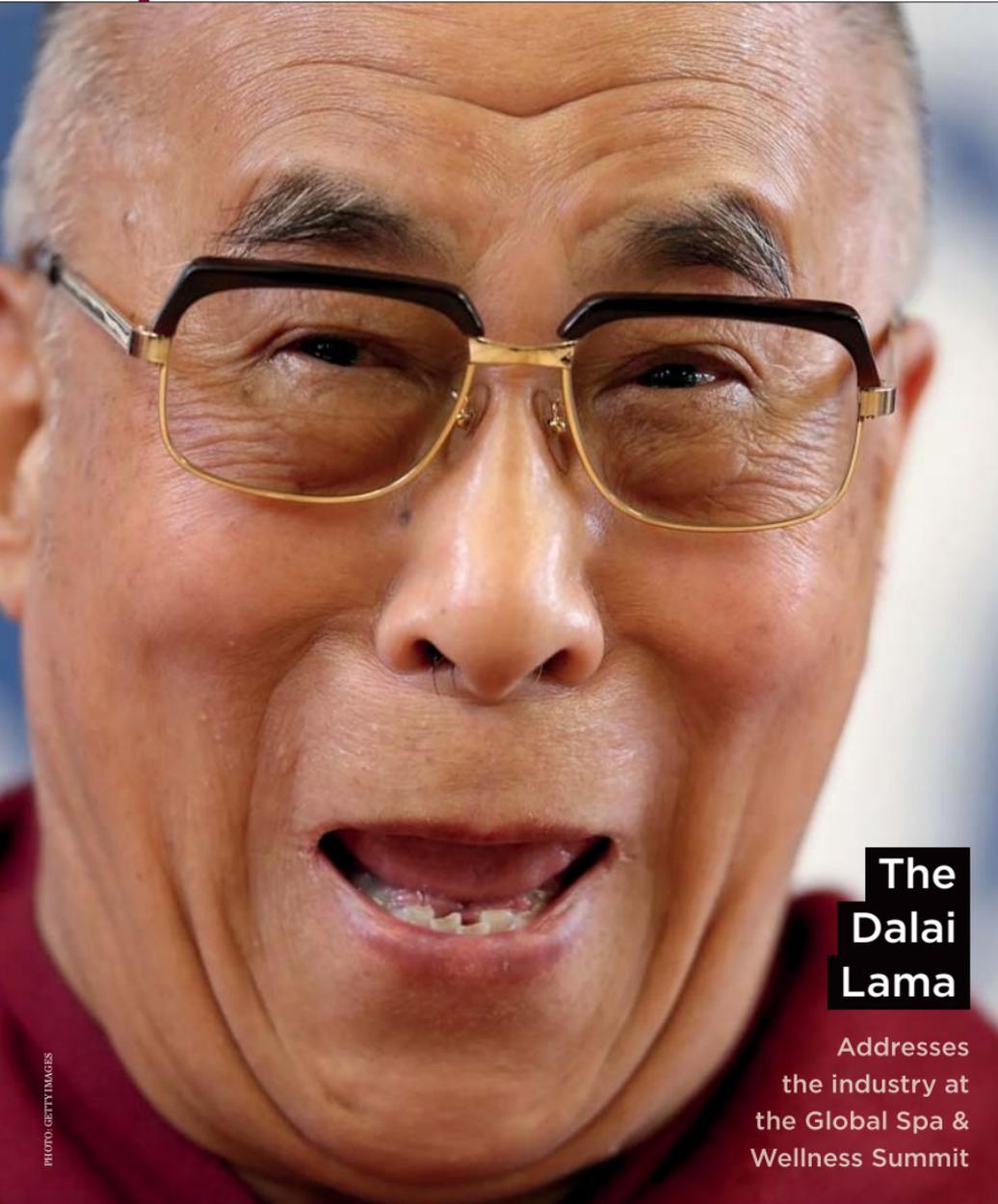


# spa business



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# India: challenge and opportunity

The phenomenal growth of the Indian economy is well documented, however, wellness and spa companies wanting to do business there need to be surgical in their analysis of the opportunities if they are to create successful businesses.

Although the wellness and spa sector is forecast to grow from INR700bn in 2012 to over INR1 trillion in 2015, this number hides a plethora of variables,

many of which have been thoroughly laid out by a new PricewaterhouseCoopers report on the Indian wellness economy *Imperatives for growth: the wellness industry* – an invaluable document for those considering investing.

The report shows strategic deals with partners are driving much of the growth: up to 65 per cent of all deals since 2009 have been of this nature. International operators targeting India, initially aiming for the 15 bigger cities, are now going into second and third tier locations to maintain growth. In hair and beauty they include Dessange, Saks and Toni & Guy, in fitness, Fitness First and Anytime Fitness and in spa, Six Senses.

PwC says the market has been characterised by small businesses, but the arrival of corporate players will drive investment as they look for funds to fuel expansion.

The greatest consumer demand is in three areas: hygiene, curative and enhancement. As a result, sales of products represent up to 60 per cent of the market, with services at only 40 per cent. As well as being a greater proportion of volume, products also have higher value – PwC says



Spa operators who enter this market off the back of powerful retail brands will have both a strategic advantage and higher revenues

EBITDA for beauty and wellness products ranges from 20-30 per cent, while services operate at 8-20 per cent.

This indicates that spa operators who enter this market off the back of powerful retail brands will have both a strategic advantage and higher revenues.

There are other clues about demand: wellness-related F&B sales, skin and haircare and alternative therapies represent more than half the value of the market, meaning operators need a business model which plays to this. Fitness is growing fast, with 50 per cent of openings this year in that sector of wellness, so spas which make exercise a core offering could tap into this demand.

Standards and training appear to be the biggest hurdles to overcome in terms of industry development, but the greatest challenge overall will be creating a margin in the face of low consumer spend, discounting and global inflation. But those that navigate their way through these challenges could build businesses with exciting potential.

Liz Terry, editor twitter: @elizterry



Read all our editor's and contributors' letters on our blog at [blog.spabusiness.com](http://blog.spabusiness.com)

#### CONTACT US:

Spa Business magazine, Leisure Media, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1DJ, UK

TEL: +44 (0)1462 431385 EMAIL: [theteam@spabusiness.com](mailto:theteam@spabusiness.com)

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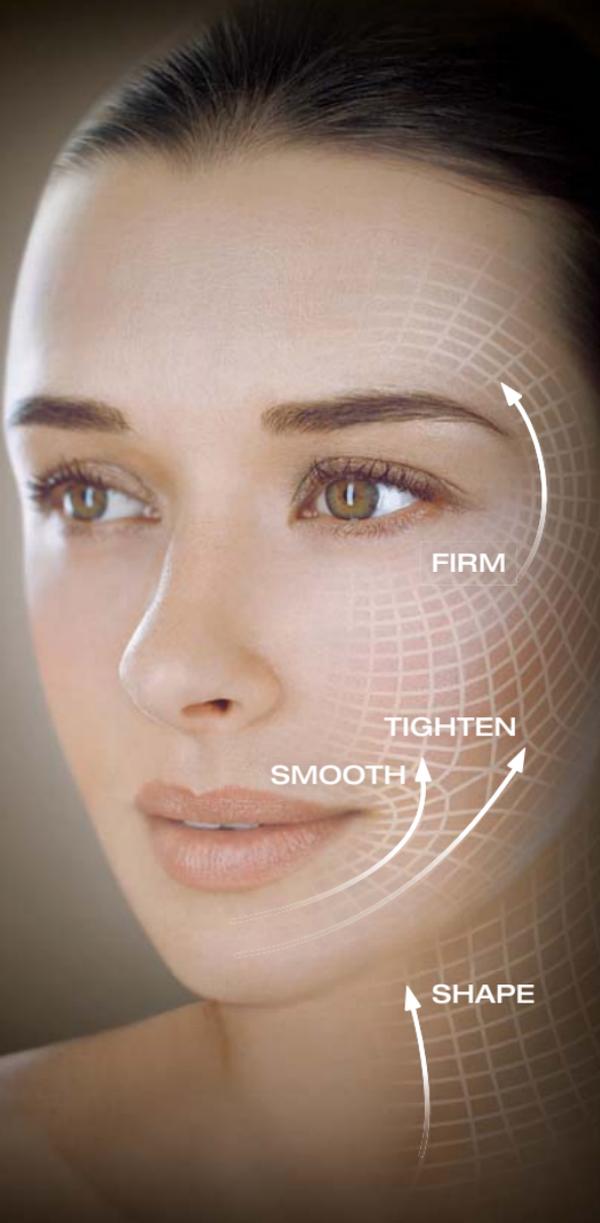
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## READER SERVICES

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

DENISE ADAMS +44 (0)1462 471930

## CIRCULATION

MICHAEL EMMERSON +44 (0)1462 471932

## EDITORIAL TEAM

## EDITOR

LIZ TERRY +44 (0)1462 431385

## MANAGING EDITOR

KATIE BARNES +44 (0)1462 471925

## PRODUCT EDITOR

KATE CORNEY +44 (0)1462 471927

## NEWSDESK

TOM WALKER +44 (0)1462 471934

AOIFE DOWLING +44 (0)1462 471938

TOM ANSTAY +44 (0)1462 471922

## ADVERTISING TEAM

## PUBLISHER/ADVERTISING SALES

ASTRID ROS +44 (0)1462 471911

## ADVERTISING SALES

JULIE BADRICK +44 (0)1462 471919

JOHN CHALLINOR +44 (0)1202 742968

JAN WILLIAMS +44 (0)1462 471909

ADVERTISING SALES - WWW.SPA-KIT.NET

STEPHANIE ROGERS +44 (0)1462 471902

## ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

ED GALLAGHER +44 (0)1905 20198

## SPA RECRUITMENT/TRAINING SALES

SARAH GIBBS +44 (0)1462 471908

## WEB TEAM

WWW.SPA-KIT.NET

## PRODUCT SEARCH ENGINE

KATE CORNEY +44 (0)1462 471927

## SPABUSINESS.COM

MICHAEL PARAMORE +44 (0)1462 471926

TIM NASH +44 (0)1462 471917

DEAN FOX +44 (0)1462 471900

EMMA HARRIS +44 (0)1462 471921

## DESIGN

ANDY BUNDY +44 (0)1462 471924

## FINANCE

DENISE ADAMS +44 (0)1462 471930

## CREDIT CONTROL

REBEKAH SCOTT +44 (0)1462 733477

## Kate Cracknell

Kate Cracknell is the editor of *Health Club Management*, Leisure Media's magazine for the health and fitness industry in the UK and Europe. Before joining Leisure Media, she spent two and half years travelling globally, following seven years working in advertising. Email: [katecracknell@leisuremedia.com](mailto:katecracknell@leisuremedia.com) Twitter: @HealthClubKate



## Elly Earls

Currently based in Bali, Elly Earls specialises in hospitality, travel, lifestyle and healthcare writing and regularly contributes to both consumer and business publications around the world including titles in Thailand and the UAE. Previously, she was the editor of four UK-based healthcare magazines. Email: [earls@spabusiness.com](mailto:earls@spabusiness.com) Twitter: @ellyearls



## Leonor Stanton

Leonor Stanton is an independent hospitality and spa consultant who specialises in market and commercial assessments and financial planning in the hospitality and spa sectors worldwide. She previously worked for Deloitte Consulting and Deloitte Corporate Finance. Email: [lstanton@spabusiness.com](mailto:lstanton@spabusiness.com) Phone: +598 95 59 88 54



## Neena Dhillon

Neena Dhillon writes about spas and hotels and travel trends around the world for consumer and business titles, ranging from *Sleeper, easyJet* and *Gatsby* to *Hospitality Design*. She is also the former managing editor of the Great Hotels of the World *Luxury Spa Collection* directory. Email: [ndhillon@spabusiness.com](mailto:ndhillon@spabusiness.com)



## Mia Kyricos

With 20-plus years' of industry experience, Mia Kyricos runs a referral consultancy focused on the spa, wellness and hospitality sectors. She sits on the board of the Global Spa & Wellness Summit and has just joined SpaFinder® Wellness as its chief branding officer. Email: [mia@kyricos.com](mailto:mia@kyricos.com) Twitter: @mkyricos



## Lisa Starr

Business consultant, trainer and educator and overall curious person, Lisa Starr has been helping spa companies maximise their performance - in front and back of house operations - for 30 years. She is also the guest editor of *Weekend*, the newsletter for the Global Spa & Wellness Summit. Email: [lstarr@wynnebusiness.com](mailto:lstarr@wynnebusiness.com) Twitter: @StarrTalk



On the cover: What would you like to ask the Dalai Lama? See page 18

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# Spa Dreams



## Come True

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# Letters

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

## Cellulite Machines Trending In The UAE

Lindsay Madden-Nadeau, regional spa director UAE, Minor International

It was interesting to read how skincare analysis machines are becoming popular in spas (see SB13/2 p94) – in the UAE we're seeing a rise in machine-based treatments but with a focus on the body. Such machines include LPG and VelaShape which work in similar ways to target cellulite breakdown, body contouring, fluid retention and to firm up the muscles.

Our customers, with busy lifestyles, want quick fixes and technology keeps getting better. Cavitation is something that people aren't too aware of. It uses low frequency, ultrasound vibrations that are designed to eventually dissolve cellulite into liquid. I've found it one of the most effective in treating cellulite, but it's also expensive – my three sessions cost AED300-AED400 (US\$82-US\$109, €62-€82, £52-£69) each.

It's claimed that Lipoglyze uses cryotherapy to crystallise fat and reduce it by up to 26 per cent. However, it's another step up in expense – the one-off treatment is AED4,000 (US\$1,100, €822, £694), and takes up to six weeks to see the results and leave skin red for sometime after. Meanwhile, the very latest arrival is i-Lipo, which uses low level lasers to trigger a chemical signal to break. It's so new I've yet to try it.



There's a high demand for treatments like Liopglaze, which freezes fat, in the Middle East

Units can cost AED40,000-AED300,000 (US\$10,900-US\$81,700, €8,200-€61,600, £7,000-£52,650), but if they're placed in the right spa and awareness is high they pay for themselves quickly and clients normally sign up for a course of five to 15 sessions.

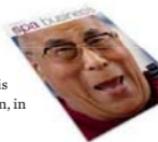
Most of the machines have clinical trials behind them, but nothing in life is a

guarantee and various body types respond differently. Rather than being viewed as a one-time fix, we believe they work best in combination with a healthy diet and a regular fitness programme. Even though results can vary, it's clear that these machines are definitely around to stay and are likely to get better by the year.

## spa business

### Uniting the world of spas

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## What's In A Name?

Steve Capellini, spa therapist, consultant and author, Royal Treatment Enterprises

What does 'spa' mean? As debated in your magazine (see SB12/4 p26), does it mean wellness or pampering? Therapy or indulgence? Unfortunately, in my hometown of Miami, it's increasingly used to signify Asian massage parlours. Meanwhile, for millions of others, the word spa signifies not much more than a hair salon with a massage room.

For those who work in the industry, 'spa' means so much more – it signifies healing, rejuvenation, meaningful connections and, more than anything, hope.

One enterprise that's given me hope is Himalayan Healers (see SB07/2 p44). Founded in 2006 by American Rob Buckley, this is the first massage school in Nepal where 'untouchables' from the lowest social orders are taught the art of touch and find good jobs in spas. Buckley's selfless work has dramatically improved over a hundred people's lives in the most dire circumstances. He worked with what he had amidst poverty, corruption, and illness to create something truly beautiful.

It's an inspiring example of how we can work with what we've got to create something that lives up to that hope.



In Nepal, the word spa can mean 'hope'



Gaia, in Australia, openly welcomes guests who have or have had cancer

## Equal Treatment For People With Cancer

Naomi Quarrell, spa manager, Gaia Retreat & Spa

Cancer is so diverse with so many variables. This is a time that support is needed most and I was pleased to see the topic covered in *Spa Business* (see SB13/2 p24)

We don't treat our cancer guests any differently to others: everyone's treated on an individual basis and equally cared for. Spas shouldn't shy away from discussing the cancer as it assists the therapist to give the best support and most appropriate treatment.

Training and experience is a major factor in client and therapist confidence, so we have practitioners specifically trained to support those dealing with cancer.

There are a number of treatments they can enjoy including massage, beauty treat-

ments, Chinese medicine, hypnotherapy, spiritual healing, oncology massage and lymphatic drainage. Sometimes the greatest comfort can come through touch alone.

However, it's important to know the limitations and make these clear. We take guidance from the guest's GP. In most cases a doctor's certificate isn't required, but there are always exceptions to the rule and so these would be assessed on an individual basis.

If spas are open to this market, they need to let it be known that they welcome cancer sufferers, although it's important that they make the distinction of not being a medical facility, with medical staff on site. Olivia Newton-John, an ambassador for cancer awareness worldwide, is one of our directors at Gaia (see SB10/3 p46), but has also opened her own cancer and wellness hospital in Melbourne and it is important for us to maintain the distinction.

