

spa opportunities

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Club Med opens first US L'Occitane spa

Club Med has opened North America's first L'Occitane-branded spa as part of a wider US\$28m (£21.3m, £17.8m) redevelopment of the Club Med Sandpiper Bay resort in Port St Lucie, Florida, US.

The Club Med Spa by L'Occitane follows an agreement announced late last year and marks the conclusion of the renovation, with the spa "completing the wellness and rejuvenation experience" at the resort. The 5,000sq ft (465sq m) spa comprises seven indoor treatment rooms, including one designed for couples' massages. Each room includes separate music, lighting and air controls.

A manicure and pedicure area, a Zen lounge and a L'Occitane boutique featuring more than 80 products also form part of the newly-opened spa. Among the services that are on offer at the spa are the TOEtally About Me pedicures and Angelica Cheeks facials, which



The resort's 5,000sq ft L'Occitane spa boasts seven treatment rooms

have been designed for younger guests aged between eight- and 17-years-old.

Club Med North America chief executive officer Xavier Mufraggi said: "We're thrilled to offer Club Med guests the L'Occitane spa experience. Well-being is at the core of both the Club Med and L'Occitane philosophies which aligns perfectly with what our customers are looking for – a way to balance their lives through enriching activities and relaxation."



Onyx launched the Maai spa brand earlier this year

Onyx to add six more properties in 2012

Thailand-based Onyx Hospitality Group has announced that it plans to open six more properties during 2013.

Onyx, which currently operates 33 properties, is set to open two new resorts in Thailand and in China, as well as one each in Hong Kong and India next year. The group has also agreed management deals for a further two properties in Sri Lanka. Most new properties will include spas.

The expansion is part of Onyx's plans to operate 51 properties by 2018.

Green Globe mark for Mövenpick hotels

Switzerland-based hospitality group Mövenpick has announced that all of its 21 hotels in Europe have now achieved Green Globe certification.

The move is part of the luxury hotel group's strategy to invest heavily in becoming one of the most sustainable hospitality companies in the world.

Mövenpick has adopted the Strategic Sustainable Development framework, a science-based model devised by Sweden-based The Natural Step, which is aimed at helping businesses to better understand and integrate sustainability in its strategy and operations.

Steiner reports increased revenue

US-based spa and wellness group Steiner Leisure has reported revenues of US\$701.6m (£527m, £440m) for the year ending 31 December 2011 – an increase of 13.1 per cent when compared with 2010.

During the period, the company completed the acquisition of Ideal Image Development – a US-based provider of laser hair removal treatments – and the massage therapy school operator, Cortiva Group.

Earlier in the year, Steiner secured deals with both Cunard and P&O Cruises, which will see the group expand its operations of onboard spa, salon and fitness facilities. In total, Steiner currently provides services aboard more than



Steiner acquired Ideal Image Development last year

155 cruise ships around the world, along with 69 land-based resort spas, urban hotel spas and day spas – operated under the Elemis, Mandara, Chavana, Bliss and Remede brands.

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MGM to bring Bellagio to Shanghai

US-based hotel giant MGM Resorts International is to develop and manage a new Bellagio-branded hotel in Shanghai, China, as part of a strategic partnership which will see the company operate a number of properties throughout the country.

MGM announced that it had secured the deal through its Chinese joint venture, Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality Limited, which has entered into an agreement with Suning Real Estate Group, a subsidiary of Suning Group. The 200-bedroom Suning Bellagio Shanghai Bund will be owned by Suning and managed by Diaoyutai MGM – a joint venture between MGM and Diaoyutai State Guest House, which focuses on the development and management of hospitality assets in China.

The hotel will feature a luxury spa, 'world-class retail' and entertainment amenities, with completion scheduled for 2015.

MGM Resorts Chairman and CEO Jim Murren said, "This strategic partnership with Suning further extends our reach into China, one of the fastest growing hospitality markets in the world. Along with our Diaoyutai JV partners, we believe relationships like this with Suning create new opportunities to expand our brand reach into this marketplace."



The Bellagio-branded resort will be the 'first of many'

Suning Real Estate, a subsidiary of Suning Group, is a large real estate development group, that specialises in the development of high-end mixed-use schemes.

