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Spas take their offerings online

Can saunas help treat COVID-19?

ISPA research: industry's pandemic response

Highlights from over 40 webinars

Karen Roos

Owner of world-renowned hotel, The Newt

Kisawa Sanctuary

3D-printed resort planned for Mozambique

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Mary Celeste Beall

ON WELLNESS THROUGH NATURE AT BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN



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Our greatest challenge

Spa and wellness businesses will reopen while COVID-19 is still circulating in the community, meaning we have to find models which work in this new reality. How will this change the industry?

The coronavirus pandemic has brought with it some dark times, but I truly believe the global spa industry is a beacon of light in the world.

We should be proud of how suppliers have switched production to support medical staff and the public (p96), operators have pivoted to digital solutions (p26) and we've all come together in hundreds of webinars, virtual conferences and 'collaboration calls'.

For those who haven't been able to keep up with the webinar overload, we share our takeaways on p56 and p62.

Overall, the industry standpoint is one of optimism - people will be in need of wellness more than ever going forward and there are reports of phones ringing off the hook in anticipation of reopening.

In some countries, like China and the US, spas are already starting to operate once more, while in others, like the UK, this is weeks away. But the reality is that when doors open, we will need to operate while COVID-19 is still active in the community - for the foreseeable future.

So how can we deliver meaningful experiences while avoiding transmission? There won't be one solution and only operators that are adaptable and responsive will survive.

There will be an opportunity to position spas as safe spaces - places of 'safe touch'. Hygiene and social distancing will need to be scrutinised at every touchpoint and this demonstrated to customers to build up trust.

Maybe it will be about testing staff and customers before they enter the spa, or using UV robots, anti-viral fogging and anti-viral air con to keep spaces safe. Perhaps it will be around wearing masks, or delivering touchless therapies using machines. There are many tools and strategies we can use.

We can also make more of the outdoors as a safe space by offering interventions such as forest bathing. This will also help support people with their mental health.



Medical wellness includes oxygen therapy and DNA testing

“We expect medical wellness to do well in the new reality and this is an opportunity to add more medical services to your menu”

There will be a significant move towards medical wellness, and businesses in this part of the sector will do well in the new reality. This is an opportunity for spas to add more science-based interventions to menus to support customers.

Now is also the time to cement relationships with medical institutions to create new operating models and also to reconfirm the efficacy of what we already offer.

We'll find a growing demand for beauty maintenance, so we also expect to see spas embracing these services far more.

In a time of crisis, people are open to new ideas. We need to be entrepreneurial and flexible, not only to survive, but also to add meaningful depth to our services. ●

Katie Barnes, editor @SpaBusinessKB

Contact Spa Business: +44 (0)1462 431385 theteam@spabusiness.com
spabusiness.com [@spabusinessmag](https://www.facebook.com/spabusiness) [Facebook.com/spabusiness](https://www.facebook.com/spabusiness)



Blackberry Mountain's Mary Celeste Beall **p30**



Karen Roos and The Newt **p50**



Webinar highlights **p62**



ISPA releases first COVID-19 study **p46**

7 | Editor's letter

Katie Barnes shares her thoughts

14 | Spa people

Nina Flohr plans a 3D printed resort in Africa; Sue Harmsworth reveals UK standards for cancer touch therapy

20 | News

Latest headlines from the global spa industry

26 | ★ On the menu: Pivot to digital

Which forward-thinking spas are taking their offerings online during the coronavirus pandemic?

30 | Interview: Mary Celeste Beall

Blackberry Farm has opened a sister property in the mountains of Tennessee. The owner tells Jane Kitchen why wellness through nature is so key

38 | ★ Everyone's talking about: COVID-19

Spa companies talk to Katie Barnes about the impact of coronavirus

46 | ★ Research: First responders

ISPA's COVID-19 survey offers insights into how the industry has responded to the global pandemic. Josh Corman reports

50 | Hotel spa: The Newt

Karen Roos, owner of the world-renowned hotel, on design, gardens and a spa housed in an old cow barn

56 | ★ Calls to action

Industry leaders around the world come together in a crisis to share ideas and innovations in a series of GWS Collaboration calls. Cassandra Cavanah reports on the highlights

62 | ★ Webinar wisdom

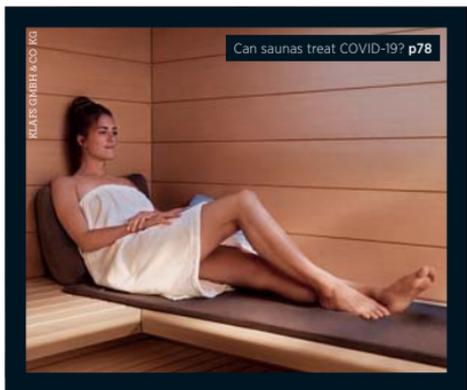
Lisa Starr shares her spa-relevant takeaways from the masses of webinars that are being streamed worldwide



Marc Cohen's wellness retreat in Bali **p70**



Using software to keep connected **p90**



Can saunas treat COVID-19? **p78**



Mindful movement master Juliu Horvath **p84**

66 | Research: **Measure for measure**
Intelligent Spas reveals its latest global spa benchmarks and explores what they mean in today's climate

70 | Focus on: **Extreme wellness**
Catharine Nicol braves two retreats led by Wim Hof and Dr Marc Cohen

78 | **Investigation:**
Sauna & coronavirus
Can saunas help combat COVID-19? Three authorities give their opinions

84 | Interview: **Juliu Horvath**
We talk to the Gyrotonic founder

90 | **Software: Customer connections**
How can spas use software to keep in touch with clients during lockdown?

96 | **Product news:**
Suppliers show support
We shine a spotlight on spa suppliers which are pivoting production to help those in the fight against coronavirus

99 | **Product innovation**
Product and equipment launches

108 | **Finishing touch**
A global study aims to uncover the role touch plays in our health and wellbeing



Suppliers switch production **p96**

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READER SERVICES

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription line +44 (0)1462 431385

CIRCULATION

Michael Emmerson +44 (0)1462 471932

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Liz Terry +44 (0)1462 431385

EDITOR

Katie Barnes +44 (0)1462 471925

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Jane Kitchen +44 (0)1462 431385

Lisa Starr +44 (0)1462 471925

ASSISTANT PRODUCT EDITOR

Lauren Heath-Jones +44 (0)1462 471927

NEWSDESK

Megan Whitby +44 (0)1462 471906

Lauren Heath-Jones +44 (0)1462 471927

Stu Roberts +44 (0)1462 471902

Tom Walker +44 (0)1462 471916

ADVERTISING TEAM

PUBLISHER/ADVERTISING SALES

Astrid Ros +44 (0)1462 471911

ADVERTISING SALES

Julie Badrick +44 (0)1462 471919

Jan Williams +44 (0)1462 471909

THE SPA BUSINESS TEAM

For email, use contact's fullname@spabusiness.com



Editorial director
Liz Terry
+44 (0)1462 431385



Editor
Katie Barnes
+44 (0)1462 471925



Publisher
Astrid Ros
+44 (0)1462 471911



Contributing editor
Jane Kitchen
+44 (0)1462 431385



Contributing editor
Lisa Starr
+44 (0)1462 471925



Journalist
Megan Whitby
+44 (0)1462 471906

CONTRIBUTORS



● **Cassandra Cavanah**

Cassandra Cavanah specialises in spa and wellness PR. She's also a part of the Global Wellness Summit team and authored the *Guide to Hydrothermal Spa & Wellness Development Standards*.
Email: cassandra@cavanahcommunications.com



● **Josh Corman**

Josh Corman is the director of education and research for ISPA. His writing has been featured at *Book Riot*, *Wanderlust Travel* and *The Huffington Post*.
Email: ispa@ispastaff.com



● **Julie Garrow**

Julie Garrow, founder of Intelligent Spas, has 25 years' experience in tourism, hospitality and leisure research. She's been focusing on spa business and consumer research since 2001
Email: julie@intelligentspas.com



● **Catharine Nicol**

Previously editor of consumer wellness and lifestyle magazine *AsiaSpa*, Catharine Nicol travels extensively and writes editorial, web, blog and marketing content from her Hong Kong base.
Email: catherinenicol@spabusiness.com

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spa people



We've used design as a tool, not as a style, to ensure Kisawa is integrated, both culturally and environmentally into Mozambique

Nina Flohr entrepreneur



Billed as the world's first 3D-printed resort, Kisawa Sanctuary a luxury eco-resort and spa in Mozambique will be created by a 3D printer using a sand-and-sea-water mortar. The structure is being piped in layers from the bottom up using patented technology.

It's taken entrepreneur Nina Flohr five years to develop the project and now the resort is scheduled to open in mid 2020. Flohr is the daughter of Thomas

Flohr, the Swiss billionaire and founder of private aviation company VistaJet and she's assembling a team of global experts to execute the long-term vision.

The resort will be located on Benguerra Island, 14km off the East coast of Africa, which is part of the WWF National Marine Park and home to rich subtropical ecosystems.

Set across 300 hectares of private sanctuary beach, forest and sand dunes, Kisawa will feature a



Kisawa Sanctuary is billed as the world's first 3D printed resort



Each of the 12 bungalows is set within an acre of land and includes its own massage hut

It inspires feelings of freedom and luxury born from nature, space and true privacy

standalone spa – called The Natural Wellness Center – which will specialise in traditional Chinese medicine and ayurvedic offerings. Its design will be inspired by traditional Mozambican dwellings and the spa menu will offer a range of treatments including massages and multi-day detox retreats.

“My mission for Kisawa is to create a level of hospitality and design that, to my knowledge, does not exist today, a place that inspires feelings of freedom and luxury born from nature, space and true privacy,” she explains.

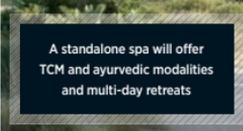
“We’ve used design as a tool, not as a style, to ensure Kisawa is integrated, both culturally and environmentally into Mozambique,” says Flohr.

The resort will feature 12 one-, two- and three-bed bungalows set in an acre of land, each one including



personal beachfront, a swimming pool, personal chef, massage hut, an electric mini moke (small convertible) and e-bike. Rates start at US\$8,124 (£7,301, £6,342) a night. Additional on-property facilities include a gym, yoga and meditation pavilion, along with a tennis court, water sports facility and four dining venues.

Flohr has worked to limit the resort’s impact on the surrounding environment with the help of its non-profit sister project, The Bazaruto Center for Scientific



A standalone spa will offer TCM and ayurvedic modalities and multi-day retreats

Studies. The field marine station and laboratory focuses on the respect and maintenance of local culture and wildlife, which includes 150 species of birds, five species of turtles, humpback whales and whale sharks.

Set against the backdrop of a 150m sand dune, the resort has been conceptualised to complement its surroundings and is described as ‘a happy pairing of innovation and tradition’. It is being constructed in collaboration with artisans from Benguerra Island.

Guests will only be able to reach the resort via air or sea, making the journey from Vilanculos using a private boat or VistaJet. ●



Flohr’s father is a billionaire and founder of private aviation company VistaJet

spabusiness.com issue 2 2020 15



A wellbeing budget is in the works, with a number of priorities already having been identified

Katrin Jakobsdóttir
Prime Minister, Iceland



TRISTAN SHUTTERSTOCK

Wellbeing indicators have potential to transform fiscal policies says Jakobsdóttir

With wellbeing and happiness being recognised as essential to political stability, this can only be positive news for spas



At a time when wellness is truly at the forefront of people's minds, Icelandic Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdóttir, has urged for wellbeing to be given greater priority than GDP and economic growth.

Speaking at London's Chatham House international affairs think tank in early February, just before coronavirus took hold globally, Jakobsdóttir called for "an alternative future, based on wellbeing and inclusive growth". She urged governments to take up both green and family-friendly targets, instead of just concentrating on economic growth.

Iceland is a member of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll), a recently formed body working to change the economic system so it focuses on wellness.

It defines a wellbeing economy as one that delivers human and ecological wellbeing.

New Zealand and Scotland are also a part of the WEAll and Jakobsdóttir recently teamed up with Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern and Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon to promote a "wellbeing agenda".

With matters of wellbeing and happiness being recognised as essential to the health of democracy and political stability, this can only be positive news for the spa industry which has been built around this ethos.

Writing for the *Evening Standard*, Jakobsdóttir confirmed that the Icelandic government is also planning to finance this initiative, saying: "A wellbeing budget is in the works, with a

number of priorities already having been identified. These include the improvement of mental health and reduction of carbon emissions."

When asked whether the creation of a 'wellbeing budget' was achievable for both developed and developing countries, Jakobsdóttir responded: "You can always have an emphasis on wellbeing, it's just about how you prioritise it in the public budget".

Jakobsdóttir heads up The Icelandic Prime Minister's Committee on Measurements for Wellbeing in Iceland. "This committee has developed 39 wellbeing indicators that include economic, environmental and social factors, GDP and other economic indicators are among them, but in a new context with social and environmental indicators, to aim for the delicate balance of sustainable development."

The indicators are linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals – an initiative which spas are also looking to align with (see SB20/1 p44) – and are used to inform government policy formulation.

According to a survey commissioned by the committee, the general public in Iceland views health to be the most significant factor in the quality of life, followed by relationships, housing and making a living.



Iceland already has a number of health-focused spas, such as Deplar Farm

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The industry's approach to serving those touched by cancer has been fragmented for many years

Sue Harmsworth

industry influencer; founder, ESPA



Sue Harmsworth, industry influencer and founder of ESPA, has brought together a group of leading training providers in the UK and Ireland to create the Standards Authority for Touch in Cancer Care (SATCC).

The SATCC's mission is to offer a national standard, providing people touched by cancer access to appropriately qualified therapists who're capable of catering to cancer sufferers' individual needs and to provide a recognised platform for spas to find training courses.

The group's advisory board has created an informed and jointly-agreed national standard which outlines guidelines for therapists on maintaining safe and effective methods of care while performing massages, facials, manicures, pedicures and other spa treatments on people affected by cancer.

It features specific advice for therapists on how to prepare, plan and conduct cancer touch therapy as well as information regarding complex contra-indications such as heat and lymphedema, and how to handle these appropriately.

One in two people born after 1970 in the UK are going to be touched by cancer



The need

Evidence suggests one in two people born after 1970 in the UK are going to be touched by cancer. Massage therapy can be used to support people who've had cancer and has been proven to reduce anxiety and depression and improve sleep quality.

Yet despite this, a vast number of spas still turn away people touched by cancer - arguably at the time they need the most support - due to lack of knowledge and fear of liability. For this reason, some clients don't inform their therapist they've had cancer, meaning massages can't be adapted appropriately to meet their needs.

Speaking to *Spa Business*, Harmsworth says: "Historically therapists have been cautious when dealing with customers who've had cancer - they are carers and frightened of doing the wrong thing. "The industry's approach to serving those touched by cancer has been fragmented for many years, with consumers, trade, therapists and spas alike unsure of the terrain surrounding touch therapy and cancer. Ultimately, we have a responsibility to the therapist and the consumer to ensure they're embraced by the wellness industry, rather than excluded."

Motivation to create the SATCC also stems from a group concern over the dilution of



Cancer friendly spas, such as Ridding Park, will be listed on SpaBreaks.com



Spas at Carden Park (above) and Boringdon Hall (right) are already SATCC-certified



Standards Authority for Touch in Cancer Care committee

- Sue Harmsworth, founder, ESPA; and Sue Harmsworth Ltd
- Lisa Barden, group director of spa and wellness, Arora
- Christine Clinton, founder, Christine Clinton Cancer Care
- Kim Ford, global consultancy examiner and lecturer
- Diane Hey, standards and qualification technical advisor, Habia
- John Holman, MD, Hydrotherm Massage Systems
- Marian Hook, director, MJH Spa and Wellbeing
- Marc Innes, principal, School of Natural Therapies
- Kush Kumar, CEO, Think Tree Hub
- Debbie Moore, co-founder, Amethyst Trust
- Julie Speed, co-founder, Amethyst Trust
- Amanda Winwood, MD, Made for Life Organics and Cancer Touch Therapy Training
- Jennifer Young, owner, Jennifer Young and Defiant Beauty

therapist training and that many short courses are not advanced or comprehensive enough to sufficiently educate therapists to accommodate those affected by cancer.

Advisory board members share a combined 327 years worth of industry expertise and have trained well over 10,000 therapists (see box). "The passionate, well-educated and incredibly experienced individuals on the advisory board make the SATCC a highly credible, independent, governing body that promotes the support of individuals touched by cancer," says Harmsworth.

Consumer awareness

Online consumer spa directory SpaBreaks.com is partnering with SATCC to allow consumers to identify which spas have SATCC-accredited therapists who are capable of accommodating those who have experienced cancer.

SpaBreaks.com receives over one million consumer visits per month and lists more than 750 UK spas. A hundred spas on the website are already SATCC-approved and the goal is to reach 250 approved facilities by the end of 2020. These will be recognised under an SATCC-certified landing page - called Our Safe Hands Collection.

Training website

A partnership has also been struck with Think Tree Hub - an online professional association for complementary practitioners, course providers and the public seeking professional health treatments, CPD and accredited courses.

Think Tree Hub displays a register of professionals and their accreditations, making them discoverable by spas and consumers. Individual therapists, practitioners and small business spas will be able to

Advisory board members share a combined 327 years worth of industry expertise

apply to Think Tree Hub and be registered as SATCC-accredited once their licence, certificates and insurance information have been successfully approved.

Any therapist who is already trained by one of the SATCC advisory board's training providers will automatically be SATCC-accredited and eligible to register online.

The website will also launch an SATCC web page directing visitors to SATCC-accredited training providers and courses.

Harmsworth concludes that the SATCC has plans to work with charities in the future to help support those touched by cancer by directing them to its accredited spas. ●

FIND OUT MORE: For spas wishing to register for SATCC approval, contact product@spabreaks.com. Practitioners or small spas wishing to register, or those looking to set up a curriculum, should email admin@thinktreehub.com

ISPA Foundation releases consumer research focused on COVID-19's impact

The ISPA Foundation has released the 10th volume of its Consumer Snapshot Initiative, examining behaviours and expectations of US spa-goers and non-spa-goers during the coronavirus crisis.

Conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the study focuses on how the pandemic has altered respondents' behaviour in the present and how it will affect their expectations for returning to 'normal' life as restrictions are lifted.

Of the 1,019 people surveyed, only 25 per cent said they'd feel very nervous about visiting a spa after the crisis ends while 60 per cent of spa-goers noted they'll likely ask about hygiene and sanitation practices when they next visit a spa.

"This new research offers clarity at a time when we know it's in short

supply," says ISPA president Lynne McNeas, "providing key insights into real-life consumer attitudes as our members make plans for reopening their spas in an unprecedented climate."

Findings also suggested consumers will likely be most concerned about visiting communal spaces such as locker rooms and wet areas.



"This new research offers clarity at a time when we know it's in short supply"

Lynne McNeas

Only 25 per cent of people feel very nervous about visiting a spa

ISPA recently launched a Reopening Toolkit to help businesses once they're allowed to open again.

In the US, the industry appears active, with Miraval aiming to launch its new Berkshires resort in June and the state of Georgia being the first to reopen spas, with

precautions to prevent the virus spreading. **More:** http://lei.sr/q2X4c_B

Social connection inspires Aman's sister-brand

Luxury hotel group Aman Resorts is launching a sister-brand, Janu, focused on social connection.

"We wanted to create a new hotel brand with soul and kickstart human interaction again," says Aman chair and CEO Vladislav Doronin.

The sister-brand launches with three forthcoming hotels due to

open in Montenegro, Saudi Arabia and Tokyo, in 2022. Guests will have access to group and solo wellness experiences with a range of spa treatments available at each property. All Janu spas will be designed with extensive hydro and thermal offerings to be used as social spaces

A brand so focused on human connection looks

set to appeal to people deprived of socialising by COVID-19, as long as protocols address new found hygiene and safety concerns to stop the spreading of the virus.

During lockdown, Aman has been offering free digital wellness advice from its global network of healing practitioners. **More:** <http://lei.sr/d1g6B>

Spa and wellness sector remembers industry icon Ruth Stricker

Tributes have been flowing in for industry icon Ruth Stricker, who died on 14 April, aged 85.

Stricker started out as an entrepreneur, introducing her studies of mind and body interactions associated with exercise and cognitive components. Soon after she was diagnosed with lupus which inspired her to empower others living with illnesses.

In 1985, she founded integrative health facility, The Marsh, and advocated blending eastern medicine with allopathic philosophies. Stricker firmly believed in the positive benefits of combining wellness and fitness to improve quality of life.

Michael Tompkins, Hutchinson Consulting partner, tells *Spa Business*: "Ruth was an industry luminary and played a crucial role in mentoring so many people, myself included, about the obligation to do the right thing." **More:** <http://lei.sr/f5Z8b>



The spas will have extensive hydro and thermal offerings



The Farm opened in the Philippines in 2002

Immune system repair at The Farm at San Benito

Holistic medical wellness resort The Farm at San Benito, Philippines, is offering an immune system strengthening programme designed to protect the body's cells and enable them to fight infection. The resort appears to be ahead of the curve having launched this programme well in advance of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since opening in 2002, the resort has focused on integrated holistic medical wellness, 'drawing on ancient teachings of the east and west'.

The retreat begins with an initial consultation focused on nutrition, fitness and mental health, with the intention of setting goals for the remainder of the stay.

During the six-day programme, the resort's medi-wellness team assess 360-degrees of guests' wellbeing and treat underactive or overactive immune systems.

Throughout the programme, The Farm's medi-wellness team monitor skin and sleep health and conduct a range of medical scans to assess wellbeing.

The retreat has a starting rate of US\$3,480 (£3,005, €3,242).

More: <http://lei.sr/F7M4i>



New Zealand's recycled glacial-water thermal resort

A thermal wellness destination powered by glacial waters and solar energy is scheduled to open in Methven, New Zealand, in January 2021.

Called Opuke Thermal Pools and Spa, the destination will offer a collection of pools differing in temperature as well as an adults-only section. This area will include a combination of larger communal hot pools, secluded private pools and exclusive private cabanas.

The spa will feature five treatment rooms, including two for couples, and a relaxation lounge to complete the treatment area.

With the strapline 'sourced from the mountains, powered by the sun', the project is designed to be



“It gives us the opportunity to showcase our comprehensive approach”

Neil Owen

a sustainable wellness experience. Spa and wellness consultants Spa Vision and Spa Guru Consulting have been selected as advisors.

According to Spa Vision director, Neil Owen, the project has required a turn-key approach which has seen Owen collaborate closely with Kirien Withers, director of Spa Guru Consulting.

He says: "This project gives us the opportunity to showcase our comprehensive approach, as well as our collective expertise and understanding in the spa and wellness space."

More: <http://lei.sr/O8g3d>



The destination is scheduled to open in January 2021



Julie Bach

Wellness for Cancer offers donation-based training

Julie Bach, executive director of specialist cancer therapy training provider, Wellness for Cancer (WFC), has announced the organisation is providing donation-based access to its foundation training during the COVID-19 crisis.

"With global training budgets tightening and many therapists finding themselves temporarily

out of work, donation-based access has emerged as a way to continue to provide this important training," says Bach.

"This kind of access has been a top priority for us, but with the pandemic, we decided it's an ideal time to encourage wellness professionals to focus on building a strong foundation on being cancer-aware."