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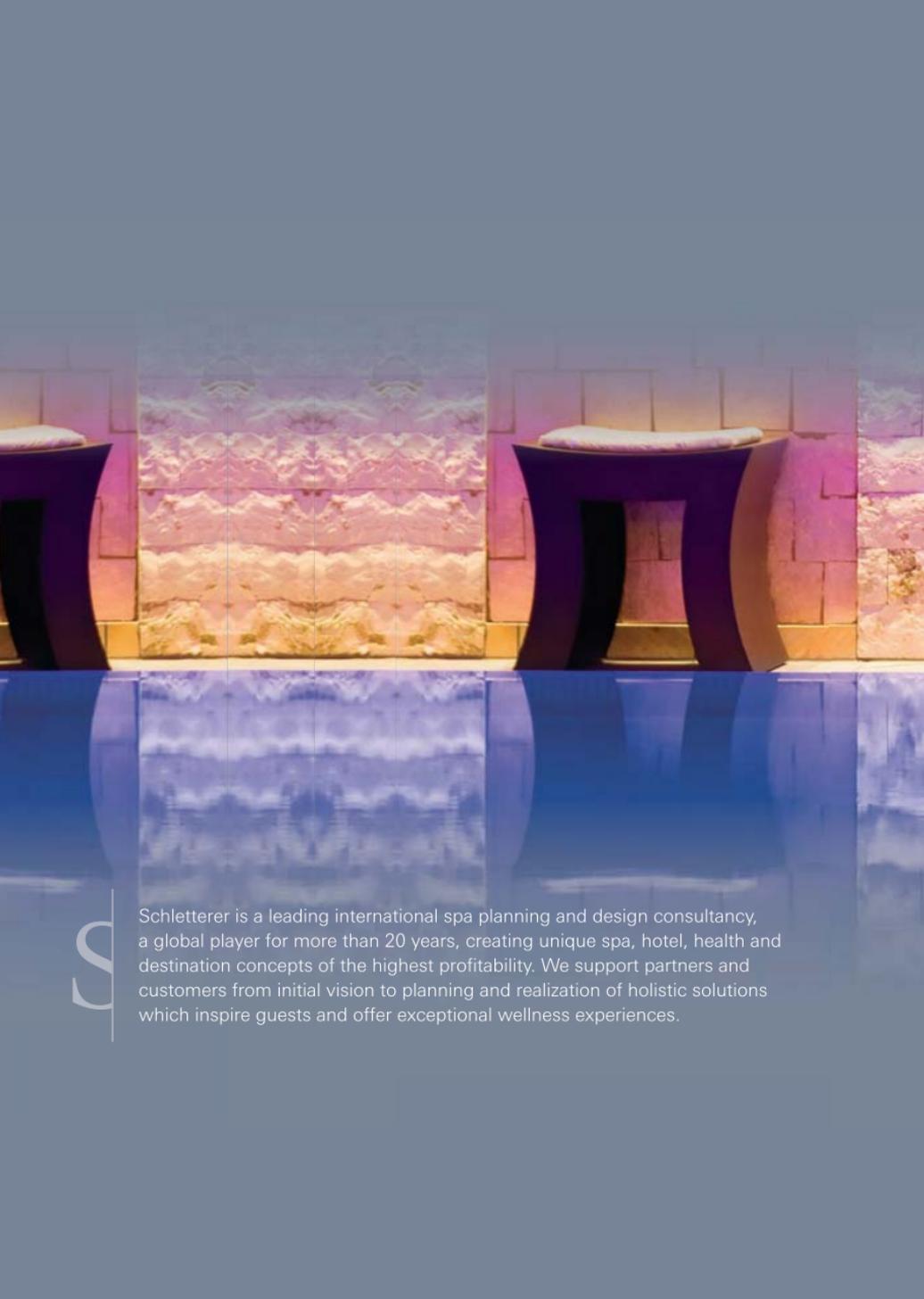


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## Nightclub operator Pacha opens resort on Ibiza

Pacha, the global nightclub operator, has launched a luxury resort on Ibiza, with the development offering 164 bedrooms, a wellness centre, a yoga studio, a pool, a 200-seat restaurant and a conference centre.

Destino sits on the cliffs of Cap Martinet, on its own corner of the island and offer panoramic views of the Mediterranean. Room prices start at €300 (US\$400, £250).

The wellness centre offers a range of massages, including tui na and one based on ayurveda, starting at €110 (US\$146, £93) for 50 minutes. Suppliers include oxygen-based product house Intracentials along with seaweed-based skincare by Voya, Valmont, Red Flower and Caci.

The yoga studio has a full programme of classes by four different yoga instructors. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=p2k0b>*

## One&Only to touch down in Australia next year

The One&Only brand, owned by Kerzner International, is to make its debut in Australia by taking over the management of the luxury island resort – Hayman, Great Barrier Reef in the Whitsundays.

The Hayman, which is owned by Mulpha Australia, will undergo a reported US\$50m (£37.6m, £31.6m) renovation before it reopens as One&Only Hayman Island in April 2014.

Refurbishments will include a new beauty centre and fitness suite to sit alongside the existing spa; a refreshed pool area and pool wing; and redecorated suites. Development of private residences already underway will also continue. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=09Z5H>*

## Six Senses retains Lamau management contract

Six Senses, on the Laamu atoll in the Maldives, has announced that it will continue operational management of the property following its acquisition by the Singapore-based HPL Hotels & Resorts.

The takeover, which was handled by HPL subsidiary, Leisure Frontiers, will see the new owners make enhancements to the resort in collaboration with the Six Senses Hotels, Resorts & Spa brands.

Designed and operated by Six Sense, the 97-villa property, which includes spa facilities, opened in 2011 and was the first high-end island resort in the Laamu atoll. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=03k90>*

## Dalai Lama Q&A at GSWS

Spa professionals are being invited to submit questions for His Holiness the Dalai Lama who will address industry leaders for the first time at a Q&A during this year's Global Spa & Wellness Summit (GSWS) in India (see p24).

The Q&A will form part of the spiritual leader's keynote session on 6 October, during which he will explore the topic What is Wellness?

The Dalai Lama has spoken and written about health and wellness for many years, from both scientific and experiential perspectives.

His lecture comes at a significant time for the sector, as it begins to demonstrate it has more to offer than just pampering. Industry leaders are highlighting the wide-ranging, proven health benefits behind many of therapies, experiences and services (see SB10/3 p20).



BUCCO/PAUL WATSON/AGF

What would you like to ask the Dalai Lama?

The Dalai Lama is known for his support of women leaders. Given how many women hold top-level positions in the spa industry, this is likely to be an interesting talking point.

*To put forward your questions for the Dalai Lama, email [info@gsws.org](mailto:info@gsws.org).*

## Waldorf Astoria enters emirate of RAK

Hilton Worldwide's luxury brand, Waldorf Astoria, has opened its first UAE hotel in the emerging hospitality hotspot of Ras al-Khaimah (RAK) – an emirate between Dubai and Oman.

Designed to reflect the features of an Arabian Palace, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah houses 346 guest-rooms and suites.

The hotel, which offers 350m of private beach also includes a signature Waldorf Astoria Spa, a fitness centre, four restaurants and an 18-hole championship golf course.

The new arrival is one of a number of hotels included in a US\$250m (£188m, £158m) investment of the RAK government. The funds are being used to develop the emirate's tourism offering.

Another project, the 627-bed Rixos Bab Al Bahr Resort, is scheduled to open in February 2014 on the man-made Marjan Island.



The hotel is designed to honour regional Arab culture

Meanwhile, Hilton will also open a DoubleTree by Hilton Resort on Marjan Island next year.

In 2012, the government and Spanish football club Real Madrid announced plans to establish a major US\$1bn (€756m, €632m) visitor attraction that includes the first sports stadium open to the sea. *Details: [www.rasalkhaimahatourism.com](http://www.rasalkhaimahatourism.com)*

## Growth for the top five US spa benchmarks in 2012

US spa industry revenue increased by 4.7 per cent to US\$14bn (€10.5bn, £8.8m) last year, according to the new ISPA 2013 *US Spa Industry Study* conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Indeed, there was rise in all of the industry's 'big five' benchmarks from the previous year.

Spa visits grew by 2.8 per cent to 160 million; the average guest spend was US\$87 per visit, up 1.8 per cent; the number of locations rose by 0.5 per cent to 19,690; and total employee numbers was 343,600, representing a 1.2 per cent increase. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Ni7J7>*

## Minor joins with African group

The Minor Hotel Group (MHG) has announced a long-term strategic partnership with Rani Investment, a company which owns a number of high-end resorts across Africa.

The groups have formed a joint venture company for ownership of Indigo Bay Resort & Spa in Mozambique, with plans for further expansion in Africa.

Located on Bazaruto Island, 30km off the east coast of the country, Indigo Bay is a five-star 44-villa resort, and will be re-branded to Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort & Spa later this year when MHG takes up management.

The new partnership will explore more opportunities in Mozambique, including in the capital Maputo, and in the East Africa market. These properties will be a mix of new-build and re-brand developments and will be aligned with MHG's hotel brands of Anantara, Avani and Oaks – its serviced apartment offering.

Spas in the properties will be run by MHG's spa management company MSpa International.

Dubai-based Rani Investment is the investment arm of Aujan Group Holding which has



Rani Investment owns many resorts across Africa

more than US\$300m (£224m, £193m) of dedicated investments in the Middle East and Africa. The group first established its presence in 1999 under the Rani Resorts name.

*Interviews with MSpa's general manager Lee David Stephens and operations director Kathryn Moore can be found on page 30 and page 38.*



The Spa by L'Occitane at Capim do Mato hotel

## L'Occitane adds to its 60-plus spa network

Consumer beauty and wellness brand, L'Occitane, is rolling out spas in Switzerland, Australia and Brazil.

The Spa by L'Occitane at the Hotel Royal Crans-Montana overlooks the Swiss Alps and is the company's first in the country.

L'Occitane will also open at The Chahoya Spa & Salon, located in Cable Beach Resort, Australia and at The Capim do Mato Hotel in the Minas Gerais region of Brazil.

L'Occitane has a total of 61 spas and more than 300 treatment rooms across 23 countries. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=x9Moa>*

## Spanish spa body in health tourism push

Spain's National Association of Spas (ANBAL) has collaborated with a number of other associations in the country with a view to developing and capitalising on its €140m (US\$186m, £121m) health tourism sector.

Over 21,800 tourists visited Spain in 2012 for health purposes and the new alliance, the Spanish Health Tourism Cluster, aims to build on this by joining forces to promote the country as a world leader in the medical sector. Other cluster bodies include the National Federation of Private Clinics, the Business Federation Unit, the Spanish Confederation of Hotel and Tourist Accommodation and the Spanish Confederation of Travel Agents.

"Advances in medicine allow people around the world to seek the best technical and



Spas like Sha Wellness could benefit from a new health tourism alliance

economic solutions for the prevention and treatment of various diseases," said alliance president Inigo Valcaneras, who's also the director of international patient care at a Spanish hospital.

According to research carried out by Deloitte, health tourism in Spain could be worth up to €500m (US\$664.1m, £432.5m) by 2015. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Z6g9U>*

## WSWC to reveal Thai spa consumer survey results

Individualised packages and a back-to-basics approach to treatments are what Thai spa consumers will be looking for in the future.

In addition, the internet and word-of-mouth are the two main ways that current spa consumers in the country search for a spa to visit.

These were the findings of a study, put together by the Thai Spa Association and Stenden Rangsit University, which will be revealed to the industry at the World Spa and Well-being Convention in late September. *Details: [www.thaispaassociation.com](http://www.thaispaassociation.com)*

## Research project focuses on hot spring best practice

The operations of hot spring facilities around the world are being scrutinised for a first-of-its-kind research project.

*Global Best Practice in Hot Springs Industry*, which is due for completion in late 2014, will identify key physical, cultural, ethical, operational and regulatory elements required for industry growth.

The Hot Springs Alliance Group, an owner/operator body, was formed in January 2013 to help gather case study information from facilities in China, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, North America, India, Europe and the Middle East.

The lead consultant is New Zealander James White who specialises in the commercial development of mineral/hot spring bathing facilities.

## Paramount Hotels to create branded spa concept

Paramount Hotels, which is to build 50 Hollywood-themed hotels over the next few years, has teamed up with consultancy GOCO Hospitality to create a wellness brand to be featured at each property.

The first ever Paramount Hotels & Residences is due to open in Dubai in 2015. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=r0Q7r>*



Founder and CEO of Yelo Spa, Nic Ronco

## First Yelo Spa opens outside New York in Brazil

Nic Ronco, founder and CEO of Yelo Spa, is celebrating 25 years in the US this month. He moved from France in 1988 to build a spa business in New York City and now the company has just launched its first spa outside the US in São Paulo, Brazil.

"I believed in the dream and the vision [of the Yelo Spa concept] when it was just in my mind and on a piece of paper," said Ronco. "Now it's a small multinational and it's just the very beginning. I'm very grateful for those who trusted me a few years ago."

The new spa in São Paulo features six signature Yelo Cabs – sleeping pods with soundproofing, aromatherapy and chromotherapy – that enable guests to nap for 20 minutes. In addition, the spa offers facials, massages, manicures and pedicures as well as a host to customise the session. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=F6o9l>*

## From Mii to Vie – Accor rebrands Pullman spas

French hospitality group Accor has rolled out a new day spa brand in its Pullman hotels in Australia.

Five existing day spas have been rebranded from Mii Spa to the new Vie Spa or 'life spa': (vie means life in French). Vie Spas are now at Pullman Resort Bunker Bay, Quay West Resort Magenta Shores, Pullman Cairns International, Pullman Palm Cove Sea Temple Resort & Spa and Pullman Port Douglas Sea Temple Resort & Spa.

Each spa will have its own tailored treatment menu as well as a standard menu of treatment offerings that can be enjoyed at all Vie Spas. The Australian-based product range iKOU will be used alongside the existing Pevonia product range.

There are plans to further expand Vie Spa in the Pacific region and two more are set to open in New South Wales before the end of the year. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=U9tU>*

## Marriott to enter Italy with lagoon resort

The lavish JW Marriott Resort & Spa on the island of Sacca Sessola in Italy, which is set to open at the end of 2014, has announced details of its wellness offerings.

The resort is situated 15 minutes by speedboat from Piazza San Marco in Venice. The Sacca Sessola, a 40-acre (16-hectare) man-made island, is one of 118 islands in the Venetian lagoon.

Spa consultancy and management firm GOCO Hospitality has created the concept for the waterfront spa and will also operate it once it opens. The design is being carried out by Matteo Thun & Partners of Milan.

Covering 1,000sq m (10,765sq ft), the spa will have views over the lagoon and a backdrop of Piazza San Marco. It will feature spa suites as well as single treatment rooms, plus a bathing circuit and fitness centre.



The Venetian spa offers views against a backdrop of Piazza San Marco

It will offer authentic, classical treatments, results-orientated cosmeceutical facials and male grooming in addition to weekend spa and wellness packages and mind and body classes.

Set among private gardens, the spa will also offer guests treatments in pop-up locations around the island during the summer months. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=A7T9O>*

## Clarins reveals first Maldives My Blend Spa

Velaa Private Island, a luxury resort in the Maldives, will open at the end of 2013, with a Spa My Blend by Clarins.

Privately owned and managed by Czech entrepreneurs Radka and Jiri Smejck, the Petr Kolar-designed resort is made up of 43 private villas and five four-bedroom residences, which focus on local materials and contemporary flourishes. Each private retreat offers a generous outdoor space and private pool.

The spa facilities feature six spa suites nestled over the island's lagoon, with two suites for couples. Given the partnership with Spa My Blend by Clarins, exclusive products and treatments will be on offer. This is the fourth Spa My Blend by Clarins to open, with others in Paris, Cannes and Toronto.



Velaa Private Island will have a six-suite Spa My Blend by Clarins

The spa will also have a thermal area with a steamroom, sauna and the Maldives' first-ever snowroom. Alongside these features is a Cloud 9 floatation suite providing a cloud-shaped reclining treatment pod by Klafs and Sha. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=voG8X>*

## Aquis Great Barrier Reef Resort moves forward

Chinese billionaire Tony Fung's AU\$4.2bn (US\$3.75bn, £2.4bn) mega leisure development in Cairns, Australia has moved to the next stage, having been declared a 'co-ordinated project' – the first step in the Australian government's planning approval process.

The Aquis Resort at the Great Barrier Reef project is set to feature nine luxury hotels, a 25,000-seat sports stadium, a casino and high-end retail space. In total, it will offer 3,750 hotel bedrooms, 1,180 apartments and 130 villas. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=O5jd>*

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## Mia Kyricos joins SpaFinder® Wellness

SpaFinder® Wellness has appointed Mia Kyricos to the newly created position of chief brand officer.



Kyricos will lead the company's worldwide branding initiatives and oversee marketing, advertising, public relations, industry and consumer relations, social media and digital strategy, research and internal communications.

Prior to her appointment, Kyricos was president of Kyricos & Associates, advisors to the global spa, wellness and hospitality industries, and has worked with SpaFinder Wellness on developing its brand evolution. Roll-out of the new brand will start in Q4. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=j3w0](http://lei.sr?a=j3w0)

## Spa Business Handbook launches Spa Foresight™

The *Spa Business Handbook*, the sister publication to *Spa Business*, has revealed its *Spa Foresight™ 2013/14* report which highlights trends and influences in the international spa industry and identifies opportunities for growth in market sectors, world regions, management protocols and treatment types.