It is currently planning and developing more than eighty Suning Plaza or Suning Appliance Plaza series mixed-use projects – including 100 high-end hotels – by 2020.

Sofitel unveils latest So-branded hotel

Sofitel Luxury Hotels, the luxury division of France-based hospitality group Accor, has announced the opening of its latest So-branded hotel with the new Sofitel So Bangkok, Thailand.

Thai architect Smith Obayawat and five Thai interior designers teamed up with France-based fashion designer Christian Lacroix to devise a concept based around five elements.

All 238 bedrooms and suites incorporate the elements of water, earth, wood and metal, while the dining and restaurant areas reflect the fifth element of fire.

A So SPA on the 11th floor is the second of two floors dedicated to wellness experiences at the hotel, which includes six treatment rooms – three single and three double.

The spa also includes a massage room and is themed as a mythological forest designed to "invite discovery and exploration". Products are supplied by Cinq Mondes and Ytsara.



The hotel will include a So SPA-branded space with six treatment rooms

On the 10th floor, an infinity pool and a So FIT full-service fitness centre complements the So SPA as part of the wellness experience, along with a solarium. The existing Sofitel hotel in Bangkok is to be rebranded as a Pullman property in April, following the opening of Sofitel So Bangkok.

• To read an interview with Laurence Boulet, spa development director for Accor, see *Spa Business 2010, Issue 1: <http://lei.sr?a=k17M>*



IHG launches wellness-focused brand

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has announced the launch of its new wellness-focused hotel brand, which has been designed to meet consumer demand for "healthier travel at a mainstream price".

EVEN Hotels, which IHG says is a first for the global hotel industry, aims to provide guests with solutions that cater for all their wellness needs, such as exercise, food, work and rest.

The brand will benefit from an investment of up to US\$150m (£11.5m, £94m) over the next three years to support the roll-out, with the first location to be announced in Q2 2012.

Despite the focus on wellness, there are surprisingly no spas being planned as part of the new brand. When asked about the exclusion of a spa element, a spokesperson said the focus will be on providing customers with the chance to maintain their "normal, daily healthy lifestyle" while staying at an EVEN property.

The IHG spokesperson added that providing a premium spa offer while retaining the



The EVEN brand will be based on holistic wellness - but will not have spas

EVEN price point would have been "a challenge to deliver". Instead, bedrooms will be designed for in-room fitness workouts, with multi-functional amenities to include a coat rack that doubles as a pull-up bar, as well as fully equipped gym facilities.

Menus will be "nutritionally-designed" with a focus on natural and energizing meals, while natural lighting, hypo-allergenic linens and LED dimmers will all be utilised at EVEN hotels. IHG said it had conducted analysis of emerging trends, which influenced the decision to create its new holistic travel experience.



France-based AW2 designed Six Senses Con Dao

Winners of MIPIM Awards

2012 announced in France

Vietnam's Six Senses Con Dao Resort has been named among the winners at the MIPIM Awards 2012 in Cannes, France.

More than 100 completed or upcoming projects were considered by the awards jury for this year's event, with Six Senses Con Dao - designed by Stéphanie Ledoux and Réda Amalou's France-based practice, AW2 - named Best Hotel and Tourism Resort.

Indochina Land was the developer behind the resort, which boasts a Six Senses Spa with four treatment rooms; a Thai therapy room; and three outdoor treatment salas.

The resort was named as the winner ahead of finalists The Bulgari Hotel and Residences in London, UK, and the Victoria Tower Hotel in Kista, Sweden.

Details: <http://lei.sr.a=Vot5Y>

Florida resort unveils US\$25m redevelopment

A new spa has opened at Sheraton Lake Buena Vista Resort in Orlando, Florida, US, as part of a comprehensive US\$25m (£18.9m, £15.7m) transformation of the 490-bedroom property.

Top of The Palms spa incorporates four dual treatment rooms for individual or couples' use and a relaxation lounge overlooking the pool courtyard – as well as an aesthetician room.

Poolsides massages and other treatments are available in personal cabanas, as well as in-room. All spa guests receive a signature gift of coconut water and coconut malted sweets. Treatments include the Palm Massage, which is customised to each guest's needs.

