covered in three snapshot sessions at this year's Global Spa Summit

**T**echnology is changing the spa world in many ways and at this year's GSS I touched on three major trends: **networks, social media** and **sensors**.

**Networks** are composed of collections of connections. Social networks are older than civilisation but new tools like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, email and texting now make these webs of connections easy to document and collect. New tools like NodeXL make these networks easier than ever to analyse and visualise.

Like a map of an unfamiliar city, **social media maps** can help you find the 'centre' and the 'bridges' – the core people and connectors – in the conversation crowds that gather around the topics relevant to you and your customers. Everyday, people are talking about spas and wellness, diet and exercise, and travel and destinations. Listening to these conversations is a good way of staying connected to the changing responses and preferences of customers who are interested in these products and services.

Social media network maps can help filter the torrent of traffic by identifying the people at the centre of each conversation. Identifying these special, strategically connected, people is a first step to building relationships that can help get your message heard.

Connecting with new clients is increasingly accomplished through social media. Getting ranked highly in a web search query for terms like 'spa' has become a challenge



Mobile phones are becoming medical monitoring devices



Being retweeted is key to ranking high in social media searches, says Smith

“ Clients who have years of vital sign data will want to use this to improve their [spa] experience and demonstrate the progress of their therapies ”

but getting good rankings in social media searches is much easier. As people search for spa topics and services they often ask friends and search social media services for mentions by previous customers. Getting your customers to tweet and post about your business is an important strategy for building a social media profile.

A simple strategy is to use social network maps of topics relevant to your business to identify the people in the most strategic locations in your communities. These communities might be focused on people who tweet about wellness or health and spas. 'Following' these people often generates a return follow – the first step to gaining a collection of influential followers who can help amplify your messages. Listening to these key people and selectively repeating (or 'retweeting') their best comments is a good way to ensure that your next tweet gets heard and rebroadcasted to a wider audience than you can reach yourself. Social network analysis encourages cultivating relationships of quality instead of quantity.

A related trend is the rise of electronic **sensors** as part of the phones most of us now carry. Mobile devices are on a path to

become medical monitoring devices, changing the level of detailed data that is practical to collect about our daily lives, habits and therapeutic needs. The spa industry will soon meet clients who have years of detailed activity and vital sign data and want to use the information to improve their experience and demonstrate the progress and impact of their therapies. Devices like the FitBit or the BodyBug from BodyMedia are worn throughout the day to record motion and activity. The Zeo device monitors activity while you sleep, gauging the quality of your rest each night. Other services invite users to document everything they eat as part of a weight loss programme.

Spas may soon have customers who will want to share their health data records with them, and expect that their therapist will be able to use this information to know about their prior history and current issues. This is a great opportunity to make the case for the value of massage and other spa experiences. Most people enjoy and benefit from a massage, but few document those benefits.

For more details see [www.smfoundation.org](http://www.smfoundation.org) and [www.connectedaction.net](http://www.connectedaction.net).

## Q&amp;A

# PHILIPPE BOURGUIGNON



Philippe Bourguignon has been appointed as the new board member of the Global Spa Summit. The French businessman talks to *Spa Business* about joining the GSS team and bringing a fresh perspective

## BACKGROUND

At the 2010 Global Spa Summit (GSS) in Istanbul, leaders in the worldwide spa industry heard Philippe Bourguignon speak about his vision for 2025. Making his first public presentation in more than 10 years, he envisioned – among other things – a futuristic drinkable perfume by Chanel to make sweat smell sweet, a snack by Nestlé in collaboration with Shiseido to change hair colour, the feminisation of society and the ‘age of the singles’. And while Bourguignon confesses to being no spa expert, some interesting insights can be gained from his background in the travel and tourism industry.

Bourguignon is vice-chairman of Steve Case’s company Revolution Places and CEO of Revolution Places Development and Miraval destination spa in the US. In June, he was also appointed CEO of Case’s Executive Resorts. Prior to Revolution, he served as co-CEO of the World Economic Forum for two consecutive years and also as chairman and CEO of Euro Disney (now Disneyland Paris) from 1988 to 1997 and as chairman and CEO of Club Méditerranée

(ClubMed) from 1997 to 2003. In addition to now serving on the board of directors for the GSS, he’s been named co-chair for the next summit, scheduled to take place on 4-6 June 2012 in Aspen, Colorado.

**How do you feel about being invited to join the GSS board?** I genuinely feel very honoured. I’ve known the spa industry for a very long time, but I’m a new player in the industry, so it’s a privilege to be asked.

**What do you hope to bring to the board?** Whether you’re in the spa, hotel, travel, advertising or media industry – everybody is preoccupied with how the industry’s performing and how it will perform. As I’m new to the spa industry, I hope to bring a fresh view.

Beyond what I do professionally, one of my passions is geopolitics and getting involved in think tanks. Understanding the way the world behaves – beyond what you read in the press – and exchanging ideas on global issues is really valuable and I hope to introduce this aspect too. For example, the UK prime minister, David Cameron, has said

that we should not just measure a country on its GDP, but look at the Happiness Index too. Happiness might sound like a light subject, but it’s not and it’s a worldwide issue that spas could get involved in.

**What does the collaboration with the Aspen Institute mean to the GSS?** I was on the board of the Aspen Institute in France for 10 years and I’ve been to a number of its events. I got a lot out of it personally, including new ideas and ways of thinking. For the GSS, it will symbolise thinking on a global scale. The fact that the GSS is returning to the US is also significant, all eyes will be on the US once more and I strongly believe that 2012 will be the year of its comeback.

**How did you first get into the spa business?** When I was CEO of ClubMed I introduced spa and wellness activities into the offering – my vision was to evolve ClubMed globally as a ‘live healthier’ company. These plans were put on hold after 9/11, but by the time I left, one-third of ClubMed properties had spas and up to 10 per cent offered wellness activities.



Miraval offers more than 80 therapies, but Bourguignon feels spas are key to wellness and that an industry goal should be to dispel the notion that spas are frivolous





Bourguignon says he's working on a new spa for 2012 to add to Miraval's existing wellness facilities (above)

I hope to bring a fresh view and a global perspective. Happiness, for example, might sound like a light subject, but it's not and it's a worldwide issue that spas could get involved in

**How would you describe yourself?** I have my head in the clouds and my feet on the ground. I'm a dreamer and always have been ever since I was a young child. But at the same time I'm very pragmatic.

**How would your critics describe you?** They would probably say that I move too fast and that I have strong opinions.

**What has been the biggest challenge of your career so far?** I don't see challenges as a negative, I see them as the reverse because they wake you up and enforce change. Mine would be undertaking the turnaround and restructuring of Euro Disney. When I took over, it was thought to be a sinking ship – it had lost a lot of money and the number of visitors in the first year fell short of projections. Plus the European press were very negative.

**So, how did you overcome it?** It took a lot of hard work and determination. More importantly, however, I knew we had a fantastic product which the public loved and that we had an amazing team.

**Why did you choose the 2010 GSS to present in public once more?** Susie [Ellis, GSS board member] asked me to participate and I accepted with pleasure. Then she asked me to make a presentation and I said no because I don't do that. But she insisted and I felt comfortable with her. Being new in the industry, among people I didn't know, helped. So I decided it was the right time – many years had passed – and jumped! And I'm happy I did!

**What do you love most about the spa industry?** The fact that it's so rewarding and that you do a lot of good for people.

**What's been your biggest achievement?** Having Miraval reinforce its leadership position: in 2011 we have been ranked as a top destination spa by *Spa Magazine* and *Condé Nast Traveler*. Also, we've just achieved the best quarter we've had in the last five years.

**What do you want to achieve over the next 12 months?** We're looking forward to unveiling a brand new, state of the art spa facility in 2012. Other than that, it's to continue con-

solidating and growing our existing business. Not very imaginative, but that's my goal.

**What drives you?** Just enjoying life and having a job that I love. I enjoyed working for a public company, but, frankly, I'm much happier not having to report to analysts who do not understand the business.

**What trends do you see emerging in the spa industry?** The most significant is the evolution from people just having a massage, to people taking care of themselves and looking for wellness. As an industry, one of our goals should be to dispel the notion that visiting a spa is frivolous because it's not. If wellness was more widespread, people would be healthier and the pressure would be taken off of our national healthcare systems.

**Do you go for spa treatments yourself?** Absolutely! But I couldn't say which I enjoy most.

**What advice would you give to someone coming into this industry now?** Avoid following the norms, think freely, make your own mistakes and learn from them. ●

# KEEPING TRADITION ALIVE

YTL Hotels has built a global reputation as a provider of authentic Asian spa experiences. With a new property in Japan and three more planned for Malaysia, the company is taking its spa strategy to the next level

It's been less than a decade since Malaysia-based YTL Hotels opened its first Spa Village on Pangkor Laut, its private island resort off the country's west coast. But since then, its spa division has gone from strength to strength, with five Spa Villages in Malaysia and one Spa Village Resort in Bali, plus a number of other spas.

Widely associated with delivering luxurious, authentic spa experiences using local ingredients and traditions, the core brand is so well established that when Shangri-La

used the phrase 'Spa Village' to describe one of its new CHI spa sites a couple of years ago, YTL Hotels' VP spa division, Chik Lai Ping, only had to let Shangri-La, know for the problem to quietly go away.

The company's focus on spa shows no signs of slowing, with two new boutique launches in Japan and France and three resort and spa openings in the pipeline. So what's driving this growth? And what is the philosophy at the heart of the Spa Village brand?

## SPA ATTRACTION

Founded in 1955, by Malaysian businessman Yeoh Tiong Lay, YTL Corporation started life as a small construction firm, but quickly grew and diversified before being listed on the Bursa Malaysia in 1985. Today, the company comprises six listed entities worldwide and has a combined market capitalisation of MYR35.9bn (US\$11.9bn, €8.4bn, £7.4bn).

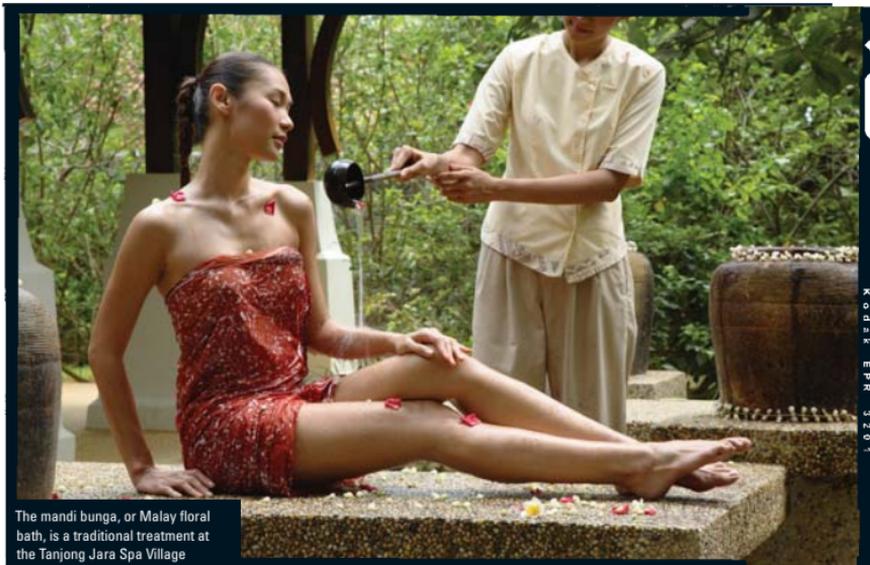
YTL Hotels was set up in 1991, and the spa division soon followed. With the luxury market zeitgeist pointing firmly in this direction and demand on the rise, adding spas was an obvious next step, explains Chik, who has 20 years' experience in the hospitality industry. Pangkor Laut Resort, built by YTL on a privately owned island in 1985 and relaunched under its current name in 1994, was earmarked as the perfect location for the first spa.

In 1997, renowned US spa consultant Sylvia Sepielli was brought on board to help with concept development and planning for the new spa (see S805/2 p108). Two years later, YTL Hotels bought the JW Marriott Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, where Chik had already set up a successful spa. Following the acquisition, she was invited to work alongside Sepielli.

Together, they developed a village-style spa concept for the Pangkor Laut Resort featuring eight treatment pavilions, three healing huts, two bath houses, three spa huts, three nap gazebos and a spa boutique, as well as 22 residential spa villas. Significantly, the spa would focus not only on pampering, but would harness the ingredients and healing practices of the region's rich local cultures: Malay, Chinese and Indian, as well as drawing on other Asian traditions, including those from Bali, Thailand and Japan. "We really wanted to promote a continuation of traditional healing methods," explains Chik.



Pangkor Laut's Malay and Chinese Bath House Ritual incorporates inhalation therapy in its six steps



The mandi bunga, or Malay floral bath, is a traditional treatment at the Tanjung Jara Spa Village

## VILLAGE ROLLOUT

Since 2002, YTL Hotels has opened four more Spa Villages across Malaysia, two in resort locations – Spa Village Tanjung Jara (2005) on the country's east coast and Spa Village Cameron Highlands (2006) in the tea-growing region – and two in city hotels: Spa Village Kuala Lumpur at the Ritz-Carlton Kuala Lumpur (2005) and Spa Village Malacca at the Majestic Malacca (2008). All four sites have a healthy capture rate of 20 to 30 per cent; the resort spas, with their captive audience, tend to get slightly more traffic from hotel guests, while the city locations also accept day-spa business.

The sites vary in size and scale – the urban spas are more compact and tend to offer more shorter treatments rather than packages – but all have at least six treatment rooms and share the philosophy of honouring local healing traditions. In Tanjung Jara, for example, this is encapsulated by the mandi bunga, or Malay floral bath; in Cameron Highlands, by the signature tea baths; and in Malacca, by a Peranakan hair-washing ceremony. Products made with local ingredients are also used alongside the company's preferred skincare suppliers, Kerstin Florian and Sundari.