The report highlights new allies for the spa industry, saying operators must look to governments, corporations and individuals for collaboration. It also predicts spas will tackle death, sex and childhood obesity and self-care, as well as adding services such as gluteal massage and new cellulite treatments. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=o8L2u](http://lei.sr?a=o8L2u)

## Filipino energy company to create hot spring offering

Constellation Energy Corp (CEC) is to develop the lakeshore area of its 20-megawatt geothermal power plant on the island of Mindoro, in the Philippines, into a hot spring and wellness centre.

The project, near to Naujan Lake in the eastern Oriental Mindoro province, is scheduled to be commissioned in 2014 and aims to showcase a healthy mix of green energy and green tourism.

CEC chair, Jose Leviste said: "Green energy is the way to go. Power, tourism and health rejuvenation can mix. This is possible with renewable power energy." [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=wikoY](http://lei.sr?a=wikoY)

## Deep Nature spa for Brando paradise

The Brando, an eco-resort encircled by a coral reef in Tetiaroa, French Polynesia, is due to open in July 2014 and has just launched its official website.

The 12-island atoll was bought in 1965 by actor Marlon Brando, who fell in love with it while scouting for film locations around Tahiti for his movie *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

Deep Nature, a French-based spa and thalassotherapy specialist, is working on the spa element.

The Brando is owned and will be operated by Pacific Beachcomber, which already has seven hotels in French Polynesia, including four InterContinentials. It will have 35 villas with a strong focus on the environment – all the energy it uses will come from renewable sources such as solar panels, deep ocean-cooling technology and coconut biofuel.



Actor Marlon Brando fell in love with the island while filming there

The Deep Nature spa will be located in a large planted area partly built over a tropical pond. It will have a village style with facilities – three double treatment rooms, two steamrooms, a cold bath, relaxation area and tea lounge – housed in separate bungalows. [Read more http://lei.sr?a=Y5k5Y](http://lei.sr?a=Y5k5Y)

## Ecover family behind new UK spa

A 'farmhouse chic' spa is to open in the 17th century Dormy House hotel, which is situated in the middle of the UK's Cotswolds countryside, next year.

The hotel and spa are part of Farncombe hospitality – a group of companies originally owned by Jorgen Philip-Sorensen, the entrepreneur behind the green cleaning product brand Ecover.

The 40-suite hotel has just opened following a multi-million pound renovation and the six treatment room the House Spa is due to be up and running by February.

Sparcstudio has been responsible for the design and interiors of the spa, while other companies that have worked on it include Howard Spa Consulting and Temple Spa.



The infinity pool will have mood lighting and access to the spa terrace

Facilities will include a 16m infinity pool, a Rasul, spa terrace and garden hydro pool and a personal training studio. A thermal suite will house a salt infusion steamroom, drench showers and ice chute, lavender sauna and a juniper Finnish sauna. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=v4e7h](http://lei.sr?a=v4e7h)

## Spa hotel launches in Jerusalem's wine region

Hotel Cramim, a new spa hotel, has been unveiled at the heart of the wine region of Judea, just 15 minutes from Jerusalem in Israel.

Located in the hills of Jerusalem, the hotel is built on a wooden ridge, close to Highway 1 that runs between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Covering an area of 2,000sq m (21,528sq ft), the spa comprises 21 treatment rooms and has a strong focus on facials (see p24). Skincare company Christina Cosmeceuticals has developed a vinotherapy line that also features on the spa menu. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=K5X6Y](http://lei.sr?a=K5X6Y)

## US film producer's spa resort

Film producer Sheila C Johnson, who recently opened *The Butler* movie featuring Oprah Winfrey, Forest Whitaker and Mariah Carey, has unveiled her decade-long project – the Salamander Resort & Spa.

The resort is set in the village of Middleburg located in the heart of Virginia's horse and wine region. The 168-guestroom resort has been designed by WATG to blend into the countryside and respect the traditions of Johnson's own nearby Virginia farm – which served as the architectural inspiration.

The spa, which has been designed by Blu Spas Inc, offers farm-to-table treatments and boasts 14 therapy rooms with private stone terraces and a double suite with a hot tub.

There's also a secluded spa courtyard with an infinity pool, raised fire pit, whirlpool and



Sheila C Johnson is behind the Salamander Resort & Spa in the US

cabanas, as well as a 10-station salon for hair, makeup, manicures and pedicures.

Johnson founded Salamander Hotels & Resorts in 2005 to manage the development of the project. The company now also operates three resorts across Florida including Innisbrook, Reunion and Hammock Beach. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=a6X9M>*

## Sad music actually makes you happy says report

Sad music might actually evoke positive emotions according to a new study by Japanese researchers published in the open-access journal *Frontiers in Psychology*.

The study, by Tokyo University of the Arts and RIKEN, looked at the reasons people

enjoy listening to sad music. The researchers explained that sad music evoked contradictory emotions because the participants of the study tended to feel sad music to be more tragic and less romantic than they felt themselves while listening to it. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=H4f9z>*

## Work starts on Hungarian thermal salt spa

Work is underway on the Salco Resort in Hungary, which will feature one of Europe's first thermal salt spas.

Hungary has been seeing a surge in tourists, who are combining their sightseeing with medical treatments. Details about the spa facilities have not yet been released although it is known that the Mineral Salt Spa will emerge from 410 metres deep and will feature salt therapy, which has been shown to improve respiratory conditions.

Salco Resort will be marketed as a unique offering based on the claim that the waters are "some of the most medicinal in the world".

As such, the government of Hungary has appointed this particular project as one of high significance. Based in Egerszalók, around an



The high significance project is due to open in December 2014

hour from Budapest, the 254-bed resort is spread across 7 hectares (17 acres).

The new resort, under the wing of Select Resorts and in association with Savills International, will also include an 18-hole golf course. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z9cod>*

## DIARY DATES

5-7 October 2013

**Global Spa & Wellness Summit**

The Oberoi Gurgaon, New Delhi, India  
The GSWS is attended by global spa and wellness leaders to help shape the industry's future.

Tel: +1 212 716 1205

[www.globalspaandwellnesssummit.org](http://www.globalspaandwellnesssummit.org)

15-16 OCTOBER 2013

**Wellness & Spa Experience Event**

Gran Via – The Exhibition Centre, Barcelona, Spain

Part of the Barcelona Piscina international aquatic exhibition, this event will focus examples of best practice in the wellness industry.

Tel: +34 93 233 2000

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

21-23 OCTOBER 2013

**ISPA Conference & Expo**

Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

The ISPA Conference & Expo provides spa leaders with the opportunity to access executive education sessions, and collaborative networking options.

Tel: +1 888 651 4772

[www.ispa2013.com](http://www.ispa2013.com)

7-10 NOVEMBER 2013

**Slow Life Symposium**

Soneva Kiri, Koh Kood, Thailand

This event convenes business leaders, scientists, NGOs, renowned thinkers and policy makers in a bid to help boost environmental sustainability.

Tel: +66 2631 9698

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

12-13 NOVEMBER 2013

**Spa Life UK**

Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire, UK

Spa Life aims to introduce spa professionals to product innovations; industry insights; networking opportunities; and quality management education.

Tel: +44 1268 745 892

[www.spa-life.co.uk](http://www.spa-life.co.uk)

27-28 NOVEMBER 2013

**Spameeting Autumn Middle East, India & Russia**

Meydan Hotel, Dubai, UAE

A two-day forum of face-to-face meetings between spa suppliers and decision makers from the Middle East, Indian Ocean and Russian regions.

Tel: +33 1 44 69 95 69

<http://me.spameeting.com>

*Ask an expert*

# FACIALS

Massage might be a spa-goer's favourite treatment, but facials are better for business. We find out how spa operators can persuade their clients to forgo their automatic choice



■ Israel's Cramim Spa offers courses of facials by Christina Cosmeceuticals to tempt guests

Industry research confirms time and again that massage is the number one treatment received by spa-goers, but facials are far more profitable. Indeed, while massages may seem to be better for business because they cost less to perform than product-heavy facials, this is actually a false economy because the retail potential for body treatments is low.

"If you're performing a US\$150 massage, the chances are you're [only] going to get US\$150, but if you use that hour for a facial, you could potentially get US\$300, US\$400 or even US\$500 on top of that with retail," confirms global spa consultant Nigel Franklyn, who currently works exclusively with skincare company Sodashi as its 'spa whisperer'. "Massage will always be the spa's bread and butter, but facials are an incredibly important component when it comes to generating untapped retail revenue."

Anecdotal evidence from spas around the world suggests that facials are becoming more popular too. At Trellis Spa at The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa, USA, spa director Renae Cassam is converting one of her massage rooms to an aesthetic room to meet growing demand for facials, while at Israel's Carmel For-

est Spa Resort, the proportion of guests opting for facials has zoomed up from 10 per cent 10 years ago to 30 per cent today.

However, while it may be easier than it used to be to convince spa-goers to forgo their automatic choice of a massage for a bottom line boosting facial, this is still by no means an easy task. So, how can spa operators do it?

For Franklyn, it's all about lots of small changes. "My goal is not to take away all the massages and put in facials; but to create a healthier balance," he explains, adding that the training of everyone in the spa – from the reservation department to the therapists – is the key to both booking more facials and generating the all-important retail sale.

We asked three other seasoned spa professionals – all of whom have benefited from encouraging their customers to try facials and facial courses – whether they agree.



Elly Earls is a hospitality and travel journalist

Email: [eearls@spabusiness.com](mailto:eearls@spabusiness.com)

Twitter: @ellyearls



If you're performing a US\$150 massage, the chances are you're only going to get US\$150, but if you use that hour for a facial, you could potentially get US\$300, US\$400 or even US\$500 on top of that with retail



There's no doubt that facials are becoming more popular. Ten years ago, when I was managing the Carmel Forest Spa Resort in Israel only 10 per cent of treatments were facials. Now, at the same hotel, this is close to 30 per cent. A woman who goes to a spa hotel will always have at least one facial during her stay. Both men and women are realising that taking care of their face is something that will make them look and feel better.

When we opened Cramim Resort & Spa in June, we did so with 10 facials by Israeli brand Christina Cosmeceuticals and Dermalogica. These makes up a quarter of our spa treatments. We offer so many facials because there's more chance that a guest will find something to suit their needs.

I believe the unique vinotherapy treatments by Christina Cosmeceuticals – the first of their kind in Israel – will keep demand for facials strong as they connect very well with the story of the hotel, which is located in the wine region in Judea.

Overall, facials are already very popular. Female customers who only come for one treatment tend to prefer facials over body massages, while most guests who take

## SYLVIE COHEN GABAY

General manager, Cramim Resort & Spa



packages will choose those with a combination of facial and body treatments rather than focused just on the body.

We also encourage clients to have more than one facial by offering competitively priced courses. These consist of four to seven treatments, with discounts of around 15-20 per cent off a la carte prices depending on how many facials are included.

But treatments won't sell themselves. So before we opened, we trained all spa staff on all the treatments we offer, including demonstrations from both Christina Cosmeceuticals and Dermalogica. The hotel reservation department also received general training. Having this knowledge means they're far more confident in selling facials and that they also offer customers a treatment that can really meet their needs.

To sell as many products as possible, we encourage therapists to talk to the client

about what they're using and to suggest which ones would work best at home. At the end, each customer is given a brochure with product suggestions marked on it and they get a 10 per cent reduction on all products in the hotel shop.

Cramim Resort & Spa only opened just over a month ago, but I can already see that it will go the same way as Carmel Forest Spa Resort (see SB09/1 p54). This is great because, of course, you can sell more products off facials than body treatments. Thirty per cent of our hotel shop's retail sales are currently for facial products; this is much higher than for body products.

Prior to Cramim, Cohen Gabay managed two other spa resorts in Israel: Hotel Beresheet and Carmel Forest Spa Resort. Details: [www.isrotelexclusivecollection.com](http://www.isrotelexclusivecollection.com) or [www.christina-cosmeceuticals.com](http://www.christina-cosmeceuticals.com)

My role at Sodashi is to help its partner spas to reach their optimal potential, including profitability. Retail sales is key to this and as facials are product heavy, they obviously have more retail potential than most body treatments. So, if one of your goals is to increase your retail, you should aim to book more facials.

To do this, spas should keep their treatment menu simple as too much choice creates confusion. I'd suggest having no more than three product houses and around four facials – a deep cleanse, an anti-ageing choice, a man's facial and a premium offering. And list facials at the front of treatment menu to highlight them.

However, remember that unless you've focused on developing your staff and their connection with the therapy and the product, no matter what treatment you're offering, you won't be maximising anything at all.

I regularly consult on behalf of Sodashi at The Spa at Four

Franklyn suggests spas have no more than three product houses to avoid overloading the menu



## NIGEL FRANKLYN

The spa whisperer, Sodashi



Seasons Hotel George V Paris and one of my key focuses is to train receptionists that their role shouldn't be to simply facilitate bookings and take payments. I get them, and therapists, to ditch robotic scripts and talk about facials in the same way as massages – as an 'experience' and how they make people feel rather than how they make a person look. This leads to a more emotional and energised level of communication which can override problematic language barriers.

As Sodashi facial protocols have elements of massage – from lymphatic moves to Indian pressure points techniques – it makes it even easier for staff to describe them as experiences. This technique not only helps to encourage bookings, but can aid retail sales – if you can get someone to an emotional point where they cannot equate those

feelings with their products they already have at home, they will buy new ones.

George V has been a fabulous success story. The pace of the spa, the energy and, ultimately, the revenue, have all increased dramatically. Not only are we booking more facials, we're booking the really expensive ones. What I find fascinating is that while there's a big difference between US\$1,000 and US\$10,000 per month in retail, the effort it's taken to close that gap, is practically none. The trick has been making lots of very little changes and putting them in a row; you end up creating a bigger, better, more profitable environment but nobody quite knows what they're doing differently.

Nigel Franklyn has consulted for the global luxury spa industry for 13 years. For the past six years he's worked exclusively with Sodashi and its clients such as the Four Seasons, Amanresorts and The Siam in Bangkok. Details: [www.sodashi.com](http://www.sodashi.com) or [www.fourseasons.com/paris](http://www.fourseasons.com/paris)



Ditch robotic scripts and talk about facials in the same way as massages – how they make a person feel rather than how they make them look. This leads to a more emotional and energised level of communication



We're very lucky as we have a clientele who absolutely love facials. Even when they book a body massage, they'll often ask for a face massage to be included. The reason for this is that not only is a facial relaxing, but you can also see the results right away – and because customers can immediately smell, touch and see how different their face is after a treatment it's much easier to sell products which could range from lotions to serums and creams for the night and day.

We've been focused on facials since we opened five years ago. We have two facial brands – Bellefontaine and Carita – that are both extremely well-liked. The Carita Cinetic Lift Expert machine, which uses microcurrents, luminotherapy and ultrasonic micromassage for the skin and scalp

## DELPHINE QUARNGUL

Spa director, Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat



[see SB12/4 p93], is particularly popular because it offers three different treatments in one machine. We often recommend our guests have more than one treatment with the machine for better results.

This year, we also brought in a trainer from Carita, and this has been the key to generating more retail sales. Our therapists are now very comfortable recommending products to guests because they know specifically about each item and can talk about them with much more confidence.

I'd say that 85 per cent of our retail sales come from facial products. And, although it's difficult to pinpoint how much our revenue has increased since we implemented the new training strategy, there's no doubt it has improved.

Delphine Quarngul has been working in the hospitality industry for more than 20 years, including 11 years at Four Seasons. Details: [www.grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com](http://www.grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com) or [www.carita.com](http://www.carita.com)

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Since bringing in Natura Bissé three years ago, the spa's had a 30 per cent increase in facial bookings



We've had at least 30 per cent growth in retail sales as we've been tying in face treatments with product recommendations... Because of the demand for facials, we'll be converting one of our massage rooms into an aesthetics room



**W**e have 21 treatment rooms, seven of which are for facials. Although we perform more massages, the aesthetics portion of our business is much more profitable as it ties into the retail product sales.

Plus, it's easier to maintain regular customers via facials. Most clients see immediate results and want to return. If aestheticians can get customers to see them every three weeks, they retain relationships which leads to in a locked-in revenue stream.

In the last few years, we've really started focusing on facials. We're now in our third year partnering with Natura Bissé, a brand we chose because of its excellent reputation for skincare and facials, and since bringing them in, we've had a 30 per cent increase in facials booked. We've also had at least a 30 per cent growth in retail sales as we've been tying in our treatments more with retail by making product recommendations on the back of our skin and treatment analysis.

### RENAE CASSAM

Spa director, Trellis Spa at The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa



Because demand for facials has considerably increased, we'll be converting one of our massage rooms into an aesthetics room.

One of the most important attributions to this success has been our great training programme. We have multiple in-house sessions per year as well as great training partnerships with our vendors. Natura Bissé offers a week-long training programme in Dallas and their trainers are frequently on-site training our staff on retail products and facials.

We also promote our facials throughout the spa, as many times as we can. When a customer is making a reservation, we'll ask them if they'd like to book a facial after

their massage. Additionally, our massage therapists – who know the products well – will often recommend having a Natura Bissé facial as well as a body treatment.

Of course, we don't ever want to overwhelm our clients, so we do all of this in a very subtle, professional way and make sure we're always tailoring our treatments to our clients' needs.