The spa is one of the new additions to the resort – formerly known as Sheraton Safari Hotel and Suites. A health and fitness centre and the 27 Palms Pool Club with two swimming pools have also opened.



Top of The Palms spa is among the new additions to the Orlando resort

Orlando mayor Buddy Dyer said: "Sheraton Lake Buena Vista Resort is a fantastic addition to the lodging, dining and event facilities available for local residents and visitors alike."

"Travel and tourism drives our region's economy and the significant investments made to this property have created another compelling offering in Orlando."

ISPA reveals keynote speaker line-up for annual conference

Jim Collins, author of the international bestseller *Good to Great*, has been named as one of the keynote speakers at this year's ISPA Annual Conference and Expo.

Organised by the International SPA Association (ISPA), the event will be held at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Kissimmee, Florida, US, between 15 and 17 October. Other speakers include Lisa Ling, former co-host of popular US TV show *The View*; and Peter Sheahan, founder and CEO of ChangeLabs.

ISPA president Lynne McNees said: "We're thrilled to have three world-class speakers on the ISPA stage this year."

"The pressures of growing and leading a business in the rapidly changing world we live in today are enormously challenging. Each of these incredible speakers can share first-hand stories that will educate and inspire our attendees to prosper and thrive in any circumstances."



IMAGE: CHIN WEN SENG/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Total EMEA investment volumes totalled €8.1bn

JLL publishes latest hotel investment report

A new report by Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) has revealed that 60 per cent of total hotel investment volumes last year across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) were single asset deals.

The professional services firm's *Hotel Investment Highlights* report said it had been "another active year" for investors and hoteliers across the region throughout 2011. Total investment volumes totalled €8.1bn (US\$10.8bn, £6.8bn) – up 5 per cent on 2010 – and the most active market within the region was the UK, which came ahead of France and Germany.

JLL also reported a 16 per cent increase in portfolio transaction volumes, such as Mint and the European InterContinental estates. However, single asset deals were still more common throughout the region.

HVS: European hotel deal activity increases

International consultancy HVS has revealed European hotel sector investment activity showed signs of improvement last year, following a 9 per cent growth in total transaction volume.

HVS London's annual *European Hotel Transactions* study saw total volume increase to €7.1bn (£6bn), compared with €6.5bn (£5.5bn) for the previous 12 months.

However, the report also found that activity continues to remain well below the 2006 peak of €20bn (£17bn), as well as the 10-year average of €9.9bn (£8.4bn).

The increase in investment activity last year has been attributed to improved demand in both the leisure and business markets, which has made the sector more attractive to investors.

European expansion for Jumeirah

Jumeirah Group, the United Arab Emirates-based luxury hotel group, has further expanded its presence in the European market with new properties in Rome, Italy, and Mallorca, Spain.

Earlier this year, the group took over the management of the 116-bedroom Jumeirah Grand Hotel Via Veneto in central Rome, which includes the 500sq m (5,382sq ft) Aqva City Spa. Facilities at the Rome hotel include six mahogany treatment rooms featuring ergonomic heated beds and individual polychrome marble showers, along with a couples' room.

Aqva City Spa also includes a vitality pool with salt water hydro massages; a hammam; and a sauna, as well as a relaxation lounge. Treatments at the spa use Bulgari products.

Meanwhile, the new Jumeirah Port Soller Hotel and Spa on the north-east coast of



Jumeirah's new sites include the Grand Hotel Via Veneto in Roma, Italy

Mallorca is due to open this year, although an exact date is yet to be confirmed by the group.

The hotel's facilities will include a Talise spa spanning more than 2,200sq m (23,681sq ft) and will house 10 treatment rooms – including a rasul and hammam suite. A thermal area at the Talise spa will comprise a salt bath, a sauna and an Arabic hammam, in addition to an ice fountain, a steamroom and a meditation room.

Virgin opens Clubhouse Spa at JFK airport

Virgin Atlantic has opened its new US\$77m (€5.3m, £4.5m) Clubhouse at New York JFK International Airport, US.

Slade Architecture designed the 10,000sq ft (929sq m) air-side venue in partnership with Virgin Atlantic's in-house design team, with facilities including a Clubhouse Spa.

The 450sq ft (42 sq m) spa is the first branded spa for Virgin outside of London and will be marketed as a more "intimate space" than the Clubhouse Spa at Heathrow airport.