WFC's foundational training is designed to increase confidence around cancer and massage. The 16-hour home-study programme, which traditionally includes textbooks, assignments and online lectures, has been expanded with live access to regional trainers via the internet.

More: <http://lei.sr/e9ROH>

Studio Apostoli designing Milanese wellness centre with green onyx cave

Italian architecture studio Studio Apostoli is designing a luxury wellness centre in a restored 20th century Milanese palazzo, scheduled to open in 2021.

The three-layer 1,000sq m facility will be a part of a boutique-hotel complex at the five-star Palazzo Bernasconi hotel, a project developed and owned by Italian hotel group Cipriani, and shall be named 'Palazzo del Sarto'.

Architect Alberto Apostoli has been commissioned to develop the interior design and project manage the wellness area, designed to emphasise the building's history through a bespoke project. Apostoli has recently been vocal about the potential



impacts of COVID-19 on spa design and has hinted he may rethink his process and approach for future designs.

Studio Apostoli will work with cedarwood, French red marble, onyx, and mosaic to realise the Milanese project.

The centre will be divided into male and female facilities and re-converge in a relaxation area designed to look like a green onyx cave. Both facilities will offer an ice waterfall, a two-level sauna, two

The wellness centre will be decorated with gold features and mosaic details



multi-sensory showers and a steambath. The spa will include nine treatment rooms, three of which will be reserved for hotel guests to request ritual massages and experience mud and thalasso treatments.

Apostoli tells *Spa Business* that he's drawn inspiration from Milan's design culture. "The attitude is that of a haute couture wellness project with a plurality of sensory experiences with references to the world of fashion."

More: <http://lei.sr/17o3b>

Canyon Ranch's Woodside Wellness Retreat



Canyon Ranch offers Brain Recharge retreat

Destination spa brand Canyon Ranch is offering a brain recharge programme at its recently launched Woodside Wellness Retreat hub in California.

The programme is designed to provide guests with practical tools to regularly refresh their brain and instil a mindset to be ready to thrive every day.

Brain training experts Dr Heidi Hanna and Dr Evian Gordon, guide the retreat which consists of eight daily workshops and seminars, with topics ranging from understanding neuroplasticity to nurturing creativity.

With a starting price of US\$3,185, the five-day retreat can be enhanced

for an additional fee with destination excursions, wellness services and visits to a performance lab – for assessment and coaching.

Guests can also upgrade with a visit to the onsite spa. The property itself has 14 bedrooms in the main lodge and 24 luxury tree houses.

More: <http://lei.sr/B0c8V>



Revamp for famous Bali spa

Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay has overhauled its spa, one of the most well known facilities in the region.

Set to be unveiled imminently, The Healing Village Spa will have 10 treatment rooms and is 70 per cent bigger than the original facility, covering 2,000sq m over two storeys.

The spa, which appears to be suspended over water, focuses on seven 'healing attributes' – water, community, gemstones, light, sound, plants and love. "The seven attributes are woven into the tapestry of the new spa," says regional director of spa, Luisa Anderson.

More: <http://lei.sr/R4t8m>



“The seven attributes are woven into the tapestry of the new spa”

Luisa Anderson

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DIARY DATES

16-17 July 2020

APSWC Roundtable 2020

Naman Resort, Da Nang, Vietnam
Members of the Asia Pacific Spa & Wellness Coalition gather to create a white paper focusing on sector challenges and opportunities.
www.apswc.org

3-5 August 2020

World Fitness and Wellness Summit

Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore
A conference featuring an exhibition, awards dinner, networking and product launches.
www.thefitssummit.com

6-19 August 2020

Spatec Spring North America

Ritz-Carlton, Miami, Florida, USA
Operators and suppliers gather for one-to-one meetings and networking.
www.spatecpring.com

4-5 October 2020

Olympia Beauty

Olympia, London, UK
An event for beauty professionals and students, featuring 500 exhibiting brands.
www.olympiabeauty.co.uk

11-12 October 2020

World Spa & Wellness London

ExCel, London, UK
International spa figures convene for talks, networking and a trade show.
www.worldspawellness.com

19-20 October 2020

The Healing Summit

The Pine Cliffs Resort, Albufeira, Portugal
Speakers from all over the world share their holistic perspectives on a future committed to healing.
www.healingsummit.com

10-13 November 2020

Global Wellness Summit

Tel Aviv, Israel
Spa and wellness professionals from around the world come together to discover innovations and network at this high-level invitation-only event.
www.globalwellnesssummit.com



TLee Spas spent three years developing the spa concept

Tracy Lee unveils Spa Alkemia at Zadún for Ritz-Carlton Los Cabos

Spa consultancy, TLee Spas, has unveiled Spa Alkemia at Zadún, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, in Los Cabos, Mexico.

The 30,000sq ft spa's treatments and design are inspired by Mexican traditions and culture with a natural aesthetic.

"Spa Alkemia is the ultimate playground of immersive wellness experiences," says Tracy Lee, TLee Spas' CEO.

Three years in development, the spa comprises multiple free-standing pavilions and palapas, along with nine treatment rooms enveloped by tropical foliage.



“Spa Alkemia is the ultimate playground of immersive wellness experiences”
Tracy Lee

Facilities include a guided thermal experience – the Templo Caliente – a recreation of a Mexican temazcal and the Savasana Sound Room, an immersive sound vault to usher the brain into a meditative state.

Spa Alkemia has both private relaxation rooms and communal spaces, including Zócalo, a homage to traditional Mexican town squares, with indoor and outdoor lounges.

More: <http://lei.sr/17hs>

Lifelihood spa enables guests to anonymously donate massages

A Los Angeles spa is offering a “love it forward” service where guests can pay in advance to donate a discounted massage to a friend, family member or stranger as an act of kindness.

The gifted massage voucher is delivered anonymously via email to the recipient and once they arrive for their treatment the giver's name is revealed by a personalised handwritten message.

Guests have the opportunity to “love it forward” again to continue the cycle of kindness, and track their cycle of kindness via the website to see how far it goes.

The service is offered at Lifelihood, a 1,600sq ft space designed by Brigitte



Amy Krofchick founded Lifelihood in Los Angeles

Romanek and founded by former fashion designer Amy Krofchick. The destination is described by its team as a “wellness movement founded on kindness and gratitude.”

The treatment menu offers a range of massages or express 25-minute seated treatments.

More: <http://lei.sr/1s3x>


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This challenging time has reminded us that we are one, interconnected community.

As a BCorp, our mission is to be the best for the world, even in hard times. We have started from an essential protecting gesture, donating 150,000 pieces of our Good Hope Hygiene Gel to our partners and to charities. We have shared free education to inspire professionals to make the most out of this lockdown. Now, we are ready to support them for the restart.

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www.comfortzone.it

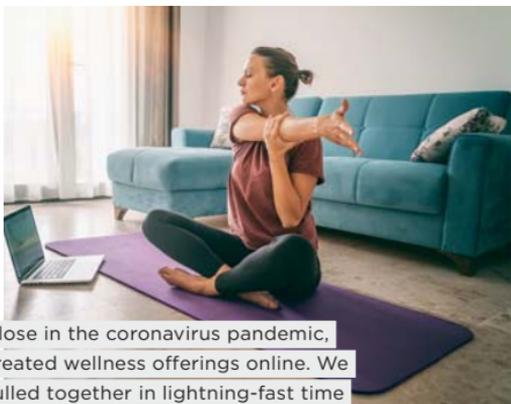


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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Pivot to digital



As spas across the world were forced to close in the coronavirus pandemic, a number of forward-thinking operators created wellness offerings online. We take a look at some of the programmes pulled together in lightning-fast time

At Home With Six Senses

www.sixsenses.com

Spa and resort operator Six Senses was one of the first companies to connect with guests online with the launch of its At Home content portal on 24 March.

The service uses videos, tutorials and articles to deliver wellbeing advice adopted from its in-resort wellness experiences based on the pillars of mindfulness, eat, sleep, move, live naturally and connect.

It's available to everyone, whether or not they've previously stayed at a Six Senses property. Tips include everything from how to reduce anxiety and loneliness when practising social distancing, as well as advice on food to support the immune system, working from home and good sleep routines.

Read more: <http://lei.sr/U117F>



Naturopaths, physios and exercise professionals are all offering advice

Chiva-Som offers online consultations

www.chivasom.com/online-wellness-services

Thai destination spa Chiva-Som is combatting widespread anxiety and social isolation during lockdown by offering one-on-one live wellbeing consultations with its naturopaths, physiotherapists and exercise professionals.

An initial 50-minute consultation includes personalised feedback regarding lifestyle and nutrition and advisors can also refer clients to either a private naturopathic consultation, a natural fertility treatment session or an exercise tutorial.

The resort is also offering private yoga and meditation sessions as well as daily wellbeing advice – from

self-massage to immune-boosting tips – across its social media channels.

Past and regular guests have unlimited use of consultations and tutorials. The general public can book one consultation and a referral tutorial for free, after that customer sessions start at THB3,500 (US\$108, €99, £87).

"Now is a time for support, collaboration and encouragement," says CEO Krip Rojanastien. "We're committed to our guests and community, in which we're striving to distribute our wellness resources to support people's wellbeing without boundaries. We shall pass this together." Read more: <http://lei.sr/4C0iO>

18. Search for news, journals, advertisements

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Dr. Petra Miller-Rappaport, M.D.,
Specialist in Psychosomatic
Medicine

Specialist in Psychosomatic Medicine and Internal Medicine, Dr. Petra Miller-Rappaport is a member of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association. She is also a member of the International Association of Psychotherapists and the International Association of Integrative Medicine. She has been practicing for over 20 years and has a passion for helping people find their way to wellness.

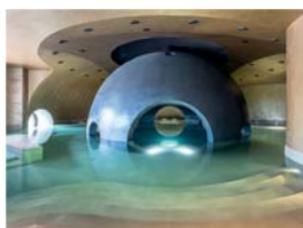
Healing Hotels delivers wellbeing to the home

www.healinghotels.com

Energy healing, ayurvedic, spiritual wellness and life coaching sessions are being offered to people in their own homes for free during the lockdown thanks to a programme set up by Healing Hotels of the World.

The Healing@Home series is being delivered by six global practitioners who have previously worked with Healing Hotels. The sessions, arranged by contacting healers@healing-hotels.com, are designed to help clients step into new perspectives, find inner balance and transform fear into positivity and strength while coping with the pandemic.

"Although we're unable to travel at the moment and most of our Healing Hotels are closed due to COVID-19, their hearts are still beating strongly," says co-founder Anne Biging, "our shared mission to guide you on your healing journey is stronger than ever."
Read more: <http://lei.sr/H6p5V>



Marina Efraimoglu owns the spa which is known for its transformation retreats

Euphoria's five-week virtual retreat

www.euphoriaretreat.com/webinars

Greek transformation spa, Euphoria, has unveiled a free five-week immersive virtual retreat inspired by Euphoria's mythology and the five elements.

The retreat will explore and focus on one of the five elements – water, wood, fire, earth and metal – in order to help people reset and focus on their energy balance, as well as understand specific organs and their emotions in relation to each of the elements.

It will be conducted online via a series of healing, grounding, and

uplifting wellness practices and activities. Every week participants will be guided through two 45-minute webinars by Euphoria's founder, Marina Efraimoglu, and spiritual mentor, Mary Vanderou.

Efraimoglu says: "We've based our virtual offering on our signature retreat – 'Emotional and Physical Transformation' – and participants can join us for just one day, one week or sign up for the full five weeks to discover the power of all the elements."
Read more: <http://lei.sr/LTa1m>



Borgo Egnazia unveils at home platform

www.borgoegnazianews.com/casa-egnazia/

Italian destination spa Borgo Egnazia has designed an online wellness platform to bring its unique experience into guest's homes.

Egnazia is known for its Vair spa that addresses emotional and physical tension with more mindful treatments such as laughter therapy and olfactory tests, and the new Casa Egnazia platform celebrates this offering alongside the local Apulian culture. Content such as tips for happiness and beauty, sports for longevity and food for wellness has been generated by

employees who each have their own area of expertise. It's even recording sessions of village musicians to recreate a local festival and sending guests samples of its signature homemade tomato sauce to keep them front of mind.

"We're generating all this great content and creating a new part of the business which I think we can still offer once we do reopen," said spa director Erica D'Angelo on a Professional Beauty webinar. "It's also a great opportunity to get feedback from our clients."
Read more: <http://lei.sr/7GIV1>

Spa career coaching from Hutchinson



Michael Tompkins

www.hutchinsonconsulting.com

Spa and hospitality recruitment firm Hutchinson Consulting has revealed a weekly video web series to help industry colleagues with questions about their career development to navigate the pandemic. The free Coffee with the Coaches sessions take place every Wednesday and are delivered by industry leader Michael Tompkins and other Hutchinson team members. Each session is recorded and shared on the company's website.

Read more: www.spabusiness.com/newsfeed

The Well's membership goes digital

www.the-well.com/stayhome

Wellbeing hub The Well, based in New York City, launched a monthly online membership with an introductory price of US\$99 (€91, £79) and US\$149 (€137, £120) thereafter.

Members receive access to a 'complete ecosystem' for wellness online, including twice-weekly support circles, daily mindful movement and meditation classes, programming, and online appointments. Monthly coaching

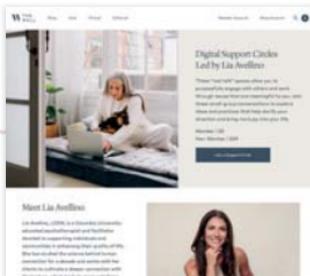


Deepak Chopra

sessions focus on topics such as sleep health and managing anxiety during social distancing.

In late March The Well also teamed up with alternative medicine expert Deepak Chopra to live-stream a global meditation event, called H(om)e, to encourage people to stay at home and have hope during the pandemic.

Read more: <http://lei.sr/12K5S>



Maria Lia Andriano



S'well founders Marshall (left) and Fiske

S'well's tips for healthy virtual meetings

www.swellpublicrelations.com

With so many virtual meetings now taking place wellness PR firm S'well has created a free digital toolkit to facilitate more effective, healthier online gatherings.

The *Virtually Well Meeting Recipe Book* includes tips to help participants remain engaged with techniques such as intermittent mindfulness practices, using live scribing and

movement exercises. In addition, it suggests using colourful mind maps to help keep track of people's contributions and advises enriching virtual meetings with live music breaks.

S'well co-founders, Kim Marshall and Darlene Fiske, revealed the toolkit on 2 April via a webinar with the 'methods' demonstrated by industry figures. Read more: <http://lei.sr/J5e8m>

Four Seasons takes Hawaiian wellness online

@FSHualalai, @FSLanai, @FSMaui and @FSOahu

Five Four Seasons resorts in Hawaii has created a series of at-home experiences, including spa treatments, designed to transport guests to the islands.

At Four Seasons Resort Hualalai, for example, spa director Cecilia Hercik has unveiled an at-home Niu Bath Treatment recipe made with coconuts which is inspired by local healing traditions and ingredients. Meanwhile, the team at Sensei

Lanai, A Four Seasons Resort is offering guidance on using journaling and meditation for self-reflection. The resort is owned by billionaire Larry Ellison and spa leader Andrew Gibson is a senior executive (see SB19/4).

Globally, the Four Seasons group is also releasing digital at-home fitness content called Fit with Four Seasons, led by celebrity trainer Harley Pasternak. Read more: <http://lei.sr/v3fDQ>



Tips include recreating a local coconut bath

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INTERVIEW

Mary Celeste Beall

In the mountains of Tennessee, a sister property to the celebrated Blackberry Farm has opened with a focus on wellness through nature. Jane Kitchen speaks with the owner about her poignant story

38 spabusiness.com issue 2 2020



It's hit the right chord with guests from the concrete jungles of New York and Atlanta



An holistic health spa carries on the 'wellness through nature' theme

Even though it's just lunchtime, the shadows grow long and dark as we weave through increasingly remote valleys in the Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee. "Turn right," Google Maps tells me, and I think surely it must be wrong: we're facing a set of massive iron gates – no sign, just three simple triangles nestled together to look like mountain tops. I push an intercom button, telling the voice on the other end that I'm looking for Blackberry Mountain. "You've found us," he says, and I can hear the sweet lilt of Southern hospitality in his voice even through the crackle of the wires. After checking my name on the registrar, he tells me to drive up the winding mountain road for another mile or so, and eventually I'll reach the main lodge.

As the gate closes behind us and we ascend the mountain, the views stretch out for miles, with nothing but green rolling hills layered with pristine forests of beech, yellow birch, maple and pine. This is all part of the 5,200 acres of land that makes up Blackberry Mountain, the newly opened retreat with a focus on wellness through nature. With just 18 stone cottages and six wooden cabins, Blackberry Mountain is one of the most anticipated hotel openings in the US, despite

Blackberry Mountain is one of the most anticipated hotel openings in the US, despite – and because of – its remote location

– and because of – its remote location.

The sister property to the celebrated Blackberry Farm, 'the Mountain', as it's called by its many passionate employees, has been conceived specifically to blend in with the environment and leave the smallest possible footprint on the land. Located 7 miles uphill from the Farm, it's billed as 'your own private national park', and has dedicated more than half of its 5,200 acres to preservation. Its focus on wellness

through nature has hit the right chord with today's digitally obsessed, always-on consumer, and guests from the concrete jungles of New York and Atlanta are finding solace in the quiet at a starting price of around US\$1,045 (€958, £841) a night based on double occupancy and including breakfast and dinner.

Family tradition

The original Blackberry Farm was first opened in 1976 by Sandy and Kreis Beall – founders of the successful American restaurant chain Ruby Tuesday – who grew the property from a six-bedroom inn to a 62-bedroom luxury resort. The Bealls' son Sam took over in the early 2000s, and was responsible for elevating the resort in terms of cuisine, programming and clientele. But Sam

The resort has been a mission of love for Beall and is a testament to her late husband's vision

Sam was such a champion for the team, and my goal is simply to carry that same torch



► - an avid outdoorsman and adventurer - died suddenly in a skiing accident in 2016, aged 39. He left behind not just a business, but a wife and five young children, and plans and dreams for Blackberry Mountain - the land had been purchased years before, in a bid to save it from the kind of overdevelopment that had ravaged nearby towns. Mary Celeste - Sam's widow - stepped in to run the business, and bringing Blackberry Mountain to fruition has been a mission of love for her. "We still miss Sam every day," she says.

"Thankfully, there was this incredible team already in place at Blackberry who I had known and worked with in different ways over 15 years. That gave me the confidence to take on this new challenge. Sam was such a champion for the team, and my goal is simply to carry that same torch."

Wellness through nature

Blackberry Farm offers a wealth of activities, from archery to horseback riding to fly fishing, designed to allow guests to slow down and connect with the location; the on-site spa is just one of many options in a broad sense of wellness. But at Blackberry Mountain, that holistic idea of wellness has been expanded, and the sheer volume of land set aside for preservation means that outdoor activities take centre stage. At The Hub, guests can take part in arts and crafts activities like pottery, play basketball, or take on the rock-climbing wall, or sign up for a wide range of activities including creekside meditation, sound healing, forest bathing, endurance climbs, trail running, paddle boarding, bouldering and mountain biking.

"The whole philosophy at the Mountain honours how connection to nature can be such a beautiful and important part of our wellness journey," says Mary Celeste Beall. "We think wellness extends way beyond the walls of a studio and spa. That's why we incorporated so many special elements outside as well as in our facilities. You can find surprises all along our trail system, like a swing or a yoga platform, and we want you to take your practices to



Spa packages lasting 2.5 to 6 hours blend traditional therapies, like massage, with outdoor activities





The spa is decorated in natural tones and includes a serene reading area and eight treatment rooms



Beall has a flair for design and worked with the Blackberry team to create the interiors



new places and be inspired to invigorate your daily work - find something completely new to explore."

Holistic health spa

This philosophy extends to the resort's on-site spa, Nest, whose menu of natural therapies includes holistic health offerings like acupuncture and nutritional consultations, often packaged together to address specific needs. A 50-minute Nervous System Reset, which costs US\$190 (€174, £153), uses a combination of different modalities to help restore balance to the nervous system, which can include craniosacral therapy, tuning forks, essential oils, myofascial release, qi gong, tui na, topical herbal compresses, chakra balancing and acupuncture techniques.

Body therapies at Nest reflect the earthiness of the locale, from Kaolin Clay wraps to an Echinacea Herbal Buff or a Walnut Sandalwood Moisture Mask. Meanwhile, product houses include Kindred, Among the Flowers and Luzern.

The spa also features curated packages from 2.5 to 6 hours, which blend traditional spa treatments like aromatherapy massage with the resort's outdoor offerings and activities. For example, the 4-hour Forage package, priced at US\$625 (€573, £503), includes an 80-minute inspirational hike, 50-minute Herbal Remedy Session with the on-site holistic health specialist, and an 80-minute Herbal Poultice Massage. "At Nest, a guest can spend time with our holistic health specialist

The fully curated experience at Nest is so much more than just traditional spa treatments

and dive into consultations that speak to the body's nutrition or naturopathic wellness," says Beall. "They might find release with acupuncture or enjoy an all-encompassing experience with meditation, creative exploration and a massage.

The fully curated experience at Nest is so much more than just traditional spa treatments."

The spa itself is decorated in soothing, natural tones and fabrics, with a reading room of comfortable armchairs that offers a serene view out across the Smokies. A long corridor with arched ceilings leads to the eight treatment rooms, each of which also features a calming minimalist decor. Beall has a natural flair for design - her own home was featured in *Elle Decor* magazine - and she worked closely with the Blackberry Farm Design team to create the interiors.

"I love that the Nest experience at Blackberry Mountain really is all about wellness and the wellbeing of both the body and the mind," she says. "There is a call to pause and recharge when you visit that space." ▶

INTERVIEW

- ▶ Beyond the spa, wellness journeys – also on the spa’s menu – include creative practices like mandala stone painting, clay work or guided journaling; and mind & body healing, including crystal reiki and suspended soundbathing & meditation. Seven different yoga classes are on offer, as well as a list of enrichment activities like lectures and herbal tea blending workshops. A selection of forest bathing experiences includes Journey to the Edge, which combines a guided trail hike with yoga in a natural setting. “There are yoga studios in every town, but we often don’t get the chance to explore a winding trail or dive into nature,” says Beall. “That quiet reflection is becoming increasingly more important so that we can disconnect from the busyness of our lives and refocus our energy.”