In 2007, YTL Hotels launched its first Spa Village Resort in Tembok, Bali – a decision that had as much to do with location as with strategy. In a beautiful, remote spot on Bali's northern coast, the property – which YTL Hotels acquired in 2006 – had only 31 rooms and the staff, while dedicated to their work,

Spa Village Gaya Island [Borneo] will push boundaries when it comes to customer education. If it proves successful when it opens in 2012, a second Borneo resort is set to follow

“were not very commercialised,” says Chik. “There were also already a few resorts in the area, so we decided to do something more niche, which wouldn't compete.”

Playing to the inherited staff's strengths of commitment to service and love of the local culture, Chik and her team created an all-inclusive destination spa experience, including a daily massage and three meals a day, and centred on Bali's rich healing traditions. While occupancy fluctuates, in high season it is upwards of 70 per cent.

## GREAT HERITAGE

In addition to its six Spa Villages, the company operates a number of other spas including the Starhill Spa at the Marriott Kuala Lumpur and the Muse Care & Eco-Spa – an in-room offering plus one dedicated treatment room at a newly acquired Muse hotel in St Tropez. There are also two resort spas within its Niseko Village development in Hokkaido, Japan: Green Leaf Spa at the Green Leaf and Wakka Spa at the Hilton (see p48).

Spa Village, however, remains at the heart of the company's spa strategy, with two more set to open next year: one at the Majestic Kuala Lumpur and one within a new-build resort on Pulau Gaya island in Borneo. With six treatment rooms plus other facilities, Spa

Village Gaya Island at Gaya Island Resort will push boundaries when it comes to customer education, says Chik – the signature experience will be the Sabah Scent Exploration, where the guest is helped to create their own blend of essential oils, tailored to their individual needs. If Gaya Island proves successful when it opens in April 2012, a second Borneo resort on Pulau Tiga island – a more exclusive experience with spa treatments created around volcanic mud – is set to follow.

With all this on the cards, Chik admits there are challenges ahead – not least in finding good spa managers, although, “this is the problem of the whole industry, not just me!” she laughs. Luckily, YTL has its own hospitality school in Kuala Lumpur – the International College of Hotel Management YTL (ICHM-YTL) – which is already proving a rich source of upcoming talent.

Looking forward, there's no doubt that spa will remain at the centre of the YTL Hotels story. “Spas are part of our DNA,” says Anthony Champalimaud, the company's VP development Europe and America. “At every single one of our projects, the question comes up: how do we create a great spa experience here? How do we tie it back to the YTL story and this great heritage of health and wellness? It's foremost in our minds.” ▶



NEW OPENING

The Japanese ski resort was bought in 2010 (above); the new Green Leaf spa by Champalimaud Design (below)

## The Aspen of the East

In March 2010, YTL Hotels bought Niseko Village in Hokkaido, Japan, from US company Citigroup with the stated view of turning the 462-hectare (1,142-acre) ski resort into the "Aspen of the East". Included in the reported ¥976bn (US\$76m, €54m £47m) sale was the 506-room Hilton Hotel, the 200-room Green Leaf Hotel, two 18-hole golf courses, 155 hectares of ski-mountain and natural hot springs.

The company's masterplan for the resort is to create a world-class, year-round village resort, with private residences as well as high-end leisure facilities. According to Anthony Champalimaud, YTL Hotels' VP development Europe and America, the company chose to start the redevelopment with Green Leaf to "plant a flag" that would demonstrate quickly (the property was only closed for eight weeks) the overall vision.

As well as overhauling guestrooms and public spaces, the Green Leaf renovation included the addition of a 100sq m (1,076 sq ft) spa in a space, adjacent to the existing onsen (hot spring baths), which was previously the gift shop. While the long, thin structure was not changed, a local artist created a stunning 'art wall' to divide the spa from the corridor leading to the onsen. And although sound-proofing was impossible, the brick floor was changed to wood to encourage guests to remove their shoes and move more quietly.

The layout of the spa has also been carefully planned so the experience becomes more serene as the guest moves through



it. Near the entrance, there are five neck, shoulder and back massage stations, which is considered a social space for après-ski tension release; further in are two manicure and two pedicure/foot massage stations, and at the end nearest the onsen, are three massage rooms. Although not a Spa Village, the YTL Hotels philosophy of reflecting local traditions has also been considered – the signature experience is the Hot Buttered Rum Treatment, based on a popular, local après-ski drink of the same name.

Champalimaud – also a director of Champalimaud Design, the New York-based firm that redesigned the Green Leaf – is delighted with the resort and spa's success in its opening season. Despite the potential for negative PR following the earthquake and tsunami in March, and the subsequent disaster in Fukushima, YTL Hotels says occupancy at the

hotel was up on the previous season while the spa's capture rate was 5 per cent – not unreasonable given the resort's younger, out-doorsy demographic.

Although Niseko Village did close for a couple of weeks in solidarity (so power supplies could be diverted to where they were most needed), Champalimaud says the actual impact on the resort – which is almost 400 miles from Fukushima – was nonexistent and summer business at the Hilton is already on a par with last year. This resilience could be partly due to the fact that 90 per cent of Niseko Village's visitors are currently Japanese, but while the impact of the disaster on plans to attract a more international audience is not yet clear, Chik points out that forecasts suggests tourism across Japan should recover within three years. ●

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Susan Harmsworth

## ESPA LIFE

ESPA revealed its new, fully integrated wellness spa concept in London in July and has two more sites underway. Founder and CEO, Susan Harmsworth tells us about her vision for the future of spas

Major new hotel in London. Check. Owners who recognise the importance of wellness and are willing to invest heavily in it. Check. A full-time dream team to deliver the offering. Check.

It's no wonder Susan Harmsworth is beaming about ESPA Life, her first wellness concept which was unveiled at the Corinthia Hotel in London, UK, in July. Its opening marks the arrival of a new spa and wellness concept which combines a luxury spa and beauty offering with complementary therapies and targeted fitness and rehabilitation services. It promises to be "a leading influence in the next generation of spa."

ESPA has built a strong reputation as an innovative spa management and skincare company and if you were going to bet on who in the industry could create an holistic wellness concept, its founder and CEO, Harmsworth, would be a good choice.

The five-star Corinthia Hotels group thought so too and made a bold move by investing £20m (US\$32.7m, €23m) in the debut ESPA Life to help put its lavish £305 (US\$500m, €350m) flagship property – just a stone's throw from Trafalgar Square – on the map (see p54). It needed something to impress its high-end clientele: the type of people who are used to staying in the best

hotels around the globe, or who wouldn't blink at investing in one of its 12 super-chic residential apartments to be sold at top market London prices. And the 3,300sq m (35,000sq ft) four-storey, ultra-modern ESPA Life stands out for many reasons.

Harmsworth has hand-picked a number of specialists in spa, beauty, fitness, holistic health and complementary medicine to create the team staffing the spa. In addition, naturopaths, nutritionists, homeopaths, medical herbalists, osteopaths, acupuncturists and physiotherapists are all on the payroll full-time.

Revolutionary lifestyle programmes, covering everything from biological ageing, detox, sleep, weight-loss, pregnancy and general vitality, have been carefully put together to deliver measurable results. On top of this is a full spa menu, a selection of very targeted and specially-created signature treatments and a roster of beauty and grooming services.

And while most wellness facilities are a one-off, in ESPA Life Harmsworth has meticulously documented design and operating

protocols and created a template to roll it out. Work has already started on two more ESPA Life projects – one in Scotland, UK and one in Marrakech, Morocco – with a further three more definite sites in the pipeline.

### IMPORTANCE OF EFFICACY

It took Harmsworth three years to create and perfect the ESPA Life concept, although the seed of the idea has grown over many years. "I started my career in more of a medical environment – in the late 70s and early 80s I worked in thalassotherapy centres and at Grayshott Hall [a UK destination spa] which had doctors, osteopaths and acupuncturists," she says. "However, in the late 80s the spa market swung away from health to focus on luxury, relaxation and indulgence.

"Health, prevention and ageing well are passions of mine. I've watched a lot of people I love go through extended periods of illness, having been healthy until their 80s: my mum died of Alzheimers and my dad had a stroke after he nursed her."

It's no surprise then, that the wellness menu at ESPA Life is well-thought out. The complementary therapies include naturopathy, nutrition and diet, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine, osteopathy and cranial osteopathy and physiotherapy. "We made a huge list, researched every modality

ESPA Life's targeted signature therapies (left); and its black and white, Chanel-inspired, décor (right)





and looked at licensing, insurance and durability within a five-star hotel environment," says Harsworth. "The main thing, however, was choosing therapies that are proven to work, are not gimmicky and not invasive."

"Efficacy is hugely important and we'll be recording results through functional medicine testing," she says. Where necessary, these tests examine blood, saliva, urine and stool samples to measure thyroid activity, chronic fatigue, digestive health and nutritional needs and levels of stress, sleep and hormones. "We've taken complementary medicine and backed the modalities with science," she adds.

Harsworth has also put together a series of lifestyle programmes ranging from nine days to three months, while independent lifestyle and health assessments with a 'gatekeeper' or targeted fitness and rehabilitation service are also an option.

The team of in-house specialists have played a key role in shaping the offering. These include Max Tomlinson, an Australian-trained naturopath, nutritionist, homeopath and medical herbalist and Stephen Price, a personal trainer to elite athletes.

"We've got the best of the best. They had to be visionaries and aligned to our way of thinking," says Harsworth. "Max and Steve are on our payroll and working directly with clients. And they will also work with our other pre-opening teams to train our trainers as well as keeping control of standards, and checking any clinical matters. This way we ensure we maintain a high consistency of standards and delivery across all our sites."



Corinthia London is a lavish hotel in the heart of the city (left); ESPA Life is key in putting it on the map (above)

#### A GROOMING COMEBACK

Over the past 18 years, ESPA has been creating, running and supplying products to high-end spas worldwide (see SB05/1 p106). The spas have become synonymous with luxury therapies and facilities and in early 2011 the products were rebranded and reformulated to ensure they're natural and even more results-driven (see SB11/2 p82).

The new ESPA Life at Corinthia offers all of this, but also includes beauty and grooming services – a trend which a number of savvy operators are picking up on (see SB11/1 p20). The extras include hairdressing with celebrity hairdresser Daniel Galvin, nail services, hair reduction and removal, brow shaping and eyelash tinting and extensions.

"Beauty and grooming was prevalent when I was starting out," says Harsworth, adding that although it dropped back for a while, it's now enjoying a resurgence. "Traditional spa services won't decline – people will still want massages when they're travelling or on holiday – but grooming is coming back – especially for city spas because they want to retain customers and attract a local clientele. It's also important for hotel customers – when people are away on business they've got to look right at all times, so need access to these services."

"We've come up with a brilliant concept where a customer can phone up, tell us how much time they've got, what they want to have done and what their priorities are. We'll then put two therapists on them to do everything we can – a leg wax, manicure, a facial, a blow dry – in the time given."

To ensure customers aren't confused by the in-depth ESPA Life offering, the menu has been split into sections – complementary medicine/wellness and lifestyle programmes, grooming and beauty services, traditional spa treatments and fitness. And the facilities in the spa are grouped this way too.

"We've created a spa that anyone can use at any time, for whatever purpose," says Harsworth. "We've designed fun, social spaces such as the spa lounge and manicure/martini bar for people who don't even need ▶

## WELLNESS SPA

### ESPA

products were rebranded and reformulated to coincide with the launch



- ▶ to get changed or there are pool, gym and thermal facilities for members, day spa visitors and hotel guests. But we've done this without intruding on the true spa experience and treatment areas.

"The challenge is to integrate all of the experiences and make sure we're cross referring. A woman with fertility issues, for example, might need a massage as well as acupuncture to reduce stress, or maybe some personal training or sleep coaching too. It's all about defining what's right for each individual and then using the whole team to give them the best programme."

### WELLNESS ISN'T FOR EVERYONE

It's no coincidence the first ESPA Life has been built in the UK – the home of ESPA – as Harmsworth wanted the flagship on home ground and the 294-bedroom Corinthia (see p54) was a fitting partner. She explains: "Mr Pisani [the owner of Corinthia] was a visionary and he 'got' what we were doing. He recognised ESPA was very successful in the UK and wanted a 'wow concept' – something that was really going to put the hotel on the map.

"They've spent a fortune on the hotel and spa but he sees that it will bring in a different audience. He's aiming for leisure clientele, but he also wants individual businesspeople who come to London on a regular basis and

#### ESPA Life at Corinthia by numbers

- There are approximately 60 staff at ESPA Life, including 25 full-time therapists
- An initial 50-minute lifestyle and health assessment with a gatekeeper is £145 (US\$236, €163)
- Lifestyle programmes range from nine days to three months and cost between £1,350 (US\$2,200, €1,500) and £5,625 (US\$9,150, €6,350)
- A 50- or 80-minute ESPA personalised massage is £95 (US\$155, €107) or £145 (US\$236, €163)
- A Brazilian wax costs £55 (US\$90, €62)
- There are two membership tiers – Quartz and Black – and overall numbers will be capped at 300

### Design & facilities

ESPA Life ranges over four floors of the Corinthia Hotel, London. Styled by GA Design, it has a black and cream/white theme – inspired by the Chanel palette – with light hues used predominately at the top and darker shades taking over gradually on the lower levels.

Curved walls with wave patterns and round treatment rooms give a feeling of energy and flow, while a contemporary finish comes from marble, lacquer panels, strained dark oak, textured leather, polished chrome and pewter artwork.