The spa has a two treatment rooms and offers a range of massages and facials by German supplier Dr.Hauschka Skin Care for passengers with premium tickets or Virgin Atlantic or Singapore Airlines flights. New York-based spa and salon supplier Bumble and bumble has



The new Clubhouse Spa at JFK airport includes two treatment rooms

partnered with Virgin Atlantic and will offer the first-ever hair service available at any business class lounge in the US.

The Clubhouse Spa's salon fittings have been provided by Takara Belmont and massage tables are furnished by Oakworks.

Ginger McLean joins WTS International

Ginger McLean has joined spa management and consultancy firm WTS International as senior vice president, spa division.

McLean joins the company from her role as spa director at The Spa at the Hotel Hershey, Hershey, Pennsylvania, US.

In her new position, McLean will be responsible for overseeing the strategic development of the WTS International spa division to ensure quality standards and benchmark practices for the WTS International spa brand worldwide. Details: <http://leisr.a=H5Piz>



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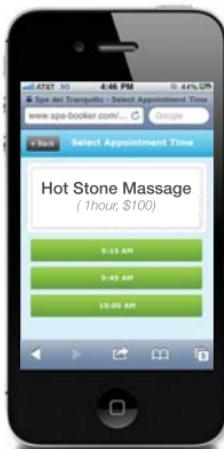
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The spa forms part of a £15m redevelopment

£15m Cheshire spa resort scheme completed

A new 81-bedroom hotel has opened at the independently-owned Mere Golf Resort and Spa in Cheshire, UK, to complete a £15m (US\$23.4m, €17.8m) redevelopment.

Mather and Co worked on three parts of the scheme, which has included the interior design of the new hotel – an extension to the resort's original golf club building.

The Cheshire-based consultancy also carried out interior design work on a 1,253 sq m (13,487sq ft) health club and day spa, which opened early last year and includes seven treatment rooms and a hammam.

A relaxation terrace, a thermal zone with sauna and steamroom, a salt room and a caldarium Roman-style hot room also feature as part of the spa, which uses Carita and Aromatherapy Associates products.

The health club and spa facilities are located within a former stable block and courtyard at the property.

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

Hotel Missoni Mauritius on track for 2014 opening

Rezidor Hotel Group has said that its luxury lifestyle brand, Hotel Missoni, is on track to open a new 80-suite property overlooking the Indian Ocean in Mauritius in 2014.

The hotel will be owned by Bouygues Développement and will include a 900sq m (9,688sq ft) luxury spa, the brand's signature dining concept, Cucina; a Choco Café; a fitness area and pool.

Hotel Missoni Mauritius, which will join the brand's existing properties in Edinburgh, UK, and Kuwait, will also provide access to a 650m (2,133ft) beach and outdoor swimming pools.

Each of the hotel's suites will incorporate Missoni's signature patterns and fabrics, as well as a large covered outdoor living area known as a Varangue in Mauritius.

Medical tourism future for Guernsey

A new report carried out on behalf of the States of Guernsey has uncovered the "notable economic potential" of the Channel Island's medical tourism industry.

Oxford Economics has compiled the study, which provides a look at the island's current economic profile and opportunities for growth.

The report said cosmetic surgery provided one of the "strongest opportunities" for growth in the medical tourism sector, which applied to both domestic and external markets. A reported VAT increase on aesthetic procedures in the UK could benefit inbound medical tourism, while Guernsey may also be able to look towards attracting European residents.

The report said: "To attract appropriate higher-income consumers, the medical tourism sector should probably be sold in tandem with Guernsey's existing core brand image – premium quality, skilled professional labour and relaxed, picturesque surroundings.



Guernsey could become a destination for medical and wellness tourism

IMAGE: DAVID TURNER/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

"Unless capacity can be significantly expanded, Guernsey probably needs to treat medical tourism as a niche sector in order to identify true specialisms and concentrate on providing key services to a higher standard than elsewhere."

Oxford Economics found other areas that could drive up tourism, which included upmarket short breaks; cultural tourism; and the medium-term potential of eco-tourism.