Cassam joined The Houstonian from the Ritz-Carlton Golf Club & Spa in Florida. Prior to that, she was a spa director at two high-end hotels in Atlanta. Details: [www.houstonian.com](http://www.houstonian.com) or [www.naturabisse.com](http://www.naturabisse.com)



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## GETTING RESULTS

For over 25 years Dr med Erich Schulte, founder of QMS Medicosmetics, has been revolutionising the way we treat and care for skin. His passion for advancing the science of skincare began when working in the field of trauma surgery in his home country of Germany. Research led him to pioneer a technique that conditions natural soluble collagens so they can be re-absorbed into the epidermis. From this innovation he developed the Classic Set – a unique facial care system combining 70 per cent natural soluble collagens with a highly effective fruit acid and enzyme peeling method.

This product launched QMS Medicosmetics and was the first of many groundbreaking achievements that have created a new generation of skincare and spa treatments. From the latest in plant stem cell research with our highly regenerative creams Cellular Marine (Stem Cell Line Eraser) and Cellular Alpine (Eye Care) to Ion Skin Equalizer, a first in the beauty world, QMS Medicosmetics' collection is based scientific logic not miracles. Importantly, our products are designed for ease of use and modern day lifestyles wherever you are in the world.

Our German heritage continues as each product is still formulated in our own labo-

**QMS Medicosmetics' exceptional collection of skincare and spa treatments is designed to offer superior results for every type of spa**

ratories by our founder and we manage our own production to ensure optimum quality from start to finish.

### OUR PROFESSIONAL DIFFERENCE

With QMS Medicosmetics, clients enjoy the perfect combination of renowned skincare expertise, cutting-edge technology and signature treatments that deliver results every time.

We believe in bespoke solutions and our consultative approach ensures we design the right offering for our global spa partners, wherever they are in the world. From Alpine resorts to sun-soaked islands and cosmopolitan cities, we tailor a programme to suit location, climate and clientele.

QMS Medicosmetics results-focused facial and body treatments have been specifically developed to use our pioneering

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# Lee David Stephens

MSpa International – the spa arm of the Minor Hotel Group – manages 44 spas, 450 staff and has 30 more potential projects. The general manager talks to us about the importance of brands, simple KPIs and Minor's recent investment in Per Aquum

KATIE BARNES, MANAGING EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

**T**his July, the Thai-based Minor Hotel Group (MHG) invested US\$4m (€3m, £2.6m) to gain a 50 per cent stake in Per Aquum – the luxury boutique resort and spa management company famous for its Huvaafen Fushi property in the Maldives which features one of the first underwater treatment rooms. Its plan is to build on the three existing Per Aquum properties – two in the Maldives and the Desert Palm in Dubai – by developing up to a possible 15 more.

The investment brings MHG's portfolio to 94 hotels and resorts most of which are in Asia, although it has a growing presence in Africa and the Middle East. Forming part of Minor International (MINT) – a company listed on the stock exchange of Thailand (see p34) – MHG has aggressive expansion plans to grow to 150 properties in the next five years.

Lee David Stephens, the general manager of MSpa International, the group's spa operations arm, explains what all of this means for his division and what exciting things we can expect in the future.

## BRAND APPRECIATION

As part of the Per Aquum deal, MSpa inherited the Lime Spa concept which Stephens describes as more of a design-led, upbeat spa offering in a region that's typically focused on romance, reclusiveness and candlelit dinners. On working with the new brand he says: "We'll levy our strengths in terms of operational support and give them [Per Aquum] access to our training, centralised bookings, e-commerce and sales and marketing systems; and as a profit-driven company, I'll certainly be measuring performance of facilities."



Stephens, who's worked in the hair and beauty industry for 20 years, joined MSpa in mid 2012

With the Lime Spa addition, MSpa now has six in-house spa concepts for both MHG and third-party properties (see p36). Its other brands include: Mandara Spa, the Steiner-owned concept which MSpa has the franchise licence for in Thailand and China; Anantara Spa, developed for MHG's luxury hotels of the same name; Aequalis Spa, an urban spa concept focused on 'high tech, high touch' and the Individually

Tailored Spa Collection, a bespoke line. Meanwhile, Avani Spa, its newest concept launched at two MHG-managed Avani properties in Sri Lanka in 2012, has been created as an upscale contemporary spa offering for those seeking tailor made treatments, who appreciate attention to detail and who also have a passion for design.

"MINT's chairman and founder [William Heinecke] love brands," says Stephens.



Anantara Spa is one of six MSpa brands (both pictures). Most of the company's sites are in Asia but it has a growing presence in Africa and the Middle East

"Many people think the M in MSpa stands for Minor, when it actually comes from Mandara – which we brought into our fold in 1999 to work with our Marriott properties." He adds that MSpa is also the distributor for product house Elemis, another Steiner subsidiary, in Thailand, while it works with Amala in China and has developed its own in-house Anantara Spa product and amenities line.

Having so many spa and hotel brands works in the company's favour in respect to mega-resorts – developments which feature multiple hotels on the same plot and which are becoming increasingly popular in Asia. "Our strength is that instead of having to go to three or four different companies, developers can just come to MHG and still have a choice," says Stephens. The number of spa brands is also an indication

of how valued the facilities are as part of the MHG offering. "Mr Heinecke has a passion for spas, pizza and private jets!" he says. "They [spas] are of paramount importance. Anyone can have a nice hotel and bed with Egyptian cotton sheets and featherdown pillows – but we sell experiences which are not told, but felt by their great local cuisine, comfortable rooms and, of course, great spas."

Perhaps even more significant, however, is how spas are used by MHG as springboards into new territories. "MHG has opened in new markets through spas," explains Stephens. "We first launched the Anantara brand in China by introducing an Anantara Spa at the PuLi Hotel in Shanghai in 2009. Now we have two Anantara resorts in the country, with another five in the pipeline. Interestingly, Anantara in China is mostly known for its spas. ▶



MSpa manages the Elemis Spa at The St Regis Bangkok, as well as operating 43 other spas globally. It also distributes the Elemis brand in Thailand

▶ “The same thing has happened in the UAE. We opened the Anantara Spa at the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi in 2006 and now there are four more Anantara properties there with another opening in Dubai in September.”

### CAREER INFLUENCES

Stephens joined MSpa in June 2012 armed with a 20-year career in the beauty and spa industry. Originally from Liverpool, north England, the 40-year-old's upbringing heavily influenced his route into the sector. “My dad built a yacht when I was 10 and our family emigrated to Majorca and lived on it,” he recalls. “I have many relatives, eight of who were hairdressers and/



or barbers and that's what I wanted to do too. My dad, who started his own career on cruise liners, suggested I took the opportunity to travel at the same time. So at the age of 20, I joined the *QE2* as a hairdresser for Steiner and spent 10 years working in salons, fitness centres and spas progress-

ing from supervisor, to assistant manager, manager and department head roles.”

Having travelled the world five times over Stephens became “absolutely captivated” with Hong Kong and felt it time to use his spa management skills on terra firma as the director of spas for the Beautiful Skin Centre Group (later becoming Puaa and now trading as South China Cosmetics), which operated beauty centres, including the Elemis Day Spa and Victorian Spa at the Hong Kong Disneyland Hotel in the area. Then, while running his own company Sol Spa Services which distributed the Voya and Somme Institute brands, the chance to join MSpa came up. “I'd known Minor for many years and seen it dramatically increase from eight hotels to 80 in just a few years so I saw it as a great opportunity to be a part of that growth,” he says.

### LEE DAVID STEPHENS FAVOURITES

**Book:** *Majorca - The Island of Calm* by Santiago Rusinol

**Film:** *Everything* by Perdo Almodovar  
**Season:** Autumn

**Leisure activity:** Sailing. When I visit family in Spain, there's always a boat or two to catch a ride on  
**What do you do to relax?** I try to avoid spas! Luckily, it's easy to escape to a small island or beach villa in Thailand  
**Non-MSpa spa:** The Barai in Hua Hin  
**Treatment:** I'm obsessed by traditional Turkish hammam treatments - I love the vigour, how it warms you to the

core and leaves you simultaneously dazed and completely wide awake  
**Quote:** “Twenty years from now you'll be more disappointed with the things you didn't do than the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sail. Explore. Dream. Discover” – Mark Twain  
**Who you admire:** Without being sycophantic, our chairman and founder. Mr Heinecke's built his empire from nothing and leads with a 'drive culture' that's contagious

### ROLE CALL

Unlike other large hotel groups, where general managers of properties typically oversee the spas, MSpa is fully responsible for running its 44 facilities. From staffing, ▶

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Aequalis Spa (above and right) is an urban spa concept focused on 'high tech, high touch'



“ We’re performance driven and we look at our spa business the way that we look at our hotels – so measuring revenue, sales and spend comes naturally ”

► through to profit and loss – as a subsidiary of MHG and a company in its own right, its answerable to all financials which are closely monitored. This makes Stephens’ role slightly different to others who head up spas for hotel chains. He has 20 people dedicated to spas at the head office in Bangkok who report into him including directors of HR, procurement, training and development, finance, marketing and a country manager for Thailand where the biggest cluster of its spas are. These posts are very strategic, he says explaining that the marketing director gets involved in helping to drive spa capture rates and average spends with targeted, localised campaigns, as well as dealing with overall marketing.

He works particularly closely with director of operations Kathryn Moore (see p38) to co-ordinate projects coming up to ensure “the right staff are selected and are in place and that the managers know what they need to do in order to open on time, on budget and on brand – I’m a guardian of the quality of the brands.”

Of course, with 450 spa staff either employed directly by MSpa or hotel owners, finding, growing and keeping talent is a particular challenge. “We’re facing the same problems as everyone else – you have to grow your talent quickly because competition is hot on your heels.” While it’s still not easy to keep staff – therapists in Asia typically have little loyalty to companies because they’re in high demand – Stephens feels offering a clear career path helps. MSpa categorises its spas as A, B or C properties depending on their size, number of treatment rooms, location and calibre of hotel and holds monthly succession planning meetings with a view of promoting C managers up to B properties and B managers up to A properties. This part of the job, he says, keeps him driven: “I love seeing therapists and my corporate team develop.”

Another key responsibility Stephens has is keeping a tight control on spa KPIs. “As a public listed company, we’re performance driven and we look at our spa business the way we look at our hotels – so

#### MINT CONDITION

Minor International (MINT) was founded in 1978 with a single beachfront resort in Pattaya, Thailand. Today, it’s one of the largest hospitality and leisure companies in the Asia Pacific region with a core net profit of THB3.4bn (US\$105.8m, €79.8m, £68.3m) in 2012 – up an impressive 78 per cent from 2011.

Fifty per cent of MINT’s revenue come from its hotel and resort business, the Minor Hotel Group (MHG), comprising more than 90 hotels, resorts and serviced suites under brands such as Anantara, Marriott, Four Seasons, St Regis, Avani, Oaks and Per Aquum. Forty per cent of revenue is derived from the Minor Food Group – MINT is one of Asia’s largest quick-service restaurant companies – through brands such as The Pizza Company, Burger King, Dairy Queen and The Coffee Club. The remaining 10 per cent of revenue comes from the Minor Retail arm of the company which distributes or franchises well-known retail brands in Thailand such as GAP, Espirit, Bossini and Tumi.



MHG bought a 50 per cent stake in Per Aquum (right) in July and is planning to develop up to 15 more properties to strengthen the brand name

measuring revenue, treatment sales and average spend of guests comes naturally.” However, he admits financial terminology can be confusing, especially for managers who may be using a second language. “Just recently, we’ve made it even more simple by counting the number of treatments sold every day to measure performance and set seven day goals. When you’re dealing with more than 40 spas in 10 countries you need to have something that everyone can measure and follow.”

#### OUT OF AFRICA

Currently, MSpa has more than 30 potential spa projects in the pipeline, says Stephens. Around three quarters of these are in MHG-branded properties, although third-party partnerships are still valued – “partnership is one of the five core values of MINT,” he adds. And while MHG has up until this point typically owned and operated its properties and spas, it’s starting to take on more management contracts to facilitate quicker expansion.



“However,” says Stephens, “there are some little gems out there which we would invest in and purchase as assets.” One such property, he confides, is the soon to open Anantara Phuket Layan Resort & Spa in Thailand which MHG acquired in 2012. The 77-villa site has undergone extensive refurbishment and is scheduled to reopen in early 2014. “We’ve gutted the spa and started it from new,” says Stephens. “It will

be one of the most luxurious properties you can find.” In addition, MHG has acquired 5 hectares (12 acres) of adjacent hillside land overlooking the Andaman Sea to develop Anantara’s first residential property.

Africa is a continent that is of particular interest to MSpa. It already has three spas there – two in Tanzania and one in Egypt – and 10 out of its 30-plus possible future projects are planned in countries such as ▶



Stephens thinks Africa is a very exciting market that's ripe for spa development - out of 30 potential future projects, 10 are planned on the continent

► Morocco, Mozambique and in East Africa, with more development also underway in Tanzania. "It's a very exciting market," Stephens says. "We talk about the BRIC nations, but Africa has huge potential. It has an abundance of natural beauty and although you need to fix the infrastructure and make it accessible, African properties are absolutely waiting to happen."

Neither is Stephens ruling out more spa brand development, revealing that MSpa is in discussions with a few external companies about creating a spa concept for them.

He concludes: "We're growing very rapidly and as we do our strength and expertise grow so we become even more appealing to owners. We get calls all the time, so we can afford to be choosy with what we do and who we partner with. It's not a bad predicament to have!" ●

## MSpa International portfolio

### THAILAND

- Anantara Spa, Anantara Phuket
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Golden Triangle Chiang Rai
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Hua Hin
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Bo Phut Koh Samui
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Lawana, Koh Samui
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Riverside Bangkok
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Sikao, Trang
- The Spa, Four Seasons hotel Bangkok
- Mandara Spa, JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa
- Royal Garden Spa, Pattaya Marriott Resort & Spa
- Mandara Spa, Sheraton Krabi Beach Resort
- Mandara Spa, The Royal Orchid Sheraton hotel Bangkok
- Elemis Spa, The St Regis Bangkok hotel
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Rasananda, Koh Phangan

### CHINA

- Mandara Spa, Marco Polo Shenzhen
- Mandara Spa, JW Marriott hotel Shanghai
- Mandara Spa, Pullman Lijiang Resort & Spa
- Mandara Spa, Renaissance Shanghai Putuo hotel
- Mandara Spa, Sheraton Sanya Resort
- Anantara Spa, The PuLi Hotel & Spa
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Sanya
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Xishuangbanna

### INDONESIA

- Anantara Spa, Anantara Seminyak, Bali
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Uluwatu, Bali

### KOREA

- Aequalis Spa, Sheraton Seoul D Cube City

### MALDIVES

- Anantara Spa, Anantara Dhigu
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Kihavah Villas
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Veli
- In-house spa, Naladhu
- Per Aquum, Huvafen Fushi
- Per Aquum, Niyama

### VIETNAM

- Anantara Spa, Anantara Mui Ne
- Anantara Spa, Anantara Hoi-An
- Avani Spa, Avani Quy Nhon

### MALAYSIA

- The Spa, Golden Palmtree Resort, Sepang

### TANZANIA

- Anantara Spa, Hyatt Regency, Dar es Salaam
- Anantara Spa, Melia Zanzibar

### UAE

- Anantara Spa, Desert Islands Resort by Anantara
- Anantara Spa, Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara
- Anantara Spa, The Emirates Palace hotel
- Anantara Spa, Eastern Mangroves by Anantara
- Desert Palm by Per Aquum, Dubai

### EGYPT

- Mandara Spa, JW Marriott Cairo

### JORDAN

- Anantara Spa, Kempinski Ishtar Dead Sea

Turn to p38 to read our interview with Kathryn Moore



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# Kathryn Moore

The operations director of MSpa International talks about the company's new fast track management programme, hot spa markets and a brand new wellness concept

KATIE BARNES, MANAGING EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

**K**athryn Moore has a passion for management. Straight out of school at 19, the native Australian from Perth started running nightclubs and restaurants – at one point overseeing 50 staff – before taking a two-year beauty therapy diploma in 2002 with a view to making a career out of operating spas. “I don’t think having a therapist qualification makes a huge amount of difference to running spas,” says Moore who’s now the director of operations – corporate support for MSpa International. “But it did give me more insight into what therapists go through and I think it’s helped me to be a better manager.”

In her first role at Retreat on Spring, an Aveda spa in Melbourne, Moore was mentored by Marie Prospero-Porter and Julie-Anne Kelly – two well-known spa professionals in the country who “opened my eyes to how quickly the industry was growing”. Then, after managing the spa at Hilton Melbourne for two years, she relocated to Hua Hin, Thailand where an opportunity to join MSpa, a subsidiary of Asia’s Minor Hotel Group (MHG), as spa director for its Mandara Spa and Anantara Spa brands presented itself. Three years on, the 32-year-old has moved very quickly through the company to become “number two” to MSpa’s general manager Lee David Stephens (see p30) run-



Moore heads up international projects for MSpa as well as being operations director

ning the its 44 spas and 450 staff across Asia, the Middle East and Africa, as well as heading up new developments and openings as its international project manager.