Human connection

Currently, both the Farm and Mountain have ‘temporarily paused operations’ during the coronavirus pandemic. As it becomes available, produce grown



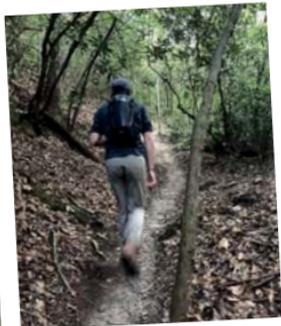
Each member of staff becomes a specialist in their area of expertise

Quiet reflection is becoming increasingly more important so that we can disconnect from the busyness of our lives and refocus our energy

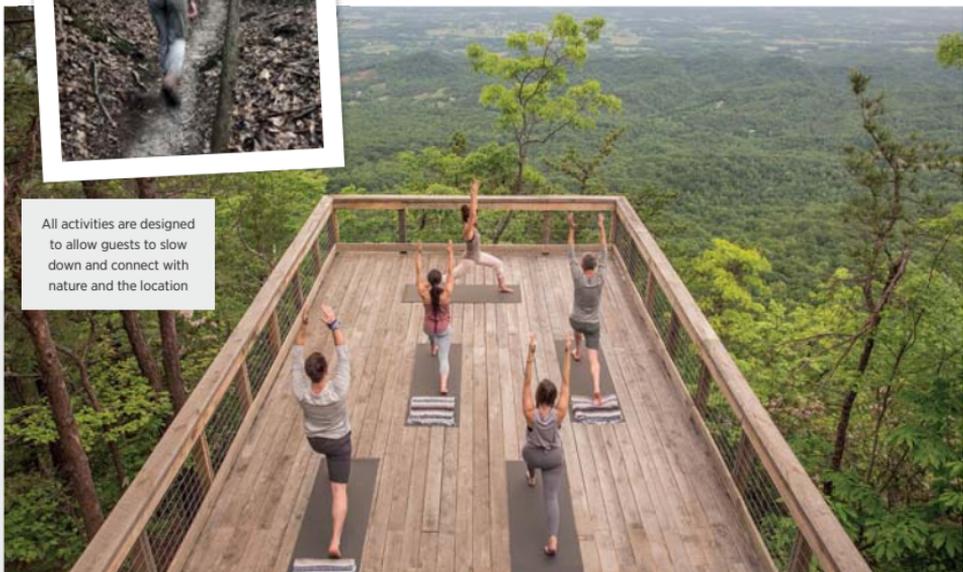
onsite is being sent to Blackberry Farm Brewery’s curbside farm stand as part of their to-go only menu. The company says: “Taking care of our Blackberry family, guests and private owners is our number one priority, and we look forward to welcoming them all back soon.”

When they reopen, clientele may differ to those it attracted beforehand. For the Farm, this included leisure travellers who made up 80 per cent of business with the remaining 20 per cent consisting of corporate retreats,

weddings, and large family gatherings, and the Mountain was expecting similar numbers. Gwenth Paltrow held a retreat for her Goop staff soon after the Mountain opened, taking part in a ropes wall yoga class and sharing photos of herself on one of the resort’s surprise swings in the woods with her Instagram fans.



All activities are designed to allow guests to slow down and connect with nature and the location





Beall says that making guests feel welcome and comfortable is the best environment for wellbeing

Additionally, more intimate retreats, called 'house parties' are slated to bring people together for weekends to explore a wide variety of topics with experts in different fields - an event last August included a professional cyclist, a chef, a wine maker and a musician. "Human connection is huge for our wellbeing," explains Beall. And this is something people are going to crave even more of once the nationwide lockdown lifts. "Connection is really my greatest wish for our guests, whether they're connecting with the people they're travelling with, someone they meet in a yoga class or on the trail, discovering something new in an event, or finding a common love of an activity."

That connection extends to the 850 staff, each of whom appears to be a specialist in - and lover of - their particular area of expertise. At Blackberry Farm, the resident master gardener, John Coykendall, is something of a legend. The staff at the Mountain is some of the most outstanding I've encountered - not formal, often young, but each incredibly passionate. A hike to breakfast was made into a learning experience with the help of our guide, Eddie, who filled our journey with history lessons and pointed out edible chicory leaves and sassafras roots to taste. These were brought to the kitchen at the Firetower restaurant, where mixologist Chelsea - the only person I've ever met who's as passionate about obscure bitter liquors as my husband is - happily accepted them and told us of her plans to use them in her craft cocktails,

We focus on bringing a connected and meaningful experience to our guests in all that they do

before giving us an impromptu tasting of a new herbal brew she was working on.

"The magic of both properties starts with the team," says Beall. "We focus on bringing a connected and meaningful experience to our guests in all that they do. The heart of hospitality, and specifically the Southern hospitality we champion, is connection.

The smiles, the eye contact, remembering the guest's names - each detail plays into deepening an authentic human connection. Our guests can feel that we care about them, and that creates a space where they feel welcome and comfortable, which is the best environment for wellbeing."

Historical inspiration

The architecture of Blackberry Mountain is designed for optimal wellbeing of both people and planet, with buildings created to fit seamlessly into the natural landscape. Beall worked with Atlanta-based architect Keith Summerour, who took inspiration from the US Civilian Conservation Corp, which built many of America's state and national parks during the Great Depression. "Buildings were built



It's really a special space that pays tribute to the beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains



The low-profile buildings fit seamlessly into the natural landscape and are view-oriented

► mostly by hand labour, and needed to be fit into the existing topography and tenor of the land where these structures were conceived," says Summerour. "We therefore designed our efforts towards low-profile, view-oriented structures. This approach leaves a small footprint on the land."

Many of the cottages feature earth-sheltered designs and live green roofs. They offer sweeping views of the Great Smoky Mountains and feature stacked stone archways, iron windows, reclaimed oak floors, white rough-sawn walls, and lime-washed oak ceilings, as well as private outdoor patios, wood-burning fireplaces and soaking tubs. Six secluded Watchman Cottages are built in traditional log cabin style but with floor-to-ceiling windows, for a luxury rustic retreat.

"I really loved how much Keith used the elements of the mountain - with



Architect Keith Summerour

the stone and wood materials coming directly from the site of the buildings," says Beall. "The structures are designed so that they blend into the natural slope of the land, honouring the natural shape. It's really a special space that pays tribute to the beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains."

Getting all of those details right, of course, takes on especially significant meaning for Beall, who knows how much her late husband loved the land. "Sam spent so much time exploring the Mountain with his father, team members and friends - I know he would find so much joy in our guests doing the same," she concludes. "Sam loved sharing meaningful experiences with people, and that's what we bring to life each day." ●



Jane Kitchen is a consulting editor at *Spa Business* magazine
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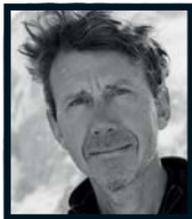
Leading spa operators, wellness companies and organisations from around the world assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic - highlighting examples of best practice and looking at what to expect moving forward



Thierry Malleret managing partner, Monthly Barometer

From an economic perspective, we're facing a 'demand shock', meaning people cannot consume at the moment, and a 'supply shock' globally. This has never happened before in the history of economic records dating back to the 18th Century. Ever. As explained in my recent webinar for Professional Beauty, the impact on the vast majority of industries, including hospitality, travel and retail, is major and we are, de facto, in a recession. The question is, will governments succeed in preventing a depression with their policies and action?

I'm regularly talking to policy makers and heads of state and no one really knows when businesses will start to reopen. But, at the moment, the assumption is being made that with a little bit of luck and if the very harsh containment measures prove to be effective, we hope (not expect) there will be a restart around mid-May, even though this date is



country-dependent. But it won't be quick. Recovery will take a long time and things will not be the same as before. A partial, wider retreat from globalisation will favour regionalism and localism in travel as people will have less discretionary spend and confidence to venture abroad again, which is one example I highlighted in a Global Wellness Institute briefing. The Alps in Europe and National Parks in the US, for instance, are locations which were already benefitting from the 'micro-adventure' trend before COVID-19 and this will now accelerate.

The question is, will governments succeed in preventing a depression with their policies and action?

But there are also some positives for the wellness sector. Firstly, governments will incentivise wellness because they will have no other choice when it comes to decreasing healthcare costs - and this is something I predicted years ago based on the escalating number of preventative, chronic diseases. Secondly, when we've hit with such a big shock, it favours attention and makes us ponder what's important in our lives. I hope that after the pandemic, many of us will realise that it's not about consuming as much as we can but about taking greater care of ourselves and that wellness has to be a driving parameter in how we lead our lives.

It will also have a considerable impact on

how consumers make their decisions and there will be a new obsession with cleanliness. Anxiety and diffidence about sharing space with complete strangers may be another and many people may decide that it's preferable to practice yoga or exercise at home rather than going to a club or gym. It goes without saying, whenever possible, have an online presence.

In the face of adversity, I'm still full of hope because extreme events force us to be very imaginative, adaptive and resilient and we should never underestimate the power of resiliency of humankind.

■ *The Monthly Barometer is a predictive analysis for private investors. Details: www.monthlybarometer.com*

Anna Bjurstram wellness pioneer, Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas

In just under a month we came up with and launched our At Home With Six Senses portal on 24 March. This offers advice around our brand values – on how to reduce anxiety and loneliness for example, as well as tips on everything from working at home to getting into good sleep routines. It's been hugely successful in enabling us to communicate with our customers and they're giving feedback daily on what they like and don't like.

We think the future is going to focus on self-responsibility as people realise the



importance to taking care of their own health – they won't just want a massage, they'll want to learn about it, so the aim of our At Home initiative is to offer proactive and pragmatic ways for

The future will focus on self-care as people realise the importance of taking care of their own health

people to care for themselves and the people they love.

Like all spa businesses, we've had to shut our properties. But there is light at the end of the tunnel. IHG, the owners of Six Senses, had 170 hotels closed in mid-March and almost all of those have now reopened. At Six Senses Quing Cheng Mountain in China, the restaurant had 70 walk ins the first day the lockdown was

lifted and it's experiencing up to 100 per cent occupancy at the weekends. The ramp-up will be slow and limited to domestic travel this summer but then the international side will pick up and there will be a huge opportunity for wellness tourism when it does.

■ *Six Senses operates 20 resorts and 33 spas globally. Details: www.sixsenses.com*

Jeremy McCarthy group director spa & wellness, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group

The most common question I'm getting right now is 'will consumers be hesitant to return to spas as they're essentially businesses which touch people?'. I'm more optimistic than most and think spas have a real opportunity to establish themselves as a place to go for 'safe touch' by offering an immaculate clean environment, highly trained therapists, and high levels of safety and cleanliness.

Mandarin Oriental already had some of the most stringent and comprehensive safety and cleanliness standards in the industry but we're now relooking at every touchpoint in our colleague and customer journey to



consider how we may need to modify our approach.

Trust is a big factor. The spas which have a high level of trust, which have most authentic approach to wellness and are the most passionate about the care they give guests, will be resilient and will come back. Those that don't will struggle and many will close.

I'm more optimistic than most and think spas have a real opportunity to establish themselves as a place to go for 'safe touch'

People are already focusing more on wellness. The pandemic is the most devastating to those with underlying health conditions and it's a stark reminder of mortality. A time of disruption also breaks people's old habits and creates space for new habits to be formed. The wellness industry needs to help people establish a new lifestyle for themselves and to offer authentic experiences led by true experts that make a meaningful impact on people's health and quality of life.

We're also very concerned about the impact on mental health that this unprecedented period of stress, anxiety and isolation is having on people. That's why we're training all of our spa colleagues to be mentally strong when they come back to work and we're focusing on the mental wellness aspects of our spa experiences as a priority for our reopening.

■ *Mandarin Oriental runs 30 spas around the world. Details: www.mandarinoriental.com*

Cary Collier co-founder, Blu Spas

Spa consultancies seem to be faring better than others in the global spa community. We're most fortunate that on-going projects are not slowing down and clients are still planning and/or building now to be ready for when things do pick up. At the same time, new prospective clients are already coming to us because of the coronavirus outbreak for advice on incorporating wellness.

We're getting 10-15 per cent more enquiries than usual and most of those are for new builds (80 per cent) or renovations. There's also been interest in creating 'adaptable' spa models to resonate with what a 'new normal' may be when we come back into the light. This fits in well with our



Blu Galaxy indoor/outdoor soaking retreat concept which includes diverse experiences, all with health benefits, that are mostly enjoyed outside.

Without doubt COVID-19 will impact on spa design. The technology, materials and finishes to deliver more clean, virus-resilient ecosystems for spas and wellness facilities already exist. Whether that's to do with air quality, such as

Consultancies seem to be faring better than others in the global spa community. we're getting 10-15% more enquiries

filtration systems, wearable air purifiers or air-purifying curtains; or cleanliness, such as elegant sanitisation portals, back-of-house 'clean zones', a reduction of 'touch zones' (think *Star Trek* type sensor opening doors, RFID opening lockers), self-sanitising rooms or bacteria-battling robots.

Sitting in on a Green Spa Network virtual meeting also germinated some ideas for new treatment concepts. These include everything from hand treatments (we're drying the heck out of them!) as a complimentary welcome back to the spa to

a 're-awakening' package where a spa layers services to encourage repeat visits and community participation. Services without practitioners - self-care, self-directed treatments - will be at the forefront. Expect more virtual and digital communication and connectivity. Immune boosting and detox therapies will be the new normal.

There's so much opportunity to improve and reset or innovate and inspire.

■ *Blu Spas is a design and planning consultancy. Details: www.bluspasinc.com*

Craig Collin COO, Tavistock Development Company

People are still digesting what's happening, but I do think you'll see an intensified interest in health and wellbeing products in the future - especially for the home and office. Wellbeing certifications will become the new LEED and consumers will seek everything from germicidal lighting and antimicrobial surfaces to accessible healthcare and wellness programmes.

We're fortunate that we already provide that environment in Lake Nona - it's something we've innovated over the last 15 years. Our pioneering WHIT (Wellness Home built on Innovation and Technology) is a showcase for how to incorporate more health and wellness features. To this end, I think that well-built, well-positioned communities



that offer wellness will continue to outperform, especially if they continue to evolve with the changing times.

Lake Nona, for example, has quickly switched its robust health and wellbeing programming to a virtual platform including meditation and yoga to cardio workouts and more. Now is the time to get ahead of the curve as everything from the master plan of a space, to the design

Everything from the master plan of a space, to the design of a building, to the operations is likely to evolve

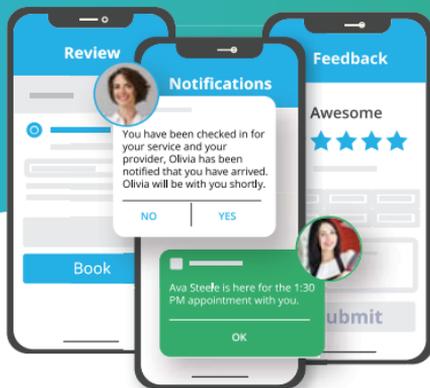
of a building, to the operations is likely to evolve as a result of COVID-19. Safety and health is going to be top of mind and this includes our spas which are still in development.

Overall there will be a need for more private spaces in buildings, more space in general to accommodate more people while keeping safe distances. Spas, on the other hand, will have a heightened sense of responsibility to ensure people feel safe in confined spaces. This will include reducing waiting room and recovery area footprints and limiting numbers so everyone can space out.

In general, cleaning and janitorial protocols will increase, reducing the things we need to touch, encouraging virtual meetings and reducing required travel and in-person meetings. Spas will also focus on this and may potentially look at using protective face coverings when up close during services - anything to maintain the comforting and relaxing environment they provide.

■ *Tavistock is the developer of Lake Nona, a mixed-use planned community covering 17sq miles in Orlando, US. Details: www.lakenona.com*

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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Susie Ellis chair & CEO, Global Wellness Institute

With every challenge comes opportunity. That's what we see from our global vantage point at the Global Wellness Institute (GWI).

In the midst of worries about coronavirus, it can be easy to slip into fears about the unknown and concerns about the suffering a global health crisis could cause people around the world - and those in our industry. However, I believe members of the spa and wellness industry are extremely resilient - and resourceful - and are demonstrating extraordinary leadership during this crisis.

At the beginning of March, GWI launched the PositivelyWell campaign to encourage the spa and wellness industry to respond to fear with hope, optimism and



a message of wellness. Shortly after, the GWS launched a series of collaboration calls and master classes to bring industry leaders together in meaningful dialogue to share ideas and best practices for navigating the COVID-19 crisis.

The feedback to these additions has been inspiring. Owners of spas, fitness clubs and wellness centres, executives in the hospitality and travel industry and

This is the exact moment to recognise that we have an opportunity to reinforce the self-care message we proclaim

leaders in health and wellness from around the world have shared insightful articles and inspiring quotes as part of the PositivelyWell campaign. And as of the end of April, 2,000 people from 75 countries have participated in the collaboration calls (see p56), with more planned.

While not discounting the seriousness of the pandemic, I believe this is the exact moment to recognise that we have an opportunity to reinforce the self-care message we proclaim - and to remind our clients, employees, families and friends that now is the time to commit to wellness

in their own lives and the lives of those in our homes, businesses and communities.

We must recognise this is the ideal time to encourage a focus on building a strong immune system through exercise, healthy nutrition, stress reduction, smoking cessation and more. And we need to prepare for the time when the pandemic has subsided - to trumpet our message even louder and wider.

■ *GWI's mission is to spread the word about preventative health and wellness worldwide. Details: www.globalwellnessinstitute.org*

Lynne McNees president, International Spa Association

ISPA is, of course, mindful of the potential large-scale implications the spread of COVID-19 has had on public health, the economy and our industry in the long term. However, we also know that a lot can be done immediately to support our members and the industry as a whole, and that's what we're focusing on.

As the seriousness of coronavirus became clear, ISPA immediately created a COVID-19 resources page to share best practice and business guidance from organisations like the World Health Organization. That page has since grown to include a central repository of relevant resources. More recently, we've created a COVID-19 Reopening Toolkit to assist spas as they prepare to reopen. This includes a Spa



Reopening Checklist to help guide spas through the process, communication templates to simplify marketing efforts and a Spa Sanitation and Hygiene Standards list. Currently, the toolkit has been downloaded more than 77,000 times.

We've also published the results of one coronavirus snapshot survey to better understand the needs of the

We remain hopeful that the spa industry's response will be an example for others to follow

industry (see p46) and will release the results of a second in May. In addition, PwC has conducted a separate study for ISPA examining the pandemic's impact on consumer decision-making and spending (see p20).

Though it's tempting to look at - and worry about - the future, we strongly believe our attention should be on what we know to be true right now: those in our industry need whatever support and guidance we can offer. As the 'what comes next' becomes clearer, we'll be there to help spas bounce back from

this crisis and its countless unknown consequences.

Though we don't yet know precisely what those consequences will be, we remain hopeful that the spa industry's response will be an example for others to follow. I say that because in my 25 years with ISPA, I have been repeatedly amazed by the strength, compassion and resiliency of the global ISPA community. ●

■ *ISPA represents health and wellness facilities and providers in over 70 countries. Details: www.experiencespa.com*

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Our philosophy is to always think differently – to scout and develop the best technology in longevity

Simone Gibertoni,
CEO, Clinique La Prairie

Simone Gibertoni

World-renowned medical spa, Clinique La Prairie, is creating a global network of locations to support clients with their wellbeing, every day of the year, says its CEO

Clinique La Prairie, based on Lake Geneva at Montreux, is a world-renowned medical clinic and wellness destination famed for its award-winning innovation.

Thanks to its commitment to scientific research, Clinique La Prairie is highly regarded and has earned a reputation for excellence in preventative medicine.

Its unique programmes include Revitalisation, Beauty Stem Cells

and Master Detox and all its signature treatment programmes are customised through DNA testing.

Founded in 1931, by Dr Paul Niehans, Clinique La Prairie is a fusion of hyper-luxury private clinic and wellness centre – a unique combination of spa, medicine and hotel in one beautiful location – all boasting the attention to detail only found with Swiss hospitality.

“Our philosophy is to always think differently – to scout and develop the

best technology in longevity,” says CEO, Simone Gibertoni. “We have a team of 50 doctors evaluating the scientific foundations of treatments and introducing them into our programmes. This is a continuous process, so every year we’re improving what we offer our guests.”

This dedication to excellence has earned a loyal clientele – Gibertoni reports a net promoter score of 91 per cent and says repeat business runs at over 65 per cent.

Now, as the company approaches its centenary, it’s embarking on a campaign of global expansion to create ‘city hubs’ – facilities of between 1,000-2,000sq m – that embody Clinique La Prairie’s philosophy of longevity, which is delivered through the four pillars of nutrition, wellbeing, movement and medical science.

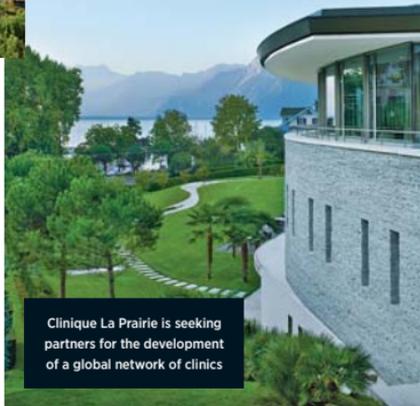
Continuous support

Gibertoni expects customers to visit Clinique La Prairie to undertake the complete holistic programme and then to follow up between visits with regular appointments at city hubs: “The aim is to open Clinique La Prairie hubs around the world, so our international clients can continue their journey closer to home on a day-to-day basis,” he explains.

The first international opening – the Clinique La Prairie Aesthetics and



Clinique La Prairie specialises in high-end longevity treatments



Clinique La Prairie is seeking partners for the development of a global network of clinics

Longevity Suites in Madrid – opened early in 2020, and a clinic at The St. Regis Bangkok is scheduled to open later this year. “If we can open in the top 15-20 cities in the world, we’ll be able to reach 80 per cent of our clients,” says Gibertoni.

While the company intends to grow, it also remains fixed on supporting its existing clients, as Gibertoni explains: “We want to deepen our relationship with a unique and exclusive community of guests rather than having a more superficial relationship with a larger number of people,” he says. “Our mission is to take our unique fusion of science and holistic wellness directly to our global clientele.”

Clinique La Prairie intends to keep both the exclusivity and the human dimension of service at each clinic and hub to reflect its philosophy of exclusive treatments and high-end service for demanding customers.

Partnership opportunities

“We want to reach out to potential partners in the spa, hotel and resort markets to explain the benefits of working with Clinique La Prairie,” says Gibertoni.

“We want to show them how much more they can offer their customers,



We want to deepen our relationship with a unique and exclusive community of guests



The company has an NPS of 91 and a 65 per cent return rate

by partnering with us to deliver our world-class programmes that create real and lasting change for guests.

“We also want to be seen as providing a full health concierge service for all our clients’ needs and the needs of our partners’ clients, all year round, both in our Swiss clinic and at our city hubs,” he continues. “The idea is to sustain improvements in the health of guests throughout the year.

As part of this strategy, the company is working to support its clients with their wellbeing at home, by offering a new line of nutraceuticals: “We’re creating a full product range called Clinique La Prairie Holistic Health – that will launch at the end of this year,” explains Gibertoni.

“We’re serving a unique community of men and women from all around the world,” he concludes. “We want to stay very aligned with them in everything we do.” ●

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This ISPA survey captures an industry in the middle of an enormous transition as they reacted to daily changes in the public health landscape

FIRST RESPONDERS



ISPA's COVID-19 response survey offers insights into the spa world's in-the-moment reaction to coronavirus. Josh Corman explains the significance of the data

Alongside the rest of the world, the spa industry has spent much of the last several weeks responding to the rapid changes caused by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Attempts to mitigate the virus's impact on public health through social distancing and other measures have forced a vast number of spas to close.

As these rapid developments occurred, the International Spa Association (ISPA) surveyed stakeholders from across the industry - including owners and managers, vendors, consultants and educational institutions - to better understand the pandemic's impact on the businesses within it. Specifically, ISPA sought feedback about the ways in which coronavirus (and COVID-19, the disease it causes) affected policies and practices, communications, revenues and more for spas and their resource partners. More than 500 spa industry professionals responded to the two-part

survey, which was conducted from 13-23 March. The majority of respondents (80 per cent) were based in the US.