Details: <http://lei.sr?r=a=Y2y9A>

Hermitage Plaza granted 'permis de construire'

Architects Foster + Partners have confirmed that the Hermitage Plaza, a mixed-use development planned for Paris, France has been granted 'permis de construire' – the final approval.

The result of a close collaboration with EPAD, the City of Courbevoie, Atelier de Paysage Urbain and Département de Hauts-de-Seine, the project is intended to inject life into the area east of La Défense by creating a sustainable, high-density community.

The project incorporates two 320m (1,050ft)-high buildings. The twin tower buildings will take the form of interlocking triangles which face one another and enclose a large public piazza.

Covering a total site area of 161,458sq ft (15,000sq m), the first tower will have 91 floors and the second will have 92.

There will be 538 apartments, two spa centres – including a panoramic spa – a luxury hotel and office space. The angle of the façade panels promotes self-shading and vents can be opened to draw fresh air inside, contributing to an environmental strategy that targets a



The development will feature two towers overlooking the River Seine

BREEAM 'excellent' rating. Exact details of the spas and hotel – including the identity of potential operators – are yet to be confirmed.

Grant Brookner, senior partner at Foster + Partners, said: "Our ambition was to create a project that would inject new life into La Défense by bringing a new type of occupation and creating a new public focus on the edge of the Seine. This represents a very important stage in the project's development."

• To read more on the Hermitage Plaza and other large hotel projects in Paris, see Spa Business Issue 3, 2011: <http://lei.sr?r=a=dim8s>

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Global Spa & Wellness Summit 2012

Aspen, Colorado, US

The sixth annual Global Spa & Wellness Summit (GSWS) will be held 3-6 June 2012 in Aspen, Colorado, US. The first gathering to be held in the US since 2008, the 2012 Summit will be very unique, as it's being held in collaboration with the 61-year-old Aspen Institute, one of the most prestigious think-tanks in the world.

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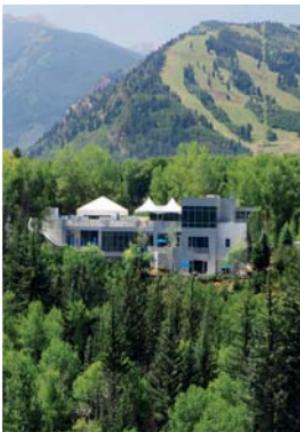
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ESPA to sponsor Gallery Pavilion

International spa company SPA has announced the first of its planned cultural partnerships for 2012 with the sponsorship of the annual Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in Hyde Park, London, UK.

The pavilion is a temporary structure commissioned annually by the park's Serpentine Gallery in order to provide a showcase for contemporary architectural practice.

This year, the gallery has been designed in partnership by Chinese artist and architect Ai Weiwei and Switzerland-based architects Herzog and de Meuron (HDM).

Weiwei and HDM previously collaborated on the Beijing National Stadium – also known as the "Bird's Nest" – and which was the main stage of the 2008 Olympic Games.

The pavilion will be presented as part of the London 2012 Festival and will mark the culmination of the Cultural Olympiad, which has been organised as part of the legacy plans for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

According to Susan Harmsworth, SPA's involvement in the pavilion will be part of the company's programme of collaborations with British cultural institutions, artists and



Chinese architect and artist Ai Weiwei

luminaries that showcase the best in design, expertise and "the unexpected".

Harmsworth said: "To be able to support British culture, in particular the creativity and innovation of the pavilion, is important to SPA as it reflects our core values."

Kempinski confirms Latin America return

Hotel and resort operator Kempinski has announced its re-entry into the Latin American market with the signing of a management contract for a new luxury resort in Colón Province, Panama.

The new property is under development by Two Oceans Group on the Caribbean Sea coastline and will be sited near the town of Portobelo to the north of the country.

Scheduled to open in 2015 the beachside resort will feature 106 rooms and suites – all with ocean view – a large spa, outdoor and indoor pools as well as a plaza area featuring restaurants, boutique retail units and entertainment facilities. A total of 75 private Kempinski Residences are also planned as



Kempinski's new Panama resort is scheduled to open in 2015

part of the development, of which 40 are to be directly located overlooking the sea.

The Panama opening is part of Kempinski's long-term strategy for Central and South America with projects in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Welsh boutique hotel invests in wellness

Ruthin Castle Hotel, a 60-bedroom boutique property in Denbighshire, Wales, UK, has received a upgrade of its amenities.