The first floor features the reception, a Daniel Galvin hair salon and a spa lounge serving healthy cuisine. Down one level there's a nail/finishing studio, the ladies changing room, a relaxation area for women, 15 treatment pods (all multi-purpose and with showers) and a private spa suite.

The third floor comprises the men's changing room and relaxation area, the male day spa/member locker room, and a gym. At the bottom is the female day spa/member locker room and the hydrothermal area. The heat experiences comprise a glass-clad amphitheatre sauna where you step down into the heat, a black mosaic steamroom, an ice fountain,



The bottom floor is dedicated to hydrothermal facilities including a glass-clad amphitheatre sauna

experience showers and heated relaxation beds. A 9m silver stainless steel swimming pool and a vitality pool with various air and water massage jets complete the offer.

Suppliers include ESPA, Creative Nail Design (Shellac), Palomar (IPL), Lycon Wax, Klafs, Barr + Wray, Fabio Alemanno Design (Cleopatra loungers), Life Fitness, Power Plate, Concept 2 (rowers), Trixter (group cycling) and TRX (suspension training).

stay for a couple of nights a week – although he doesn't want the huge conferences."

Wellness, says Harmsworth, isn't necessarily something that all operators will want to take on. "Everybody thinks it's going to be easy [to introduce wellness into spas] but I can tell you it's not! We've had to get all the standard operating procedures together for the new therapies – documenting everything from how to take blood to the whole diagnostic process – and creating a format and standard that customers trust."

Then there's the cost of the physical build and equipment – Harmsworth "doesn't believe in half measures" – and the payroll. While most complementary practitioners are self-employed, those at ESPA Life are full-time – Harmsworth feels that this is the only way to create an integrated team who can offer the best programmes for the client.

She adds: "I don't think the ESPA Life concept will be suited to many operators because it needs a good volume of guests to justify the cost. And if operators already have a [spa] formula that works for them, why would they change it?"

### HAPPY, HEALTHY PEOPLE

The next ESPA Life will open at Gleneagles in Scotland, UK, by 2012. It already has a 1,680sq m (18,084sq ft) ESPA spa, a pool, fitness area, nail studio, hair salon and a world famous golf course.

An ESPA Life with a residential element will also open in Marrakech, Morocco in early 2013 and Harmsworth confirms there are three more sites in the pipeline.

"We have to choose locations that have a local captive market, because we've got to make sure it's financially viable," she says. "Gleneagles attracts people from Edinburgh and Glasgow and has a strong membership base. Our Marrakech development is right in the centre. The others are city centre developments. But I'm not going to rush it. We have to prove it works first."

She concludes: "We're bombarded with information and get wrapped up with the pace of life and technology. People have lost touch with understanding their bodies and minds. My passion is to help people to be happy and healthy and to give them the space and tools to enable them to do this." ●



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## SIMON NAUDI

Corinthia Hotel London is the latest offering in the UK capital's five-star market. The group's director explains how the flagship site will shape the Maltese company's global expansion

**F**or a brief spell in an earlier career, Simon Naudi's job took him to war zones, and allowed him to meet famous figures such as George Bush Senior, President Gorbachev and the Pope. "I was working as a journalist for the *Times of Malta* and because it was a small island you got to meet everyone," he says.

More than two decades on, Naudi's passion is now five-star hotels – and his task is to take a flavour of Malta out into the world. For the past 15 years he has been at the right-hand of Alfred Pisani, the creator of Corinthia Hotels – a family-founded Maltese hotel group that has flourished in fledgling markets and is now poised to take its place on the wider international stage.

With the spring 2011 opening of the €305m (US\$500m, €345m) Corinthia Hotel Lon-

don – the company's first flagship hotel in a major western European capital outside Malta – Naudi knows the eyes of the hotel world will be upon them. He says: "Until now we've mainly sought out opportunities in emerging markets and our brand is very well regarded in countries like Russia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. But London will give us a different platform of visibility – it will put us on the global map."

### LIBYA LINK

The London opening, however, has not been without its hitches. One investor in the Corinthia group is the Libyan Foreign Investment Company (Lfico) which is owned by the Libyan government and has been a non-controlling shareholder in Corinthia since 1974, now owning a third of its holding

company, International Hotel Investments (IHI). There are 3,100 other shareholders including the founding Pisani family, who still control and run the business, and Istithmar Hotels of Dubai.

With Libya in turmoil and the Gaddafi regime subject to economic sanctions, there was press speculation that Corinthia London wouldn't be able to open because of its investment links. Prior to the launch, the company says it obtained all necessary approvals from the UK Treasury to continue trading normally and to reassure its customers.

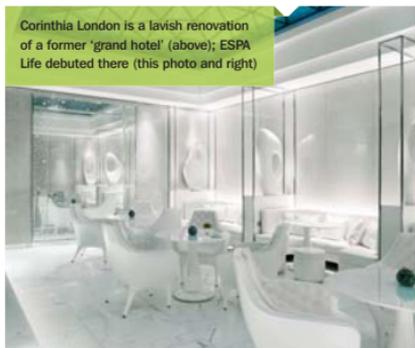
Corinthia issued a statement saying the running of its business will not be affected as it does "not involve making available any funds to a designated entity prohibited by sanctions". Naudi says simply: "We do not get involved in politics, we are hotel operators."

The 1001 crystal bauble chandelier, by Baccarat, hangs in the main lobby and is an unavoidable talking point





Corinthia London is a lavish renovation of a former 'grand hotel' (above); ESPA Life debuted there (this photo and right)



There will no doubt be high hopes for the performance Corinthia London. It is a lavish renovation of a former 19th century 'grand hotel' (Hotel Metropole), which had been occupied for the past 80 years by the Ministry of Defence. The location is also rather enviable, with views over the River Thames and a stone's throw from Trafalgar Square.

The five-star hotel has 294 guestrooms (the original had about 500), including 43 suites. The reduced accommodation means rooms average a spacious 45 sq m (484sq ft), among the largest in London's luxury hotel category. Corinthia Hotel London also houses a 3,300sq m (35,000sq ft) flagship spa from ESPA (see p50), meeting spaces, restored ballroom and two signature restaurants.

#### GLOBAL INTEREST

Naudi is particularly pleased with the London acquisition, given that the company fought off stiff global competition to get it. When the Crown Estate put out a tender for the building it attracted 29 bids from some of the biggest developers around the world.

"...the spa had to be very special... We were very impressed with [ESPA], not only with their knowledge of how to create a five-star spa, but also how to make it work as a business"

"It wasn't just a question of writing down a number – the site came with certain planning requirements and we had to present detailed architectural information," says Naudi.

Of the 42,000sq m (452,084sq ft), 16,000sq m (172,223sq ft) had to be for hotel development. While other bids proposed mixed-use schemes, Corinthia perhaps surprised with its plan to develop the whole site as a hotel, and 12 exclusive residential apartments.

"From a planning perspective we were the least controversial. We won the bid and got through planning in just 10 weeks, which is virtually unheard of," says Naudi. "Corinthia London is an extraordinary achievement in terms of how we bought it, what we bought it for and how we've developed it in terms of its relative value in the market."

As Corinthia expands more into western economies – with Paris and New York next on the hit list – Naudi acknowledges such deals will be rarer, and the company's focus must change as a result. "In the early days Mr Pisani followed the real estate opportunities – such as in central Europe or Russia. As we grow, we are becoming more brand driven to drive occupancies and especially to drive the rate," he says.

#### DESIGN DETAILS

The flagship Corinthia London has been rather impressively developed in a little over two years. Working through the recession has had some advantages, says Naudi, as the company has had preferential access to some top craftsmen and designers at short notice. ▶



The new hotel houses two signature restaurants (left) and its bedrooms average 45sq m, making them some of the largest in London's luxury hotels (above)

"Corinthia London is an extraordinary achievement in terms of how we bought it to market, what we bought it for and how we've developed it in terms of its relative value in the market"

Bespoke pieces are a hallmark of Corinthia properties. In London, designers Based Upon were commissioned to make a 95m (975sq ft) bronze artwork of the Thames, and bronze elevator doors. Another unavoidable talking point is the extravagant Full Moon chandelier in the main lobby comprising 1001 crystal baubles, created by French designer Chafik Gasmî and made by Baccarat. At two-tonnes, hotel designers had to add a new glass atrium to accommodate it, and Naudi declines to disclose its cost.

The hotel is home to several 'firsts' – mostly notably the launch of spa operator ESPA's new brand ESPA Life (see p50), which is a holistic wellness facility, offering naturopathic treatments, acupuncture, osteopathy and functional medicine alongside regular spa and beauty services.

"We knew the spa had to be very special," says Naudi, who seems delighted with their choice of ESPA as partners. "We were very impressed, not only with their knowledge of how to create a five-star spa, but also how to make that spa work as a business."

Another luxury brand, Harrod's, will open its very first hotel retail space there too.

The hotel's 12 Sky Mansion residential apartments have yet to be finished, but will be the height of super-chic design with some of them occupying well over 1,200sq m (12,917sq ft) of space. Each residence has a private lift that links to the hotel's own service area, private access to the spa and underground car-parking. With suggested values at the top of the market in London, it

#### CORINTHIA PORTFOLIO

Corinthia has three luxury facilities in Malta – its original Palace Hotel & Spa, St George's Bay, and the Marina Hotel. There are also hotels in St Petersburg, Budapest, Tripoli, Lisbon and Prague. The Corinthia Taormina Golf Resort in Sicily opens in 2012.

is no wonder Naudi is beaming about Corinthia's £305m overall investment.

The quest for design quality and craftsmanship seems to be at the core of Corinthia's philosophy, and this appears to emanate from the company's founder Alfred Pisani who still plays a very hands-on role in the company today. Naudi says: "Everybody in the company has met the chairman. He is a very inspirational character who built his business from a small island with little money and limited human resources."

As a young man in the 60s, an inexperienced but passionate Pisani obtained one of the government loans being offered to promote development on Malta, which had recently gained independence from Britain. But he couldn't find anyone to build his hotel, so he became the builder himself.

#### 'SPIRIT OF CORINTHIA'

Because the company has evolved as a tight-knit, family inspired business, everybody feels a strong sense of ownership. Naudi says: "I love the way I can be involved in

every aspect of hotel creation from the purchasing of the site right through to deciding how breakfast is laid out. I could even tell you the price of that chair [he points to a meeting room chair] because we have sat down and had a discussion about it".

Naudi acknowledges that the challenge will be to keep and engender that feeling of pride and "spirit of Corinthia" among all hotel staff as they open in new countries. "As much as we put importance on the size of hotel bedrooms and quality of bathrooms – the human side of hoteliering has to remain the most important part of our business."

The company has taken half a century to expand its portfolio to nine Corinthia branded luxury facilities and several non-branded hotels. Naudi says growth, which will focus mainly on the Corinthia brand, will be measured, and "no-one is pushing us to open 100 hotels".

A new golf resort being built in Sicily will be the first Corinthia hotel where the company will just be the operator, not the investor. Naudi believes that as Corinthia becomes known for its multi-skill, more of these ventures will follow.

He is also confident the expanding company will retain its Maltese charm. "I think we have the best of all cultures – the warmth of the Mediterranean people, structure inherited from the British and the trading instincts of the Arabs." Corinthia appears to uphold these values in its company culture, and in the competitive world of hotels, they sound like a recipe for success. ●



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# FACE FACTS

Europeans are spending more on beauty, according to Mintel, yet one in four women are still on the lookout for effective anti-ageing products

VIVIENNE RUDD • HEAD OF BEAUTY • PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD CARE, MINTEL

**T**he global beauty market holds tantalising promise for spas. While operators traditionally shied away from grooming services like waxing, eyebrow shaping, eyelash tinting, sunless tanning, hairdressing and nail upkeep – preferring massages and complementary therapies – they're beginning to see the benefits of attracting a more local, regular clientele who are in search of beauty maintenance treatments (and home-use products) in a high-end environment (see S811/1 p20).

These treatments generate a more regular income stream and according to SRI's 2010 report, *Spas & the Global Wellness Market: Synergies & Opportunities*, the beauty market represents a US\$679bn (€479bn, £421bn) market annually. More recent research by Mintel, shows that there's also slow, but

upwards growth in the sales of anti-ageing skincare (face) products in high-street department stores, drug stores and direct sellers in the 'big five' European countries of France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK.

## Growth in times of austerity

While the recent economic situation has had a massive effect on consumer perceptions as a whole, it seems high-street shoppers have still been determined to put their best face forward. Indeed, despite government cuts, employment insecurity, financial worries and inflation, it looks as though women across Europe won't let worry lines and wrinkles settle in.

The skincare category coped well with the ups and (often) downs of the global economic environment in 2010. Although consumers, have in general, been troubled with worries linked to unemployment and rising household costs, the skincare product sales have more or less maintained a healthy glow across Europe. In addition, while skyward sales trajectories may be only a memory, the high-street shops in the UK and Spain managed to deliver 3 per cent growth in 2010, which, given the continued gloom of the economic climate, is relatively impressive.

Mintel's research found that, while consumers may economise on many areas of personal care expenditure when it comes to cosmetics, facial skincare is not one of them. In fact, facial skincare was one of the strongest sellers in the cosmetics industry of the

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/EVANY KRAMDIAEV



last year in the big five European countries, resisting economic uncertainties to reach a market value of €6.2bn (US\$8.8bn, £5.5bn) at the end of 2010, up from €6bn (US\$8.5bn, £5.3bn) in 2009.

## Market performance

Despite perceptions, Mintel believes that the 'masstige' sector – prestige mass market products such as Dove Spa, Nivea and Molton Brown – could be hardest hit in the beauty arena as shoppers may be forced to trade down to cheaper alternatives.