Though the situation facing the industry has evolved a great deal even since the survey was conducted, its timing offers insights into the spa world's in-the-moment coronavirus response. "This ISPA survey captures an industry in the middle of an enormous transition as they reacted to daily changes in the public health landscape," says Crystal Ducker, ISPA's vice president of research and communications.

Operational changes

By the dates on which they responded, 99 per cent of spas reported an increase in their cleaning and sanitation efforts, and 82 per cent had implemented other policies or procedures specifically related to COVID-19. Largely, these new policies reflected the early guidance provided by the World Health Organization and the US Centers for Disease Control. For example, just over half of spas visibly promoted hand washing within the spa, nearly 70 per cent



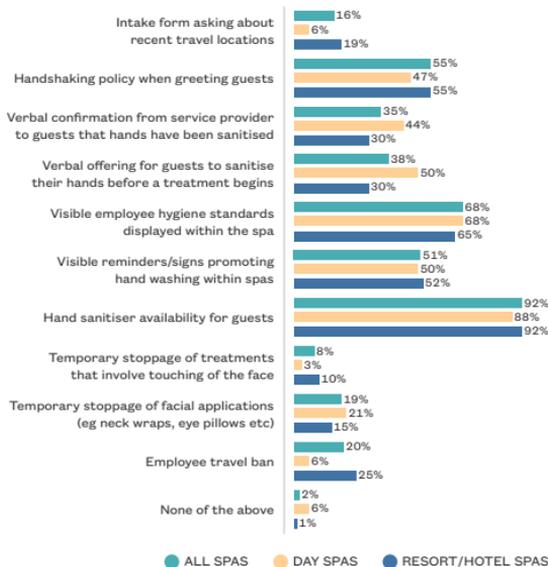
KRISTINA KORDIANOVA, SHUTTERSTOCK

More than half of spas had changed the traditional handshake greeting before lockdown

GRAPH 1

{ Standards Implemented Prior to Closures }

Prior to spa closures, respondents were asked: Which of the following, if any, have been implemented by your company? Select all that apply



displayed employee hygiene standards and more than 90 per cent made hand sanitiser widely available to guests (see Graph 1).

In addition, more than half of all spas responded that their guest greeting policies had been amended to eliminate shaking hands, 38 per cent offered guests the opportunity to sanitise their hands prior to receiving treatment and 35 per cent required service providers to verbally confirm that their hands had been sanitised prior to providing treatment.

Guest communications

These steps were also the focal point of most COVID-19-related communications from spas to guests as shown in Graph 2 (see p48). More than 90 per cent of spas informed guests of sanitation efforts within their facilities in communications. Interestingly, day spas also encouraged guests not to visit if they were sick (96 per cent) and informed them about staff hygiene standards (92 per cent) at higher rates than resort/hotel spas (71 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively).

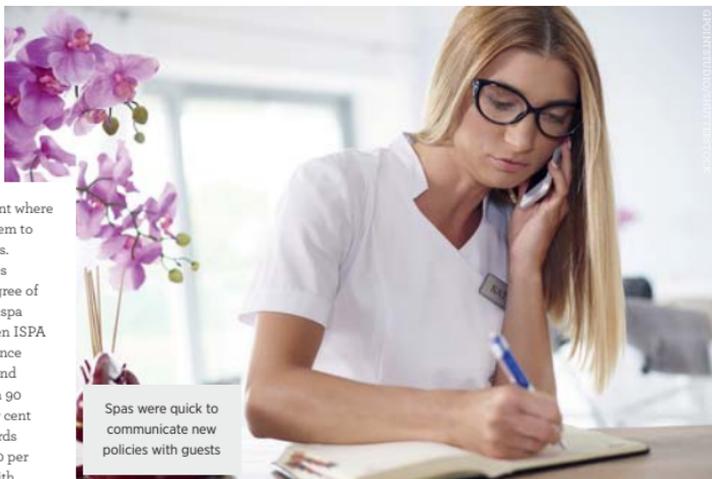
The numbers don't lie. The coronavirus pandemic has left no corner of the spa industry untouched

These figures suggest that, by mid-March, most spas were taking at least basic precautions against the transmission of coronavirus. However, it also seems clear that many spas had not yet expanded their policies to include even more robust protections. More than a quarter of spas, for example, noted that their guest communications encouraged visiting the spa to reduce stress. Also, a relatively low percentage of spas noted that they had stopped employees from travelling (25 per cent of resort/hotel spas), stopped facial applications like neck wraps and eye pillows (19 per cent) or stopped treatments that involved touching the face altogether (8 per cent).

From our vantage point in mid April, those figures may seem shockingly low. However, by the time ISPA's survey was concluded, 80 per cent of spas reported closing to guests at least temporarily in response to COVID-19. Once again, the timing of the survey is key, as it likely explains the rapid transition from crafting new policies in hopes of remaining open to closing altogether within such a short time.

Financial wellbeing

It's worth noting that, on 23 March, only nine US states had issued statewide "shelter in place" or "stay at home" directives. By 30 March, the number of states was up to 30. As of 3 April, 41 states and the District of Columbia have issued such orders. The UK, meanwhile, announced an enforced lockdown on 23 March, and many European nations harder hit at that time by the virus had put similar lockdowns in place only in the week or two prior. This suggests that, like the world at large, the spa industry attempted to maintain some safe level of normal



Spas were quick to communicate new policies with guests

GRAPH 2

{ COVID-19 Communications }

Which of the following types of messages have been included within your communications to customers relating to COVID-19?



operations before reaching the point where public health concerns required them to take sudden, more drastic measures.

Of course, those drastic measures have brought with them a high degree of fear and uncertainty regarding the spa industry's financial wellbeing. When ISPA asked spas to anticipate the difference in revenues between March 2020 and the same month in 2019, more than 90 per cent estimated at least a 20 per cent drop in revenue, with a full two-thirds anticipating a drop of more than 50 per cent. Those figures track closely with respondents' estimates about the change in number of guest visits in March compared to the previous year, with 64 per cent of spas anticipating that number to be cut at least in half due to the pandemic.

Naturally, those steep declines led to workforce changes as well. A quarter of spas had laid off employees at the time of the survey and 35 per cent had a hiring freeze. Given the high rate of closures indicated in the survey, it's highly likely that those numbers have risen dramatically in the weeks since it was concluded.

Spas themselves are not, however, facing these industry wide challenges in isolation. Of the resource partners who responded to the survey, more than two-thirds anticipated their March gross revenues to be at least 20 per cent lower than last year, while just under a third anticipated a drop of more than 50 per cent. Resource partners differed from spas, though, in at least one key way: just

16 per cent of resource partners reported having closed their businesses. That figure is likely explained by the high number of respondents (71 per cent) who transitioned employees to work remotely in the pandemic and the (often) less hands-on nature of their jobs compared to spas. Still, 41 per cent of resource partners had already reduced employee hours, 31 per cent had a hiring freeze and 17 per cent had laid off employees.

Lasting impact?

The numbers don't lie. The coronavirus pandemic has left no corner of the spa industry untouched. But what the numbers can't yet tell us is how long its most immediate effects will be felt. ISPA's survey reveals that more than half of spas anticipated that the length of their closure

would be four weeks or less, while just 6 per cent believed it would last more than six weeks. Perhaps those numbers reflect the optimism and positive thinking the spa industry is known for. Perhaps they simply illustrate that, in mid-March, people weren't yet aware of the pandemic's possible scope or the measures required to combat it.

In any case, that picture will likely become clearer as more data is collected. To help with this, ISPA conducted another survey late in April to more fully measure the effects of COVID-19 on the industry as it continues to respond to these unprecedented events. ●

Josh Corman is director of education and research at ISPA ■ ispa@ispastaff.com



Over 500 spa professionals responded to the survey between 13-23 March

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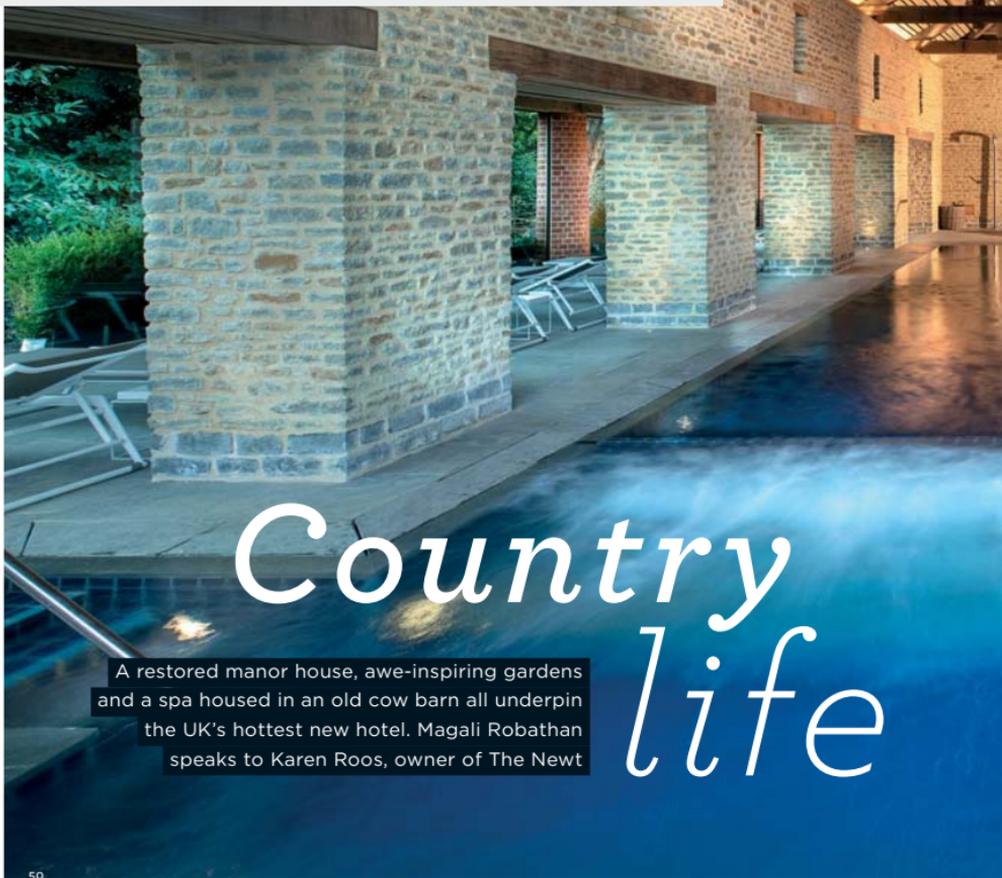
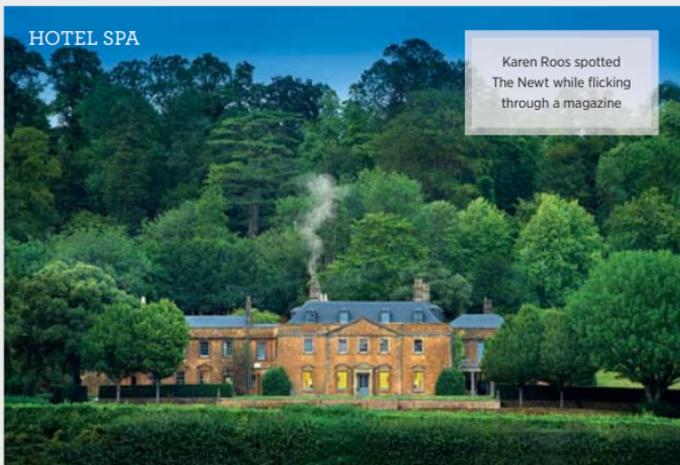
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HOTEL SPA

Karen Roos spotted
The Newt while flicking
through a magazine



Country *life*

A restored manor house, awe-inspiring gardens and a spa housed in an old cow barn all underpin the UK's hottest new hotel. Magali Robathan speaks to Karen Roos, owner of The Newt



A cow barn has been transformed into a beautiful spa

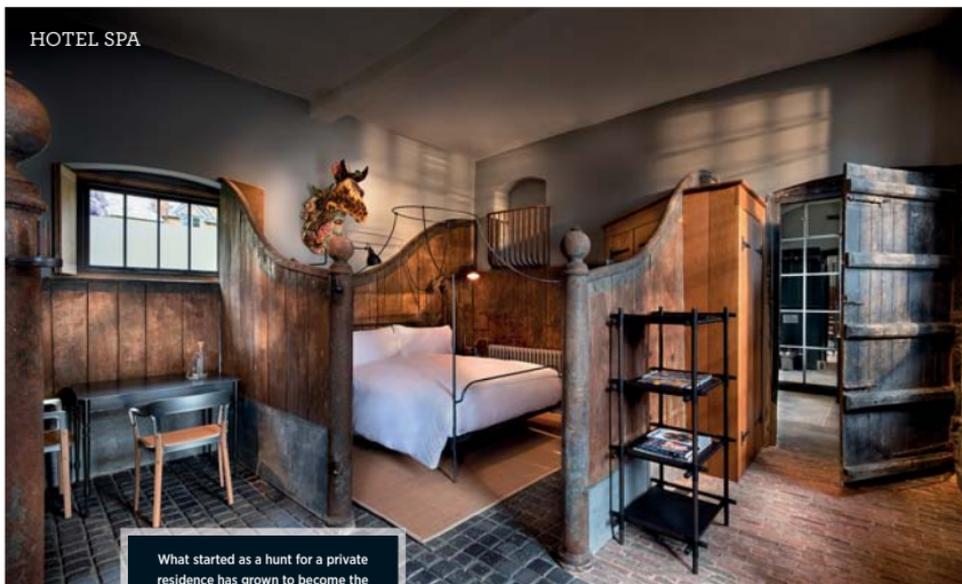
When South African telecoms billionaire Koos Bekker and his wife Karen Roos began their search for a Georgian country house to use as a weekend retreat in England, they knew the gardens were always going to be at the heart of their vision.

The pair are the creators and owners of Babylonstoren, a historic Cape Dutch farm estate that's been converted into a stylish boutique hotel, spa and winery near Cape Town, South Africa. It's a beautiful, painstakingly restored 17th century farmhouse with an 8-acre fruit and vegetable garden inspired by the mythological hanging gardens of Babylon.

This is a couple that takes gardens very seriously. Which is a good job, because the Somerset estate that Karen spotted for sale while leafing through a copy of *Country Life* magazine in 2013 is the result of the work of generations

of gardeners. This includes Arthur Hobhouse, one of the founders of the UK's national parks system, and more recently garden designer, writer and presenter Penelope Hobhouse, who lived and worked there until 1979.

"I loved it immediately," says Karen Roos, of Hadspen House, which has been renamed as The Newt in respect for the 2,000 endangered amphibians which slowed down its transformation. And arriving at the sprawling estate on a bright, windblown day – six weeks before coronavirus took hold – it's easy to see why. ▶



What started as a hunt for a private residence has grown to become the UK's most talked about hotel openings

- ▶ What started as a hunt for a private residence has grown to become one of the UK's most talked about hotel openings. It has only 23 rooms set across the honey-coloured limestone main house and in converted farm buildings, a spa in an old cow barn and a standalone new-build boasting a plant-based cafe and interactive museum about the history of gardening.

FROM COW BARN TO SPA

The design of the hotel and gardens, opened last September, was led by Roos, who also oversaw the interiors at Babylonstoren and is a former editor of *Elle Decoration* in South Africa.

The classical rooms in the main house boast four poster beds and sash windows overlooking the grand sweeping grounds. In the former stable yard, old horse boxes have been replaced with dark, cozy spaces featuring wood panelling, wood burning stoves, hay mangers, king size beds and luxurious bathrooms. Meanwhile, those in the converted Granary building have the feel of a Scandinavian cabin, with futons, exposed stone walls and fur-style throws.

The landscape has inspired the overall design, with a varied palette of greens used throughout and opposite Roos tells *Spa Business* about her vision, passion for the land and how she's grown to love the infamous newts.

The design enthusiast also had a hand in the garden-scented spa, with the help of industry consultant Tracey Chappell, who previously



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WAS INUNDATED
WITH REQUESTS FOR
THE DAY PACKAGES
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oversaw the global spa division at ESPA for 20-plus years. The spa is beautiful - housed in an old cow barn - with a roaring fire, exposed limestone walls, natural oak and forest marble. A glazed wall by a swimming pool looks out onto a medicinal herb garden designed to evoke monastic gardens of the medieval era and provide a calming space for guests. The spa also features an indoor/outdoor hydro pool, sauna, steamroom, Himalayan salt room, rasul and an authentic full-sized hammam - all installed by Barr + Wray. A high-spec gym is located opposite, and was designed by Invisible Studio as a giant window to minimise the impact on the landscape and gives guests views across the vegetable gardens. ▶

Karen Roos owner, The Newt

What were your first impressions when you discovered Hadspen House?

For years I'd been looking for a Georgian country house in the UK. I was in the Seychelles, paging through a magazine, when I noticed this one in Somerset: one of the most beautiful I ever saw. Classical proportions; Hadspen limestone the colour of burnt orange. I loved it immediately

What was your vision and do you think you've achieved it?

Initially the idea was merely to enjoy the house as a weekend retreat. But one thing led to another, and the project ran away with us...

What were the biggest challenges of this project?

The house itself is Grade

II-listed, so restoring it presented challenges. We had to preserve wood panelling, cosset bats in the ceiling and of course entertain the newts! The critters delayed building work by about a year, but in the end we embraced them as dear friends.

How did the location and history of the building influence the design?

I love the Georgian period: symmetrical, restrained, sun-filled. And I now like Somerset immensely: it's about copses and rolling hills; apple trees and cyder; meadows and cows and cheddar

Why was it important to use local materials and craftsmanship where possible?

The spirit of the place is everything to us. That runs from hiring



The bar is a design favourite for Roos

staff to working with local craftsman as well as using designs from British designers such as Tom Dixon. Hadspen limestone and blue lias pops out of the local quarry, while the skill of local architects, blacksmiths, carpenters and stonemasons sustained us

What are you proudest of with this project?

That it was fun!

Do you have a personal favourite part of the hotel?

I love the bar. To sip a superb glass of viognier at 7pm: that's my idea of valhalla

What are you working on now?

We're soon adding a restored Farmyard, so I'm furnishing that. Set to open mid-summer, it will have 17 bedrooms within a former dairy farm on the estate. The tone is laid back, a private experience with a separate swimming pool



Roos, a former editor of *Elle Decoration*, worked with Tracey Chappell and Barr + Wray on the spa

HOTEL SPA



The Garden Cafe has its own cyder press and bar

THE SOMERSET ESTATE IS THE RESULT OF WORK OF GENERATIONS OF GARDENERS, INCLUDING ARTHUR HOBHOUSE, ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE UK'S NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM

The hotel is a hot new opening, but the gardens really take centre stage

► The treatments, offered in one of seven therapy rooms, have been inspired by an English country garden. The 60-minute nourishing and hydrating Apothecary Blend Facial, for example, use locally-made botanical ingredients. It costs £90 (US\$111, €103) as is one of the lower priced services, along with a 60-minute mud rasul experience that costs £80 (US\$99, €92) for two people. At the top-end is the £195 (US\$241, €223), results-driven Linda Meredith Vtox Oxygen Facial, a 90-minute treatment which infuses the skin with neuropeptides and algae; or a 60-minute hammam soap treatment combined with a 30-minute couples massage for £240 (US\$297, €275).

It's a sizeable wellness offering for the boutique hotel, which has rooms starting at £320 (US\$366, €395) a night based on two people sharing. At the time of writing, both hotel and spa are closed following the coronavirus outbreak. But once reopened, it's believed that the spa will still only be available to hotel guests – when it first launched it was inundated with requests for the day packages advertised, so marketing has stopped and it will look to keep a low profile initially.





GARDEN OF ENGLAND

Although The Newt is one of the UK's most talked about hotel and spa openings, it's the gardens that really take centre stage and daily tours are led by experienced horticulturists. Next year, it's also looking to introduce Great Garden Escape day trip packages from London.

Visitors are welcomed in the triple height threshing barn – part of a new cluster of buildings designed by Benjamin and Beauchamp which also include the Farm Shop, Cyder Press and Bar and Greenhouse, and which have been designed using traditional techniques to create a historic feel.

The formal gardens have been designed by Italian-French landscape architect Patrice Taravella, who also designed the edible and medicinal gardens at Babylonstoren. Visiting in February, many of the plants were dormant, but the sheer scale and ambition of the outside space is clear.

Highlights include the walled parabola garden, which contains apple trees from each apple growing county of England, trained to form a maze as they germinate. There are also kitchen gardens that supply the restaurants, coloured gardens, a fragrance garden, wildflower meadows which I've been assured look stunning in the spring and summer, and a beautiful Victorian-style greenhouse with a small bar where guests and visitors can drink tea surrounded by tropical plants and ferns.

The estate also features a deer park, orchards with more than 3,000 apple trees that favour traditional apple growing methods over more recent commercial methods (the trees

Next year, The Newt wants to start Great Garden Escape day trip packages from London

are widely spaced, meaning they are able to grow much taller) and several miles of walks through ancient woodlands and meadows.

A steel and timber elevated treetop walk – the Viper – has been shipped from South Africa, and leads visitors above the trees to the newly-opened Story of Gardening museum. This immersive experience centre explores and celebrates gardens and their impact on culture through history. A series of multi sensory interactive exhibits explore historic and current gardens from different parts of the world, and the museum culminates in a virtual reality trip to Babylonstoren, Monet's Garden and Tivoli Gardens Italy.

It's these outdoor-based experiences that are likely to be the first things on offer once the country-wide lockdown is lifted. Stays at the hotel and treatments in the spa will hopefully follow soon after as domestic travellers seek some much-needed respite from the devastating pandemic. ●



Magali Robathan is editor of the design title *CLADmag*, a sister publication to *Spa Business*
■ magali@CLADglobal.com



CALLS to action

Spa and wellness leaders from 75 countries have participated in Global Wellness Collaboration calls to give insights into their businesses, thoughts, ideas and innovations in the wake of COVID-19. Cassandra Cavanah reports on the highlights

Even before the coronavirus pandemic had us 'sheltering in place', the Global Wellness Institute launched its PositivelyWell campaign to find all the many ways that optimism and a focus on health and wellness impact overall wellbeing. In addition, the Global Wellness Summit (GWS) introduced its Global Wellness Collaboration (GWC) Zoom calls to continue to bring the industry together.

Participants of these invitation-only calls have attended as least one GWS and as of the end of April, up to 2,000 people from 75 countries have joined in the conversations, with more planned on a regular basis. They're kept confidential so stakeholders can share business insights and innovations freely.

Calls have focused on every spectrum of the wellness industry - from hot spring operators and



Susie Ellis leads the calls, which have attracted over 2,000 attendees

With social distancing expectations, spas will use more outdoor spaces



wellness communities to beauty and retail and mental wellness. Early on, spa consultants were a bright spot, saying they were inundated with new clients exploring how to incorporate wellness into their businesses. In tandem, wellness lifestyle communities immediately reported more interest not only from buyers but also from investors and the media. And, of course, so many providers have made remarkable pivots to virtual offerings (see p26).

Below are some takeaways from the GWC Spa & Hospitality call in late April to give some perspective to what's next for the industry.

Design and space

Expect smarter design and new ways of using space as spas and hotels reopen. Abdul Nassani, a project developer in the Middle East, said many of his clients are focusing on converting larger, unused hotel suites into private wellness suites so there's no chance of running into other guests – reinforcing the reality that social distancing is here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future.