At the centre of the redevelopment works is the redesign of The Moat, which will allow the hotel to offer more spa and hydro experiences

as the hotel realigns itself as a wellness centre. Ruthin Castle's Beauty Suite, which is open to hotel guests and day visitors, currently offers a range of treatments using products supplied by Elemis and Bare Escentuals.
Details: <http://lei.sr?a=k7B2p>

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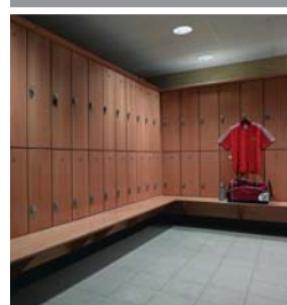
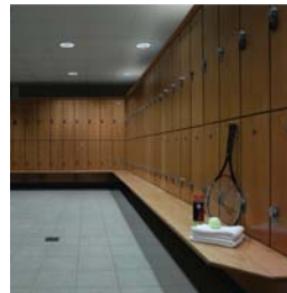
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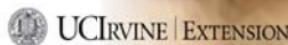
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RECRUITMENT

World Spa Award winners revealed

The winners of this year's World Spa Awards have been announced at a gala event at the Hilton Park Lane in London, UK, on 4 March.

The annual awards, held in conjunction with the European Spa Convention, recognise winners in two categories – hotel spas and destination spas – across five regions (Europe; Middle East; Africa; The Americas; and Asia and Australasia).

Among this year's winners was The Dolder Grand Spa in Zurich, Switzerland, which beat off competition from Swissotel The Bosphorus, Istanbul and Mandarin Oriental Paris to win the Hotel Spa of the Year award for Europe.

The full list of winners:

- Hotel Spa of the Year, Europe: The Dolder Grand Spa, Zurich, Switzerland.
- Destination Spa of the Year, Europe: Lannerhof, Austria.
- Hotel Spa of the Year, North and South America: Spa Montage, Laguna Beach, US.
- Destination Spa of the Year, North and South America: Lapinha Spa, Lapa Brazil.
- Hotel Spa of the Year, Asia: The Oriental Spa at The Landmark, Hong Kong.
- Destination Spa of the Year, Asia: Kamalaya Wellness Sanctuary, Koh Samui, Thailand.
- Hotel Spa of the Year, Africa: One and Only Spa, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Hotel Spa of the Year, Middle East: Assawan Spa & Health Club, Dubai
- Destination Spa of the Year, Middle East and Africa: Six Senses at Zighy Bay, Oman.



The Dolder Grand in Zurich was named European Hotel Spa of the Year

Work to begin on fifth Center Parcs site

Holiday park operator Center Parcs is to begin work on its fifth park in Bedfordshire, UK, after it successfully secured funding for the project.

Blackstone, owner of Center Parcs, is set to invest £100m (US\$156m, €119m) into the venture, while four UK banks – RBS, Barclays, HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group – have committed to a construction loan of approximately £150m (US\$234m, €178m).

Center Parcs Woburn Forest will cost £250m (US\$390m, €297m) and is due to be completed in time for the park to receive guests by May 2014.

The holiday park will comprise 625 forest lodges, a 75-bedroom hotel, an Aqua Sana-branded spa with 12 associated spa suites and two main centres including indoor sports facilities, swimming pool, restaurants and retail outlets. It will also include outdoor sports and leisure facilities and a lake.

The announcement comes as Center Parcs successfully completed a £1bn (US\$1.6bn, €1.2bn) group refinancing secured against the existing four Center Parcs sites – located at



Center Parcs Woburn Forest will include an Aqua Sana-branded spa

Whinfell Forest (Cumbria), Sherwood Forest (Nottinghamshire), Elveden Forest (Suffolk) and Longleat Forest (Wiltshire).

Martin Dalby, chief executive of Center Parcs, said: "The addition of a fifth site further enhances our geographic footprint in the UK."

"This is our 25th year of operation and Center Parcs is trading strongly, with occupancy rates of around 97 per cent throughout 2011 and positive forward booking trends for 2012, as guests continue to respond positively to the high quality holiday experience we offer."

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