The luxury end of the market, which includes professional product houses such as Darphin and Elemis, should be less badly

Europe is the leading region with a wave of new product development, which accounted for just over half of all launches worldwide in 2010



Face cream was one of the top sellers in the European cosmetics industry last year: it had a market value of €6.2bn

affected: its audience will not suffer so much from the austerity drives and this part of the sector generally reported a strong performance in 2010. Interestingly, in the UK the luxury market is in many ways out-performing the mass market products, which suggests that women place more trust in higher-priced brands which have an association with anti-ageing skincare expertise. In addition, products positioned specifically as salon alternatives could continue to pick up sales as a result.

Anti-ageing skincare products are a key part of the cosmetics industry and the segment is set to grow over the next decade, with an ageing population supporting sales.

In comparison, the sale of bodycare products isn't growing so well because women are putting an emphasis on facial skincare as an economy measure.

The anti-ageing skincare market is well placed to withstand the economic pressures of the coming years. While per capita spend may dip slightly in 2011, manufacturers will drive their new product development programmes to encourage consumers to keep up their anti-ageing regimes. Launches of premium and luxury products gained momentum in the second half of 2010, and appear set to maintain the pace into 2011.

New anti-ageing products accounted for just over 40 per cent of all European face and

neckcare launches in 2010. Among new face and neckcare product launches, 48 per cent of French products had a specific anti-ageing claim and the UK wasn't far behind with 44 per cent. Germany and Spain came next with 31 per cent and 30 per cent respectively, followed by Italy with 17 per cent.

When it comes to looking good on a global scale, Europe is the leading region, with a wave of new product development, which accounted for just over half of all launches worldwide in 2010. Asia followed with 27 per cent, while North America came in third place with an 18 per cent share.

With more arrivals on the scene, the bewildering array of anti-ageing prod- ▶



The research found that nearly a quarter of females are still on the hunt for an effective anti-ageing product

PHOTOSHUTTERSTOCK.COM/VAIBHEE ANSHILIA LTD

- ucts with promises ranging from wrinkle plumping to face firming – even in average-sized department stores and spas – is set to increase. Helping consumers to navigate the ever-growing portfolio of products will be key for brands looking to stake a claim or maintain a foothold in the market.

### Room for improvement

Furthermore, the anti-ageing market will continue to be driven by an ageing population. Europe's baby boomers are now in their 60s, and by 2013, the number of people aged 55 to 64 and 65-plus will grow substantially. This offers enormous opportunities for anti-ageing skincare manufacturers – and organisations offering such treatments – and may draw the focus away from the entry level of 35 to 44 year olds, whose numbers are falling into the older age brackets.

Use of anti-wrinkle and anti-ageing facial skincare products tend to drop off noticeably once consumers hit their mid-60s, so the chal-

Products at the luxury end of the market [in retail stores] had a strong performance... which suggests that women place more trust in higher-priced brands

### GATHERING DATA

The beauty team at Mintel collects data relating to sales through department stores, chain drug stores, pharmacies, grocers and direct sellers. It doesn't track sales through salons and spas and Mintel's separate *Online Beauty* report deals with web sales of beauty products. Product information comes from the company's global new products database, which tracks all beauty launches across the world from hair, face and body to toiletries and fragrances.

The consumer research for anti-ageing skincare took two forms: usage statistics compiled from 10,000 women in France, Germany, Spain and the UK and more detailed consumer research from 1,000 women in these countries plus Italy. The information was analysed by Mintel's beauty team who have years of experience in the industry and who supplement it with their own insights and interviews with key industry figures. Details: [www.mintel.com/bi](http://www.mintel.com/bi)

lenge for the industry is to make its products relevant and appealing to these women. However, women are a hopeful lot. The research found that a quarter of females are still on the hunt for an effective anti-ageing product, while nearly two in 10 are willing to give such products the benefit of the doubt.

This challenge is compounded by the relatively low levels of satisfaction with anti-ageing products. At most, only a quarter of Italian women have found an anti-ageing product that works and continue to use it. While two in 10 women, everywhere but in Germany, have given up on their search due to lack of results. Almost a quarter of UK adults (men and women) who use anti-ageing creams believe they have yet to find a cream that works for them and so constantly change the products they use in a bid to find one that delivers. Challenges – and opportunities – therefore remain for retailers and operators to respond, to help consumers find what they are looking for.

When it comes to what worries consumers most, lines and wrinkles are the top ageing concerns throughout the big five, cited by more than half (53 per cent) of Spanish consumers, five in 10 (48 per cent) in France, four in 10 (46 per cent) consumers in Italy and 44 per cent in the UK. German consumers are the most relaxed with just three in 10 (33 per cent) concerned about age lines and wrinkles.

Mintel's research also shows that image-conscious French women splashed €32 (US\$45, £28) per head in 2010 on anti-ageing products, followed by Italians with €17.5 (US\$25, £15) and British women with €15 (US\$21, £13). Germans, in fourth place, spent €11.5 (US\$16, £10), while Spain registered the weakest performance with just below €7 (US\$10, £6) per head.

Looking forwards, the industry shouldn't rest on its laurels – one size does not fit all when it comes to wrinkles and there are many more development opportunities. ●

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# PARISIAN APPEAL

Seven high-end hotels are opening in the French capital and causing a stir in the city's luxury market segment. We take a look at the pipeline and how the spas will make their mark

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/VICHERIANANTOLLI/STYF



**T**he capital of couture, culture, cuisine and all things chic, Paris is consistently ranked as the most popular city in the world for tourists and 2010 was no exception. Last year, it attracted 15.1 million international tourists, ahead of London and New York. And it's bounced back from the downturn – according to the Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau: “Hotel overnights [in 2010] broke the record reached in 2007: up by 5.7 per cent compared to 2009, they reached 35.8 million.”

The numbers were bolstered by French visitors (up 8.8 per cent) and impressive growth in new markets such as China, Eastern Europe and South America. Business travel was another key element, with business overnights up by 11.1 per cent compared to 1.7 for leisure overnights.

However, the numbers for mature markets – with the US and UK clearly top – have not fully recovered yet.

As the tourism and hospitality industries begin to pick up pace once more, it's no surprise that many of the big international hotel chains see Paris as an obvious target. It has the visitor numbers, but it also has a lack of high-end facilities: there are only 16 five-star hotels in the city. And with the introduction of the country's 'palace' label this year – which signals the ultimate distinction in super luxury hotels (see below) – only a handful of operators are set to gain this coveted title. It's this exclusive rank, however, that a number of leading Asian hotel brands such as Raffles, Shangri-La, Mandarin Oriental and Peninsula are aiming for as they enter the market... and their spas need to measure up too.

**R**affles of Singapore was the first Asian operator to launch in Paris in October 2010 with the reported €69m (US\$100m, £61m) overhaul of Le Royal Monceau by renowned French designer Philippe Starck. Close to Champs-Élysées and the Arc de Triomphe, the original 1928 hotel – now fully owned by the Qatari Diar real-estate investment fund – was a favourite of the rich and famous such as Coco Chanel and Walt Disney.

Today, the flamboyantly refurbished hotel complete with its own cinema, features quirky, artistic touches that have become the hallmark of Starck: such as the elaborate seashell walls in Il Carpaccio – just one of five beautiful restaurant and bars. The flair extends to the 149 guestrooms which, reminiscent of the 1940s and 50s, have elegant touches such as floor to ceiling mirrored bathrooms and dressing rooms that pay homage to haute couture boutiques.

Eight months on and Le Royal Monceau has something else to celebrate with the opening of its €40m (US\$58m, £35m) luxury Spa My Blend by Clarins. The 1,500sq m (16,000sq ft) spa has

## PALACE POSITIONING

In early 2011, the French Department for Tourism introduced a new 'palace' hospitality label, following the overhaul of its entire hotel grading system in 2009 which replaced its 1986 system.

So far, the palace title has been awarded to seven hotels (below) that stand out because of their history and location and recognition by clientele and tourism professionals. All palaces fulfil a set of fixed

criteria such as the size of bedrooms (a minimum of 24sq m or 258sq ft); the quality of service; and the number of restaurants and additional facilities such as a spa and swimming pool. Price is key and hotels are judged on the average room price and what they're sold at – typically this ranges from €600 (US\$864, £530) to €800 (US\$1,150, £707) for one night in a standard room with breakfast, in comparison to €260 (US\$374, £230) on average in a four-star\*

Palace status hotels in Paris so far are:

- Le Bristol
- Le Meurice
- Hôtel de Crillon
- Plaza Athénée
- Hôtel Fouquet's Barrière
- The Ritz
- The Four Seasons Hotel George V

Those awaiting classification include:

- Le Royal Monceau – Raffles Paris
- The Shangri-La
- The Mandarin Oriental
- The Peninsula

\*Source: Paris Palaces 2011, Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau

“Le Royal Monceau had an excellent reputation, Raffles is a top luxury operator and Philippe Starck was doing the design – what more could we ask for?”



also been created by Philippe Starck, with treatments by Clarins, and its striking white décor defies the fact that it's on the lower ground. What really adds to the open feel, however, is a 28m pool – one of the largest in any Parisian hotel – which sits directly beneath the garden pond with a glass tile base that forms the roof of the pool. The result is an underwater world that's bathed in daylight which is reflected in the abundant mirrored surfaces.

The pool is the central point for the spa and leading on from this a watsu pool and separate male and female relaxation/changing areas with a Hydroconcept sauna, Turkish steamroom, laconium, experience showers

The €40m spa, designed by Starck, is a 'white paradise' (top and above left); it's also the launchpad for My Blend, a new skincare line created by Clarins' Dr Olivier Courtin (above middle and right)

and ice fountains, plus a plunge pool on the ladies side. There are also seven treatment rooms with Nilo beds – including one for couples and a Vichy shower room – plus an extensive fitness offering comprising a Technogym gym and four individual training rooms. A haircare room, retail and reception area and spa bar complete the facility.

### Customised service

Clarins operates more than 200 day spas worldwide including 60 in hotels and although it's certainly a strong French brand, something more exclusive was needed for Raffles. Ghislain Waeyaert, director of spa activities for Clarins explains: "Raffles was looking for something to differentiate itself from our other [high-end] hotel spas".

Behind the scenes, however, Dr Olivier Courtin – one of two sons of Clarins founder Jacques Courtin (see s809/2 p58) – and the team at Clarins laboratories had been working on a new premium brand. Five years in development, My Blend, offers high-grade



► ingredients and formulae that can be tailored to an individual's needs on a any given day (see p88). "When we presented them with My Blend, they fell in love," says Waeyaert, who adds that it took another year to develop the eight My Blend facial treatments.

Costing €295 (US\$425, £261), the 95-minute facials consist of a 15 to 20-minute lifestyle analysis and testing of the skin for hydration, sebum, elasticity, pigmentation and wrinkles using the Callegari Soft Plus machine. A beauty coach then custom-blends the products and personalises the facials which culminate with a Clarins makeover. Clarins facials and body treatments, starting at €140 (US\$202, £123) for 60 minutes, are also available.

### A royal partnership

"Although we had two day spas in Paris, we'd been looking for a flagship for a long time," says Waeyaert. "We refused many projects because they weren't impressive enough, but when we heard about this I knew it was for us: Le Royal Monceau had an excellent reputation, Raffles is a top luxury operator and Philippe Starck was doing the design – what more could we ask for? Working with Philippe was exciting and challenging. He has a strong character and knows what he wants. His design team were flexible, but had to strike a balance because if you compromise too much on the décor and focus only the operations it no longer looks like a Starck spa."

As part of the agreement, the hotel put up the investment for the spa while Clarins oversees management and pay roll.

The intent is to rollout Spa My Blend in other luxury hotels in major cities such as New York (left); it's the company's first full-service spa with thermal areas, a pool and fitness facilities (right)

"Will people pay higher prices [for My Blend] or still go for Clarins treatments? The hotel is targeting a lot of wealthy people, so we don't think it will be an issue"

Waeyaert describes Spa My Blend as a "more serious skincare spa". While relaxing and pampering therapies are on offer, the focus is very much on technical, results-oriented services. A request from Raffles was to also "make the spa work financially" which, says Waeyaert, is where Clarins comes in.

"Consumer awareness of Clarins is strong and this drives business to spas, plus, our dedicated spa marketing division create year-long promotional plans. Some of our operators are doing 30 to 40 per cent retail, so having a high-street presence doesn't stop clients buying products in spas."

The local market will be just as important as hotel guests at Spa My Blend where the idea is to "create an experience that people will come back to rather than a one-off treat". As such, an extensive fitness offering and 15 'on call' personal trainers have been added to the mix and so have annual memberships starting at €4,500 (US\$6,500, £3,950). The memberships will be capped at 150 for 2011 and already 125 have been sold.

"This is the first time Clarins has managed a spa like this as we usually only focus on treatments – but it's what the hotel wanted," says Waeyaert. "We surrounded ourselves with professional people including a well-known Parisian fitness coach and Camille Lacourt the European gold-medal swimmer [who Clarins sponsors] helped to create our exercise programmes and aqua gym classes."

### Spa My Blend rollout?

In terms of future Spa My Blends, there are no mandatory design requirements but operators will be obliged to take on both the My Blend and full Clarins range and no other lines. "I'm not planning on opening lots of spas because the concept is exclusive," says Waeyaert. "We're looking for modern, luxury hotel chains and ideally I'd like locations in London, New York and Singapore."

"At the moment, we just want to see how popular My Blend is. Will people pay the higher price point or will they still go for Clarins treatments? The hotel is certainly targeting a lot of wealthy people, so we don't think it will be an issue."