How guests and staff navigate spas will also likely change. Think one-way halls to minimise anxiety around passing in small corridors. There will be more visible handwashing/sanitising and spas will also look to technical solutions to facilitate 'touchless' experiences, whether it's key fobs or wristbands to automate the opening of doors or equipment like hydro-massage beds.

Outdoor areas offer another bright spot, suggested veteran travel journalist and consultant Laura Powell, "One opportunity is to stop thinking treatments

One opportunity is to stop thinking treatments or classes can only take place within four walls. Instead, I see more use of outdoor spaces, not just for spas and restaurants, but for all businesses

or classes can only take place within four walls. Instead, I see more use of outdoor spaces, not just for spas and restaurants, but for all businesses."

Going local

The lack of incoming tourists presents a massive challenge – and is even more concerning for destination spas in remote corners of the world – this

means under-served locals will be more important than ever. Get creative about what you can offer them from the spa menu, restaurant or even just space inside or outside for that ever-important change of scenery. It could be a huge opportunity in the early days of opening: for example, Six Senses reported a presence in China had 70 locals come into its restaurant the day the lockdown lifted.

Day spas that already have relationships with locals will likely be able to ramp up much faster than larger brands, said spa consultant Lisa Starr, Wynne Business. She recommends a shortened service menu, staggered start times to help with spacing in locker rooms, lounges and treatment areas, as well as contactless check-in and check-out. And, of course, this is something to tout in communications and marketing materials.

Another great idea while paying guests are at a bare minimum: consider letting staff experience the property. Something that will no doubt bring dividends in terms of loyalty, but also a better understanding of the guest journey. Kamalaya in Thailand has done just that as well as keeping staff employed to make improvements and keep systems up and running so they're fully ready when business does pick back up. ▶

► Operational impact

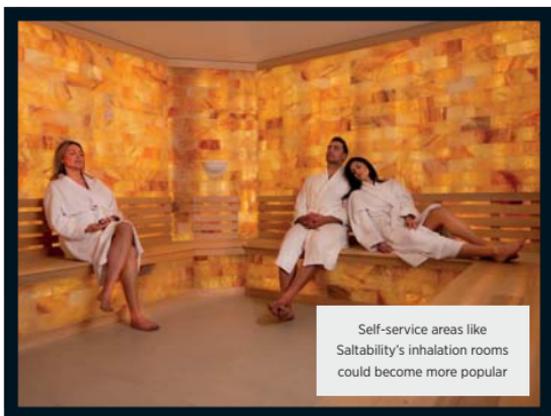
Clearly, guest and employee safety are paramount to reopening and this is the thing most people on the call wanted to understand.

With concerns for hygiene so heightened, turnover times for hotel rooms – and possibly treatment rooms? – will likely be considerably longer. One US hotel that's remained opened is leaving rooms alone for 48 hours after a checkout, followed by a deep clean and waiting yet another 24 hours before a final sweep. A 72-hour turnaround is not sustainable over the long haul, but with occupancy rates low, there's a unique opportunity to eradicate viruses and bacteria.

Christina Salcedas from Aromatherapy Associates asked the group: "We know how important touch is to our clients, but how do we actually open up the spa successfully with physical distancing? How do we look after our therapists? It's challenging to recruit them and keep them, so we need to be sure they're safe."

Figuring out how to cater to clients who will no doubt be craving human touch after weeks of isolation – as well as the immune-building preventative treatments on offer – is clearly key to a successful reopening of spas. Visible cleaning protocols are a no brainer – and definitely in every spa's future, but insuring therapist safety is also critical. One spa owner commented: "We need hygiene procedures that support both clients and therapists. Perhaps clients will need to take a special antibacterial shower before going into a massage room?"

Debbie Leon from Fashionizer Spa, which pivoted to making face masks from spa uniforms in light of the crisis, said it's working on producing anti-viral



Self-service areas like Saltability's inhalation rooms could become more popular

We know how important touch is to our clients, but how do we actually open up the spa successfully with physical distancing?

masks – and uniforms – for the industry, but pointed out that many of "the existing materials for this are environmentally unsustainable, so we need to consider that issue too."

Will everyone be wearing masks? Gloves? Should both guests and therapists get their temperatures taken upon arrival? Should we have questionnaires regarding COVID symptoms? Or add an indemnity clause to consent forms regarding coronavirus? Maybe consider offering more spa treatments where

clients are clothed, like Thai massage or energy medicine like reiki? Will we see much more use of self-service wellness areas, like inhalation therapy and saunas? What about changing treatment beds after a guest has arrived in the room so they can see that everything is freshly washed and clean for them? These questions proved difficult to answer and the answers are clearly still evolving.

Ready and waiting

The good news is that numerous operators say clients are ready to come back. A private masseuse located outside of New York said her customers are already reaching out: "I'm in a unique position, my clients have known me for a very long time and I'm assuring them I'm using safe and sustainable sanitising products and happy to offer treatments with or without a mask and gloves – whatever the client wants."

Regardless of what happens next in our 'new normal', it's clear that spas once again need to become safe, healthy and trusted sanctuaries that offer human connection – something that will be critical as we enter recovery for our normal day-to-day lives and the industry's future. ●

● To read more highlights from other GWC calls, visit www.globalwellnesssummit.com/global-wellness-collaborations

Cassandra Cavanah is a communications specialist who's part of the GWS team
 ■ cassandra@cavanahcommunications.com



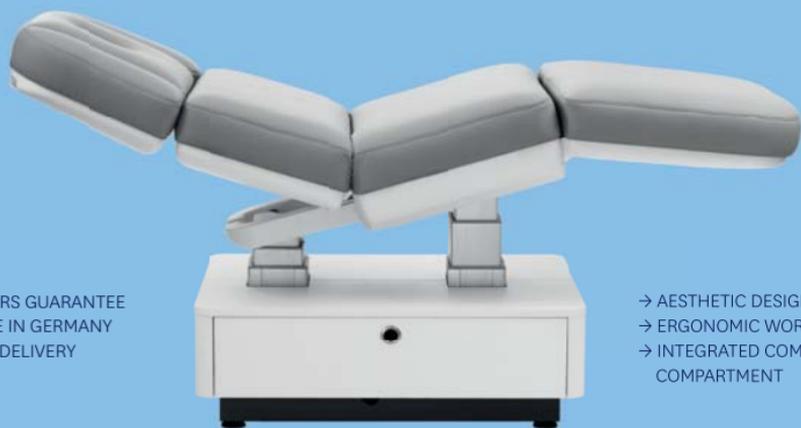
Expect more 'touchless' therapies like Gharient's hydromassage bed



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spa business uniting the world of wellness



Webinar WISDOM

Suddenly the spa industry is flooded with online group calls, chats, webinars and virtual roundtables as the sector takes stock of what's happened and where things are headed following the coronavirus outbreak. Lisa Starr shares her takeaways from 30 different sessions

In the midst of an unprecedented global shutdown of practically every business imaginable, most of us found ourselves adrift for at least a few days. Many thousands in spas worldwide have been laid off or furloughed, or work has dried up for obvious reasons. Schedules disrupted, travel upended, personal meetings rescheduled or shifted to online versions, or no work at all, and we suddenly had much more time on our hands. It only took about a week for the void to be filled by a tsunami of online options from group chats and calls to webinars.

In the early stages, most of conversations centred around leadership and team and client communication. Now they've shifted to reopening and re-engagement strategies. In this period without a playbook, we're sharing a selection of the nuggets we heard from spa and wellness, hospitality, restaurant, retail, real estate and general business luminaries during this down time.

Spas will need to visibly demonstrate heightened hygiene standards

The Global Wellness Summit was one of the first to act, hosting a series of 'collaboration calls' via Zoom which had up to 150 stakeholders from around the world at a time talking about their current situations and future prospects. Some ideas shared included:

- Lots of suggestions for video marketing. Demonstrations, workshops, cooking classes from wellness resorts, even web cams showing the view from properties, empty of tourists, but hopefully arousing the desire for future visits
- Hotels converting to staycation offers for locals, as in Moscow
- UAE hotels offering treatments in suites rather than the spa
- Creating protocols for contactless check-in and check-outs
- A heightened demand for cleanliness and hygiene which will impact all SOPs and the need to also visibly demonstrate such standards
- The potential of virtual reality in spas, and treatments that don't require touch, delivered on equipment that can be cleaned and disinfected
- Guests asking for more science-based evidence of modalities
- Spa consultancies and wellness communities are faring better than most and are seeing a spike in enquiries and sales as businesses and consumers become more wellness-focused than ever

SHUTTERSTOCK





Will VR therapies, such as Sensync at Four Seasons, grow in popularity?

Reopening will be gradual
- only operating during
peak hours or days at first
and streamlining staff,
services and costs

In an innovative move, the Professional Spa & Wellness Convention switched its contents of speakers – such as Andrew Gibson, Amanda Al-Masri and Anna Bjurstam – to live YouTube sessions.

Meanwhile, in a special session hosted by the Irish Spa Association, Niamh O’Connell, Rosewood’s global head of spas, shared reopening strategies. Points from both corners included using the downtime to menu-engineer (looking at the most profitable and popular services) and gradual reopenings – only operating during peak hours or days at first (and streamlining staff, services and costs accordingly).

Advice on leadership has had a consistent theme – transparent communication. Business entrepreneur Verne Harnish has offered several virtual ‘summits’ focused on recovery; 2-hour blitzes of 12 high-level speakers with suggestions such as:

- Don’t make commitments you can’t keep, don’t forecast too far out
- Lead your team to overcome stress, learned helplessness and perfectionism
- Leaders absorb fear and exude hope
- We’re not bouncing back, we’re going to bounce forward
- Stop selling and be a resource

Hotel Business magazine showcased an array of panellists who forecasted RevPAR will be down 46 per cent for the year, and they’re now expecting a U-shaped, rather than V-shaped, recovery.

Those with operations in third world countries are fearing a longer downturn because many workers live and/or transit to work in cramped quarters without access to proper hygiene, so there was discussion around how to get these staff virus-tested, and then the logistics of daily management.

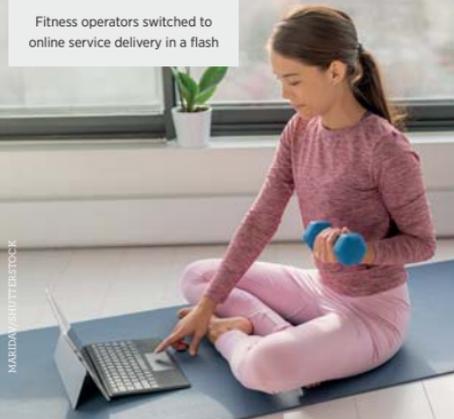
Domestic leisure travel is expected to recover more quickly standing city hotels in good stead. In the US, 15,000 hotels signed up to provide overflow housing for hospitals or quarantine centres, which would be repaid by the government. And economy brand Red Roof Inn had the clever idea to rent out rooms in the day providing access to good wifi for those who can’t work at home.

Business leader and author Margaret Heffernan (University of Bath) had some excellent advice for entrepreneurs: “Don’t lose your ambition. A lot of companies have an instinct to hunker down, but it’s really important to recognise, in difficult moments with a shrinking economy, the enormous opportunities. In a downturn, people are prepared to listen to you, try things with you.”

These sentiments were echoed in a Business of Fashion podcast when Doug Stephens said: “Knowing that most of your competitors are recoiling, slashing budgets, cutting payrolls, this is the time to take advantage and reinvent what you do, bring consumers new alternatives, reinvent your brand. Be sensible and prudent but don’t let innovation stop.”

Cloud-based booking platform Mindbody hosted several panel-based webinars for their constituencies, namely fitness/yoga studios as well as salons and spas. In particular, movement-based businesses quickly morphed into online on-demand or live delivery programming providers.

Fitness operators switched to online service delivery in a flash



MARIDA W/SHUTTERSTOCK

Kindness, promoting local products/experiences and a greater interest in our own health have all arisen out of the situation

Retailers will use virtual training to refresh product knowledge

A variety of webinars from retailers also offered some relevant points for spas. Small stores have quickly shifted to curbside pick-up and home delivery, selling through Instagram, and working with resource partners who can ship products direct to clients.

Many commented that online content that most resonated with customers was more oriented to building community, clean beauty, sustainability and other common issues, rather than just focused on sales. Sharing recipes and DIY tips and donating a percentage of sales to current causes also help with general engagement. One facility was giving coupons/double points or some incentive for its reopening week with large value orders.

A Sephora SVP remarked on the role that technology will play in reopening, as they'll need to employ virtual training "early and often" in order to refresh product knowledge and sales skills.



A discussion of the future, including trust, safety, confidence, cleanliness standards and new protocols at airports/hotels, was on the programme of the Wellness Tourism Association webinar. And also, not forgetting some of the good things that have arisen out of the situation - kindness, cooperation, promoting local producers, products and experiences, and greater respect/interest in our own health and environment.

Representatives from hospitals and the retail sector predicted that telehealth will take a great leap forward with one large healthcare operator reporting a rise from 50 to 4,000 daily telehealth bookings. This has definite implications for spa, particularly in the wellness and integrative health categories, for a swathe of practitioners.

Resource partners have been working hard to stay connected to spas and consumers, and event planner We Work Well has generated a series of video interviews with industry vendors who share how the pandemic has affected their operations, and what they're doing to remain relevant and efficient. Universal Companies has created a retail certification programme to help brands learn the art of selling online and to provide best practices.

The Green Spa Network has been offering weekly panel-based pandemic webinars. In a practitioner-led session, it was noted that they've always been well-trained on hygiene, but now that will need to become a front and centre activity. There is much concern about how spas that are already short-staffed will find enough therapists, and will manage longer room turn times as well as the personal safety of staff. At the same time, social media is rife with posts of clients who can't wait to return to their spa or salon. The hope for everyone is that this will prove true. ●

There will be a big focus on new cleanliness and hygiene SOPs

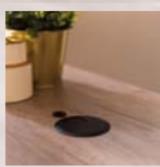
Lisa Starr is a senior spa consultant and trainer at Wynne Business.
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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Measure for Measure

The latest spa industry benchmarks by Intelligent Spas are key to mapping the impact and recovery of COVID-19. Founder Julie Garrow gives her analysis

The spa world is experiencing unprecedented pressures and changes which will continue to greatly impact the industry's performance. *Intelligent Spas' 2019 Global Research* captured updated spa benchmarks from over 200 properties across 43 countries just before the COVID-19 outbreak and provides all industry stakeholders with a clear state of the sector over the last three years, plus an opportunity to measure the rate of disruption and recovery as the situation evolves.

Julie Garrow, founder and managing director of Intelligent Spas says: "We've been tracking global spa performance over the last 10 years and our latest survey shows that average revenue per spa halved during that time due to a supply and demand imbalance, in essence, too many spas opened compared to the level of demand for spa services. A 47 per cent decrease in average spa occupancy rates between 2008 and 2018 prove this. On the positive side, revenue per visit increased 29 per cent to US\$129 (£118, £104). Overall, the findings confirm many revenue and visit

indicators have decreased significantly and even before the coronavirus, the business environment for spa owners and managers was challenging."

Spa occupancy and capture rates

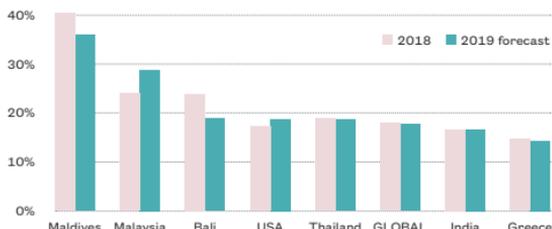
The number of people visiting spas in comparison to the number of available spas and treatments is alarming. Although some spas have performed really well over the last three years, the average occupancy rates indicate that

many spas have not. The global spa occupancy rate in 2018 was 17.9 per cent and it was forecast to slightly decrease to 17.7 per cent in 2019 (see Graph 1).

The massive declines in visits due to lockdowns associated with the current pandemic will inevitably greatly impact 2020 occupancy rates. Intelligent Spas' survey breaks down occupancy by some spa marketplaces, which highlights key differences in results. Maldives performed well predicting a 36 per cent occupancy rate in 2019, down from 40.4 per cent the previous year. In comparison, spas in Greece reported 14.7 per cent occupancy and were forecasting a slight decline for 2019.

The research also recorded two spa capture rate statistics for hotels and resorts in 2019. Spas in the Americas reported the highest in both benchmarks, with 23 per cent of all hotel/resort guests visiting the spa and 52 per cent of total spa visits being from hotel/resort guests. Spas in the Middle East and Africa reported the lowest rates, with 14 per cent of all hotel/resort guests visiting the spa and 36 per cent of total spa visits being from hotel/resort guests. On average, spa capture rates around the world

Graph 1: SPA OCCUPANCY



Source: Intelligent Spas, Global Spa Benchmark Reports 2019



Spa occupancy has decreased, but revenue per visit has risen

PHOTO BY GUSTAVO PERINOTIOM PIXELS



Global spa capture rates sat at 16.2 per cent before coronavirus

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The information in this article is based on Intelligent Spas' second *Global Spa Benchmark Survey* which coincides with the 10th anniversary of its first global spa survey results. The latest benchmark survey was released in December 2019 and is based on over 200 spas, in 43 countries. The full survey results are available in three types of reports starting from US\$40 (£37, £32) and each can be downloaded at IntelligentSpas.com.

Survey sponsors include The Assistant Company (TAC); the Asia Pacific Spa & Wellness Coalition (APSWC); Spa & Wellness Association of Singapore (SWAS); Association of Malaysian Spas (AMSPA) and the Malaysian Association of Wellness and Spa (MAWSPA). Founded in 2001, Intelligent Spas also provides detailed operations and training manuals starting at US\$30 (£28, £24).

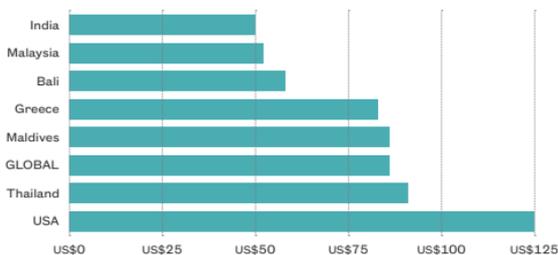
were 16.2 per cent of all hotel/resort guests visiting the spa and 45.8 per cent of total spa visits were from hotel/resort guests.

Revenue analysis

The average treatment price benchmark in spas is the ratio for annual treatment revenue received and the number of treatments sold. It assesses the performance of treatments alone, without including other revenue sources such as retail revenue, which are included in the average revenue per visit benchmark ratio calculation. If a spa menu offers a variety of lower priced services, such as express services, the average treatment price will be lower, versus if a spa is more focused on higher ticket treatments, the result will be higher assuming the same number of treatments are sold. Spas in the USA predicted an average treatment price of US\$125 (£115, £100) in 2019, compared to spas in India which predicted less than half that at US\$50 (£46, £40) (see Graph 2).

It's interesting to breakdown spa treatment revenue per therapist as this clearly identifies if the cost of the therapist is more or less than what they're generating

Graph 2: AVERAGE TREATMENT PRICE



Source: Intelligent Spas, Global Spa Benchmark Reports 2019

for the business. Spas in the Americas experienced a sharp decline in treatment revenue per therapist between 2017 and 2018, however that was forecast to stabilise in 2019 at around US\$57,000 (£52,251, £45,800)(see Graph 3). In comparison, spas in the Asia Pacific region reported the lowest levels in the three years collated, achieving between US\$33,000 (£30,251, £26,515) and US\$35,000 (£32,084, £28,122) treatment revenue per therapist.

In Asia, treatment prices and average revenue per visit are generally lower than the USA so these limit an Asian spa's ability to generate the same levels of revenue. Labour rates are also lower in comparison, so this balances the costs associated with the revenue generated.

The research was also broken down by spa type to identify a range of variations between day spas, hotel spas and resort spas and some of the biggest differences

Spas in the Maldives had some of the highest occupancy rates

were found in daily retail revenues. Hotel spas recorded the lowest daily retail revenue between 2017 and 2018, however that was forecast to improve in 2019 to be US\$91 (£83, £73), passing that of day spas, which predicted daily retail revenue to be US\$84 (£77, £67) last year. Resort spas have consistently performed the best over the three years and generated a predicted US\$162 (£149, £130) in daily retail revenue in 2019. Resort guests have more time to shop because they're typically on vacation and resort spas generally contain larger retail spaces with a greater range of products.

Changes since 2008

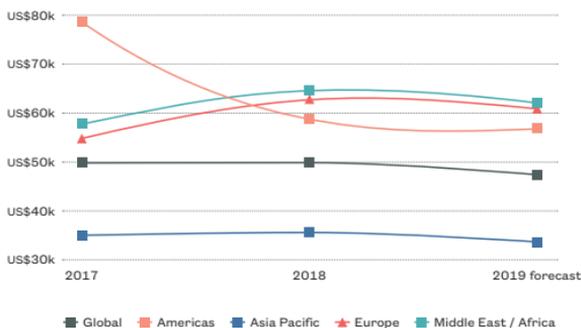
The global spa industry has experienced some interesting changes over the last decade as shown in the difference in key performance indicators in Table 1. Intelligent Spas' findings confirm many revenue and visit indicators have decreased significantly and spas continued to be challenged by financial and operational issues, ranging from maintaining existing clients, attracting new guests and managing revenue targets, while new spas entered their marketplace.

Table 1: SPA KPIs FROM 2008 TO 2018

Global Spa Benchmarks US\$	2008	2018	Change
Revenue per Square Metre	\$1,820	\$1,353	-26%
Revenue per Square Foot	\$169	\$126	-26%
Revenue per Available Treatment Hour	\$24.60	\$14.38	-42%
Average Treatment Price	\$90	\$82	-9%
Treatment Room Occupancy	34%	18%	-47%
Female Visits	58%	60%	4%
Proportion of Total Spa Visits from Hotel Guests	62%	46%	-26%
Number of Treatment Rooms	9	8.6	-5%
Spa Indoor Size (Square Metres)	788	1,350	71%
Spa Indoor Size (Square Feet)	8,487	14,531	71%

Source: Intelligent Spas, Global Spa Benchmark Reports 2019

Graph 3: SPA TREATMENT REVENUE PER THERAPIST



Source: Intelligent Spas, Global Spa Benchmark Reports 2019

Post COVID-19

The aim of Intelligent Spas' research is to help spa owners, managers, investors and other stakeholders tackle the ever-changing conditions of their business environment and to measure and enhance their performance.

The recent events caused by COVID-19 highlight the very important need for spas to closely monitor their businesses and plan for downturns in the market. Unfortunately, based on significant changes experienced in the last 10 years, the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 will push some spas into permanent closure. The businesses which continue to operate are encouraged to track their performance regularly, put financial buffers in place to protect them during slow periods and ensure they have a loyal client base to support them when normality resumes. These policies and procedures empower owners and managers to understand how their business is performing at any point in time, identify new risks in a timely manner and make informed decisions to maximise their success. ●



Julie Garrow is the founder and managing director of Intelligent Spas
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Catharine Nicol braves two extreme wellness retreats led by Wim Hof and Dr Marc Cohen and explains why their immune boosting properties might just be what the industry needs at the moment

to the extreme

Cold immersion, breathing techniques and focus are the underlying elements of two extreme wellness retreats that I recently experienced in two very contrasting destinations – wintry Poland and tropical Bali – led by two renowned yet very different wellness personalities – Wim Hof and Dr Marc Cohen.