## FAST TRACK MANAGEMENT

Faced, like the majority of the industry, with the lack of skilled spa managers – “I couldn’t find any to save my life!” – Moore has put together a fast track programme for beauty therapy graduates, in-house therapists and other professionals outside of the industry who show ambition and

management potential. After a six-month probation in a receptionist or therapist position, candidates will go through an 18-month mentoring programme shadowing top-level MSpa employees at various properties with the back-up of online training courses. Probation is important, she says, as they need to ensure candidates have a work ethic first.

With four people on the programme so far, Moore’s aim is find more recruits by developing stronger relationships with respected therapist training organisations/



Moore's target is to sign at least four new spa deals and year. She's created an 18-month spa management training programme to help with staff shortages

#### SHOPPING TRIP

Wearing her other MSpa hat, as the company's international project manager, Moore's target is to bring in at least four new deals for a year. "Getting owners to sign new deals is always exciting," she says, adding that it's one of the things she works closely with Stephens on. "If I'm in an area, it makes sense for me to do the presentation [to owners] and vice versa. I've spent quite a bit of time in the Middle East lately and he spends more time in China."

New deals are also quickly coming on line via company investments. "Mr Heinicke, our founder, and Dillip Rajakarier, our CEO are travelling on one of the company's private jets almost every week and come back with a brand new property or one to rebrand," says Moore. "It's become a bit of an in-house joke – 'what have you bought on your shopping trip this time?' – it means more work for us which is exciting, but it's pretty full on!" As it stands, Moore says there's around 25 projects she needs to get open in the next 18 months. ▶

schools, such as Elly Lukas in Australia. However, the sheer demand for managers means they may need to widen the net. "We need to start looking outside the industry," she says, "potentially looking at hotel F&B managers or front of house managers who already have an idea of how much hard work hospitality is and who have responsibility for a department's performance."

Making the switch to spa management would certainly be a lucrative move she adds: "The spa industry's paying more for managers than what hotels are – some spa

directors are on US\$6,000 a month. In the past GMs were on that money, and F&B/front of house managers are probably only earning around US\$2,000-US\$3,000."

Having employees with business-running backgrounds would certainly make her job to deliver on KPIs easier. As part of a public limited company MSpa is closely scrutinised on its performance. "It's my role to make sure 80 per cent of my managers, achieve 80 per cent of their KPIs," explains Moore. "I'd lie if I didn't say revenue was one of our most important benchmarks."



“ Nothing like this exists in the Middle East as return on investment is tough, but our owners are the Qatari royal family and they really want to have something different ”

► “We’ve got some amazing deals in the pipeline, but I’m going to need to bring in a few more people to help me handle them.”

#### HOT SPOTS

One of the newest projects is the rollout of Lime Spa – the branded concept for Per Aquum resorts (see SB06/1 p28) which MHG acquired a 50 per cent stake in just two months ago. With only three sites, the 10-year-old brand is not known in the hotel industry but MHG plans to change this. “We’re currently talking about what direction we’ll take it as we’re planning at least 15 resorts in coming years,” says Moore. “We were considering Lime Spa as a stand-alone

concept, but now think it’s best positioned exclusively for Per Aquum as a USP.”

With spas now standard in hotels, Moore says it’s “hard to see where you can get an extra dollar, or an extra guest into the spa.” However, the Maldives, Africa and the Middle East are still hot spots for successful spas, she feels. “Even though there are lots of resorts in the Maldives, there’s still big potential as there’s nothing else for guests to do and you’re pretty much guaranteed a 15-20 per cent capture rate.”

The potential in Africa – MSpa has 10 possible projects there – lies with professionals who, having studied abroad and gained a taste for western luxuries, are

returning to their homeland as it becomes more prosperous. “I was in a 200-bed hotel in Tanzania a few months ago that was getting 95 per cent year-round occupancy via corporate business at US\$450 (£341, £287) a night and US\$150-US\$200 (£114-£152, £96-£127) average spend in the spa – that’s amazing,” says Moore.

She also feels there’s high spending power in the Middle East. “Consumers there have a lot of money, however, they’re always looking for something fresh with the latest brands. If you don’t continue to evolve in that market, you’ll lose customers.”

It’s fitting, therefore, that MSpa has chosen Doha to launch a completely different ►

## KATHRYN MOORE FAVOURITES

**Book:** I'm currently reading *The*

*4-Hour Workweek* by Tim Ferriss

**Film:** A tie between *Robin Hood:*

*Prince of Thieves* and *Love Actually*

**Season:** Spring

**Non-MSpa spa:** The Bliss

Spa in London does an

amazing bespoke facial

**Treatment:** Thai massage

**Advice:** My parents taught me

to never give up and to stand

up for what I believe in (gets

me in trouble sometimes!)

**Who you admire?** Not to sound like

a swot, but both my bosses [William

Heinecke and Dillip Rajakarier]

are incredibly inspirational



There's lots of money for luxury spend in the Middle East, says Moore, adding that MSpa will soon reveal a full-service wellness concept to consumers in Qatar

concept to sit alongside its Anantara Spa. When the 13-hectare (32-acre) Anantara Doha Island Resort & Spa opens in early 2014, it will feature the company's first "full-on wellness concept" – a facility capable of hosting year-round long-stay retreats on detox, weight-loss and relaxation that mix alternative therapies with medi-spa treatments and doctors on staff. "We've haven't released details to the press yet as we're still finalising the offer" says Moore. "It's going to target the Middle East clientele who usually go to Asia, places like Chiva-Som, for those types of programmes. There are going to be more than 100 residential units [on the island] so it will target locals too.



"Nothing like this exists in the Middle East because the return on investment is tough, but our owners are the Qatari royal family and they really want to have something with a different angle."

This isn't the first time owners have expressed an interest in having a full-service wellness centre says Moore who's been researching concepts and viable business models for a few years now. Indeed Anantara has slowly introduced wellness retreats at different properties so it's already built up a base of experts and she sees no reason why they shouldn't continue with elements of wellness in the future as they refresh the Anantara Spa brand. "What we created five

year's ago isn't as relevant today," she says. "I'm looking into an intro level, such as more weekend retreats and a step up from that where we might offer lifestyle memberships and health check ups."

Overall, the next few years are going to prove exciting. "There aren't that many spa management companies in Asia or the Middle East," she says. "There's ESPA and a couple in the US but we get enquiries every day from owners wanting us to either create or manage a spa for them. There's huge potential for us to get more deals!" ●

Turn to p30 to read the interview with Lee David Stephens

# GOCO Hospitality

After just four years of operation GOCO Hospitality is regarded as a global leader in wellness hospitality segment of the industry. With 22 projects on its books, spanning three continents, we look at what underpins the company's success

SOPHIE BENGE, JOURNALIST

There are hospitality companies, then there is GOCO – a fully global and fully multi-disciplinary consulting and management company dedicated to the art of wellness hospitality. Its client portfolio – currently standing at 22 projects – is ratification enough for a four-year-old company. Such success is born from several factors, not least a driven, visionary CEO.

"We are a company with a diverse team who can relate to owners, developers, architects, operators and marketeers as my colleagues hail from these backgrounds. We are dedicated to creating contemporary and functional spaces while being business savvy and driving financial success," says CEO and key stakeholder Ingo Schweder. "We are an effective partner because of our depth and spectrum of sensibilities."



## GOCO PEOPLE

Team members are employed for their high skill sets in respective lead functions and come with a level of specialism in their field having previously held GM and VP level positions in leading corporations. Top management have won awards in their professions and are shareholders in the com-

pany. Younger team members – Schweder says it's an active policy to employ "aspiring talents with unlimited potential" – all have multi-jurisdictional education and masters qualifications. To date, GOCO has 25 full-time team members from 14 countries at its head office and it places an emphasis on 'team'. The CEO takes the team on an annual

▲ Design is key to GOCO's profile.

Here the team study architectural plans

retreat, in Thailand, and more frequently takes them out to exchange on matters over a meal. "We look for cultural diversity and aim to be the employer of choice for creative talents. GOCO's managers focus on mentoring and empowering staff."

All new team members undergo a 14-module induction covering a broad range of topics from guest service to spa knowledge, even anatomy and physiology, through to financial planning and personal wellness at work. Training is ongoing in monthly GOCO @ School workshops in topics such as leadership and conflict resolution or during early morning DLT (daily learning time).

Company strategy is given the same dedication starting with the yearly strategic plan that's developed with all team members on the annual retreat, reviewed quarterly by management and honed in daily morning meetings.

## GOCO TOP MANAGEMENT TEAM

Ingo Schweder – CEO

Thomas Wurzingler – group director, Operations

Josephine Leung – group director, Design

Matthew Brennan – director, Finance

Sridhar KR – director, Human Resources

Emlyn Brown – director, Spa Operations

Shekhar Malkotia – manager, Spa Operations

Jennifer Wilson – manager, Market Research & Feasibility

Enisha Narula – manager, Design & Technical Services

Anna von Kühn – manager, Electronic Distribution

Christine Seiler – manager, Marketing Communications



**Josephine Leung**

Group director

**DESIGN****How did you get into hospitality design?**

One of my first projects after my masters at Columbia was the Hong Kong Landmark Mandarin Oriental Hotel, where I learnt the complexity of hotel design. I was fascinated by the variety of uses within one building and how all areas need to be integrated. Here I met Ingo, a director on the project, and where I gained experience in conceptualising a top-tier luxury hotel spa from scratch.

**What drives you?**

In the last 10 years as an architect and urban designer for HOK and SOM, I've dedicated my efforts to creating places for people and have a particular passion for developing better environments, even cities, that have long-term sustainability.

**What kind of projects are you working on?**

We're creating wellness destinations of various scales in many parts of the world. I personally enjoy the process of understanding

“

I see design becoming more dedicated to promoting longer-term sustainability in our lives

”

local culture, consumer needs, current trends and being part of envisioning environments for preventive health and wellness education.

**What do you see as the future of design in the wellness industry?**

I see design becoming a powerful tool in promoting longer-term sustainability in our lives. We're involved in various large scale wellness real estate projects, which are a testament to the need for individuals to reside in an environment that promotes wellness-related experiences, extending longevity and offering a wide spectrum of services.

**Thomas Wurzinger**

Group director

**OPERATIONS****How did you get involved with GOCO?**

Having experienced the transformation of the luxury Ritz-Carlton group from 20 to 70 hotels, it became too large for me and I was looking for a smaller company. I'd known Ingo for 10 years, I admired his vision and was glad for the chance to be part of the start up of GOCO's journey – an opportunity I couldn't resist!

**As hotel operator turned wellness hotel operator, how do you see the differences?**

From my experience as GM at Sha Wellness Clinic, it became clear that a destination spa and a luxury hotel require two different hats. The guest and employee behaviours and motivations are different. At wellness resorts, guests want to have a stronger relationship with employees and it's important that every team member is knowledgeable of overall principles and can answer questions. Employees not only fulfil their technical tasks

“

I'd known Ingo for 10 years, I admired his vision and was glad for the chance to be part of the start up of GOCO's journey – an opportunity I couldn't resist!

”

but are an integral part of the experience and the results guests can achieve. Divisions like F&B and Rooms become an amenity while the wellness division is key and the driving force for human resources (HR).

**How can one ensure that employees are committed to such a demanding role?**

I'll speak on this at the SpaChina Wellness Summit in September. HR is most critical to service excellence and customer engagement. The dilemma is that talent is hard to find. As leaders we need to pay greater attention to motivating employees. At GOCO, we regularly discuss our core values through a



presentation, video, or activity. This ensures employees have a clear understanding of the company they're working for and what its vision and mission is.

**Has all this impacted your own wellness habits?**

Completely. I could not have imagined that after five years, I'd be eating miso soup for breakfast, more vegetarian cuisine, and going to yoga three times a week – I truly enjoy it. ▶



**GOCO CEO INGO SCHWEDER**

Ingo Schweder is one of the world's foremost hotel and spa professionals, following 30 years' experience with leading hospitality chains. He began in F&B at Waldorf Astoria, joined Ritz-Carlton when it started off, moving to Shangri-La and Rafael Group Hoteliers as RM/GM. He later became group director of hotel operations for Oberoi and was subsequently co-founder and MD of the award-winning destination spa, Ananda in the Himalayas.

His vision, as board member and group director – spa at Mandarin Oriental from 2001-2007, meant the hotel group became the first to have its own dedicated in-house spa portfolio, which he built from the ground up to 15 spas across three continents in six years.

Schweder has won 10 personal awards for excellence and is an overall leading industry personality. His commitment to projects – including Rajvillas in India; Sha Wellness Clinic in Spain; The Spa at The Claridges, in India; and the spas at The Mandarin Oriental in New York, London, Hong Kong and Tokyo – has made them award winners on numerous occasions.

He occasionally finds downtime for his passions: jazz, yoga, Thailand beaches and daily juicing. His cancer diagnosis at 33 spurred a personal lifestyle change that morphed naturally into a dedicated professional focus – spas and wellbeing. "I hope the platforms we build now for others extend their longevity and strengthen their health," he says.

**GOCO CORPORATE OFFICES**

In line with GOCO's emphasis on teamwork, Schweder has made the design and construction of a Bangkok corporate office one of his priorities for 2013. At a cost of US\$3m, the 500sq m purpose-built, wholly-owned office behind Four Seasons Bangkok will span several floors each dedicated to specific segments of the business – finance, feasibility, design, marketing and operations.

The space will reflect GOCO's reputation for high design: flooded with natural light and accessible to a fully functioning kitchen with resident cook preparing healthy meals. It was shrewd psychology to invest in the bricks and mortar space. "If you're in a beautiful environment, people feel comfortable and I seek to attract smart, committed professionals

“ Wellness related travel is on the up. There's an increasingly older and wealthier population with a determination to remain healthy ”

to work for GOCO. Equally our office will attract business, as it's a statement of who we are. The style will be minimal, authentic and include bespoke art. It says much about our contemporary good taste and operational functionality," says Schweder.

Elsewhere, a GOCO office in central Berlin is due to open in September while a Shanghai office, under negotiation, is planned for March 2014.

**THE GOCO BRAND – 'WHERE WELLNESS MEETS WANDERLUST'**

The GOCO span of expertise provides a wholly integrated range of services from project development and financial structuring through to ongoing management; in other words a one-stop turnkey solution with scope and versatility at the core. The master plan of multi million dollar real estate projects such as groundbreaking wellness villages in Qatar and Hebei, China, or the creation of a 1,000sq m city spa in Frankfurt, Venice and Ajman sit side-by-side in the GOCO portfolio.

GO – alluding to travel, movement and energy and CO – from community combined with hospitality sums up a brand which crosses borders and offers innovative solutions in the

area of wellness. The company aims to be the leading global firm for 'wellness hospitality'.

So, if there's a current defining focus for GOCO it's on scalable destination resorts. "This supports our tagline: Where Wellness Meets Wanderlust," says Schweder. "Wellness related travel is on the up. There's an increasingly older and wealthier population with a determination to remain healthy. Across the board people are taking more responsibility for actively maintaining their wellbeing." Schweder helped to conceive one of the world's first wellness destinations, Ananda in the Himalayas in 1999. Today he's behind wellness destinations in China, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Europe. "We're probably the only company to have multiple destination spas [dedicated health resorts] across continents," he says. "Our long-term aim is to manage and operate wellness concepts in all five continents."

By 2014, the company will be managing and operating two destination wellness resorts, five spa operations and a 15,000sq m thermal spring facility. Alongside the other 22 projects in the pipeline, the company is negotiating four further wellness resort destinations in Germany, Bhutan, Bali and southern China.