## The Spa at Mandarin Oriental, Paris

Located on rue Saint-Honoré in the 1st arrondissement, the new Mandarin Oriental, Paris is surrounded by the city's finest fashion stores. The hotel, which is owned by Société Foncière Lyonnaise, features 138 rooms and suites in a restored 1930s art deco building. Around US\$40m (€28m, £24m) has been spent on transforming the building which now boasts two restaurants, a bar and cake shop under executive chef Thierry Marx as well as a 900sqm (9,688sq ft) spa. A speciality of the restaurant is the Delight nutritional, wellness menu which has been created by naturopath Liliane Israel.

Created by Sybille de Margerie, a French designer who also worked on the hotel's rooms

The new Mandarin is in a prime location in Paris' 1st arrondissement (left); the all-suite spa has a chic, yet Oriental feel and will focus on longer (80-minute) experiences (right)

and public spaces, the spa blends colours such as mauve, pink, taupe and silver with delicate butterfly and origami flower-themed features to give a chic, Oriental feel. The spa is spread over two floors, with the ground floor consisting of a sensory arrival sphere – with a signature ginger, orange and frankincense scent, atmospheric lighting and acoustic music – seven treatment suites (four single and three double), a 14m pool next to an Oriental herb steamroom and a relaxation area. Above this is a 120sqm (1,280sq ft) fitness area with Technogym equipment that overlooks the pool.

A collection of 40 relaxing and results-driven treatments are on offer using Mandarin Oriental's own-branded products, plus those by Aromatherapy Associates and French beauty brand Guerlain. The group's signature, personalised, therapies – created in collaboration with Aromatherapy Associates in 2009 (see SB09/3 p58) – combine Oriental meridian massages with custom-blended

essential oils and start at €370 (US\$536, £327) for a 2-hour 20-minute treatment.

### Longer spa experiences

The target audience for the spa is an even split between hotel guests and local customers. Memberships may be added later on, but are not a focus in the initial opening stages.

To maximise utilisation in this all-suite spa, the minimum treatment time has been set at 80 minutes. Andrew Gibson, group director of spa for Mandarin Oriental says: "This is not a time poor spa and the idea is to set a precedence for longer treatments to begin with and to sell our 'spa experience'. Our shorter treatments, including beauty services such as eyelash tinting and waxing, will be sold as add ons."

To deliver the treatments Véronique Ellinger, director of spa, who previously worked at two key Parisian spas at Le Meurice hotel and L'Espace Payot, has picked a team of 17 employees including an operational, duty and treatment manager. All therapists are trade tested and go through at least four interviews. Ellinger says: "It takes a long time to find people with the qualities we're looking for – they have speak English and, if possible, have a background of working in a luxury hotel. We're also looking for people with passion who are not carbon copies. I'm really pleased with the team we have because we've gelled so well."

She concludes: "I was astonished by the quality and professionalism at Mandarin Oriental. I've never seen so many standard operating procedures – we have 1,500 to learn for spa, plus up to 3,500 general guest services – but detail is necessary to ensure quality. We won't be leaving anything to chance." ▶



Subtle projections of flitting butterflies are an example of this spa's elegant design

## NEW &amp; FUTURE OPENINGS

## After the Rain at Saint James &amp; Albany Hotel

In July, Swiss spa product and management company After the Rain launched its first spa in an urban hotel in Paris's four-star Saint James & Albany Hotel. Opposite the Tuileries Gardens in the 1st arrondissement, the 17th century building features 200 bedrooms and the spa, which covers 500sq m (5,382sq ft) and is located on the lower ground floor.

Vaulted stone ceilings mix with rich red hues and modern day comforts in the spa, which used to be a beauty institute. Today, the focus is on creating a spa experience where guests can relax in the hammam and by a 15m pool, before trying treatments in one of six treatment rooms which include a couples suite with a whirlpool, a Vichy shower room and a wet room with a Technodesign bed. There's also a relaxation/rest area.



The spa is on the lower ground floor of a 17th century building and features vaulted stonework



It's expected that hotel guests will make up 30 per cent of customers and 70 per cent will be day visitors. Once a week there will even be a children's special session with chocolate-based treatments and milkshake baths.

After the rain offers a wide selection of therapies which can be tailored using techniques such as ayurveda, reiki, aromatherapy and four-handed massage. Fresh, seasonal

ingredients are also kept onsite to help personalise massages, wraps and hair treatments. After the rain products are natural and have been formulated using high-altitude plants, valley cereals and essential oils. Face creams can be customised by picking one of 11 concentrated skin elixirs.

The Swiss firm opened its first spa in Geneva in 2002 and now has over 40 worldwide.

## A Champs-Élysées palace?

A luxury hotel and spa is an obvious fit for a €400m (US\$576m, £353m) property in central Paris that's been on the market since December 2009. The part-listed building on the Avenue des Champs Élysées – currently the head office of HSBC France – has two courtyards, covers 35,000sq m (376,737sq ft) and in the early 1900s was the home of the Élysées Palace hotel. Initial interest was shown by Qatari Diar, but the signing of the deal was never confirmed. Qatari Diar also owns Le Royal Monceau and has an 80 per cent stake in Paris Peninsula (see opposite).

## ESPA at Peninsula

An ESPA spa will feature in the new Peninsula hotel that's scheduled to launch in 2013. Located on Avenue Kléber, near the Arc de Triomphe, the 200 to 250-bedroom property will be the first in Europe for the Hong-Kong based operator (a 20 per cent stakeholder).

The remaining 80 per cent belongs to the Qatari Diar real-estate investment fund – also owners

of Le Royal Monceau – which bought the property from the French state in 2007 for €460m (US\$662m, £406m).

A further €50m (US\$72m, £44m) will be spent on updating the building, which used to be an international conference centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The interiors will be designed by New York-based Thierry Despont with a contemporary flair and reference to the original belle époque style.

## Hermitage Plaza

Construction of the €2.5bn (US\$3.6bn, €2.2bn) Hermitage Plaza, in Paris's La Défense business district, is due to start in 2011 with completion scheduled for 2016.

Consisting of two towers that will reach a final height of 323 metres – purposefully 1m below the Eiffel Tower – it is the first purpose-built high-rise development in France and is considered a 'national project'.

Designed by Foster + Partners, the 90- and 91-storey towers feature glazed façade panels with different points catching the light throughout the day.

The towers, situated next to the River Seine, will take the form of two interlocking triangles which face each other and enclose a public piazza and garden with shops, restaurants, offices, a concert hall and an art gallery. Between them, the towers will also house a five-star hotel – some published articles suggest this will be a Four Seasons, although this hasn't been confirmed – two spa centres with swimming pools and fitness centres. Residential apartments, priced at a reported €2 to €3m (US\$2.9m to US\$4.3m, £1.8m to £2.6m), a business centre, two auditoriums and more offices complete the offering.

The company behind the development is real estate firm the Hermitage Group, a French subsidiary of the Mirax Group Corporation, a Russian real estate investor.



The €2.5bn development is considered a national project (this photo) and will feature two spas in each tower (below)



## LVMH's La Samaritaine

Japanese firm SANAA has been chosen to transform Paris's famous La Samaritaine department store into a mixed-use development.

The 1869 building, located between Pont Neuf and Rue de Rivoli in the 1st arrondissement, was bought by the LVMH group in 2001 and closed down due to safety concerns.

With a view to revitalising the local area, the development will include an 80-room hotel – a spa is yet to be confirmed – although no operator has been disclosed. It will also comprise commercial space, offices and 95 social housing apartments and will be encased in a transparent glass façade to flood the interior in daylight. Work will begin this year and will not be complete before 2013.



The new Shangri-La boasts views of the Eiffel Tower



## Shangri-La Hotel

Hong-Kong-based luxury chain, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts, made its European debut with its Parisian hotel opening in December 2010.

Formerly the 19th century home of Napoleon Bonaparte's grand-nephew, Prince Roland Bonaparte, the property was acquired by the chain in 2006. Located in the 16th arrondissement, the hotel now features 81 bedrooms – decorated in an Empire style by French designer Pierre-Yves Rochon – with views of the Eiffel Tower. There are also three restaurants.

A 'wellbeing space' below the ground floor is to open in late 2011 and will feature a 16m pool and an 80sq m (862 sq ft) fitness centre. While massages will be on offer, it is too early to confirm whether the hotel an actual spa.

# Armani Hotel & Spa Dubai



Spa consultant and fashion aficionado, Mindy Terry, goes undercover to see if the first Armani hotel spa lives up to stylish, haute couture expectations and delivers operationally

MINDY TERRY • PRESIDENT • CREATIVE SPA CONCEPTS



The hotel and spa opened in May 2010 in Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building

**I**n the heart of Dubai's shopping district stands the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. This 160-floor, US\$1.6bn (€1.1bn, £992m) structure not only boasts the world's fastest double-deck elevator, it is also home to the first Armani Hotel, Residences and Spa.

The development, which includes 160 guestrooms and 144 apartments, launched in May 2010 and was the result of a collaboration between fashion designer Giorgio Armani SpA and Emaar Properties PJSC. It is the first in a collection of Armani Hotels & Resorts by the two companies. Armani/SPA at Burj Khalifa was designed by Howard Consulting (see p72), is managed in-house and covers 12,000sq ft (1,115sq m).

As a self-proclaimed fashionista – I've long loved the fashion house's simple yet elegant style of clothes and its classic monochrome palettes – you can imagine my delight at mystery shopping this spa to see how well the brand experience translates from the catwalk to spa.

## THE VISIT

### The booking

When I called, a friendly receptionist indicated that all treatments were made to order. I was urged to select an amount of time and told that on arrival, my treatment would be custom-crafted depending on my mood at that time. I settled for a 100-minute, AED800 (US\$218, €154, £135) treatment.

### The offer

Armani/SPA in Dubai consists of a reception and retail area, manicure/pedicure room, two thermal suites and relaxation lounges for men and women, eight treatment rooms, an outdoor swimming pool and a Technogym gym.

All services feature Armani's signature label of products – made in collaboration with L'Oréal – a selection of personalised facials, wraps and massages, classic spa treatments and a half and full-day package.



While beautifully designed, the treatment room lacked small details such as a robe hook

## VITAL STATISTICS

Address: Burj Khalifa,  
1 Emaar Boulevard,  
Downtown Dubai, UAE

Prices: A 50-minute treatment costs AED490 (US\$133, €94, £83), an 80-minute one is priced at AED650 (US\$177, €125, £110) and a 100-minute treatment is AED800 (US\$218, €154, £133)

Operating hours: 9am to 9pm daily

To book: <http://dubai.armanihotels.com>



Armani/SPA has a futuristic feel, which Terry felt was a refreshing change from the warm, homey spaces that are common in the vast majority of spas

I love the idea of a customised approach, but know that operationally it is very difficult to successfully execute. To me, a truly tailor-made treatment is created in the moment, based on the guest's desires and the therapist's level of experience. In reality, the Armani treatments are the result of a therapist selecting a series of set options that fit nicely into a specific time slot.

### Location & access

The spa is located on the third floor of Burj Khalifa and access is via an elevator.

### Disabled access & facilities

Most of the spa seemed ADA accessible.

### Design

Less is more for the Armani brand, the colours are monochromatic and the clothes are well-cut, timeless creations. Likewise, its spa is very sleek and modern, with hi-tech touches, and the interior is clad in shades of grey, silver, black and white.

Yet on a few occasions, form triumphed over function. There was no robe hook in the very stylish treatment rooms and I was told to "just drop it on the floor". Beautiful hand-held Dornbracht shower fixtures looked stunning, but were bit awkward to use when trying to wash the scrub off my body. In addition, automatic, sliding doors throughout the spa made it confusing to know where you were: I got

lost a few times and though artful, the signage was too small to be effective.

One of my favourite design elements was located in the relaxation lounge where a lattice with small, intermittently blinking lights was placed behind shaded windows to create an illusion of dancing sunlight. The effect was particularly captivating. Also, the long linear changing rooms featured the most beautiful lockers I've seen to date – they looked like alabaster or pearlised stone.

The thermal suite with its domed ceiling and sequential bathing experiences – a laconium, steambath, sauna, ice fountain and shower walk – was well-laid out. The sauna incorporated charcoal stone slabs on the walls which, although hot, made a nice change from the standard wooden box.

Overall, the spa had a futuristic feel, I felt as though I was on a *Star Trek* movie set. However, I appreciated the 'coolness' of the minimalistic décor as it was a welcome departure from the warm, homey spaces that are common in the vast majority of spas.

### Cleanliness

The facility was very clean, with the exception of the relaxation lounge where my leftover tea, fruit and used towel still remained when I returned after my treatment.

### The staff

All of the staff were professional and kind and for the most part, spoke fluent English.

### The experience

My adventure began with a climb through expansive gardens to the Burj Khalifa's main entrance. On the final flight of stairs, a handsome security guard dressed in black sprung from the bushes to inquire about my business. After taking notice of my designer shoes and accessories, he let me pass. I learnt a long time ago that if you want to be taken seriously at Armani, you better dress the part!

From that moment on, I was passed from one attractive black-clad male to the next, through the lobby, into the elevator up to the third floor spa. As in Armani clothing boutiques, a reception desk was nowhere to be found and Betty my 'spa ambassador' magically appeared from a hallway and directed me to a stylish, yet uncomfortable, wicker chair. I couldn't help but notice that her uniform was a shade of purple-grey and certainly stood out compared to the typical spa therapist garb.