The fact that they help boost the immune system is particularly pertinent amid the world's COVID-19 concerns. But there are a whole host of other benefits for participants and host spas too.

The theory

Exploring the edge of your physiological and psychological extremes by subjecting your body and mind to controlled stress induces a hormetic stress response that builds resilience. Exploring the extremes also helps you find your balance point and attain physical and mental homeostasis.

Extreme breathing techniques, such as repetitive diaphragmatic deep breathing (hyperventilation) followed by breath holding, create extremes of carbon dioxide and oxygen that force cells to declutter and make mitochondria (energy generators)

© MATT COHEN

more efficient. Deep breathing also creates low levels of carbon dioxide, nudging blood into a temporary alkaline state and helping the body to fight viral infections.

Extreme hot and cold exposure boosts circulation and flushes out toxins, and can help relieve pain, inflammation and slow ageing. Using extremes of temperature also allows you to practice being comfortable in an otherwise uncomfortable situation and this builds mental resilience.

Not only do these practices require commitment and focus to keep repeating, they create a 'forced mindfulness' that can fast track practitioners into a meditative state.

Immune boosting properties

Ideal right now, all of the above can boost the body's immune system, helping it fight pathogens, whether viruses,



Marc Cohen (centre) led his latest retreat at the Komune resort in Bali

© NEHOOD TVWR



With this new awareness, they feel more in control and start to take more care, responsibility and ownership of their choices

Spa appeal: extreme challenges can lead to life-changing transformations



'Iceman' Wim Hof (above); and Nico braving a mountain hike (third left)

bacteria or other antigens intent on taking over the cells of our bodies.

In 2011, Radboud University in The Netherlands experimented on Hof and his claim that he could control his autonomic nervous system and immune response. Injected with a bacterial endotoxin while practicing his concentration and meditation techniques, he did indeed overcome the usual flu-like symptoms of fever, chills and headache. In 2014 they re-tested him and 12 volunteers who'd undergone 10 days of Wim Hof Method training (meditation, breathing, cold exposure) and they all showed similar remarkable results.

Why offer extreme wellness?

The boundary-pushing nature of these retreats is a great way to attract more men to wellness. Extreme challenges also bring extreme results, potentially leading to life ▶



Participants call it a beautiful internal journey from perceived discomfort to a state of inner peace

► changing transformations fast – something most spas would love to offer their guests.

“A lot of people go home and change daily routine and habits,” says my Wim Hof Method (WHM) instructor Leonardo Pelagotti. “With this new awareness, they feel more in control and start to take more care and ownership of their choices.” Under his own company Inspire Potential, Pelagotti offers workshops in France, Italy and Switzerland.

Alex Tsuk, founder of Breathing Cold, led the ice bathing sessions on Cohen’s retreat. He offers regular online and offline workshops blending the techniques. “Participants call it a beautiful internal journey from perceived discomfort to a state of inner peace, having confronted fears, challenges and limitations,” he says. “It takes your wellness to the next level and has a ripple effect on everything around you.”

Ice baths, breathing and focus techniques aren’t difficult to facilitate in most locations; snowy mountains and freezing rivers, hot springs and saunas are ideal but not 100 per cent necessary.

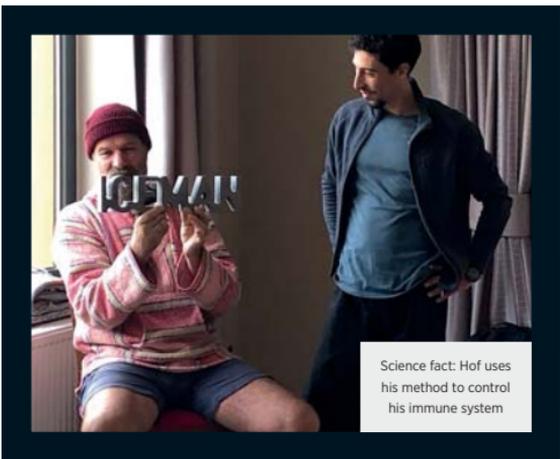
As one participant from China says, “I’m back in Beijing, which has been hit by the coronavirus. I’m using breathing methods daily to boost my immune system and get into the cold (ice water, short pant winter runs) when I have the chance.”

Who, what, where

POLAND

Dutch wellness pioneer, author and f-bomb renegade, Wim Hof is known as The Iceman thanks to his affinity for the cold and over 25 Guinness World Records for ice exposure (see SB17/4). He passionately recommends his WHM that includes the three pillars of breathing techniques, cold immersion and focus/meditation.

In Poland every January and February over 100 participants a week, a mostly male crowd, arrive at the mountain village of Przesieka where Hof has a home, for a five-day Winter Expedition – costing around US\$2,400 (€2,200, £1,932). He also hosts Summer Expeditions in Spain, and his growing band of instructors hold workshops year-round globally.



Science fact: Hof uses his method to control his immune system

PHOTO: CATHARINE NINCO



PHOTO: SMALL COHEN

Our group’s instructor, Pelagotti, guided us through breathing exercises (classic, anti-inflammation and power), cold immersion in pools and rivers, a hike to a snowy mountaintop in minimal clothing, and time in saunas and meditation. Hof appeared every day to lead occasional sessions and impassioned talks.

“We live in artificial environments with air-con and heaters, everything controlled,” he says. “Breathing and cold are mirrors that tell us our physical, mental, emotional, spiritual state.”

BALI

Cohen, a renowned industry researcher and author, professor and wellness expert with a background as a medical doctor, met Hof in 2017 and found his method helped him overcome persistent pain from a past injury.

Cohen’s own Extreme Wellness Retreats include Wim Hof influenced ice baths, extreme breathing and breath holding, as well as his own additions such as nutritional feasting and fasting and activities that encourage exertion and relaxation, focus and flow (see SB19/1).

In Bali, Cohen and 18 participants gathered for his five-day Extreme Wellness Retreat at Tony de Leede’s Komune Resort & Beach Club in November (costing around US\$1,500 – or €1,375, £1,207). Previous



Extreme challenges sharply focus the mind and create natural highs

retreats have been held at Peninsula Hot Springs in Australia, Maruia Hot Springs in New Zealand and Four Seasons Chiang Mai, Thailand. Each has been led by Cohen and differ slightly to take advantage of the natural surroundings - such as 'adventure bathing' in New Zealand.

"None of the practices I suggest are new, I merely suggest doing them consciously and with a purpose," says Cohen. "When these activities become part of your daily routine you'll become 'superpowered' and require less food and less sleep while enjoying greater levels of energy and vitality."

Cohen is hoping to train and certify Extreme Wellness leaders who will be able to hold retreats around the world.

The experiences

BALI, NOVEMBER 2019

Leading up to the Bali retreat I was excited to experience the more extreme activities. With introvert tendencies, it was the group pursuits as well as the giving and receiving

of watsu that were most challenging for me. However, the group gelled wonderfully under Cohen's fun-filled leadership.

Days consisted of breathing techniques and yoga before breakfast, presentations and talks before lunch and activities like ice baths, watsu and learning to spin fire sticks in the afternoon. Delicious, light meals were taken around communal tables at Komune's stunning Health Hub and in the evenings we migrated to the resort's Beach Club for atmospheric dinners.

Cohen is astoundingly knowledgeable. There really is no question you can ask that his medical qualifications, research experience and boundless natural curiosity can't answer, and his retreats bring an incredibly rich array of experiences and teachings.

My first ice bath lasted 2 minutes, the second 5 and the third I finally got out at 10 minutes. Getting in and exhaling calmly through the body's gasping fight or flight response was most difficult. With my hands folded against my shoulders, the rest of my body got used to the temperature ▶



©BALI COHEN

FOCUS ON

▶ relatively quickly. I focused on the warm air on my face, and each time it was the increasing pain of the cold creeping up from my feet that forced me to get out. The cold had different effects on everyone, with emotions running over for anyone. Once out, the body's rush of energy and adrenaline put me on an instant high.

When it came to the ice baths' extreme opposite - fire spinning - it was comical to feel so clumsy as we practiced (without fire) and repeatedly dropped our sticks. The trick is to stop thinking about it and let the muscles learn the movements - and that night, against a sky full of stars, the incentive not to set fire to ourselves magically sharpened our focuses. I found myself spinning, dancing to the music, experiencing another high.

I left the retreat with introvert-built walls dissolving, feeling like I'd let go of a past relationship, and looking forward to filling 2020 with new challenges.

POLAND, FEBRUARY 2020

Hof's winter expeditions are raw rather than luxurious. The week offers varying degrees of accommodation, delicious (but not specifically healthy) buffet meals and an amazing diversity among participants.

I'd signed up because I can't cope with the cold. In the spirit of facing



Lasting impression: Nicol has recreated cold bathing back at home with cold showers

your fears I was - ahem - quite nervous beforehand. How would I survive in a cold climate and even colder water?

Days started with breathing practice before breakfast, various techniques including anti-inflammation breathing using rounds of strong, fast breaths, then holding on the inhale. Breathing in a group emphasised the power of the inner journey. At times I found myself mentally and emotionally Rolladexing through my life, the people in it and where I was heading, leading to tears, gratitude, and ultimately, overwhelming feelings of love.

Our first experience with the cold was dipping just our hands and feet into a nearby river (around 2°C) causing that familiar aching blue cold. The second day at Hof's house we did pre- and post-dip energising exercises in the

cold air, alternating with three full body dips in his freezing unheated pool, and sauna time. I ended the session cold and shivering. But from the third day onwards when we soaked in natural pools and rivers I relaxed and actively enjoyed the extreme sensations, especially jumping in from a high rock. The cold was full-on to almost unbearable - a real challenge - but the pay off of warmth, adrenaline and feeling invincible immediately afterwards was extraordinary.

One of the winter expedition's key challenges is a 3-hour hike up a nearby mountain in minimal clothes. We set out in hiking boots and shorts (and bra tops for us girls), focusing on breathing in more oxygen than we needed. At the snow line we strapped on micro-spikes, scrunching our way over ice and snow, through wind but also occasional, wonderful sunshine. It was "only" -2°C at the top but I can honestly say when in the zone of breathing and focus, I barely noticed.

I ended the winter expedition on a high, having well and truly become friends with the river and the cold, with the breathing's meditative calm and resulting insights, and having made beautifully close friendships within our incredibly supportive group.

Back in everyday life, I've continued the breathing, cold showers and meditation, the timing especially ideal given their immune-boosting properties. And during this enforced indoors time, ideas for exciting future plans are slowly finding the space to come to fruition. ●

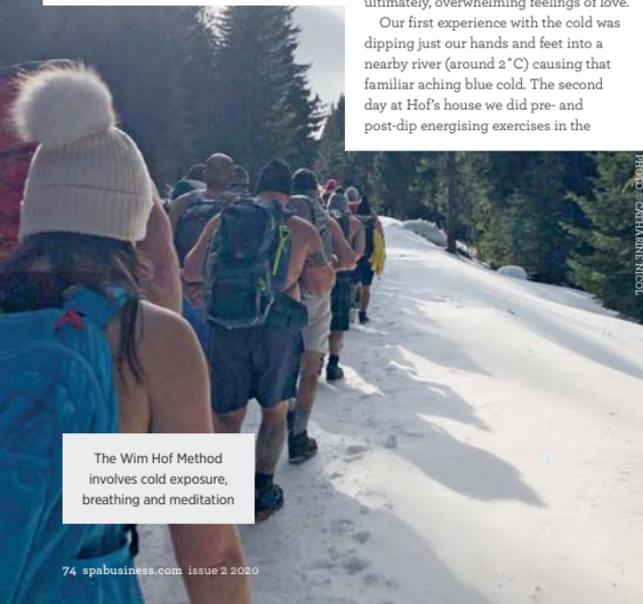


PHOTO © CATHARINE NICOL

The Wim Hof Method involves cold exposure, breathing and meditation



Catharine Nicol is an Asia-based spa, travel and hospitality writer and editor
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IN WELL-BEING.

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Hot PURSUIT

Can saunas help combat coronavirus safely and effectively? Three authorities give their opinions



Experts left to right: Dr Marc Cohen, Risto Elomaa and Dr Karl-Ludwig Resch

With no cure for COVID-19, there's much debate in the wellness industry about interventions which can strengthen the immune systems of those who want to take steps to avoid it, and also modalities that can potentially help support people with the virus. Sauna is one of those most widely discussed.

It's worth noting that the initiation of global government shutdowns means many spas, thermal experiences and public bathing facilities have been closed, restricting accessibility to such therapies – but this article could provide many details to contemplate for when they do reopen. Meanwhile, in many European countries like Finland and Germany, where people have long believed in the benefits of heat, private saunas in houses are not uncommon.

Dr Marc Cohen, an integrative medicine expert; Risto Elomaa, president of the International Sauna Association (ISA); and Dr Karl-Ludwig Resch, head of the German Institute for Health

Research, have all recently shared their views on saunas and coronavirus.

Cautionary tale

ISA represents sauna associations, companies and enthusiasts the world over (see SB18/3) and in a recent statement, which has been reviewed by medical experts for accuracy, its message is one of caution. "Even though viruses can be quickly destroyed by the heat in most sauna rooms (65-100 °C), coughing and sneezing in close proximity to other bathers can transfer a virus from one person to another before the heat has time to react."

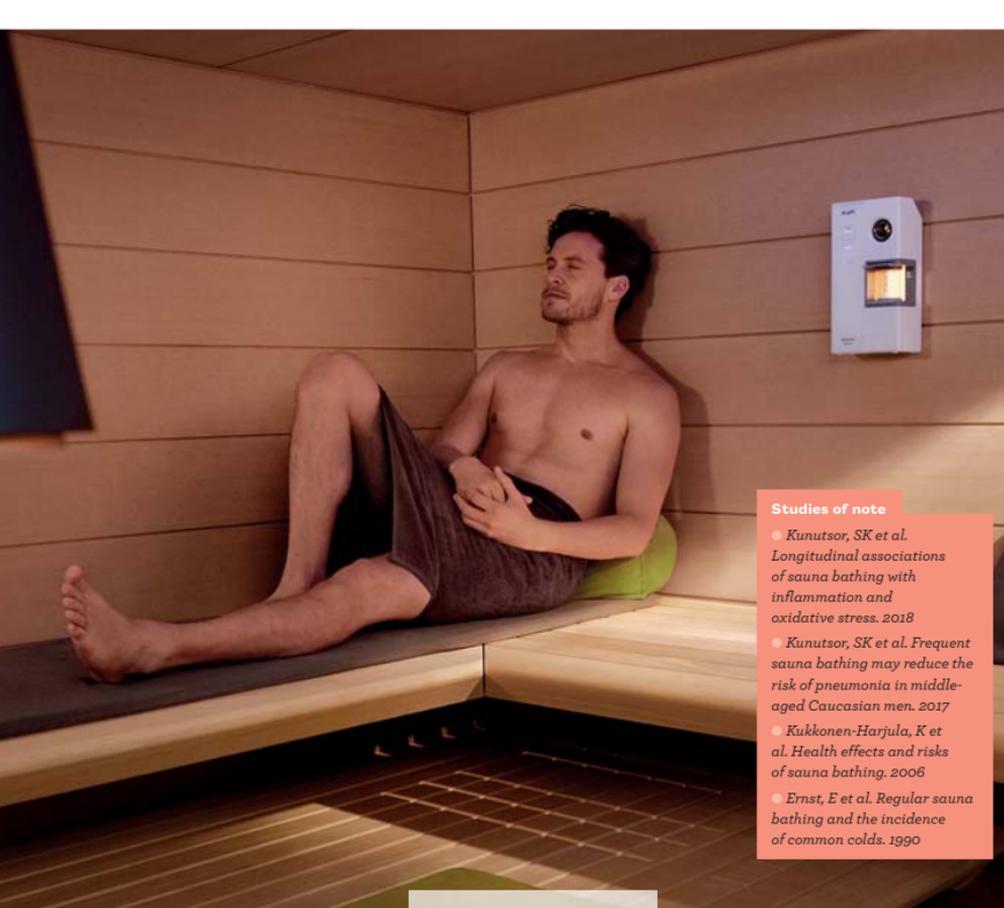
Cohen, who has a background as a medical doctor and a professor of health sciences and complementary medicine concurs. He emphasises the need for medicalised protocols, with rules about social distancing and procedures adapted from existing hospital regulations, to be implemented when spas do reopen.

But can heat help protect us against coronavirus? Yes says the ISA, but only from a preventative standpoint where

sauna remains an integral part of a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, smart eating and sleeping habits combined with social interaction. Elomaa adds a warning: "If you're sick with the coronavirus or any respiratory illness, you should refrain from using the sauna. It will not directly contribute to healing the disease and the body's reaction to heat can put a strain on an already stressed body, which can lead to serious health issues."

Resch thinks along similar lines. "As long as there is no drug that effectively acts directly against the virus, all therapeutic approaches are limited to supporting the body's immune system and hoping it will somehow get to grips with the invader," he says. "You should also take particular care if you are already experiencing symptoms of respiratory tract infection or even have a slight fever: the body may have a difficult

I'M FRUSTRATED AND CONCERNED THERE'S NO POSITIVE HEALTH INFORMATION COMING FROM AUTHORITIES



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time with a 'healthy' counter-regulation, especially if it has not already learned to deal positively with high temperature stimuli by taking sauna baths regularly."

However, Cohen believes heat-stress could potentially help prevent *and* treat COVID-19 and is in the process of completing an academic paper collating scientific evidence from previous studies to demonstrate this. "I'm frustrated and concerned there's no positive health information coming from the authorities on what to do once you have the virus," he says. "It's all focused on washing your hands and self-isolating, nothing about how to boost your immunity, clear the virus from your upper airways or about the effective use of heat, sunlight or essential oils. Instead, people who are infected are told to just 'hunker down and wait for a vaccine.'"

Suppliers like Klafs already know the benefits of sauna, but experts are divided on if it can be used to both prevent and treat COVID-19

How can sauna help?

Cohen explains that there's plenty of medical evidence to show that people who use saunas regularly get less viral infections. Treating the common cold and other respiratory viruses with heat also leads to lower-incidence rates, as shown by 2017 research by SK Kunutsor at the University of Bristol, UK (see above). Although this study doesn't target people aged 70 and over and black and ethnic minorities who have been identified as high risk and potential high risk groups for contracting coronavirus.

He also contends that humans have been using heat – such as saunas and

sweat lodges – for prevention and cure, throughout history. This approach essentially uses the sauna to outsource the work of the immune system to simulate a fever, meaning less physical exhaustion for the body than a fever driven by infection. In addition, humans can tolerate high temperatures in saunas in which the virus cannot survive and at the same time heat-stress activates, heightens and stimulates the immune system, while inhibiting viral replication.

Resch says coronavirus, like the flu, first multiply in the nose, throat and upper respiratory tract – areas which may be reached effectively with external heat. "Sauna is a real secret weapon," he says. "You should take a sauna bath as often as possible (daily!) and for as long as possible. The latter works best if the temperature is set relatively low: 60-70 °C is probably

Studies of note

- Kunutsor, SK et al. Longitudinal associations of sauna bathing with inflammation and oxidative stress. 2018
- Kunutsor, SK et al. Frequent sauna bathing may reduce the risk of pneumonia in middle-aged Caucasian men. 2017
- Kukkonen-Harjula, K et al. Health effects and risks of sauna bathing. 2006
- Ernst, E et al. Regular sauna bathing and the incidence of common colds. 1990

Humans can tolerate high temperatures in saunas in which viruses cannot survive

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► sufficient. By increasing temperature, the effect may work further into the upper respiratory tract, but possible and well-tolerated duration of exposure decreases.

"Many aspects of the current pandemic are still in the starting blocks of scientific research, but what has been scientifically proven is that taking sauna baths regularly is a highly-efficient means of training the body's own immune system," he adds referencing three particular studies (see p79). "This may significantly increase the chances of fending off an infection (at least if the dose of virus you have been exposed to is not too high). If you should become infected, it might be much milder and the course of the illness much shorter without life-threatening crisis."

Cohen explains: "We need more evidence before we can be sure of the effects of heat in combating coronavirus, because that research has not yet been done, as COVID-19 is a new virus, but there's a huge line of evolutionary and historical evidence from humans, as well as epidemiological and laboratory evidence that consistently point to the therapeutic application of heat having

**WE NEED
MORE EVIDENCE
BEFORE WE CAN
BE SURE OF THE
EFFECTS OF HEAT
IN COMBATING
CORONAVIRUS**

a positive effect in dealing with respiratory viruses."

The belief is that inhaling warm, moist air, such as over a bowl of hot water, or dry salt inhalation can also potentially help.

Psychological benefits

Experts think that because the body goes through a

physiological state of hyper-arousal in a sauna, it's important to balance this with hyper-relaxation. Furthermore, sauna can help alleviate psychological symptoms when coping with coronavirus, helping people feel more in control of symptoms and allowing time for dedicated rest.

Resch says: "A sauna bath stimulates the body, mind and soul, gives us a nice break during these chaotic times and boosts our inner metabolism."

Cohen adds: "Around 80 per cent of people will get this virus, they may be asymptomatic or get milder symptoms, but they're all panicking. If you're in fight or flight mode your body is not going to be using energy on healing from coronavirus."

"I actually think there's a huge scope for including saunas, steamrooms and hot bathing into hospitals, care homes and public facilities. I really think that when we come out of this, the health system could be much more integrated with conventional medicine and wellness practices." ●

10 ways saunas help your body overcome COVID-19

By Marc Cohen

- Saunas can help destroy viruses in the places in the body where they first lodge – the nose and throat
- They keep mucus thin and mobile, so cilia can clear the airways and prevent viral penetration
- Saunas mimic a fever, speed up metabolism and stimulate immune function while inhibiting viral replication
- Heat-stress induces mild hyperventilation which changes blood pH and gives your body an advantage in fighting infection
- Saunas release heat shock proteins that protect immune cells and increase their number and activity
- They also induce hormesis and increase your ability to tolerate and recover from heat and other physiological stresses
- Saunas flush your skin with blood and sweat which nourishes and cleans it from the inside out
- Saunas flood your internal organs with blood and lymph so clean water and herbal tonics can flush out toxic compounds
- Saunas exercise your heart, lungs and vascular system without significant production of metabolic waste products
- Essential oils with antiviral, and decongestant properties, can be delivered to your upper respiratory tract while in the sauna

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Creating a seamless journey



With 60 years of experience, Barr and Wray has long been known for excellence in technical design for wellness. Design director Graeme Banks explains the company also offers interior design services

Barr and Wray offers the full package in spa design," stated Banks, "we provide both interior and technical design and have been creating spa designs for 60 years, so we've got knowledge and experience in abundance and fully understand the process of designing a spa."

The company provides a complete service, starting from concept design to construction documentation and post-contract supervision. Its service encompasses the entire spa, including wet areas, receptions, relaxation areas, changing rooms, treatment rooms and more.

"As a company, our most important design goal is that the flow of the spa must work," he continued, "the final product should be a seamless journey transitioning the guests through the different zones and experiences of the spa."

As Barr and Wray see it, it's crucial the engineering and operational aspects are consistently integrated and thoroughly thought through during the design planning process.

"We appreciate a spa project is a complex and specialist endeavour which requires a specialist consultant. It's no good having a great looking spa if all the engineering and



The One Spa, Edinburgh

Our most important design goal is that the flow of the spa must work

operations don't work," said Banks. "We make sure all aspects are designed and integrated to create a cohesive final product."