▲ GOCO is to open a 500sq m purpose-built office in central Bangkok this year

wellness  
meets  
wanderlust™



## GO SPA

**GOCO Spa at the Starwood Luxury Collection Hotel, Ajman, UAE: Q4 2013**

- 1,200sq m wellness spa on the oceanfront, for 202-bed luxury hotel
- 15 private treatment rooms, two luxury spa suites
- male and female grooming areas

**GOCO Spa at JW Marriott Sacca Sessola, Venice, Italy: Q3 2014**

- 1,000sq m spa and wellness facility for 210-bed, 50-residence luxury property overlooking the water towards Piazza San Marco
- most comprehensive spa in Venice with medi-spa, thermal and aquatonic facilities

## GO RETREAT

**GOCO Retreat Hebei, China: Q1 2015**

- comprehensive integrated 55-villa, 32,000sq m wellness retreat 45km outside Beijing
- mineral springs bathing
- diagnostics, TCM and medi-clinic, organic gardens, yoga, meditation and t'ai chi



▲ The GOCO Spa at the JW Marriott Venice is due to open in Q3 2014



▲ The 32,000sq m GOCO Retreat Hebei is due to open in China in 2015

**GOCO Retreat Borjomi, Georgia: Q1 2014**

- 84-bed mineral spring resort – the first deluxe destination in the former CIS
- 3,000sq m wellness facility with medi-spa and diagnostics

**GOCO Retreat (Hot Spring and Wellness Centre), Xiangshan, China: Q2 2015**

- four-storey, 9,600sq m wellness centre, plus 1,500sq m outdoor hot spring water bathing zone and medi-clinic
- 25 treatment rooms, male and female grooming areas, fitness facilities and cafe

**Fürstenhof Grand Hotel a GOCO Retreat, Bad Kissingen, Germany: Q4 2016**

- historic 80-bed hotel and 30 residences
- 3,000sq m wellness centre with fitness, medi-spa and grooming facilities, plus mineral spring bathing
- macrobiotic restaurant and art studio

## GOCO Partner Projects

### Paramount

- development of the Paramount Hotel and Resort wellness and fitness global brand in line with Hollywood glamour and Californian lifestyle
- implementing first two projects in Dubai and Hainan Island, China

### MGM

- development of the MGM & Bellagio spa and wellness global brand. Including, currently – Dubai, Mumbai, New Delhi, Hangzhou, Sanya and Sharm El Sheikh
- 11 more are in 'design and technical services' phase and two in pre-opening

**THE SPA Frankfurter Hof, Germany (operated by GOCO Hospitality): opened 2013**

- 1,000sq m urban wellness sanctuary
- spa suite, male grooming, advanced beauty, thermal experiences and hamam

**Dusit Thani Hot Springs Resort and Spa, Guangzhou, China: 2014**

- 8,000sq m outdoor mineral spring spa plus 2,500sq m wellness centre in 184-bed hotel with 14 suites and four villas

**The Ritz-Carlton, Mumbai, India: 2016**

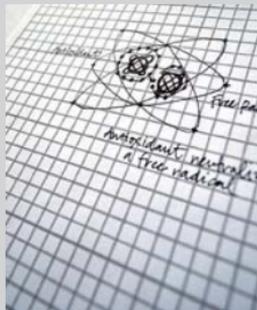
- 1,800sq m of wellness space including a spa, fitness centre and infinity pool
- Designed in collaboration with Tony Chi

**Mövenpick Resort & Spa, Dharamshala, India: 2015**

- first luxury resort and spa operated by an international hotel brand in Dharamshala, overlooking the Himalayas
- 3,000sq m wellness facility in 75-bed hotel, plus a thermal bathing circuit



The brand offers the best of science and nature. Systems include Skin Regimen (left) and Sacred Nature (above)



# [ comfort zone ]

The [ comfort zone ] spa brand has been newly revamped and revitalised to better communicate its core offerings as a natural, scientific and soul-centred skincare and lifestyle brand

“Products for the spa market often tend to look very clinical, sterile and medical, but [ comfort zone ] is quite the opposite. We're a colourful, contemporary, stylish and approachable brand that really stands out as something very different in the spa environment.

“We have a strong scientific base, but we also seek to humanise science and turn it into an emotional experience that's about people and lifestyle, and not just products and protocols.”

So says Stephanie Guinard, the company's newly-appointed brand development manager, who's joined the Italian spa skincare specialist to help spearhead a whole new era for the family-owned brand.

The Bollati family first established a skincare and haircare brand in 1983, and still manufactures all its own products at its laboratories and headquarters in Parma, northern Italy. [ comfort zone ] is its niche spa brand, created in 1996, and only supplied to a select number (currently around 3,000) of spas worldwide, as well as its five standalone branded spa 'SPACES' in Italy.

The recent reinvigoration of the [ comfort zone ] branding is based around the company's three guiding principles of Skin, Science and Soul.

## BEAUTIFUL, HEALTHY SKIN

As the company states: “The future of beauty is in wellness. In today's world we're more informed, more discerning, more concerned about real benefits. Skincare must go beyond evoking a sense of luxury, indulgence and pleasure to produce clear results.”

With this in mind, [ comfort zone ] launched its Skin Regimen product and lifestyle line at the end of 2012 in Italy, rolling it out a few months later internationally.

Skin Regimen is a results-oriented programme that has been created by an international, multidisciplinary team of doctors and scientists. It combines advanced skin care products, the latest generation of food supplements as well as lifestyle recommendations for an overall 'skin diet'.

The plan is detailed in a new book, *Skin Regimen: The Essential Lifestyle Guide for Longevity and Beauty*, only available at the company's sites and partner spas.

► Davide Bollati, MD, is a pharmacist and cosmetologist



In efficacy tests, the company says this advanced approach achieved an increase in skin moisture of 26 per cent, with wrinkles appearing to be reduced by 17 per cent.

“We're not just promoting highly results-oriented skincare products and protocols, but a holistic lifestyle, partnering with spas and helping them to teach their clients how to take care of themselves, eat better, take more exercise, reduce stress in their lives, and learn how to age better,” says Guinard.

## NATURAL SCIENCE

[ comfort zone ] is underpinned by a strong scientific base, led by pharmacist and cosmetologist Dr Davide Bollati, whose mission has been to research and use nature's most powerful and effective ingredients in the development of skin formulations.

All of the company's products are rich in natural, active ingredients and free from parabens. Among its bestselling ranges are Action Sublime, a unique chronobiology system that releases retinol into



the skin only when it's required, and so avoiding adverse reactions and overload.

Its organic brand is Sacred Nature (launched in 2009), which combines 99 per cent natural formulations with high efficacy. The line is certified organic by Ecocert and has won the Marie Claire Prix d'Excellence de Beauté twice, in 2010 and 2011.

To reinforce these ideals of science, beauty and natural ingredients, the new [comfort zone] branding uses distinctive patterns and elements derived from structures found in the natural world. Guinard says the branding "is designed to reflect an artistic, emotional representation of the scientific sources that are the basis for our formulations".

#### INDIVIDUAL SOUL

At the heart of the [comfort zone] business is people – from the Bollati family who conceived it and pioneered developments in skincare formulation, to the highly trained teams in Italy and internationally who deliver the CZ training protocols, and the high quality spa partners worldwide. In turn, these spa operators can better provide a more personal, human touch to their clients.

Guinard says the new branding and recently-revamped website and literature have been carefully designed to reflect these values. She says: "The [comfort zone] logo

[comfort zone] products are designed to have visual and commercial appeal, while delivering real skin results

represents the expert, loving hands of the researchers, estheticians, and therapists who provide an exclusive space of rejuvenation for clients. The brackets are a symbol of science's embrace that protects and cares for the individual person".

To support the power of its products, the company offers a wide range of face and body treatments that draw inspiration from ancient techniques and rituals worldwide, as well as from different areas of wellness such as medicine and physiotherapy.

Its Tibetan Sound Massage is inspired by Ku Nye, an ancient indigenous practice originating in Tibetan medicine dating back almost 4000 years. Using Tibetan ringing bowls, the treatment is said to promote vitality, ease psycho-physical tension, contribute to the elimination of toxins and alleviate joint and muscle pain, anxiety and insomnia.

#### BRAND DELIVERY

Guinard says the [comfort zone] brand principles are backed up by a sound business proposition, support and training. The basic training for spas lasts for one to two

weeks, and goes well beyond instruction in products and protocols – offering education in lifestyle matters, spa management tips, support with branding, merchandising, marketing and social media, and how to create a buzz in both the spa and retail areas.

Guinard says: "We strive to get a perfect balance for our spa clients. It's not just about helping them deliver exceptional services, it's about helping them to be profitable. Retail is an area that can be greatly improved in many spas – and we are the perfect partners to work with on this.

"Our branding gives our products – which represent affordable luxury – a consumer appeal and it's easy to understand what the individual products do. We don't want them to blend into the spa environment, but stand apart with their own personality."

The next generation of [comfort zone] Spaces are now in development, designed to match the evolution and fresh focus of a modern, scientific skincare system, that still embodies Italian design flair and passion.

#### [comfort zone]

Via Ravasini 9/a  
43100 Parma, Italy  
T. +39 0521 965611  
E. [contactcz@comfortzone.it](mailto:contactcz@comfortzone.it)



# BEING GREEN

**Ecocert's Being label is the first consumer-facing certification for eco-friendly spa facilities. We talk to Valerie Lemarie, general manager of Ecocert Greenlife**

With more than 30,000 supplier clients in 85 countries, Ecocert is recognised worldwide for the certification of natural and organic food and food products, services and management systems. It's also widely known in the organic cosmetics sector, where under the Ecocert Greenlife division, it certifies over 1,000 brands which, it says, represents 75 per cent of the market. Now, this specialist company has turned its attention to spa operations with the launch of its Being label to help consumers recognise high-quality spa facilities which are respectful of the environment.

Having trialled the label in France, Ecocert is now looking to roll it out globally. Valerie Lemarie, the general manager of Ecocert Greenlife reveals the details.

## Why did you launch the Being label?

More consumers are looking for wellness centres where they can experience 'real wellbeing' - relaxation using healthy, natural products in a space/business that's environmentally friendly.

It's difficult to quantify the demand, but we know it's a growing industry as cosmetic brands have created eco-friendly product



Eco products are just one part of the criterion



Ecocert is well known as it already certifies over 1,000 natural and organic cosmetic brands, but this is the first time it's focused on spa operations

lines; many establishments offer organic/natural treatments; and specialist websites, magazines (*Organic Spa*) and associations (the Green Spa Network) have launched.

## How did you develop it?

It took us two years in total. Ecocert already has certifications for golf, catering, forest management and other operations, but to form the technical criteria for Being, we put together a committee of 12 spa, wellbeing and hospitality professionals (see p50). Their input on quality of service, treatment protocols and staff management was a great help. We also sought feedback from the public about what they'd want the label to cover.

## What difficulties did you face?

The main challenge was making sure the criteria met with the various regulations that are already enforced around the world - from health and safety protocols through to swimming pool, cosmetics and labour laws.

## What's the criteria?

For Level 1 - Ecological Spa we have 50 basic criteria (see opposite) which focus on services/the condition of treatments (10); products purchased, used or sold by the

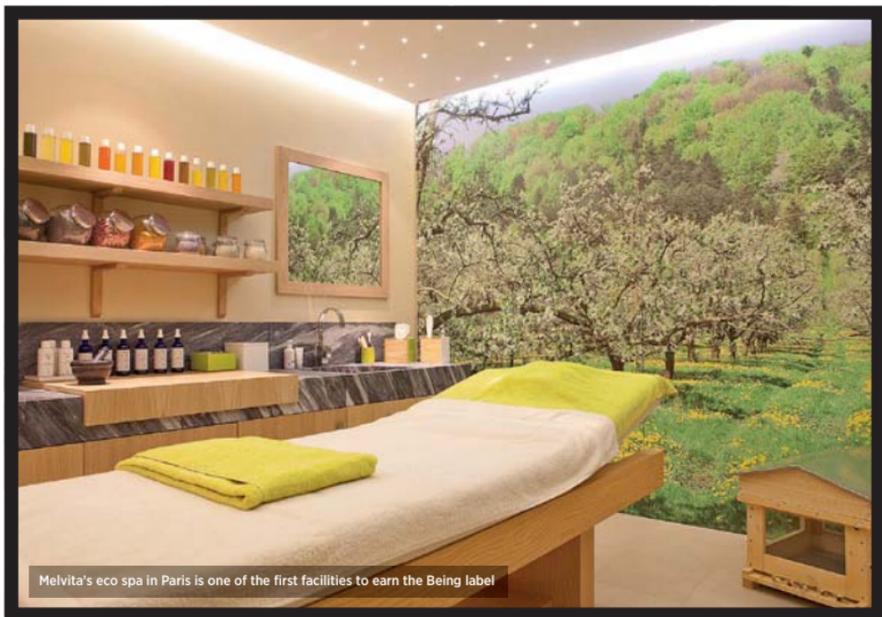
spa establishments (13); and site management (27). Then spas at Level 2 - Excellence: Organic & Ecological Spa should meet all criteria at Level 1 plus six additional standards. Three of these should be based on exceeding the compulsory criteria, such as having more than one natural and organic product and treatment offering. The other three can be chosen by the spa and be specific to its operation, such as committing to using renewable energy sources like solar panels, or sourcing more products locally.

## How does Being differ to Green Globe's spa benchmarks?

Our's is the first standard to focus specifically on spas - Green Globe is an adaptation of resort and hospitality management (see SB08/2 p74) - it's also the first to give guarantees to the end-user.

## What are the minimum requirements for site management?

At the very least, spas should record water and energy consumption, the quantity of waste and identify areas for improvement. Various other criteria include efficient insulation of heat experiences, use of low energy lights and regulation of water chemicals.



## MANDATORY CRITERIA

THE BEING STANDARD LEVEL 1 - ECOLOGICAL SPA HAS 50 MANDATORY CRITERIA OVER THREE DOMAINS:

### SERVICES

- At least one treatment should be based exclusively on organic and natural products
- Detailed procedures are needed for all treatment protocols
- Traceability of treatments – for every client, a spa should know what treatment was followed, products applied and therapist
- Competence of staff and spa managers (see below)

- Comfort levels of customers throughout
- Guest satisfaction surveys with corrective action plans

### PRODUCTS

- There should be at least one organic or natural product offering for sale in the spa
- Certified organic snacks
- Natural cleaning products
- Textiles (towels, bathrobes, uniforms etc) should be organic, natural or recycled

- Air perfumes or candles used in the spa should be natural or organic

### SITE MANAGEMENT

- Environmental management of water, energy and waste
- Compliance with all current standards and regulations – from health and safety protocols through to cosmetics, pool management and labour laws
- Equipment maintenance
- Hygiene and security conditions
- Pool and pond treatment
- Environmental management of laundry operations
- Minimum social criteria – workplace compliance with basic human rights, local regulations and fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization

### What are your requirements for staff competence?

Therapists need to be sufficiently qualified and deliver on protocols to ensure quality of service. Each therapist needs a job description and clear development plans for on-going training and qualifications.

### What's the certification process?

We've created a free online self-assessment questionnaire covering 24 points which operators can fill out to see what criteria they

already meet and what they can improve on; along with details of which criteria they don't meet and what they need to do to pass.

We also offer training courses for operators wanting to fully understand the Being standard and the certification steps.

Once the questionnaire's been filled out, we need documented evidence of operators are meeting criteria. We'll then conduct a site inspection and highlight any areas that need extra work in a conformity report. Once we're satisfied that the spa has passed

the criteria, we'll issue them with a certificate and Being plaque.

We have two office-based people and eight field inspectors in our Organic & Ecological Spas Department to oversee this process.

### How much does certification cost?

It's a fixed yearly fee which ranges from €800-€6,000 (US\$1,050-US\$7,900, £687-£5,150) depending on the size and type of the spa. A discount is available for operators with multiple sites.



The goal is to certify 50 spas in 12 months to join other Being facilities such as the Carnac thalasso resort in France

#### ► What does the fee cover?

The documentary review, inspection visit and report, issue of the Being nameplate and as well as promotional tools such as stickers, brochures and our soon to launch website.

#### How are spas monitored thereafter?

There will be at least one anonymous visit or unannounced inspection a year.

#### What are the advantages of having a Being certification?

There are many! This certification has the benefit of the backing from EcoCert – a globally recognised certification body; and an expert in natural and organic certification.

With 23 criteria based on the wellbeing of customers and quality of treatments, the Being certification will indicate that you are a spa that takes care of your clients. The standard could be used as a point of differentiation – to point out your environmental commitment in your spa operation, while analysing environmental practices such as waste, water and electricity management often helps reduce costs. Involving your team in the process can also help to motivate them by giving them a common goal.

#### How are you raising awareness of it?

Via EcoCert's website, a Facebook page, at conferences/trade shows and through

## BEING COMMITTEE

The industry experts who consulted on the development of the Being label include the following people:

#### **Véronique Balcaen and Yves**

**Rocher**, Spa l'Heure Végétale at La Grée de Landes – eco hotel spa

**Nathalie Bouchon Poireau**, Cinq Mondes – day spas and cosmetics

**Agnès Bourgeon** – architect and spa designer

**Véronique Brégeon**, LeCoq-Gadby – hotel spa

**Marie Cazaux** – spa consultant

**Noémie de Goys**, Nohém – cosmetics brand & spa

**Martial Denetre**, Carnac resort – thalassotherapy spa

**Aldina Duarte-Ramos**, Softel – hotel spa chain

**Amanda Gerentes Chevillat**, Melvita – cosmetic brand

**Jean Eric Knecht**, Elégance Group – spa & beauty school

**Ludovic Lainé**, La Paz Group – spa designer

**Laurent Malbert**, Chill Out Design – equipment manufacturer

advertising. Towards the end of 2013 we will also be launching a dedicated Being website, which will include a public-facing register of Being-certified facilities.

#### How many spas are certified?

At the moment we only have a few, including Eco Spa Melvita in Paris and Carnac Thalasso & Spa Resort Hôtel in Bretagne. However, 15 more are already going through the process and we're aiming to have 50 certified in the next 12 months.

We've also developed the Being Program to help fast track certification. At a fixed cost of €800 (US\$1,050, £689), this involves online training, regular follow up and access to our network of certified suppliers and consultants to get operators through certification within two years.

#### What countries and companies will you target?

Europe, the US and Asia are our main focus, but as EcoCert is present in more than 85 countries we're not ruling anything out.

In terms of companies, we'll be targeting eco-chic spas and those in luxury hotels and resorts. We think that if a spa claims to be high-end, then it's already going to be offering organic/natural products and that it will be mindful of how its operations are impacting on the environment. ●



# Spameeting Autumn 2013

70%  
BOOKED

Following the success of the seventh edition of Spameeting in Morocco earlier this year, the Autumn 2013 event is already 70 per cent booked!

More than 100 participants from 25 countries worldwide attended the last Spameeting event in Morocco, where suppliers such as Clarins, Tylö, Thalgo, Gharieni, Leonor Greyl and Nohém met with selected key buyers from Europe and North Africa.