I put the marketing of a 'personalised treatment' to the test by asking for 40-minute body scrub followed by a 60-minute massage. Betty said they could not accommodate this and offered a facial or body wrap option. When I insisted on a scrub and massage, I was given the traditional 25-minute scrub followed by 75 minutes of massage. I did not feel this was truly customised. That said, my therapist gave a great massage, although I wasn't entirely convinced that she'd mastered the English language.

## MYSTERY SHOPPER

### WHAT'S THE SCORE?

Ease of booking	9
Facilities	7.5
Cleanliness/maintenance	8
Staff	8
Experience/treatment	7
Value for money	6.5
Overall experience	7.5

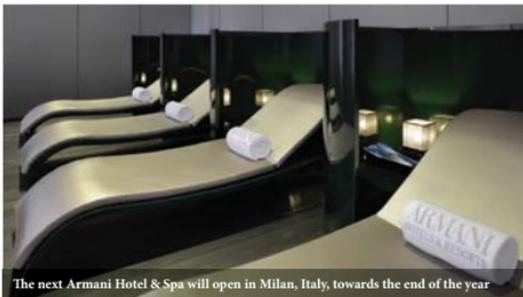
▶ While I was guided by many staff throughout the first part of my journey, post-treatment I was left in the lounge without further instruction. At first I rather liked wandering around the space, though in time I felt as though I'd been forgotten. Furthering the lack of communication, no one mentioned the thermal suite and I got the impression that I should pay extra for it. So, when I came across an automatic sliding door that led to the bathing experiences, I felt as if I'd gained access to something I wasn't supposed to and only had a quick look round. In that time, however, I did notice that the thermal area was well laid out.

After finding the locker area, I changed and waited. Again, no staff and no other guests. In fact, I didn't see another person from the time the therapist escorted me to the lounge post-treatment until I checked out. I made my way to the reception area, where Betty again magically appeared and was lovely. The execution of the check-out process reminded me of the purchase process in Giorgio's Italian clothing boutiques – complete with the receipt being presented in a beautiful heavy-weight Armani envelope.

### RIGHT TO REPLY

*Jason Harding, general manager*

Thank you for the feedback on the experience at Armani/SPA. The Armani/SPA collection is based on the principle that allows us to create a sequence of treatments to fit the time you have. The treatments available in Armani/SPA are MU, LIBERTÀ, and FLUIDITÀ, which are available for 50- or 80-minutes for the face, body, or through a massage. Body scrubs at the Armani/SPA fall under Armani/SPA Essential Touches, which allows our therapists to carry out 25-minute sequences to focus on specific areas, separate from your actual personalised treatment. The Armani/SPA upholds high standards of cleanliness within its facilities and we can assure you that the used towel and leftover tea and fruit were an oversight. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and look forward to providing all future customers with the spa ultimate experience.



The next Armani Hotel & Spa will open in Milan, Italy, towards the end of the year

### Designing an Armani Spa

While Armani's first spa in a hotel opened last May, the original Armani Spa launched in late 2007 at Tokyo's Ginza Tower – the 12-storey Armani megastore.

Neil Howard, founder of UK-based Howard Consulting, was involved in both projects. He helped to develop the concept, treatment menu and functional design.

The spa at Ginza Tower, he explains, was the smallest, with three unique domed treatment rooms and an 'east meets west' signature ceremony – comprising shiatsu, Thai and acupressure techniques – plus facial and massage rituals. The design in Dubai, however, included many more elements (see p70), which had to fit into a larger, but longer, ship-like space. "It was tricky but Emaar

[the developers] looked at all possible layouts to get the best – and most sensible – outcome," says Howard. The consultant also worked with suppliers to create bespoke items including a shower walk, rather than an experience shower, with warm to cool mists and an ice fountain by Thermarium; and a large, comfortable treatment couch by Oakworks.

Howard is now working on the next Armani Hotel & Spa which is set to open in Milan by the end of 2011. The spa will consist of six treatment rooms, a manicure/pedicure area, a relaxation lounge, plus a hydro pool and Technogym gym. "Meeting and presenting to a legend such as Giorgio Armani has been a highlight of my career to date," adds Howard. "It was a privilege and I found him to be a gentleman and very agreeable."

### Aftercare

Rather than featuring row on row of products, the retail offering included only a few items displayed tastefully next to an orchid on a single long shelf in the reception area.

The spa staff were not well trained in the fine art of retailing. No one tried to sell me

anything and although I had made a note to purchase something – the smell and texture of the products used in my service were gorgeous – the thought had slipped quickly from my mind by the time I left.

### Summary

In theory, the custom-crafted treatment approach is a great idea, but in order to live up to the marketing message the therapists need to be better trained. In the UAE, however, training issues are significant, as staff must be brought in from outside the country. A multi-cultural team that effectively caters for a world-class clientele requires vigorous, on-going coaching and this is difficult to accomplish here, or anywhere in the world for that matter.

Overall, this was a pretty typical spa experience – Armani has showed that it struggles with many of the same issues that other spas do. But, it's Armani, so I want and expect to be wooed, wowed and delighted by unexpected surprises. Please Armani, make me enjoy investing in your spa experience the same way I enjoy investing in your clothes. ●



# ANIKA

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# BIG SPENDER

More than US\$20bn is being invested in a number of major, high-value tourism developments in Jordan. We look at the projects and the role of spas and wellness in the country's future

**D**espite being located in a turbulent region of the world, Jordan was voted the top emerging destination worldwide in 2009 by both Opodo and Trip Advisor. The country draws visitors with its mix of remarkable heritage, culture and landscape resources, including a number of universally important UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

With a population of 6.5 million, Jordan has traditionally been a 'bridge' between Europe, Africa and Asia for thousands of years. Over the centuries, Greeks, Romans, Muslims, Christians and Crusaders have all left ancient ruins and abundant evidence of their conquests.

Covering 92,300sq km – about the size of Austria – the country has three distinctive landscapes, ranging from the Jordan rift valley along its western boundary (including the Dead Sea); to the Highlands where the main centres of population sit; and the extensive Arabian Desert covering over two-thirds of the country to the east. Jordan also



Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea features an Anantara Spa

boasts natural hot springs, but the jewel in the crown is the Dead Sea, which has been a focal point of wellness for many centuries as inhabitants flocked to its shores for its highly medicinal mud, salts and water. Often referred to as 'the world's largest natural spa', it is one of the finalists for this year's Seven Natural Wonders of the World contest.

Today, the country has a fast growing, albeit relatively small, economy where tour-

ism accounts for 18 per cent of GDP. The 2004 to 2010 *Tourism Strategy for Jordan* prioritised health, medical and wellness tourism as a niche for targeted growth. This was founded on rigorous market trend research including the 2004 *Medical Tourism Cluster Study* by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

The current focus of the Jordan Tourism Board – based on the 2011 to 2015 *Tourism Strategy* – is to market the country as a lux-



The Jordan Tourism Board is marketing the country as a luxury destination, with experiences focusing on natural assets

Development zones at strategic locations provide financial incentives for foreign investment, including the construction of resorts



ury destination and develop high-value tourism where visitors will find rich, diverse and unique experiences that take advantage of the country's natural assets.

#### WELCOME FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Jordan's economy is one of the smallest of all the Middle East countries and unemployment consistently lies between 10 per cent and 15 per cent. The country is heavily dependent on, and welcoming of, foreign assistance and investment. The government has established a number of development zones at strategic locations – including the Dead Sea Development Zone and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone – that provide financial incentives for investment including the construction of resorts. Both of these assisted regions have been fundamentally important for the encouragement of new tourism development and, overall, there are at least 20 hotel projects planned in Jordan from 2013 onwards.

Jordan's existing accommodation is predominantly hotels with some luxury camping and the recent arrival of eco lodges. Over the past five years, the number of bedrooms in hotels has increased by 9 per cent to over 23,000. Much of this growth has been in four and five-star developments which collectively handle almost two-thirds of all bed nights. Interestingly, all internationally-branded four and five-star hotels have spa facilities, most notably in the resorts around

Tourism makes up 18 per cent of GDP in Jordan and new hotel investment in the Dead Sea region exceeds US\$119m. Existing operators include Mövenpick (above and below left)

the Dead Sea, the southern coastal town of Aqaba and in the capital, Amman.

The Dead Sea resorts have amassed a strong cluster of first-class hotels from operators such as Kempinski with its Anantara Spa, Mövenpick featuring the Zara Spa and Six Senses Evason Ma'in Hot Springs.

The Jordan Tourist Board estimates that current hotel investment in this destination (up to 2012) will produce almost 1,000 additional rooms with investment exceeding US\$119m (€84m, £74m). Most notable is Jordan's first Islamic-themed resort – based on Islamic architecture and social values – that's set for completion in 2012. The US\$100m (€71m, £62m) project, being developed by Sama Jordan for Investment, Real Estate and Tourism Development and Jordan Agriculture Engineers Association, will include 1,000 suites and a 40,000sq m (430,556sq ft) lagoon.

In the Red Sea resort of Aqaba, a five-star Kempinski resort has recently opened ahead of major developments that are expected to fuel tourism growth. There has been a reported US\$20bn (€14bn, £12bn) worth of investment poured into the region by Gulf and European investors.

Other developments include the relocation of Aqaba's port, connection to the national rail system and leisure projects such as the ongoing development at Tala Bay, which will comprise at least five more hotels (including a Hilton); Saraya Aqaba, launching in 2012, that will incorporate five five-star hotels – including Jumeirah, Starwood and Nikki Beach; and Ayla Oasis, a phased project over the next eight years, which will also feature five hotels with a total of 1,540 rooms.

The largest real estate and tourism project in Aqaba is Marsa Zayed, a US\$10bn (€7bn, £6bn) marina community which will cover 3.25q km (1.25q mile). When complete in 2017 it will boast a state-of-the-art cruise ship terminal, more than 300 yacht berths, 30,000 residences and eight hotels with a total of 3,000 rooms. Marsa Zayed is being developed by the Al Mabar Jordan Real Estate Development Company, a subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi based Al Mabar International Investments.

Elsewhere in Jordan, Starwood Hotels & Resorts is to debut its St Regis brand with the 2014 opening of the 270-room St Regis Amman, plus 80-branded residences.

#### TOURISM GROWTH

Tourism in Jordan has been a growth phenomenon founded on an ambitious strategy and unambiguous government support. Since 2005, there has been a doubling of tourism receipts with the number of ▶



Six Senses is one of the first international operators in Jordan

Investment in spas is high on the agenda for the 2011 to 2015 strategy... 12 defined leisure and wellness trails and packages are a new key feature

▶ arrivals increasing by 22 per cent (see Table 1). Although 2009 saw a decline in numbers due to the economic recession and emerging political tensions, tourism performance stabilised in 2010 when it welcomed over 7.1 million tourists, contributing JOD2.2bn (US\$3.1bn, €2.2bn, £1.9bn) to the economy and directly supporting more than 40,100 jobs. These receipts surpassed targets – set in the 2004 to 2010 *Tourism Strategy for Jordan* – of 7 million tourists and JOD2bn (US\$2.8bn, €1.9bn, £1.8bn) and were reached nine months ahead of schedule. In addition, data from the Jordan Tourism Board also reveals an upturn in tourism receipts in the first quarter of 2011, putting the country on track to also achieve its targets for this year.

So, where are the tourists coming from and for what? According to the 2011 Global Spa Summit report, *Wellness Tourism and Medical Tourism: Where Do Spas Fit?*, Jordan is one of the world's leading countries for medical tourism and has been actively promoting this sector since the early 1970s. Today, an estimated 300,000 medical tourists visit the country using the 60 or so private hospitals approved by the Jordan Healthcare Accreditation Council.

Meanwhile, although Jordan is accessible to large European markets, it is its direct accessibility to, and appeal for, near neighbouring markets which is reflected in the pattern and composition of international arrivals – 65.5 per cent of all tourism comes from such markets (see Table 2).

## A WELLNESS FOCUS

Despite strong investment in tourism projects in Jordan, coupled with stable visitor figures, existing hotel spas could be performing better in terms of utilisation and revenues. According to the Pricewaterhouse Coopers' (PwC) *Dead Sea Spa Benchmarking Survey* in Jordan last year (see SB10/3 p30) there is "a lack of affluent local population in the immediate area surrounding the Dead Sea", thus placing a high dependence on tourism markets. Notably, less than 10 per cent of treatments were booked by non-hotel residents which makes hotel spas vulnerable to the vagaries of holiday demand. Figures for the same PwC survey in January to February 2011, highlighted that the same resorts are continuing to find their feet with REVPATH and utilisation of facilities.

It's also worth noting that low utilisation in spas could be compounded by a dependency on a tourism market which is strongly based on neighbouring countries. The popular spa traditions and rituals of these source markets aren't necessarily offered in the westernised spas in Jordan, therefore these visitors avoid using them.

Attracting more visitors from countries such as America and the UK could be part of the solution. And, interestingly, there are early signs of growth in UK tourists to Jordan – in March 2011, figures were up 6.1 per cent on 2010. Numbers were given an immediate boost with easyJet commencing flights from London Gatwick to Amman, and there

are strong expectations of exceeding the year's 20,000 target.

Another solution could be to build more 'local spas' to target day spa members. This is something which was picked up in the 2011 to 2015 *Tourism Strategy* which highlights the need to develop and secure the benefits of tourism in other parts of the country – especially in the north – with an increasing emphasis on creating "local experiences using local products and local people" – key factors in the development of wellness tourism.

Investment in wellness and spas certainly continues to be high on the agenda for the 2011 to 2015 strategy. The development of 12 defined trails and packages – see [www.visitjordan.com](http://www.visitjordan.com) – are a key feature of this new approach. Included in this is a series of three, five and eight-day packages focused on leisure and wellness with specified itineraries covering wellness attractions and accommodation in areas such as Aqaba, Amman, the Dead Sea and Ma'in hot springs.