The company's most recent design project was unveiled at the recently opened Jumeirah Talise Spa in Abu Dhabi, a 2,200sq m standalone spa with 15 treatment rooms situated in a modern building within the grounds of the Jumeirah Saadiyat Island Resort.

Barr and Wray produced a spa with separate-sex changing facilities, individual male and female wet lounges, a vitality pool, plunge pool, sauna, salt room and steamroom, as well as a rasul, ice fountain and experience showers and hammam with private scrub rooms.

Looking ahead, Banks believes spas and wellness facilities will be crucial in continuing the support of and emphasis on health and wellbeing in a post-pandemic world.

"I think this virus has brought into perspective the need to stay healthy in both body and mind, and in my opinion, a spa can only help you to achieve this."

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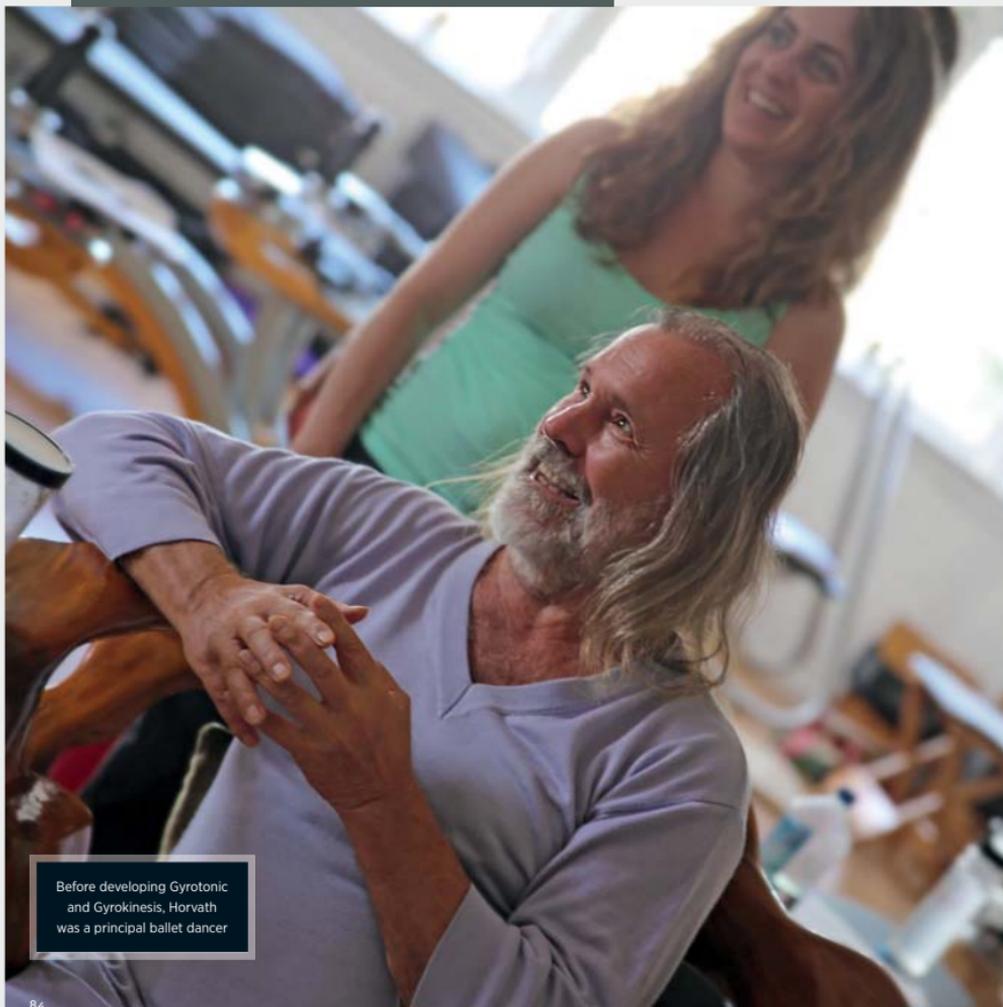
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JULIU

HORVATH

The founder of Gyrotonic and Gyrokinesis tells Kath Hudson why he'll never stop adapting his famous movement modality



Before developing Gyrotonic and Gyrokinesis, Horvath was a principal ballet dancer



Horvath continually passes his latest teachings on to a team of master trainers

Speaking to Juliu Horvath I had the sense of speaking to a legend along the lines of Joseph Pilates or Patahbi Jois. Now aged 77, Horvath has told his life story so many times that he sounds almost weary having to tell it again, but it's an intriguing tale.

It's a story about mindful movement, fitting for any spa looking to expand its repertoire or to entice customers who have a new-found respect for wellness once coronavirus lockdowns begin to lift.

Born in Romania, Horvath became the principal dancer for the Romanian National Ballet Company, but defected while touring with them in Italy, in 1970. Following a spell living in a refugee camp, he was then given political asylum in the US. After moving to New York City, he did whatever jobs he had to do to make a living until, once again, he found himself performing with ballet companies, alongside international stars, such as Margot Fonteyn.

While he was dancing, Horvath sometimes experienced lower back pain as a result of a slipped disc when he was a teenager. This occasionally became serious,

Gyrotonic has continued to grow via word of mouth. I quickly had people from all sorts of backgrounds and all kinds of disabilities coming to me who the medical community couldn't help. As I came across different people with different problems and limitations, I started to adapt the technique

but no one in the medical community was able to help him, so he started looking into other modalities which could support his body and allow him to continue dancing.

Horvath became the principal dancer with the Houston Ballet Company, but his dancing career was brought to a sudden halt when he ruptured his Achilles tendon in the late 70s. This was the catalyst for him to spend more time exploring his movement modality. Moving to a small hut in the Virgin Islands, he spent six years exploring yoga and meditation and gaining insights into movement and healing, which provided the foundations of the Gyrotonic and Gyrokinesis Method.

A new movement modality

Horvath says his technique does to the body what spring cleaning does to a house. The movements look fluid, ballet and yoga-like. They open up and create space in the body, as well as serving to expand and elongate the joints.

Today there are some 16,000 trainers working in around 60 countries practising the discipline, but Horvath says this has

all happened organically, via word of mouth. When he moved back to New York in the early 80s, he quickly gained a following in the dance community, as people wanted to know what he had been doing which allowed him to move so well.

"Initially my students were professional dancers who wanted to learn what I was doing and that was the beginning of my teaching," he explains. "It has continued to grow via word of mouth. I quickly had people from all sorts of backgrounds and all kinds of disabilities coming to me, who the medical community couldn't help. As I came across different people with different problems and limitations, I started to adapt the technique.

"The exercises support the five basic movements of the spine: forward and backwards, side to side and spiralling. We combine these in any configuration, depending on the needs of the person and can adapt it to anyone's limitation and also their goal. People have been coming back to me for more than 35 years - I take them to another dimension as they progress, because the dimensions are endless."



Gyrotonic or Gyrokinesis classes are now available at 5,000 studios worldwide

► The introduction of equipment

After a few years, Horvath started devising equipment to support the movements. Now there are two strands: Gyrotonic classes use a range of specially designed equipment, which incorporate pulleys and sliding and rotating parts, which all support the body in opening up. Gyrokinesis classes are performed on chairs or mats, without equipment but to the same end.

"The body is like a musical instrument," says Horvath. "With a violin if you over pull the cord then it won't play the right note, but if you don't pull the cord enough it also won't play the note. You have to find the exact pull in each movement and each dimension so the music becomes possible."

Over the past 35 years, Horvath has worked with many people and had countless success stories, including bringing prima ballerinas back from injury and prolonging their careers by another five or six years. He says one of his most interesting cases was in the early days, when he helped a man who was half paralysed from a stroke to walk again.

"I'm not stuffed with previous knowledge, I don't have a book, I just experiment and find a way to work around it," he says. "I don't pre-meditate anything. I work with what is happening

People have been coming back to me for more than 35 years - I take them to another dimension as they progress, because the dimensions are endless

at the particular time. I didn't dream how big this is going to get. I never imagined it would go to the dimension it is now. But it's there, so we're going with it."

Certified trainers

People from all walks of life are leaving their jobs to become Gyrotonic and Gyrokinesis trainers: doctors, bank workers, physiotherapists. Training for either of the disciplines has four stages: pre-training, foundation training, a six to 12 month supervised apprenticeship and, lastly, the final certificate course.

Once qualified, trainers are expected to do continuing education courses, as Horvath is constantly making new discoveries: there are around 25 different applications for different physical issues, ranging from dancers and elite athletes to medical conditions.

"I'm still with my own limitations and the problems which people come to me with," he says. "Every new person presents a learning curve. I don't have a preconceived idea about what I'm going

to do, I just figure out how I'm going to resolve the problem each time. The system is the vocabulary and it's up to the trainer to formulate the sentences for individuals."

For this reason, work experience and self practice is a fundamental part of the training. All of the training is undertaken by a team of master trainers who Horvath works closely with in order to pass on his latest learnings and teachings.

Gyrotonic or Gyrokinesis classes are now available at 5,000 studios worldwide. Going forward, Horvath wants to continue expanding the reach and growing the community, while not letting it grow so fast that it loses its purity. His current focus is on teaching courses which focus on harnessing the power of the breath to expand the mind and improve movement quality. ●

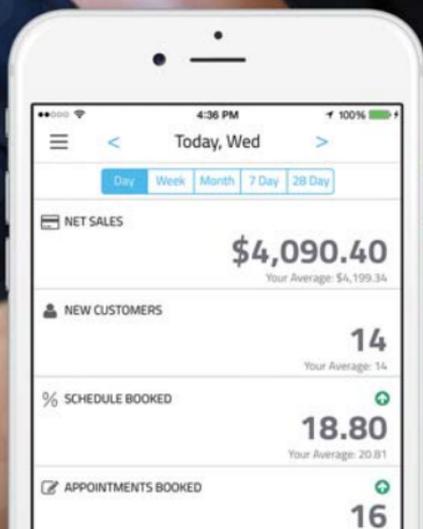


Kath Hudson is a regular contributor to *Spa Business*
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ISPA publishes Reopening Toolkit

A much-needed guide by ISPA gives essential advice on business planning, standard operating procedures, marketing and communications to support spas through the coronavirus crisis

In response to the recent announcements of several US states reopening sectors of their economies, the International Spa Association (ISPA) has compiled a Spa Reopening Toolkit with insights and expertise from global spa leaders, governing bodies, medical professionals and resource partners. ISPA wants to ensure that our industry reopens in a thoughtful manner with consideration of all established and evolving standard operating procedures. Spas have always followed healthy guidelines and have been a safe environment for employees and consumers. Now with COVID-19 being a source of global unrest, the spa industry is ideally equipped to bring healing and much needed stress relief to those whose health and mental wellbeing have suffered from this pandemic.

"We're proud that nearly 100 volunteer spa leaders and organisations have graciously shared their time and expertise to develop these new resources and they're to be commended," says ISPA chair,



Volunteers are the heart of ISPA and we're grateful for their commitment to our amazing industry

Garrett Mersberger

Garrett Mersberger. "Volunteers are the heart of ISPA and we're grateful for their commitment to our amazing industry."

ISPA's newly-released Consumer Snapshot study, conducted with PricewaterhouseCoopers to monitor consumer insights during this time, shows that once businesses reopen, 28 per cent of spa-goers noted they aren't nervous at all to visit a spa, while 47 per cent are a little nervous and only 25 per cent are very nervous. We're here to help spa professionals remove all apprehensions and get back to operating in a manner that leaves guests and employees worry-free.

The spa industry remains committed to closely following the reopening guidelines established by various governing bodies across the globe and to working cohesively to reintroduce spa back to the consumer in the safest manner possible. As this is a commitment shared by all in our industry, the resources shared from ISPA have been received with overwhelming gratitude and positivity. ISPA's toolkit was downloaded 46,000 times in the first week and has even been used by professionals in completely different industries, which proves even further how valuable and in-demand these resources are across the globe. The ISPA toolkit includes a Spa Reopening Checklist complete with communications templates and preparation guidelines, a comprehensive Sanitation & Hygiene Guidelines document and practical signage templates to display in your place of business.

ISPA will continue to monitor industry and legislative developments surrounding the COVID-19 impact and develop additional resources as updates are rolled out in the coming weeks and months. The spa community is resilient and filled with passionate professionals which will help us remain #ISPAstrong through it all.

Email: ispa@ispastaff.com
www.experienceispa.com

ISPA's toolkit
 was downloaded
 46,000 times in
 the first week

ISPA's Spa Reopening Toolkit: <https://experienceispa.com/covid-19-info/2-uncategorised/400-reopening-resources>



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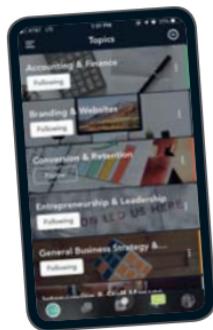
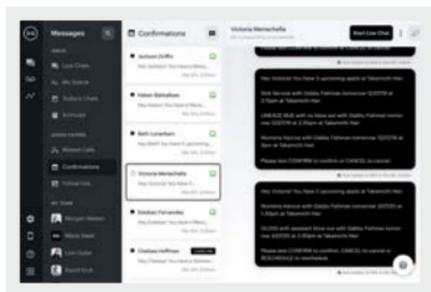


#ISPAStrong
experienceispa.com

How can software companies help spa operators keep in touch with customers, strengthening their relationship and loyalty, during the coronavirus pandemic? Key suppliers share their insights



Customer connections



“

Botwie, an AI receptionist, helps spas keep in touch with clients while they can't see them

Rick Stollmeyer CEO, Mindbody

Why is the online customer relationship so important for spas at the moment? There will be a huge demand for spa services when we get out of the COVID-19 lockdown as wellness will be a focus for many people. Staying in contact with customers now will help drive business back into spas when that time comes.

How can spas use your software to keep in touch?

Mindbody offers digital marketing tools, including email automation and Botwie, an AI receptionist, to help spas keep in touch with clients while they can't see them. We've also just launched a virtual wellness platform for spas to offer virtual appointments and consultations with current and prospective clients.



How else are you supporting operators?

Mindbody is offering business education through content and webinars to help guide spas as they navigate this pandemic. In addition to marketing tools, our software also offers online sales of retail products, which can help spas earn revenue while they're closed.

On top of this, our Mindbody One community is a network in which our customers [spa operators] interact with each other – an important feature as the wellness industry is being impacted at an unprecedented global scale.



Jeff Dickerson

CEO, DaySmart Software



There's never been a more critical time to reach out, even if you're shut in

Why should spas keep in touch with customers?

Taking the guest experience online should be a priority for spas right now and keeping in touch fosters a closer bond.

Many medi-spas now face the challenge of delivering post-operative care instructions and evaluations. Digitising data sheets, making instructional videos and conducting real-time video calls may be the only way to service these clients. That obviously represents a radical

shift, but finding new ways to connect customers with practitioners is our new normal.

How does your software help?

Our Orchid Medical Spa Software provides a few ways to optimise and automate client communication across multiple channels including targeted email and text message campaigns. Don't be shy about promoting gift cards or discounted pre-paid packages. Use Facebook Live to sell products, leverage

DIMABELIN/SHUTTERSTOCK



DaySmart is rolling out a tele-consultation feature for free

social media to feature client tips, staff profiles – focus on positivity of any kind.

We have a remote access function so owners and managers can still tend to their business from home.

How else is your software supporting operators at this time?

We're currently beta testing our new tele-consultation feature which we developed in response to coronavirus. The idea is that practitioners and clients

can schedule and hold video consultations from within our software. If the service provider wishes to charge a fee, for a skincare consultation for example, we've made allowances for that, but spas and practitioners could use this just to keep that client interaction consistent. We're rolling this out to all of our customers for free. The mantra is 'we're all in this together' and there's never been a more critical time to reach out, even if you're shut in.

Alice Smithson

Marketing manager, iSalon



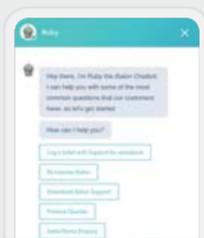
More than anything we will be there to support and guide spas during this uncertain period

Why is it so timely for spas to be visible online?

With the majority of us staying at home, we're using our phones, tablets and computers much more than normal. It's a great time to take advantage of this and put your spa out there for existing and potential customers to see. Share uplifting messages, updates from your team and daily affirmations to remain positive and inspiring.

How can iSalon help with this?

Spas can use our software to reach clients via customised SMS message and email marketing. We also offer social media services via our iCreate platform so we can put together engaging social content on a spa's behalf for them to share with their followers and communicate that way.



iSalon's chatbot can assist with queries instantly

What facility does your software offer to build a community?

Creating a community during this time will allow customers to feel supported and is an excellent way to provide peace of mind and iSalon's YourApp is an ideal way to do this. It's a fully native, customisable app for

spas with registration and full setup. Clients can use this to stay in touch with spas, visit their website, look at available appointments (when the time is right) and get in touch.

How else are you supporting spas?

More than anything we will be there to support and guide spas during this uncertain period. Our chatbot Ruby is available online to assist instantly with any queries and we're also reaching out to all spas that have asked for support or those that may need some advice on a one to one basis. We believe communication and support will get us all through this so we're making this our focus. We have created a page of information to share how we can help each other: <http://lei.szf7G6U>

Leonie Wileman

COO, Premier Software

Why should spas be keeping in touch with customers? In these unprecedented circumstances, it's how you react and support clients online that will truly determine how well your spa bounces back after COVID-19. Being understanding of your clients' needs will show them you care. Remaining flexible to cancellations and rescheduling appointments will help put them at ease.

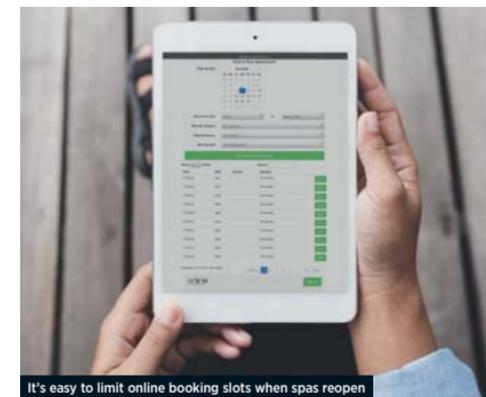
Sharing online tutorials to help clients stay relaxed and pampered will support them when they need it most. It will also keep your brand front of mind when the lockdown lifts – a time when clients will be looking for a place to go to share quality time with friends and family.



It's how you react and support clients online that will truly determine how well your spa bounces back after COVID-19

How do you help foster stronger connections?

Automated marketing is a vital tool for keeping in touch with clients. You can advise them about changes in opening hours, reopening offers, or



It's easy to limit online booking slots when spas reopen

explain the steps you're taking in light of the pandemic. Simply select the audience criteria of your message, create your template and schedule to send it via email or SMS, at a time of your choosing.

How else is your software supporting operators?

If spas decide to run at reduced capacity or close, Core by Premier can help to make the

process as simple as possible, from limiting online booking to rescheduling/cancelling treatments from home.

Financial options include reducing memberships rates to discourage cancellations, taking payment for retail products online, and extending gift voucher expiry dates. All the while, spas can monitor any revenue loss through cancellation reason codes.



Brett Smith

Vice president, global strategy and product management, Concept

Why keep in contact with customers during lockdown? Engaging with customers when facilities are shut will increase the possibility of them returning once they reopen and this is particularly important for spas which offer memberships. Maintaining engagement with members will increase the likelihood of them not cancelling their membership and can also increase the chance of renewal when that time comes.

How can your software help?

With Concept's Membership application, spas can send emails to members, whether that's an update

about resuming operations, specials or promotions on items retailed in the spa, purchasing gift cards, or even relaxation techniques.

In addition, with Concept's CRM application, a spa can create detailed marketing campaigns and track their success. They can target campaigns based on various criteria such as service history, retail purchase history, or even frequency of visits.

How else can your software support operators?

In this time of uncertainty, replacing a spa service with a gift card is a great way to ensure guests

return once COVID-19 passes. Spas can sell gift cards using Concept, enabling them to secure revenue even though they're not physically open

Once the pandemic subsides, spas are going to have to be ready to handle a pent-up demand for their services – people will be driven to find ways to release their stress. Being able to offer real time online reservation capabilities will be paramount to managing high demand. Concept's online reservations and payment options, which also enable customers to enter information in advance of a visit, leads to a more streamlined check in and check out process as well. ▶



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We've been working with digital content suppliers who can create explainer videos. These are ideal for spas as they hit both your audio and visual senses to explain something

Shez Namooaya

Head of sales marketing, Ez-Runner

How should spas reach out to customers?

Lead with compassion, maintain relationships and connect on a human level. You'll be rewarded when normality resumes.



How are you helping spas to do this? We have automated communication tools and depending on responses, the system triggers another set of replies. But content is crucial and should not be too salesy.

How does your software foster connections?

Our Insight product helps you to manage your 'tribe' by NPS surveys, which are used widely across many industries to get a 'feel' for what customers think of your brand. You'll have advocates, but also customers who are not so happy. Do you know who they are? How can you make them feel better about your brand? Our success coaches can help with all of this.

How else is your software supporting spas?

Our solution operates in the cloud by default so any home-working is perfect for us.

The shift towards digital has gathered huge pace and we offer a facility to help with social media post creations. We've also been working with digital content suppliers who can create explainer videos. These are ideal for spas as they hit both your audio and visual senses to explain something. And if you don't offer vouchers, now is the time to really get going on this.

Sudheer Koneru

CEO, Zenoti

How important is it for spas to use this time to build on their customer relationships? The need for spa services is not going away. Coronavirus will change how the needs are met though and businesses will need to adapt the services they provide while taking the necessary precautions to stop the spread of new viruses. Customers will have questions and opinions on hygiene and sanitation concerns as well. This will be a two-way communication. It's essential for spas to stay in touch and involve customers so they buy into the solution and the recovery happens faster.

How does your software help spas stay connected?

Zenoti provides integrated marketing software for email and text communication. While newsletters are a good way of reaching customers, we encourage them to contact their most valuable clients and use our two-way texting feature to truly engage them.

We're providing email template content around coronavirus to help with communication. We also have marketing automation (with our Smart Marketing module)

that will enable spas to really focus on recovering all their customers while they're also busy dealing with the rush of traffic when they do reopen.

How is Zenoti helping spas to drive revenue in this time?

We have very comprehensive views in this area and we're sharing creative ideas to inspire spas on our website in much detail.

Zenoti offers online gift card sales which are a great way to allow regular guests to continue buying their monthly services. Add incentives with discounted prices or 'bonus coupons' for extra services. One of our clients, Mario Tricoci, a hair salon and spa, is enabling its customers to support employees by donating a portion of gift card sales to the team. Similar donations could be pledged to medical worker organisations or charities - an act of kindness which further incentivises gift card purchases.

Products can be sold online via the Shopify Integration built into Zenoti and spas should use every available channel (especially e-commerce and direct orders) to boost sales. Our



Spa-goers can make contactless payments using ZenotiGo



Zenoti launches COVID-19 Resource Center

Spas worldwide can get real-time data on how coronavirus is impacting businesses through the Zenoti COVID-19 Resource Center.

The software company has 10,000 customers in 50 countries and has collected data on the impact the disruption is having on their trading. This has been translated into a heatmap showing the effect on appointment trends. *Spa Business* reported on early findings in March which showed sales declines of up to -73 per cent in Indonesia,

while South Africa was the only country to exhibit growth, at 4.7 per cent at the time.