Juliette Blanz, director of Spameeting, explains the concept: "Spameeting – which is organised by Paris-based events company, Beyond Beauty – is an intensive two-day programme of business meetings and networking opportunities between buyers and suppliers.

"Spa project holders and distributors are carefully selected and attend the event in order to find new suppliers. It's the only setting where you can find so many new and exclusive projects in the same place and where buyers give time and their undivided attention to the suppliers!

## SAVE THE DATES!

### COSMEETING – SPA CORNER

Paris, 9-11 September 2013,  
at Porte de Versailles, Paris

### SPAMEETING

Autumn, 27-28 November 2013,  
at the Meydan Hotel, Dubai

"Every edition – held in exceptional locations to add synergy – brings suppliers together with a new group of buyers and new projects, each with specific needs to provide great business opportunities."

The Autumn 2013 edition of Spameeting will take place at the five-star Meydan Hotel in Dubai on 27-28 November and project representatives have been recruited from the Middle East, India and Russia.

Among those attending will be buyers from Sofitel Thalassa Sea & Spa, Four Seasons and Park Hyatt who are working on projects around the world – whether they're new constructions, extensions or renovations.

At Spameeting Autumn 2013 they'll be able to meet quality suppliers offering a wide range of the products and services associated with a project's operation, management and organisation. Among these will be Happy Sauna, Edge Systems, Gharieni, Thalion, Téo Cabanel, Equipmed and RKF.

Beyond Beauty also organises Cosmeeting, a beauty brand showcase, the 11th edition of which will be taking place at Porte de Versailles, Paris, between 9-11 September 2013.

At the event, spa suppliers will have the opportunity to present their products and expertise to an international audience including buyers, distributors, importers, spa managers and institutes. ●

**FOLLOW THE SERIES**

1. Feasibility studies
2. Concept & brand development
3. Design consulting
- ▶ 4. Pre-opening & daily management
5. Operational consultancy

# PRE-OPENING

Opening a spa successfully is all about planning. Gary Henkin, president of WTS and Doug Chambers, principal of Blu Spas, share their experience of pre-opening

## What makes a successful pre-opening?

**Gary:** Planning, planning and more planning. Unfortunately, many spas are launched without it. It can take months or years to recover from a poor launch, yet not enough time and effort goes into this process, compared with that spent in the concept and design phases.

## What's your approach?

**Gary:** Each pre-opening task should be outlined in a timeline that describes the item to be delivered and the date of execution. A pre-opening timeline should serve as a roadmap for the opening, but often this is never used and the attempt to open and promote the spa lacks direction and focus.

Without the roadmap, the project runs the risk of taking a wrong turn – something which can easily be prevented. More than anything else, this area can make or break a successful launch and to some degree the ultimate financial success for the facility.



▲ Gary Henkin (left) and Doug Chambers

## Who should be responsible for pre-opening – the spa director or consultant?

**Doug:** In some circumstances it may be appropriate to handle all pre-opening tasks in-house. However, the pre-opening phase will have a dramatic impact on the financial performance and success of the spa, and merits the dignity of a proper budget.

The fundamental challenges centre around the sheer magnitude of the tasks and the diverse skill sets and expertise necessary to complete them.

WTS and Blu Spas take a team approach, focusing an assembly of seasoned operational experts on the various components of a methodically created, comprehensive task list.

## What ultimately makes or breaks a spa?

**Gary:** The most important factor in determining operational and financial success is quality of service. If your spa consistently offers this, you should expect a dramatic positive effect on your revenue and bottom line.

But there can be a breakdown in service at any point, from when a phone reservation is made, to the first meeting at the front desk, to the quality of the treatment, to the locker rooms, to, finally, the guest's departure.

It's critical guests take away a positive and memorable experience. Nothing negatively

impacts the financial success of a spa more than inconsistent or poor delivery of the experience at any touch point.

## How should spas train staff?

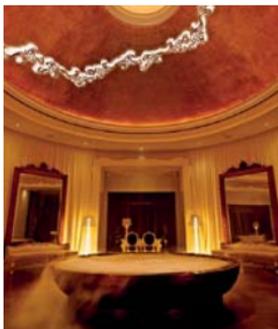
**Gary:** Well before the facility opens for business, go through every step of the service including training for therapists, aestheticians and nail technicians.

Receptionists, locker room and maintenance personnel, retail sales staff, reservationists and others should also be trained. Too many times there's not enough focus on these individuals, yet the first person a guest or member typically comes into contact with is the receptionist greeting them at the front desk or by phone and this impression has a lasting effect on the consumer. This training can be given by the spa director or operator, but it's essential all the staff understand their job responsibilities and how to execute them effectively. Product companies and vendors also offer very specific training for service providers.

## Where should spas source staff?

**Gary:** Finding and selecting qualified staff is one of the single greatest challenges for spa owners. The best sources come from connections or referrals within the industry. Another good source is through communication with schools that have programmes for certification for these positions. The wider your contacts are, the more likely it is that you will be able to source qualified people for both executive and non-executive positions.

For spas located in regions without significant numbers of qualified staff, it's often necessary to import qualified individuals from elsewhere.



▲ Quality defines success



Retaining members of staff is equally challenging and this is a function of the payment structure and how much education and support are given to these individuals. Staff retention comes through consistent support, good communication, resources and development opportunities. Positively influencing staff career paths also helps to retain employees.

#### What should spas look for when recruiting?

**Gary:** The most positive attributes to seek include experience within the field and, of equal importance, communication skills, customer service background, organisational experience, leadership, personality and work ethic. In the interview, try to focus on personal characteristics as well as the experience of the individual.

#### What marketing and promotion is needed during the pre-opening phase?

**Gary:** Spas need to execute a good marketing plan to drive revenue from both inside and outside the hotel or resort. It's important to have a separate plan for each to successfully promote the spa to both of these potential markets or the spa will not reach it's revenue and bottom line potential. Traditional routes include advertising, emails and direct mail to non-hotel-guest traffic from the local community.

Establishing a relationship with a local or regional PR company is usually a good

#### ▲ Planning at the pre-opening stage leads to more successful schemes

idea but one that is typically overlooked by many spas. Spas shouldn't underestimate the importance of publicity and articles written about the spa, yet many spas don't include public relations as part of the operating budget. Having your spa 'shopped' by an outside concern or having an occasional operational audit of the facility is an effective way to ensure that the spa is on the right course.

Open house events for local business people and residents can be very effective too.

#### How should the spa be marketed inside the property?

**Gary:** Inside the property it's vital to market the spa to guests through in-room devices – such as menus and exposure on the hotel's TV channel – and at the reception or front desk check-in area, elevators, concierge desk and in other visible areas throughout the hotel. This can be delivered through signage or in more subtle ways.

There can also be promotions which are designed to be part of the hotel/resort guest's check-in package.

Also, daily attention needs to be paid to the display of retail products and add-on services around the property.

If the spa is truly integrated into the property, this offers the best chance for consistent financial and operational success. The spa director should be trained in the hotel's cul-

ture so that there's seamless integration between the facility and the property. It's particularly important that the spa director establishes a relationship and good communication with the hotel or resort's sales and marketing department.

#### How long should pre-opening usually take?

**Gary:** This depends on the size, complexity and location of the facility, as well as the organisational skills of the spa director and staff. The timeline to open a spa usually contains hundreds of items that need attention and require planning and execution. Often the owner/developer misjudges the complexity and time required to effectively open a spa.

Generally, the larger and more intricate the spa, the longer the pre-opening timeframe will be. Spas that are smaller or moderately sized (300-800sq m) tend to need a programme which runs between six to nine months in advance, while larger facilities (over 1,000sq m) take between eight to 12 months to open, with the director needed on-site six to 12 months before opening. Spas in more remote areas often take longer to open.

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# VIETNAMESE VISION

“**T**he tourism sector has been a major factor in job creation, economic development and poverty alleviation in Vietnam, leaving no doubt that it’s played a crucial role in our country’s overall socioeconomic progress.” When Vietnam’s state vice-president Nguyen Thi Doan addressed the World Travel & Tourism Council last year, she wasted little time in underlining the significance of tourism to her nation. Having accounted for 4.5 per cent of GDP in 2012, forecasts predict a per annum increase of 6.7 per cent until 2023. With its stunning natural landscapes, cultural riches, hospitable people and a favourable climate, it’s easy to see why Vietnam is ranked among the top three emerging tourism destinations worldwide.

## A CIVETS ECONOMY

The country’s tourism growth feeds into a larger picture; one that has seen Vietnam positioned as one of Asia’s most exciting economic prospects behind China. Indeed since financial and political reforms – termed as doi moi (or restoration) – were initiated in

**We consider the opportunities and challenges for tourism and spa businesses in Vietnam, one of the emerging CIVETS economies**

1986 to facilitate the transition from a centralised planning system to a multi-sector market economy, Vietnam has posted annual per capita growth of 5.3 per cent, according to McKinsey. Throughout the 90s the country became a global investment darling and in 2007, the same year it joined the World Trade Organization, it attracted more foreign direct investment than the majority of other Asian tiger economies. The factors that underlined this success varied from a young, flourishing labour force to a notable shift from agriculture into manufacturing and service-based industries.

Vietnam’s reputation as an enticing investment market was further cemented when the Economist Intelligence Unit identified it as a CIVETS nation in 2009. An acronym championed by former HSBC chief executive Michael Geoghegan, CIVETS encapsulates six countries – Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa – all of which have been earmarked as the new batch of emerging economic powerhouses, following in the footsteps of BRIC countries. Speaking of the CIVETS, Geoghegan has observed: “Each has a large, young, growing population. Each has a diverse and dynamic economy. And each, in relative terms, is politically stable.”

Yet Vietnam’s economy has, more recently, lost some of its roar due to concerns about inflation, bad bank debts, falling foreign investment and corruption scandals among its state-owned enterprises. This meant that in 2012 the country’s growth slowed to its weakest pace in 13 years, with GDP increasing by only 5.03 per cent. In April 2013 the IMF then lowered Vietnam’s growth projections into 2014, raising questions about the ruling party’s ability to reform the fragile banking system and state-owned firms that dominate the economy.



## SILVER LINING

Among these gathering clouds, the tourism sector has remained a bright spot on the horizon. Figures from the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism showed that international arrivals reached over 6.8 million in 2012 – a 13.8 per cent increase over 2011. China, South Korea and Japan were the top source markets, confirming the trend for travel originating from other Asian countries. Factor in the additional 32.5 million trips made domestically and overall tourism turnover reached VND162 trillion (US\$7.7bn, €5.8bn, £5bn) last year.

With a strategy that seeks to secure private and public investment of VND1.9 quadrillion (US\$94.2bn, €71.6bn, £70bn) for tourism infrastructure between 2011 and 2030, it's expected that this sector will be a key national industry within the decade. Accordingly, targets have been set for 10.5 million international arrivals and 48 million domestic trips by 2020, with forecasted revenues rising to VND392 trillion (US\$18.5bn, €14.1, £12.2bn), for the year.

Set against this landscape, the VND3.1 trillion (US\$144m, €109.5m, £94.7m) generated by spa tourism in 2012 can be considered a

▲ Resort and hotel spas, such as Fusion Maia Da Nang, bring in 86 per cent of sector revenue

relative drop in the ocean. But Euromonitor International's *2012 Health and Wellness Tourism in Vietnam* report predicts this sector will achieve a compounded annual growth rate of 16 per cent over the next five years.

## HOSPITALITY INFLUENCE

From the Euromonitor report, which compares revenues of hotel and resort spas (86 per cent) versus other spas (14 per cent), it's clear that wellness tourism is driven by hospitality operations: "The healthy growth of hotel and resort spas shows that more consumers prefer to go to premium facilities in spite of higher prices as they provide professional services and trusted products."

Key purchasers, it says, are middle- and upper-income consumers and foreign tourists who enjoy Vietnam's low-priced spa services. Other spas are typically operated by small independent players, with varying service quality due to loose government management.

Not surprisingly, it's resort and hotel development that will underpin expansion, rather than local businesses. While awareness is still limited among the country's upper and middle-classes, Euromonitor predicts that more Vietnamese will become interested in spa "thanks to the greater exposure of western culture in the country."

Although estimates for the country's middle-class vary – KPMG suggests 14.6 million of the 88-million total while McKinsey reports over 7 million – it's universally acknowledged that these consumers are a growing force, interested in spending their money on products and leisure. This presents an interesting opportunity for hotel brands incorporating major spas in cities such as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh. Outside Vietnam's two main urban hubs, coastal regions make natural homes for spa resorts, and new locations include Asian Coast Development's integrated Ho Tram Strip project in southern Vietnam, which will accommodate five different resorts with spa offerings after its completion in 2020.

In the following pages, we delve into three different Vietnamese spa businesses to see how they're faring in the market. ▶



One of the most significant destinations for spa tourism in Vietnam is the Central Coast region surrounding Da Nang. And one of the most innovative hospitality operations is Fusion Maia Da Nang, operated and developed by Serenity Holding. Opened in October 2010, the 87-villa beach-side resort is expected this year to reach occupancy levels well in excess of the 65 per cent achieved in 2012, due in large part to its distinctive all-inclusive spa concept.

## CENTRAL PROMISE

Spa manager Natalie Devoy says: "All guests are entitled to two treatments a day as part of their room rate and if we have availability, we'll accommodate more. As a result, our spa has a near-100 per cent capture rate."

Comprising 16 treatment rooms, two salons, changing rooms, steam, sauna, whirlpool, yoga room and a library, the spa offers an extensive menu of treatments. Guests who sign up to a seven-day Natural Living Programme also have access to holistic activities, such as t'ai chi lessons on the nearby Marble Mountain. Manned by a team of 80 during high season, the spa required the development of a bespoke software system by South African based ESP Online to cope with the mind-boggling number of treat-



By 2014, there will be three Fusion sites in Vietnam



The resort's all-inclusive offer includes at least two spa treatments a day



ments – up to 40 per hour, with the spa operational 12 hours per day.

Founders of Serenity Holding, Louk Lennaerts and Marco van Aggele, hit upon the idea as a way of differentiating their resort. “It took a while to educate people about our all-inclusive spa offer and we did a lot of marketing, bringing media, travel agents and sales reps to experience the resort,” explains van Aggele, the group’s CEO. “For us it’s always been important to look beyond the bottom line. We realised that if we accounted for the costs of four treatments per day – electricity, oils and the therapist’s time – into our room rate, we could then offer a slightly higher resort rate than our competitors but still be perceived as great value.”

Built for VND254.5bn (US\$12m, €9.1m, £7.9m), Fusion Maia Da Nang is the very definition of laid-back five-star luxury without the premium price tag. Offering added value, whether this is through all-inclusive spa or all-inclusive culinary activities, is a common factor of all Fusion Resorts, including the upcoming Fusion Maia Phu Quoc and Fusion Alya Hoi An, both of which will be unveiled in Vietnam this year.

Van Aggele explains that the group’s residential units are an attractive proposition

“We realised that if we accounted for the costs of four treatments a day into our room rate we could offer a slightly higher resort rate yet still be perceived as great value”

for wealthy Vietnamese, who are restricted from investing overseas, and therefore turn to property development at home. “The Vietnamese like to own luxury resorts where they can invite their friends and family,” he observes. “This means it’s easier to find partners to invest in five-star concepts than those at the three-star level.”

Serenity Holding has developed a vertically integrated model in which it conceives, designs, builds and operates its own properties, usually in partnership with Vietnamese-based investors. The dynamic team has become accustomed to the idiosyncrasies of the Vietnamese system. “If you have

the ability to build something, you don’t have to wait years for a construction licence; you simply call the government office and set up a meeting,” van Aggele continues.

For van Aggele, the country’s warm and playful people are its greatest asset. Yet without an inherent spa culture, like in Thailand or Bali, finding therapists for Fusion Maia Da Nang spa was no easy task, with members of the resort team having to travel into the local town and personally spread the word about the opportunities. “We found it difficult to find therapists with the required skill set so we decided to focus on recruiting people who had the right personality, and provide full training instead,” explains Devoy. “We’ve brought in specialist trainers in facials, yoga, reiki, spiritual hospitality, ayurveda and trigger therapy to teach all our therapists, who each undergo at least two months of training before starting work. In fact training is ongoing and we already have three reiki masters, for example.

“In Vietnam, there’s a still a stigma attached to working in a spa. Some families don’t wish their daughters to take jobs as they’re worried a spa is the equivalent of a massage parlour or worse. But we’ve reassured families with our professionalism.” ▶



The 692-acre Laguna Lang Co, by Banyan Tree, is Vietnam's first integrated resort



**T**he Central Coast region recently diversified its tourism offer with the launch of Vietnam's first and largest integrated resort, a 280-hectare (692-acre) development that will eventually be home to six luxury hotels. For its VND4.2 trillion (US\$200m, €152.1m, £131.4m) opening phase Laguna Lang Co, situated in Thua Thein Hue province, accommodates a 49-villa Banyan Tree retreat and 229-bedroom Angsana resort, both with sizeable yet distinctive spas.