Overall, the Jordan Tourist Board is optimistic about the future growth of tourism in the country. This positivity is shared by the UN World Tourism Organization and the World Travel and Tourism Council – the latter predicting that tourism's contribution to GDP will increase to 20 per cent or JOD6.1m (US\$8.6m, €6.1m, £5.3m) by 2019.

Clearly, domestic and foreign investors are also planning ahead with a high degree of assuredness about the growth of tourism in the country. ●

TABLE 1

Tourism Arrivals (2005 to 2009)\*

	Tourists ('000)	Day trips ('000)	All ('000)
2005	2.987	2.831	5.827
2009	3.789	3.396	7.085

\*Source: Jordan Tourism Board

TABLE 2

Source of Tourism Arrivals in Jordan (2009/2010)\*

Syria	29 per cent	65.5 per cent
Saudi Arabia	17 per cent	
Egypt	6 per cent	
Palestine	4.8 per cent	
Israel	3.2 per cent	
Iraq	3.1 per cent	
Lebanon	2.4 per cent	65.5 per cent
USA	2.4 per cent	
Turkey	2.2 per cent	
UK	1.3 per cent	
Other	28.6 per cent	

\*Source: Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities



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- Four Seasons Scottsdale; Oberoi Amarvilas; Oberoi Bali; Oberoi Bangalore; Oberoi Grand Kolkata;
- Oberoi Lombok; Oberoi Mauritius; Oberoi Mena House; Oberoi Mumbai; Oberoi New Delhi;
- Oberoi Rajvilas; Oberoi Sahl Hasheesh; Oberoi Udaiwilas; Oberoi Vanyavilas; Oberoi Wildflower Hall;
- Mandarin Oriental Landmark; Rosewood Crescent Hotel; Rosewood Sand Hill; St Regis Aspen;
- St Regis Atlanta; St Regis Bahia Beach; St Regis Deer Valley; St Regis New York; St Regis San Francisco.

Please write to [info@omorovicza.com](mailto:info@omorovicza.com) for more information

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

# SPA SOFTWARE

Hot competition in the spa software market is driving innovation at a fast pace, meaning better systems for operators. In the third part of our series, we give news updates on innovation and system briefings

LIZ TERRY • EDITOR • SPA BUSINESS

**M**indbody business management software is scalable for use in a wide range of markets from spas to sport and for single- and multi-location businesses. Because the software is online, it can be accessed from virtually any computer, tablet or smart phone.

Mindbody has appointment scheduling/booking, customer management and marketing tools built in, as well as staff management functions like payroll processing, performance reviews and task assignments. It also has a time clock function.

The software also includes membership and e-commerce functionality, as well as integrated merchant account processing, mobile apps and auto-appointment reminders via email and SMS. Through an arrangement with Mindbody partner, HealCode, clients can pay a one-off fee of US\$44

## Mindbody

USA & WORLDWIDE

(€30, £27) for a widget which enables them to post schedules on their Facebook page to drive bookings. Once clients have made their choice in Facebook they're taken back to the spa's website to make their booking. Booking information can't be shared on Facebook, because the transaction happens outside it.

HealCode has an entry level fee of US\$11/month (€8, £7) before users are eligible to buy the Facebook widget. More social media integration is planned for future launches.

Mindbody generates marketing and management reports and has analytics tools including over 90 reports to track client retention, monitor inventory, analyse staff productivity, review sales by specific categories and analyse client visitation trends. Automated marketing tools include a geo-analytics report that identifies the location of clients and prospects.

The software has an API that allows many kinds of integrations with other programs and it's also available in English, Spanish, German and Mandarin.

Mindbody doesn't have yield management functionality. However, the company says

the software can be used to generate date-specific promotions and it can be used to track 'big spenders', as well as having other reporting features which analyse purchasing behaviour and sales results.

Mindbody includes an inventory management system that's tied directly to the POS system and online store. If you don't have your own online store, one can be created using the software's e-commerce features.

Start-up training and technical support are both included in a Mindbody subscription at no extra charge. Most clients need 3-4 one-hour sessions to implement their software and the company works with clients until they feel they are successfully using the software.

There are also a number of premium services available, including Jump Start – a software expert quickly configures your Mindbody system for an accelerated start; Premium Support – gives you your own dedicated premium account coordinator; and Fresh Start – designed for current clients who need a refresher course or a configuration review to optimise the system or make changes.

Mindbody Support provides local technical support, training and consultancy services on a five-day or seven-day a week basis, depending on world region. Mindbody accepts payment in \$US, with subscriptions beginning at US\$70 a month (€49, £43).

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

Tel: +1 877 692 3231

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/AMANDAW



MindBody has staff management tools built-in, including functions like payroll processing, performance reviews and task assignments. It also has a time clock function



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/POULIVERKONG

Mobile and online booking have become important features for spas wanting to drive business volume

**S**pa Management System (SMS) from TAP Technology is integrated software designed to manage bookings, membership and inventory.

The software is web-based and can support multi-site operations, enabling managers to monitor and control client contacts, the scheduling of therapist appointments and inventory checking remotely in real-time. The software is only available in English.

SMS can process and store millions of transactions because it is built on MySQL, the enterprise-level database platform.

The main features are containing within a series of modules for appointments, memberships, preferences and transportation management. It also offers a range of reports

## Spa Management System/TAP

THAILAND

in areas like yield management, treatment choices, room utilisation and marketing.

The Therapist Sign-In Appointment Information screen is one of the most important features. It allows managers to ensure optimal use of resource in one easy-to-use screen that looks at rooms, therapists and customer

information. Activity can be colour-coded, making it easier to monitor the progress of appointments and also to create single, couples or group appointments.

SMS has a Checker function which monitors therapist's working hours for payroll, revenue, VAT and service charge purposes.

It doesn't have email, SMS or social media integration and can't interface with PMS systems, but works as standalone spa software.

TAP Technology provides full support and training which is tailored to the needs of the business as part of the purchase price.

www.tap10.com

Tel: +66 53 920 144

**P**riverus software is designed for spas, resorts and country clubs, enabling them to schedule activities such as spa, salon, tennis and fitness with one integrated system.

Priverus offers real-time online centralised reservations, enabling guests to purchase products and gift certificates directly from the spa's website as well as making complex multi-guest, multi-day, multi-activity bookings. The system sends email itinerary confirmations and SMS notices automatically.

The revenue management application allows operators to control pricing and availability of activities to maximise revenue at peak times and the system has standard and customisable reports, as well as enter-

## Priverus

CANADA

prise reporting which enables multi-location operators to centralise scheduling and generate consolidated financial reports.

Priverus offers third-party PMS integration and PCI-compliant credit and gift card processing. It's available in English and can be translated on request.

Priverus software is sold on subscription beginning at US\$500 a month (E351 £308) for a five-user system. This includes a hosted server, five days of teleconference training, technical support, unlimited 24/7 access to the company's online course library and all ongoing software updates and upgrades.

Both email and phone support are available every weekday from 9am - 5pm EST, while private training can be delivered by teleconference. The company also offers on-site customised training at a daily rate for companies which want intensive training.

www.priverus.com

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We take a look at some of the newest and most popular treatment and relaxation beds

# Treatment and relaxation beds

**TOP SELLER**

## MLW Amphibia, Gharieni

**The bed** The MLW Amphibia wellness couch from Gharieni GmbH offers everything needed for face and whole body treatments, as well as for wellness and spa use. Its removable, soft upholstery can be exchanged for illuminated, water-filled cushions to create a dramatic and comfortable waterbed which can also be used for oil treatments.

**What makes it stand out?** The bed has triple airbag technology, with three electric-pneumatic areas which enable you to adapt the upholstery of the couch to the anatomy of individual customers. This enables customers to achieve an optimum position on the couch and also creates a good working position for the therapist. Four motors regulate the height and the rake of the back which can be raised to 75° for facials or foot treatments. The leg position can also be easily brought



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: GHARIENI

into an ergonomic position. The bed is equipped with two smart-thermal-micro-processors so you can change the temperature of the surface of the upholstery, the water elements and the water cushions.

**Other key features** LED strips immerse the couch and water cushion in an infinitely variable range of colour. The bed can also be equipped with special covers and overlays for use during oil treatments.

SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORDS: CHILLOUT DESIGN



**TOP SELLER**

## AKTICE Spa massage table, Chillout Design

**The bed** The most popular treatment table from Chillout Design is the AKTICE Spa massage table – the company sells around 900 each year.

**What makes it stand out?** It's designed 100 per cent in wood which gives spa owners the opportunity to enhance the treatment room with an elegant table, without having to hide it, as often happens. The design is a priority, with hidden electric wiring, including the remote control which is driven by two small buttons hidden below the frame. The independent mattress is extremely

comfortable thanks to the face hole which has a unique design and shape.

The bed can be customised by size and colour so it matches other elements of the interior decor.

A fix version is also available and because the mattress is independent from the base, this allows operators to switch from a high resistance foam mattress to a heated or massage vibration mattress, or alternatively, to a wellness system mattress made of heated water and fibres to offer high levels of comfort.

SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: HASLAUER



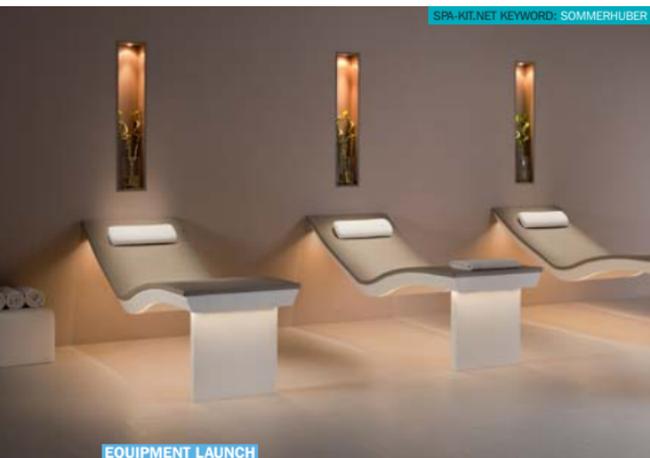
**EQUIPMENT LAUNCH**

## Convertible Lounger, Haslauer

**The bed** One of Haslauer's latest additions to its range is the Convertible Lounger which was launched in March 2011. It allows operators to convert relaxation areas in spas into profit zones because it's designed to be two things in one – a stylish, comfortable relaxation couch that can be converted into a treatment table at the touch of a button. It's also a useful piece of furniture for hotel suites, as it enables in-room treatments to be carried out on a proper bed instead of the more common mobile treatment bed.

**What makes it stand out?** Because the Lounger has been designed to be a chaise longue as well as a state-of-the-art treatment table the design allow spas to create luxurious relaxation areas where guests can be offered treatments without the need to change location during the spa journey.

**Other key features** The lounger can be converted at the touch of a button from a flat sofa to a height-adjustable treatment table which also has an adjustable backrest and a face hole for optimum position during the treatment.



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: SOMMERHUBER

EQUIPMENT LAUNCH

## The Lounger Two, Sommerhuber

**The bed** The Lounger Two was launched in 2010 at Interbad in Germany. The bed has been designed to relax the whole body and specifically the nervous system by incorporating ceramic heat radiation which is delivered in the healthy infra-red range.

**What makes it stand out?** Lounger Two has a floating design with a velvety-soft surface and an anatomically shaped form

which is both soothing to the body and pleasing to the eye.

**Other key features** The other key features are its unusual and modern design and excellent hygiene, as there are very few joints. Lounger Two can be installed in three ways: head and foot freestanding, foot freestanding or head and foot mounted. It's available in 19 glazes.

TOP SELLER

## Sanctuary Collection Relaxation Lounger

**The bed** The Sanctuary Collection Relaxation Lounger from Clodagh, by Oakworks.

**What makes it stand out?**

The bed provides high levels of comfort with a design that blends modern lines with handcrafted detail. Comfort is achieved by providing a mix of soft padding (4" or 6") and Oakworks UltraTouch type upholstery.

The table has a standard Flex Top which is fully electric and operates by use of a hand control and/or an optional foot control.

**Other key features** Unique customisation



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: OAKWORKS

can be achieved by varying the wood stain and matching upholstery colors to harmonise the bed with the spa's decor. The system can be enhanced with the addition of an optional Mini-Console and Reading Lamp as shown in the photo. This equipment will provide the ultimate experience for those who use it, and adds more amenities to the relaxation room.



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: KLAFS

TOP SELLER

## SPAVITAL massage bed, KLAFS

**The bed** The Klafs massage bed is an all-rounder. It can be used for dry and wet massage and is just as suitable for Reiki treatment as for LaStone therapy or reflexology. If the masseur in the hammam offers a traditional soap-and-brush massage then the bed's integrated lather maker can supply the lather quickly at the touch of a button.

The heated surface also has a head recess which allows oil to run off during Ayurvedic forehead oil affusions, while the slight incline of the bed makes it comfortable to lie on and directs the downward flow of water or mud and packs when they're rinsed off with the shower head.

The SPAVITAL is automatically height-adjustable and can be lowered far enough to make it easy to get onto, as well as adapting to the therapist's working height. It comes complete with fittings that are co-ordinated with the design, and has integrated thermostats which regulate the temperature to the exact degree required.

**What makes it stand out?** Along with the features mentioned, the design is unique because it can be adapted to its surroundings. This means spas don't need to compromise on technical features while enjoying owning a designer bed which improves the look of their wellness area. Despite the versatility of functions, the bed is simple to use and many clients enjoy the fact that due to the lather, they're able offer a hammam treatment without having to educate a hammam specialist.