"We've established this resource centre to help those we work with in the community," says CEO Sudheer Koneru. "I've run a spa and salon business before, and have a deep passion for making guests feel good about themselves, so they can go into the world and do great things. That's why I'm so committed to ensuring that our company and employees are doing all that

we can to help others through this difficult time and at no extra cost to anyone."

The resource centre also includes a downloadable guide that Zenoti has produced for spa businesses during the coronavirus crisis. It includes a range of information, such as how to manage existing appointments, review memberships and work on communication strategies.

■ Spas can download the guide using this link: <http://lei.sr/g7Q8d>



We're providing email template content around coronavirus to help with communication



How can your software help spas recover once they reopen?

Consumers will prefer not to exchange cash or credit cards over the counter and we enable consumers to pay from their mobile phones directly via ZenotiGo.

We also feel people won't want to wait around in reception due to social distancing and Zenoti has rich mobile solutions enabling guests to check wait times at a spa, put their name in a queue and show up just in time for their turn and more.

Further, we think guests will be wary of using pens and forms. So when they book an appointment, Zenoti automatically emails a link for consultation forms which they can fill out at home to reduce reasons for contact/physical touch. ●

spas have found success in scheduling Zoom meetings to offer virtual consultations or personal shopping trips.

We recently held a webinar on driving revenue during COVID-19 which we've made available on demand via this link: <http://lei.sr/B5K6p>. It touched on the above points and the importance of supporting the spa team such as holding regular meetings and sharing company updates and words of encouragement to keep colleagues connected. This reduces unnecessary stress brought on by unknowns and mitigates potentially damaging rumours.

SUPPLIERS show support

Spa suppliers around the world are making the industry proud by pivoting production and donating thousands of pieces of equipment and products to support those fighting coronavirus on the frontline

Oakworks manufactures 1,000 beds a week for hospitals



Jeff Riach

US-based supplier Oakworks has developed FDA-approved emergency equipment to help meet the demands and anticipated shortage of US hospital beds and examination tables during the coronavirus pandemic.

Oakworks creates spa, massage and medical equipment and is supplying two different specially-developed field bed models for hospitals or overflow centres.

"We've moved very quickly to develop these beds, focusing all of our engineering capacity to get production up to speed quickly," says CEO Jeff Riach. "I'm very proud of our team developing the capacity to build 1,000 beds a week so quickly."

Oakworks counts brands such as Aman, Mayo Clinic and Canyon Ranch as its customers.



Noel Asmar has just launched two stylish face masks

RKF works with French government to assist PPE crisis

RKF Luxury Linen is aiding the global shortage of PPE brought on by the COVID-19 outbreak. It's working with the French government to provide up to 10,000 protective gowns and 100,000 masks a week to supply hospitals, nursing homes and paramedics.

The company's largest factory in Luxeuil is now solely dedicated to only producing protective equipment and the Belfort production site has also been enlisted to help.

"We know we'll beat this, but until then we're doing everything in our power to keep our frontline safe and protected," says CEO Riadh Bouaziz.



Riadh Bouaziz

"Now more than ever we must also come together as a community and formulate our plan to bring positive solutions for the 'new normal' for our spa and hospitality industry."

Hydracial switches production to ventilators

Aesthetic technology supplier The Hydracial Company has announced it is redirecting its manufacturing to produce ventilators – essential equipment in the treatment of COVID-19 – to ease shortages in US hospitals.

Hydracial's engineering team are working with a California-based company to shift production and build the ventilators.

In addition, it's already supplying critically needed reusable face masks. The masks are washable up to 30 times and made from a fabric with antimicrobial properties. A company statement says: "While these are not N95 masks for the frontlines of COVID-19, these are medical protective masks for other essential healthcare workers and other businesses."



Hospital staff can relax and recharge on Gharieni beds



LEC's prone mattress provides great comfort for COVID patients

News round up

WELL EQUIPPED

In other commendable supplier news, **Living Earth Crafts** has partnered with non-profit organisation Prone2Help and donated its Earthlite Prone Comfort Bolster and Headrests as prone mattresses to help patients who're asked to prone – lie on their stomachs – as part of their treatment for COVID-19 pneumonia.

Gharieni is providing relaxation beds for medical staff in a Belgium hospital. It has offered the Virga Jessa hospital its Spa.Wave System and RLX loungers for the overworked employees to give them "the best relaxation possible in a very short time to recharge their batteries".

Meanwhile, **Lemi** has introduced a movable

proneglass Spa Shield which sits at the end of treatment beds to protect both therapists and customers during facials.

HELPING HANDS

To stop the spread of coronavirus, a number of spa suppliers are making and donating their own anti-bacterial hand gels or creams for incredibly dry, over-washed hands.

Comfort Zone was one of the first to step up by creating a hand sanitiser, Good Hope Gel, and donating 100,000 bottles to its partners, customers and collaborators, as well as charities.

Healthcare professionals across 15 countries are benefiting from donated hand cream from **Biologique Recherche** and it's also begun



Comfort Zone's new hand gel

producing hydroalcoholic sanitiser solution for free.

Other companies helping out include **Circadia by Dr Pugliese** in the US and **Made For Life Organics** in the UK.

"We're committed to helping control the disease and would like to thank all healthcare professionals for their tireless dedication," says **Thalgo MD Bernard Sirop**. The French spa brand is donating 3,000 Cold Cream Marine Hand Creams to hospitals around France, as well as thousands of surgical masks, hygiene caps and protective gowns and suits.

MATERIAL BENEFITS

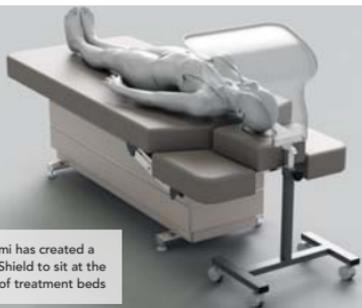
Spa linen and uniform companies across the world are joining in the COVID-19 battle too.

UK-based **Fashionizer Spa** has temporarily ceased

production on uniforms to begin making washable fabric face masks for the general public. The company is now working on producing anti-viral masks and uniforms for the industry.

In the US, **Noel Asmar** has begun the R&D process to design and deliver protective wear. It's just launched two non-medical grade masks and is now exploring protective visors along with protective wear over uniforms.

Meanwhile, a global solidarity campaign has been launched by German skincare brand **Babor**. It's asking partner spas around the world to donate masks and disinfectant to local hospitals as part of its #baborunited scheme. ●



Lemi has created a Spa Shield to sit at the end of treatment beds



Babor is asking partner spas to make donations

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spa business uniting the world of wellness

Product innovation



by Lauren Heath-Jones,
assistant product editor

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



Who says hammams have to have a traditional look?

Graeme Banks explains why Barr + Wray is launching a hammam concept



“A lot of the time clients would like the impact of a traditional, large-domed hammam, but don’t have the luxury of space

Smaller footprint. Maximum theatre. Those are the two main features of a new hammam concept being developed by wet spa specialists Barr + Wray.

“A lot of the time clients would like the impact of a traditional, large-domed hammam, but don’t have the luxury of space and don’t want to compromise by just offering something like a scrub room,” says Barr + Wray design director Graeme Banks.

It’s not unusual for traditional hammams to cover 100sq m and have domes up to 6m high. In comparison, Barr + Wray’s suggested model requires a minimum of 40sq m and this includes a steamroom and tepidarium flowing from the main chamber, plus a dome of 4m high.

Clever design adds a sense of drama. Light shines through a striking central chandelier, casting shadows around the room and reflecting off glass mosaics on the floor and high-gloss white corian walls to create a feeling of movement. The steamroom and tepidarium also use atmospheric colour effects and backlighting.

White seamless finishes and organic shapes have been used to give it a contemporary edge. “Marble, stone and ornate details are used in many hammams, but who says your hammam has to look like other hammams?” says Banks. “We want to give our clients a USP and if they have a modern spa they want the hammam to tie in.”

spa-kit.net keywords:
Barr + Wray

Essential oils are a timely addition to Verdure moss walls, says Al Benner



Benner believes the walls may reduce the threat from airborne viruses

Verdure Wellness Walls, which makes live moss interior panels, has introduced essential oils to its water basin, fountain and misters to add to its therapeutic benefits. Something which president Al Benner believes could “potentially help to reduce the threat from airborne viruses”.

The vibrant green colours and textures of the 96x48 inch wall already make an attractive addition to spas, while the automated misters and live moss are designed to reduce airborne particulate, absorb CO₂ and put out oxygen – contributing to easier breathing, clearer thinking and improved mood.

Most recently, it’s added naturally derived essential oils that circulate through the system and airspace. The fresh, earthy aromas recreate a ‘forest bathing’ effect and contain phytoncides which studies show “dramatically boost immunity and the efficiency of ‘killer cells’ in the body”.



The new fresh, earthy aromas contain phytoncides which are shown to boost immunity

Next, Benner is thinking of using a blend of cinnamon, eucalyptus, rosemary and carrot seed oils, a combination which has been shown to have a 99% in vitro kill rate on the H1N1 virus according to published research by French laboratory PLeJe. “One would think that having this blend disbursed by the Verdure Wellness Wall and/or vaporisers would have a preventative and possibly a healing effect,” he says.

spa-kit.net keyword: Verdure



The hand-blown glass pendants emit a gentle, spa-like glow

Tidal Collection captures the beauty of water, says John Pomp



John Pomp Studios, a US design practice, has expanded its Tidal collection to include five pieces inspired by the undulations of tides.

The additions include the Eclipse Pendant light, a two-tone hand-blown glass

pendant that features a moon-like form that emits a soft-glow, due to a concealed light source, reminiscent of a lunar eclipse.

Other pieces include sculptural chandeliers Tidal and Calla, which feature hand-cast sculpted glass crystal pieces and the Calla Pendant, which consists of a crystal sculpture attached to a rigid stem.

The Tidal Console table, consisting of a hand-poured glass table top set on a sculpted, polished base, completes the new line up.

The studio, headed by designer John Pomp, specialises in the artistry of glass making. These are skills which Pomp learned from Italy’s Murano masters and has honed over the past 25 years.

This collection highlights the soft curves and flowing lines found in the living world

John Pomp has been specialising in glass making for

spa-kit.net keywords: John Pomp

Seatonic is a new wave in firming and stretch mark reduction, says Phytomer's Mathilde Lagarde



Phytomer is calling it a 'next generation' treatment

It's been formulated for pregnant and breastfeeding women

Phytomer, a French product house, has used organic marine plants to formulate a dry oil which it's calling 'an ultra-powerful, next-generation treatment' for stretch marks and firming.

Seatonic, formulated for pregnant and breastfeeding women, uses 89 per cent naturally-derived and 55 per cent organic ingredients including mekabu algae to soothe and nourish the skin and glasswort to improve circulation and help with water retention. The ultra-light oil has a silky texture and a delicate orange flower scent.

"We wanted to create a product that was safe and natural to prevent stretch marks while pregnant and to combat them all life long,"



It's designed to be 'safe and natural'



says head of communications Mathilde Gedouin-Lagarde. "We also wanted to make sure it was nurturing and very enjoyable to use... and here we are now with the beautiful Seatonique Oil made from organic plants."

spa-kit.net keyword:
Phytomer

Barbara Gavazzoli explains how volcanic waters help Comfort Zone combat cellulite



Easy to apply and remove, it can be used at home too

Italian skincare brand Comfort Zone has completely revamped its Body Strategist cellulite and tone range with a focus on performance and sustainability.

A standout product is the Bagni Di Montalcino Thermal Mud which has been reformulated using calcium and magnesium-rich volcanic waters from Tuscany's Castello di Velona. Comfort Zone has combined this with mandarin, orange and peppermint essential oils and brown algae to create a 'massageable', draining and reshaping mineral mud.

"Usually mud is applied and dries fast, but because our mud has an oily, gel texture, it can be massaged onto skin and remains softer for longer so it embodies Italy's

traditional fango [mud] therapy but in a more pleasant way," says director of communications and education Barbara Gavazzoli.

"Easy to apply and remove, it can be used at home too."

Other products in the Body Strategist range include a firming cream, an oil, a scrub, a thermogenic cream and a cryo leg gel.

In other news, Comfort Zone recently created its own hand sanitising gel – named Good Hope Gel – in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic and has donated 100,000 bottles to partners, customers and charities.

spa-kit.net keywords:
Comfort Zone



Patricia Fisas introduces Natura Bisse's 'masterplan' for the neck and décolleté



“The face-neck balance is essential to a harmonious appearance”

“When I started working at Natura Bisse, the first thing I learned from our skincare experts is that the face-neck balance is essential to a harmonious appearance. This message has always stayed with me,” says Patricia Fisas, senior VP research and innovation, at Natura Bisse.

Today, the Spanish skincare brand has unveiled its inhibit V-Neck ‘masterplan’ for the neck and décolleté, an area where the muscles are finer, skin is thinner and subjected to constant movement such as ‘tech neck’ where people spend all day looking down at screens with bad posture.

The global programme consists of two products for professional use or retail: a serum with tightening, filling and firming ingredients; and a hyaluronic acid mask.

There are also five personalised treatments ranging from 20-minute add-ons to the 90-minute inhibit Face & Neck Lift. All have been



Treatments use LED lights, infrared rays and galvanic electrotherapy



Products include a serum with tightening, filling and firming ingredients and a hyaluronic mask

choreographed with advanced massage techniques and include the V-Neck Definition System – a device that contains LED light therapy, micro-vibrations, infrared rays and galvanic electrotherapy to prep the skin and improve product absorption.

spa-kit.net keywords:
Natura Bisse

MLX i3Dome offers triple detox therapy, says Sammy Gharieni

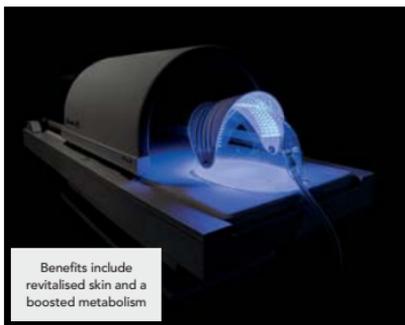
Gharieni, a Germany-based spa equipment supplier, has just received the Innovation Award by the German Wellness Association for its new Triple Detox Therapy MLX i3Dome.

The table combines far infrared (FIR) technology with plasma and light therapies and has been designed as a stand-alone

treatment, meaning after the guest is positioned on the bed, inside the extendable infrared dome, no therapist is required.

Benefits of the three therapies are believed to include revitalised skin, improvement in problem skin and increased collagen production, as well as boosted metabolism and the relief of physical discomfort.

“Combining FIR, plasma and light therapies creates a truly revolutionary treatment in the wellness category,” says founder Sammy Gharieni. “The synergies greatly enhance and improve the already well known benefits of each therapy to create an ultra-effective treatment protocol.”



Benefits include revitalised skin and a boosted metabolism

“It’s been designed as a stand-alone treatment – no therapist is required once guests are in position”

spa-kit.net keyword:
Gharieni

There's a growing understanding by consumers that wellness is driven from the inside out, as well as from the outside in

MARK AND KIRA WALTON

Why is VOYA expanding into supplements?

The launch of the Sea Ór range of supplements was driven by science.

There's no plant on the planet which has such a varied level of minerals, vitamins and active compounds as seaweed.

At VOYA, our knowledge of this power is transferable – there are many synergies between skincare and supplements, and they marry well from a commercial perspective for operators.

There's a growing understanding by consumers that wellness is driven from the inside out, as well as from the outside in and that high-end supplementation can underpin health.

What was the inspiration for the new brand?

We've been heavily involved in seaweed R&D for a long time.

We work regularly with three universities isolating skincare compounds that are functional and beneficial.

Rather serendipitously, in developing our skincare line, we've also uncovered a lot of useful information that's been beneficial in developing our range of supplements.

With whom did you work on the formulations?

A number of technical partners – in particular the University of Ulster in Ireland which performed our double-blind user trials.

Tell us about the Sea Ór supplements

They offer extremely high levels of active ingredients, such as vitamins A, B, C and E, as well as probiotics, to give the maximum health benefits to the consumer.

One Sea Ór supplement might negate taking two or three other brand supplements.

Each is tailored to give different results. For example, our Orplex Body supplement will support the immune system, has anti-inflammatory

and antioxidant properties, supports a healthy digestive system and reduces fatigue.

Our Hair, Skin and Nails supplement supports collagen formation for healthy skin repair, while protecting against oxidative stress and promoting the growth of healthy nails and hair.

What's the Orplex™ complex?

Our patented Orplex blend forms the basis of the supplements.

It contains a mixture of super ingredients and is unique to Sea Ór.

The exact breakdown is a closely guarded secret, but it includes health 'superheroes' such as fucus serratus and laminaria digitata seaweeds, coenzyme Q10 and zinc.

What is the ethos of the Sea Ór brand?

Functional, functional, functional. Sea Ór is very similar to VOYA, but also distinct. We're a sustainable and environmentally-friendly brand that's carbon neutral and uses responsible packaging.

Sea Ór has been developed to offer consumers highly effective nutritional support using organic ingredients, underpinned by science.

VOYA's Sea Ór supplements are available online now at voya.ie and will be available in VOYA spas and retail outlets soon.

VOYA
www.voya.ie



Kira and Mark Walton have built their business around the power of seaweed



Zoe Graham says Foreo's UFO 2 boosts any spa facial

Swedish skin-tech company Foreo has upgraded its UFO LED light and thermotherapy device, which therapists can use before a facial to lock in extra hydration or which spas can retail, in an effort to give customers a refined and radiant complexion.

The UFO 2, launching in spas imminently, delivers thermotherapy (heat) to the skin five times faster than the first generation model and is combined with cryotherapy and 10,000 T-sonic pulsations a minute to prep the skin for higher levels of dermal absorption.

Next, a Korean-formulated Power Activated Mask is secured onto the device and – for the first time – full-spectrum LED light (up to eight different rays) can be used to stimulate different ingredients in the mask for a personalised service. Red LED light can be used for anti-ageing, to activate cell regeneration, for example, while



The UFO 2 can be used before a facial to lock in extra hydration

The improved device delivers heat to the skin five times faster and offers full-spectrum LED rays

blue light destroys bacteria and can help with blemishes and green light can treat hyperpigmentation.

"The UFO 2 provides a unique addition to treatment menus with minimal impact on facial time [an application takes two minutes] and cost," says Foreo business development manager Zoe Graham. "It can stimulate the skin's dermal layers significantly better than hands alone."

It can stimulate the skin's dermal layers significantly better than hands alone



spa-kit.net keyword: Foreo

SkinCeuticals' Custom Dose is like a 'mini skin lab', says Guive Balooch



Therapists can use the machine to mix personalised serums onsite

SkinCeuticals, a skincare brand owned by L'Oréal, is rolling out its Custom Dose machines globally.

The machine includes a production-quality compounder that operates at 1,200 rotations a minute to mix active ingredients instantly – empowering therapists to create a personalised serum to address multiple anti-ageing issues in just 15 minutes.

The serum starts with a hydro base or light milky emulsion base and the therapist can choose from 12 possible exfoliating, brightening or enhancing ingredients to add in. Ingredients include glycolic acid, lactic acid, liquorice root extract and 0.1-0.5 per cent retinol. A treatment plan is then prescribed and the serum can be adjusted over time based on the skin's progress.



"Custom Dose acts like a mini skincare laboratory, combining lab grade formulation and factory grade manufacturing into a machine that sits on the counter," says Guive Balooch, head of L'Oréal's Technology Incubator.

The machine originally launched in London, UK, but is now available in eight countries. ●

spa-kit.net keyword: SkinCeuticals



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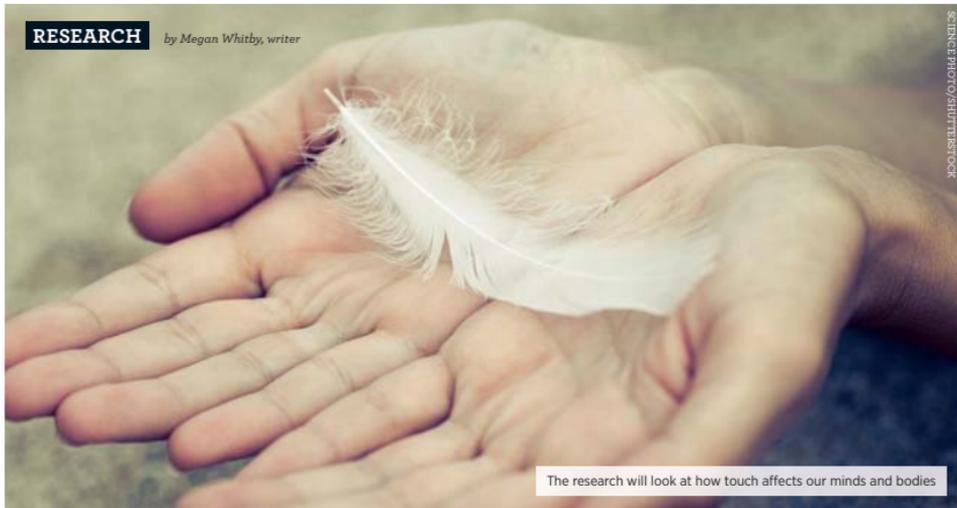
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The research will look at how touch affects our minds and bodies

Finishing touch

FEELS GOOD

A new study aims to uncover the role touch plays in our health and wellbeing

With people facing lockdown the world over, starved of contact with loved ones, society after coronavirus will be one that is more in need of touch than ever before. And delivering touch underpins the spa experience.

Just before COVID-19 hit, a global study was launched to "explore our attitudes towards the physical experience of touch" and investigate whether contemporary society experiences 'touch hunger'.

The Touch Test is an online questionnaire developed by researchers at Goldsmiths University of London and launched by the BBC and the Wellcome Collection museum. It seeks answers about the similarities and differences in our experiences of touch, with the aim of increasing our understanding of its role in health and wellbeing. It explores issues such as how our attitudes towards touch vary by age, nationality and gender and whether contemporary society allows us to get enough touch or leaves us wanting more.

"Touch is an incredibly powerful force in our daily lives, it's not often until we stop to think about it that we realise how much of a role it actually plays," says Goldsmiths' Michael Banissy, a social neuroscience

expert who's conducting the study. "It plays a role in so many human behaviours ranging from the aggressive to the most intimate and it can play a huge role in our development, our social interactions, perceptions of ourselves and our health and wellbeing."

According to researchers, the study will help shed more light on the unknown subject of how touch

affects our minds and bodies in social situations, an area which is not well-explored. "We know a lot about how we process touch but we tend to know a lot less about the use of touch socially and how we

use it in a communicative way," says Banissy.

The study was launched on BBC Radio 4's *All In The Mind* programme, which has previously investigated rest and loneliness with contributions from more than 70,000 participants. Presenter Claudia Hammond says: "Like rest and loneliness, touch is something that affects us all - and is more complex than you might think. The Touch Test gives people the opportunity to contribute to large-scale, pioneering research into the topic."

The Touch Test results are expected to be announced towards the end of this year and will be explored in an upcoming BBC series, *The Anatomy of Touch*. ●

It plays a role in so many human behaviours ranging from the aggressive to the most intimate

● Read more about the previous rest and loneliness studies: <http://lei.sr/GBW7u> and <http://lei.sr/9w0c0>

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