For more information, or to contact any of these companies, visit [www.spa-kit.net](http://www.spa-kit.net)



TOP SELLER

SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: INVIIION

### 4 Senses Lounger, Inviion

**The bed** Inviion says the 4 Senses Lounger stimulates the four senses to induce deep relaxation within 25 minutes – something clients appreciate and are prepared to pay extra for, creating a fast return on investment and an eye-catching new element for the spa relaxation room.

**What makes it stand out?**

The lounger has an RGB light changing device which is based on the concept of Traditional Chinese Medicine – colours

can be seen through closed eyes. This is combined with soft sounds, fragrance and a gently vibrating surface to create a complete environment. The experience has been designed to “stimulate the meridians”.

A number of European spas have already installed the 4 Senses Lounger, including the Royal Spa, Kitzbuhel, Austria; The Christchurch Harbour Hotel, UK; Hotel Bayerwaldhof, Germany and Center Parcs Sherwood Forest, UK.



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: THERMARIUM

EQUIPMENT LAUNCH

### Orbit Magnetic Therapie bed, Thermarium

**The bed** The brand new Orbit Magnetic Therapie bed from Thermarium combines relaxation and healing effects in a protected environment.

**What makes it stand out?** Thermarium has developed a magnetic therapy mattress which it says “has positive effects on blood circulation and cell metabolism”. The design creates an intimate and protected environment to screen guests from their surroundings through the use of a stylish cupola on the head end, while integrated loudspeakers amplify this effect to ensure guests enjoy a period of deep relaxation. The bed also has indirect illumination underneath it, giving it a floating effect. Like most Thermarium products the relaxation bed is available in many designs and colours to match the decor of the spa.



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORDS: FABIO ALEMANNO

EQUIPMENT LAUNCH

### E-Motion Balance upgrade launches

**The bed** The E-Motion Balance, which launches this September from Fabio Alemanno, is an upgrade which is available for the company’s Classico and Modemo relaxation beds – it isn’t available for the Basico model.

The E-motion Balance upgrade combines a swinging motion with natural far-infrared

rays from heated marble on the HotStone Loungers, to take users into a state of relaxation, so mind and body unwind.

The swinging angles are pre-set with precision, while the high penetrability of the far-infrared causes heat reaction in the body through a process known as resonance absorption.



SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORDS: SOMA BORNEO

EQUIPMENT LAUNCH

### Soma Borneo, Silhouet Tone

**The bed** The Soma Borneo has been supplied to a number of spas and MediSpa resorts since its launch.

**What makes it stand out?**

The company behind the bed says it sets itself apart owing to its ease of manipulation – it’s fully adjustable in less than 15

seconds and can be used for a wide range of treatments from waxing to facials. It has a clip on face hole.

The bed is made entirely from varished, environmentally-friendly, solid ash and is available in four colours and with different wood stains.

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### Environ needles larger areas

Environ has added to its system for micro-needling the face – in order to combat ageing and sun damage – by introducing the Body Roll-CIT for use on larger areas. Of the two types available, the 1.5mm option is designed to treat lax skin on the arms, abdomen and upper and lower arms, while the 3mm instrument has been devised for use by doctors and surgeons to use for acne scars on the back and chest.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **environ**



### Magnesium pool cleaning

For those spa operators seeking a greener pool cleaning solution, the MagnaPool system – which uses magnesium and potassium minerals – could be the answer. As well as treating the water, it apparently adds health benefits too. In addition to removing any organic impurities, the process creates a mineral which can aid in soothing skin conditions and reducing aches, pains, anxiety and stress.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **magnapool**



### Marine moisturising

Available from mid-August, Hydra-Original Cream and Fluid are two key new moisturising products from Phytomer. Both incorporate the marine ingredients of weaving algae and glasswort oil, with Non-Oily Ultra-Moisturizing Fluid being the choice for luminous, softer and smoother skin, and Thirst-Relief Melting Cream formulated to encourage comfortable, visibly plumped and radiant skin.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **phytomer**



### Products for the steamroom

The Russie Blanche face and body creams, oils, masks and scrubs are designed to enhance the Russian banya or steamroom experience – and are now opening up to international markets. The natural line, made by former Russian model Julia Lemigova in Parisian laboratories, is based on traditional Siberian recipes and plants and used by high-end operators such as Le Bristol Paris and Hôtel Due Cap Eden Roc.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **russie blanche**



### Steam bag relaxation by Kurland

Kurland's new Permanent Contour steamed bag heat treatment concept offers a way of turning a spa's relaxation zone into a fragrant, enjoyable, paid-for service. It can be used before or after a massage, during a facial, in between treatments and as a stand-alone treatment. Placed on a client's stomach, back or neck, three bags are available – the Moor Mud Bag, the Herb bag and the Swiss Pine Bag.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **kurland**



### Laser sculpting from Erchonia

Erchonia's Zerona laser body sculpting procedure, already well established in the US, has now been launched into Europe. It offers a pain-free Low Level Laser Therapy (3LT™) designed to reduce fat and contour the body without invasive surgery. The body fat reduction is said to be achieved without harming the fat cells, eliminating any long-term side effects which might otherwise occur.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **erchonia**

For more information, or to contact any of these companies, visit [www.spa-kit.net](http://www.spa-kit.net)



### Sothys sensorial experiences

Sothys has created a line of products and treatments based on six aromatic essences (pictured) such as lemon and petitgrain; and raspberry and jasmine flower. Each has a signature ritual and retail range – the cinnamon and ginger essence, for example, features a Oriental-inspired spicy scrub and modelling treatment with aromatic bags and warmed stones, plus a shower gel, scrub, elixir and mist for home use.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **sothys**



### Ultrasonic air care

Scentilizer is a line of three air care products from Serene House. The products include the Donut (pictured); the Vulcan, shaped like a volcano; and the Angel, where the top part of the diffuser is positioned at a 45° angle. Scentilizers use ultrasonic vibration to turn water into mist, which is then dispersed into the air. They also come with LED lighting and built-in speakers with pre-programmed, relaxing music.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **serene house**



### Lip service from VOYA

VOYA's new Balmelicious Lip Balms contain a unique blend of the company's organic seaweed extracts; vitamin E; and certified oils of sweet almond, beeswax, wheatgerm, candellilla and sunflower, all chosen for their repairing, hydrating and healing properties. Available in Zingy and Zesty Lemon flavours, they work to soften roughness, relieve dryness, stop flaking and prevent any further damage.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **voya**



### AA unveils introductory sets

Aromatherapy Associates (AA) has launched two new Skincare Sets containing miniature versions of its popular natural skincare collections. Ideal as weekend travel kits, as a stylish handbag companion or as an introduction to a new skincare regime, the Anti Age Introductory Set is presented in a classic cosmetics bag, while the Essential Skincare Introductory Set comes in a chic metallic case.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **aromatherapy**



### Diamond regeneration

System4 Technologies' Human Regenerator device is now comes in a diamond-encrusted version. The system, a quantum-pulse device that imitates and generates the cellular body's natural frequencies, works on the principal that just as a battery can be recharged, so too can individual body cells. The Human Regenerator is already available at Dubai's Burj al Arab and the Spaceport America in New Mexico.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **human regenerator**



### Li'Tya's sensory surprises

New from Li'Tya are its Sensory Walkabout "Sniff" Boxes, a range of sensory surprises offering a quick fix to lift, calm or balance one's mood. The collection, which comprises four blends of organic essential oils, includes the Detox, the Reharmonise, the Rejuvenating and the Ocean Dreaming Sensory Walkabouts. The mini-jars are simply unscrewed, held under the nose and the aromas inhaled.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **li'tya**

# PERSONAL LUXURIES

The team at Clarins has unveiled My Blend, a customisable, high-grade skincare line for luxury spas

When a skincare line makes its debut at Le Royal Monceau – one of the top hotels in Paris – in a €40m (US\$58m, £35m) spa specially created by renowned designer Philippe Starck (see p64), you know the company behind it means business. Cue My Blend: the new range that's been developed by Dr Oliver Courtin, the son of Clarins founder Jacques Courtin (see S809/2 p58), and the team of 80 researchers and developers at Clarins laboratories.

Five years in the making, My Blend has been developed with leading spa operators in mind. Ghislain Waeyaert, director of spa activities for Clarins says: "We already had an excellent quality product at a reasonable price with Clarins, but My Blend is a very exclusive brand that has been perfectly adapted to luxury hotels."

With items retailing between €30 to €250 (US\$42 to US\$354, £26 to £219), the My Blend range has been formulated using high-quality ingredients and the Cell Synergy Complex, a patented blend of peptides to boost the skin's defence system and advance cell renewal and regeneration. It also has luxurious packaging.

## THE RANGE AND TREATMENTS

The philosophy of My Blend is that a woman's skin cannot be characterised as a 'type', rather it changes on a daily basis due to age, hormones, emotions, climatic conditions, the environment and a lifestyle habits. My Blend offers more than 200 possible combinations to address all of these.



The first Spa My Blend launched at Le Royal Monceau, Paris, in June



The My Blend products offer more than 200 different combinations to suit all skin conditions

The line comprises eight day formulas and seven night formulas that each focus on different areas like oil control, early ageing, advanced ageing and stressed skin.

On top of this are seven Emergency Boosters – concentrated add-ins for when the skin needs it. The boosters include a super energising Radiant Burst; an extra hydrating Moisture Immersion; a Speedy Recovery to help with over exposure to the sun or wind; an Antioxidant Surge for stressed skin; a Redness Rescue for sensitive skin; an Anti Jet Lag Relief; and Vitamin Power for devitalised skin. There are also eight skincare Specifics including eye creams, cleansers, an acne-antidote, a face brightener, a polish and a UV protector.

My Blend's first foray to spas was in June in Spa My Blend by Clarins at Le Royal Monceau. More than 12 months has been spent

on creating eight facials which are based on the day and night creams. Each €295 (US\$418, £259), 95-minute treatment begins with a 15 to 20-minute lifestyle analysis and skin test where sensors in the Callegari Soft Plus machine measure levels of hydration, sebum, elasticity, pigmentation and wrinkles. A beauty coach then custom-blends the products and tailors the facials using different massage techniques accordingly. They finish with a makeover using Clarins make-up.

## THE ROLLOUT

So, what's next for the My Blend range? An e-commerce website is currently being developed, so that the products will be available to buy online. Another aim is to also open more Spa My Blend by Clarins facilities in partnership with modern, luxury hotel operators.

There are no set design requirements for the spas, says Waeyaert, but any operator who wants My Blend will also be required to take on the full Clarins line. In terms of location, the company has its sights set on opening spas in the major cities of London, New York and Singapore to begin with. ●

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## STOP THE CLOCK

Meditation may have long-term implications on health and could help delay the ageing process

It's well documented that meditation leads to improvements in perception and wellbeing. Small trials, involving short courses of meditation have also indicated that it can influence actual physical responses such as lowering blood pressure, slowing disease progression in HIV patients and improving the immune response in cancer patients.

Now research from the Shamatha Project – the most comprehensive long-term study of intensive meditation to date\* – is the first to link positive wellbeing with cellular ageing and possibly with the delay of the ageing process.

### THREE-MONTH RETREATS

The Shamatha Project, which focused on 60 meditators, was co-ordinated by Clifford Saron, a neuroscientist at the Center for Mind and Brain at the University of California, Davis, in the US.

Half of the participants attended a three-month retreat at the Shambhala Mountain Center in Colorado in the spring of 2007, while the other half, a control group, abstained from meditating at that time. The groups then switched places in the autumn, with those who attended the retreat not meditating for three months and vice versa.

While at the retreat, participants took part in two daily group meditation sessions and their own individual sessions for about six

hours a day in total. They practiced a mix of mindfulness meditation, in which people are aware of their own thoughts and surroundings; and compassion meditation, in which people extend feelings of love and kindness to others. They were also offered ongoing training by B Alan Wallace, a Buddhist scholar.

Over the three months, the groups were subjected to a variety of tests, mostly focusing on the control of emotions and changes in cognitive function. Yet Elissa Epel, a psychologist from the University of California, San Francisco, was interested in finding out what impact the meditation had on telomeres.

Telomeres are DNA structures at the end of chromosomes, which shorten every time a cell divides. When they fall below a certain length, the cell cannot divide and eventually dies. This cell loss causes wrinkling and ageing. An enzyme called telomerase, however, can rebuild and lengthen them.

### MEDITATION AFFECT

Epel found that at the end of the three-month retreat, telomerase activity was significantly higher – one-third more – in the white blood cells of participants on the retreat, compared to those in the control group. In an article in UK newspaper *The Observer*, Epel said that in theory this could stop and maybe even reverse cellular ageing: "If the increase in telomerase is sustained

long enough, it's logical to infer that this group would develop more stable and possibly longer telomeres over time."

During the retreat, the psychological state of participants was also assessed using questionnaires. Interestingly, three psychological qualities in particular resulted in higher telomerase activity: a higher feeling of perceived control (over life and surroundings); an increased sense of having a purpose in life; and decreased neurotic feelings such as being anxious, tense or in a bad mood.

In conclusion, Saron says: "The take-home message from this work is not that meditation directly increases telomerase activity and therefore a person's health and longevity. Rather, meditation may improve a person's psychological wellbeing in an turn these changes are related to telomerase activity in immune cells, which has the potential to promote longevity in those cells. Activities that increase a person's sense of wellbeing may have a profound effect on the most fundamental aspects of physiology."

To that effect, simply doing something we enjoy or which makes us feel less stressed – whether that's meditating, exercising, gardening, reading or painting – may help us age well and live longer. ●

\*Jacobs TL, et al. *Intensive meditation training, immune cell telomerase activity and psychological mediators*. Psychoneuroendocrinology (2010).



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