Developed through the Banyan Tree Indochina Hospitality Fund and operated by Banyan Tree Holdings, the verdant site, which formerly could only be approached by sea, has been thoughtfully designed by Architrave Design and Planning Services to maximise the beauty of its natural bay setting, nestled between a pristine beach and forested mountain landscape. It is Banyan Tree Group's first foray into Vietnam, both as a developer and operator, and reflects the

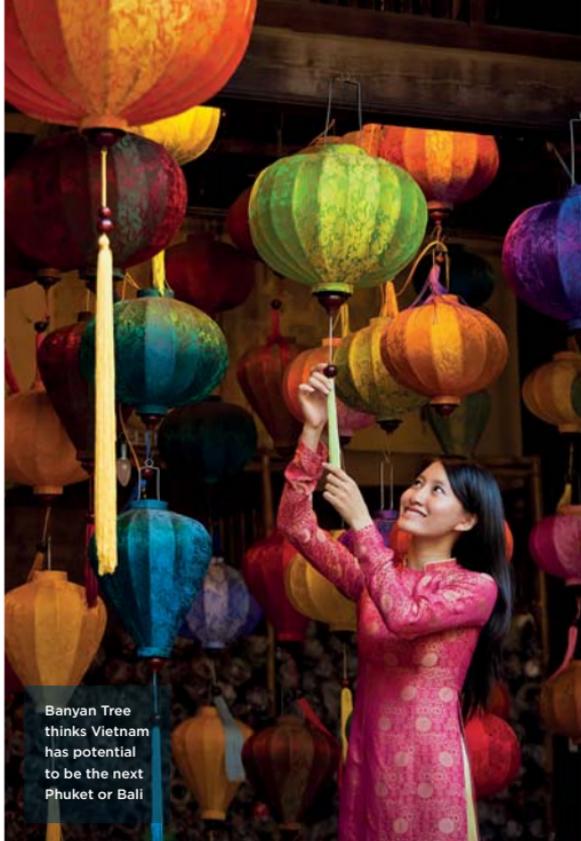
## INTEGRATED RESORT DEBUTS

ethos of Laguna Phuket – the group's pioneering integrated resort established in Thailand 25 years ago.

"Our owner has been interested in Vietnam for some time and this area provided space in abundance," explains Laguna Lang Co's managing director Ravi Chandran, who's also the group's head honcho of spa operations (see SB11/2 p26). "This is beyond the typical resort experience in the area – we have a plethora of activities from our world-class spas to our Nick Faldo golf course, local tours to adventure and water sports." As is common with the majority of foreign owners, Banyan Tree has secured a long-term lease for the land, on which it has introduced

infrastructure and environmental improvements. Fostering a close relationship with the local government of Hue Province during master planning has been key. "It's been essential to work with the local government," confirms Chandran. "We've found them to be very accommodating in recognition of the investment and job wealth that we've brought to a relatively poor province." While Chandran acknowledges that state bureaucracy means there are extra hoops for foreign owners to jump through, he sees little difference in operating in Vietnam compared to other emerging Asian economies in which the group is active.

While Australians, Americans, Brits and Germans are expected to be important western feeder markets, the group is focusing marketing efforts on ASEAN countries and, of course, China. "Vietnam is no longer a destination just for European travellers," Chandran observes. "There's a lot of wealth around in Asia and this region is ideal for



Banyan Tree thinks Vietnam has potential to be the next Phuket or Bali

“Banyan Tree has committed to sourcing 70 per cent of staff from the local provinces and the remaining 30 per cent from across Vietnam”

Chinese, Singaporeans and Hong Kong residents wanting a long weekend away. We need more direct flights to bring traffic to Da Nang but we have an international airport so I don't see this being an issue over time. We think this destination has the potential to be the next Phuket or Bali.”

The Vietnamese, too, are a key target market and membership to the on-site country club, which includes discounts on spa services, is aimed at affluent residents of towns such as Hue and Da Nang, as well as weekend trippers from Hanoi. Indeed the local party secretary is a regular visitor to the golf course.

One of the group's biggest commitments has been to the training of local staff across

the resort. Despite having to start from scratch in some cases, including teaching basic English and hospitality skills, Banyan Tree has committed to sourcing 70 per cent of staff from the local provinces and the remaining 30 per cent from across Vietnam.

In terms of the Banyan Tree and Angsana Spas – comprising a facility of six spacious, stand-alone spa pavilions and a 10-treatment room complex respectively, both of which aim for a 20 per cent capture rate – Chandran says there has been no temptation to lean on Thai or Balinese therapists. The group has recruited heavily in Vietnam instead, with therapists enrolled in its Banyan Tree Spa Academy training programme.

Currently at the start-up phase, Vietnam's first spa association will focus on international standards, training and collaboration

## Promoting central Vietnam

The Central Coast Vietnam (CCV) Destination Marketing Organisation, has been formed by private stakeholders with a vested interest in the growth of tourism in region spanning Da Nang, Hoi An, Hue and My Son Sanctuary.

Its aim is to raise the region's profile, says chair Louk Lennaerts: “CCV is a beach destination, with cultural and entertainment values, not just a place for a short stopover. By using the network of contacts shared by our members, we intend to tell the story that CCV is the new alternative to Bali and Thailand.

“Our focus is on cooperation with airlines to ensure more direct flights from hubs such as Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore. We're also seeking direct connections from gateways including Bangkok, China and Australia, to open up new markets.

“Spa has a part to play and as new concepts are developed, this will help to introduce an image of Vietnam as a wellness destination.”

## Fledgling spa association

Shearheaded by Fusion Resorts and other spa operators, plans are afoot for Vietnam's first spa association, with membership slated to be open to facilities across the country. Currently at the start-up licensing phase, the association intends to focus on international standards, training and collaboration. A spa school is expected to follow in phase two, but this will be closely linked to Fusion Maia Da Nang resort.

## INVESTING IN PEOPLE

As one of the first five-star spa resorts on the Central Coast, the GHM-operated The Nam Hai, Hoi An, set a new benchmark in luxury service when it opened in 2006. Almost 600 people are employed at the 35-hectare (86-acre) site, which features 100 guest villas. With staff benefits such as daily English training, provision of food, uniform and transportation, combined with a share in the service charge, The Nam Hai has high staff retention levels. On average, employees stay with the company for 4.5 years. Still general manager Anthony Gill points out that immediate investment is required at the national level for hospitality management schools, especially as Vietnamese school leavers tend to have poor English.

Reflecting the national picture, The Nam Hai has a strong emphasis on leisure-driven tourism, with German-speaking nations, the British, French, Americans and Australians comprising top source markets. Since Vietnamese travellers are experience-driven, often preferring to try new things, they don't typically return to the same destination. While the resort does cater for small, high-level business groups from overseas,



The GHM-operated site has eight stand-alone spa villas

Gill says the corporate and MICE segments are relatively limited in Vietnam.

After rooms, the Spa at The Nam Hai represents the resort's most profitable centre. Comprising eight stand-alone spa villas, the facility was named Best Overseas Spa Hotel at *Condé Nast Traveller's Readers' Travel Awards* in 2012. Rigorous training, cleanliness, service and design standards have been set by GHM's director of spas, Brenda

Ramen, who's based in Singapore but visits at least four times a year to test treatments and ensure touch points are consistent. Spa manager Desak Ambarwati says she has little difficulty in recruiting staff because of the resort's reputation. Instead the spa's biggest challenge is to maintain occupancy during the low season (June, September-November), during which time value-added promotions are offered to resort guests. The Nam Hai works with a specialist local consultant who handles the importing of its premium spa, cosmetics and toiletries ranges because complex Vietnamese regulations can make the process labour-intensive.

Looking forward, Gill sees potential in a region that has benefited from governance by party leaders who are both progressive and anti-corruption. This makes the Central Coast, which is forecast to welcome 3 million visitors this year, an attractive proposition for hospitality groups.

As reputed spa brands, such as Thailand's Harnn based at the new InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort, land in the vicinity, there's no doubt world-class spa facilities are contributing to the diversification and enhancement of the offer in a destination that is one of the flagships of Vietnamese tourism. ●



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Neena Dhillon is a spa, hotel and travel journalist

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# CLARINS

# Aromatherapy Associates

Global product company Aromatherapy Associates knows how to make treatments and retail work in a spa environment and partners with operators to make a real point of difference

KATE CORNEY, PRODUCT EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS



With 30 year's success in the spa sector working with leading operators it's not an understatement to call Geraldine Howard, the co-founder and president of Aromatherapy Associates, an industry guru. Not only does her company make and supply a sought after luxury product and treatment brand – providing a point of differentiation in itself; it builds long-lasting relationships with spa operators, offering them the necessary knowledge and support to ensure there's a significant contribution to the bottom line.



Howard is a passionate innovator

## ONE TO ONE

"We always work with hotels to build a strong relationship," says Howard, whose diverse international client list reads like a who's who of leading international hotel groups.

The company has a client-centric approach and Howard takes pride in being able to offer a fully customised service: "We love to work with spas to build their brand – it's not about building our brand. Even though we work with numerous hotel groups we'll take into account what the hotel spa stands for. We create treatments and offerings that echo, replicate and reinforce their brand ethos."

The company's long-standing partnership with Mandarin Oriental is testament to the benefits of this method (see SB09/3 p58). Howard and her team have also worked to create signature and unique treatment concepts for high-end clients. "Customising is very important to me and is one of our biggest USPs. We don't promote our

name everywhere, but instead take a quiet approach in order to support our customers brands," adds Howard.

As part of this, the Aromatherapy Associates marketing and design team offers bespoke POS and posters for spas using its own trademarked material and imagery. She says: "We offer customised marketing support, working in partnership with them to create combined treatments and collateral unique to the individual spa. In addition, we've created bespoke bedroom amenities for a selection of hotels. Having branded amenities – including a wide range of spa products, turndowns and VIP gifts – gives the hotel a luxury edge, and helps to raise awareness of, and bring extra footfall to, on-site spas and retail boutiques."

## RETAIL EXPERTISE

A core part of Aromatherapy Associates service is to educate partners in how to sell retail products following a body treatment. Howard explains: "It's important to ensure a massage is linked to a problem of that individual and helping to address a specific concern, such as a treatment to help aid sleep, or aching muscles. When clients understand the health benefits of the treatments, why certain oils are being used and how they are helping them, they also understand the benefits of using the relevant bath and body products at home."

Howard knows this approach works because it's something she's trialled in Aromatherapy Associates very own-branded flagship store, which opened in the exclusive Knightsbridge area – close to Harrods depart-



Facial products usually dominate retail sales, but at Aromatherapy Associates, body products are top sellers too



**Aromatherapy Associates is one of only a handful of product houses to launch a dedicated retail and day spa facility**

ment store – in London in 2011 (see SB11/4 p22). One of only a handful of product houses to set up shop, the company uses the outlet to test what works with retail. Howard reveals that an extremely impressive 65 per cent of its revenue comes from retail sales and 35 per cent from treatment sales. “It teaches us how to help spas build their retail,” she adds.

Based on the lessons learned so far, Aromatherapy Associates provides training to all clients to teach therapists how to sell, specifically in relation to body products which is thought to be a more challenging category and therefore commonly an opportunity that gets missed. Howard adds: “It’s often said that you can’t retail off body treatments, but our sales show you can. Six out of 10 of our top-selling products are for the body.”

#### **CONSUMER AWARENESS**

To help partners even more, Aromatherapy Associates places an emphasis on building awareness with the end user of its products – something that hasn’t been regular practice in the sector.

“There’s a tendency to think that if a product brand is exclusively sold in a spa, it will generate more retail,” says Howard. “However, consumers need to trust the brands they purchase, particularly skincare products for the face, and much trust comes through brand awareness and exposure. Successful retail skincare brands are usu-



“It’s often said that you can’t retail off body treatments, but our sales show you can. Six out of 10 of our top-selling products are for the body”

ally sold in multiple outlets as in today’s world ease of purchasing is a major factor.”

Aromatherapy Associates has been following this trend by successful retailing at Space NK for 14 years and other top retail spaces worldwide. It’s also generated further kudos with the public by winning numerous product awards from top consumer magazines such as *Tatler*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *InStyle* and the *Beauty Bible* (see p64). “The art for spas,”

Howard adds, “is to capitalise on this brand exposure and use the treatments combined with therapist’s expert knowledge to select the most effective products for the client. Spas really are the most perfect environment to sell products as you’ve already captured their attention and love for the brand. It’s all about educating them on what they need and how the product are going to make a difference to them personally.”



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**SOOTHING**

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**ANTI-AGEING**

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**REVIVE**

Refreshing & Invigorating. Blends to stimulate and activate the mind first thing in the morning and at the end of the day

**SUPPORT**

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**NOURISHING**

Conditioning & Nourishing. Exotic botanicals are combined with plant oils and unique essential blends in this collection to immediately smooth and nourish

**RENEWING**

Rejuvenating & Softening. Rose oil, renowned and cherished for centuries, is the signature ingredient of this line

**POLISHING**

Rejuvenating & Polishing. Comprises a scrub, exfoliator and body brush to gently invigorate tired skin, boost circulation and encourage radiance and health

Turnover has grown significantly at a rate of 20-25 per cent year on year... and the vision is to increase global expansion and supply even further

**SOLID BASE**

Howard, who trained under renowned aromatherapist Micheline Arcier back in the early 1970s, began in the industry by creating highly customised essential oil blends to suit client needs (see SB08/3 p90). Her team now includes three in-house chemists who specialise in formulating natural, aromatherapy-based products which deliver results.

The latest blend to launch is Inner Strength, a bath and shower oil Howard originally created for her own personal use during a fight against illness. The blend combines clary sage, a euphoric essential oil, frankincense to help focus the mind, cardamom and rosemary to help fortify physical strength, vetivert to calm, geranium to balance and rose for comfort – or as Howard says "a hug in a bottle".

Ten per cent of all sales from Inner Strength products are donated to the Defence Against Cancer Foundation – www.afweertegenkanker.nl. The Dutch organisation has pioneered a new method for treating cancer and, so far, Aromatherapy Associates has raised in excess of £10,000 for its continued research.

**WIDENING HORIZONS**

Under the leadership of Howard, with backing from private investor Ian Richardson, the company's turnover grew significantly in three years: at a rate of 20-25 per cent year on year.

Last year, it merged with the respected US-based consultancy Spa Strategy. And since then, Howard has been working with its managing partner Elaine Fenard to create a financial model for spas. The model will combine the company's experience of supply as well as Spa Strategy's expertise on space utilisation in order to develop a performance matrix for spas, small and large, to identify significant improvement areas to make the whole business better.

Overall, Howard's vision is to increase global expansion and supply. Aromatherapy Associates currently distributes in 47 countries, including Mexico, China and India, where it's licensed to trade and manages the distribution itself.

As a passionate entrepreneur, Howard has built a formidable company and brand in Aromatherapy Associates. And there's more to come as a result of the company's philosophy of continuous innovation. ●

**AWARDS**

**Spa China:**

- Most Popular Spa Brand of the Year, 2012/11
- Spa Product of the Year – Renewing Rose Body Collection 2010

**Asia Spa:**

- Spa Product Line of the Year, 2011
- Natural Product of the Year 2008/07
- Anti-Age Product of the Year-Fine Line Face Oil, 2009

**Crystal Awards Asia Pacific:**

- Age Repair Facial, 2010

**American Spa Professional Choice Award:**

- Favourite Aromatherapy Line 2011/10/09
- The Glamour Power List – De-Stress Muscle Gel 2012
- Tatler Beauty Awards - Bath and Shower Oils, 2012

**Harper's Bazaar Beauty Hot 100 Awards:**

- Miniature Bath and Shower Oil Collection, Overnight Repair Mask, 2012

**InStyle Best Beauty Buys:**

- Deep Relax Bath & Shower Oil, 2012 and 2013 (Hall of Fame)

**Tatler Beauty Awards:**

- The Ultimate Aromatherapy Experience, 2012

**Beauty Bible:**

- Anti-Ageing – Rose Body and Massage Oil, 2012

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# { PRICE TO PAY }

Disparities in therapist pay around the world have been highlighted in one of the first compilations of sector salaries. Lisa Starr analyses the findings

LISA STARR, SENIOR CONSULTANT, WYNNE BUSINESS

**T**herapists in the US are the best paid in the world and can earn up to US\$4,166 (€3,100, £2,700) a month. Meanwhile their counterparts in Malaysia, with the worst salaries, only bring in US\$308 (€231, £200). These were the findings of *Real Numbers on Esthetician Compensation*, a report published by leading industry body the Global Spa & Wellness Summit (GSWS) in April. One of the first analyses on global therapist pay, it marked the debut of the GSWS's Metric Minutes – compilations of anonymously-sourced, industry data and stakeholder interviews that are designed to “simply start the conversation”.

Here, the GSWS has updated its findings to provide a snapshot of how aestheticians are paid in a selection of different countries – and the reasons why salaries vary so widely. The overview is intended to help operators and owners learn more about how our industry makes money (and in some cases does not).



Despite the lack of standard base salary, US therapists earn the most worldwide

## ON COMMISSION

Whether cultural, regulatory, or just habit, different countries pay beauty therapists in very different ways. Even taking into account the cost of living from one place to another, there are still major variances in average monthly pay (see table below).

In a large number of countries, the standard method of pay for beauty therapists is a monthly salary. Although, as shown in the table, there doesn't appear to be any rhyme or reason to the amount of the salary. In almost every country, except for in the US, the salary makes up the lion's share of monthly income, with commissions on services or retail comprising the rest. Service commissions are typically 5-10 per cent of the cost of the treatment provided and are added to the monthly base salary.

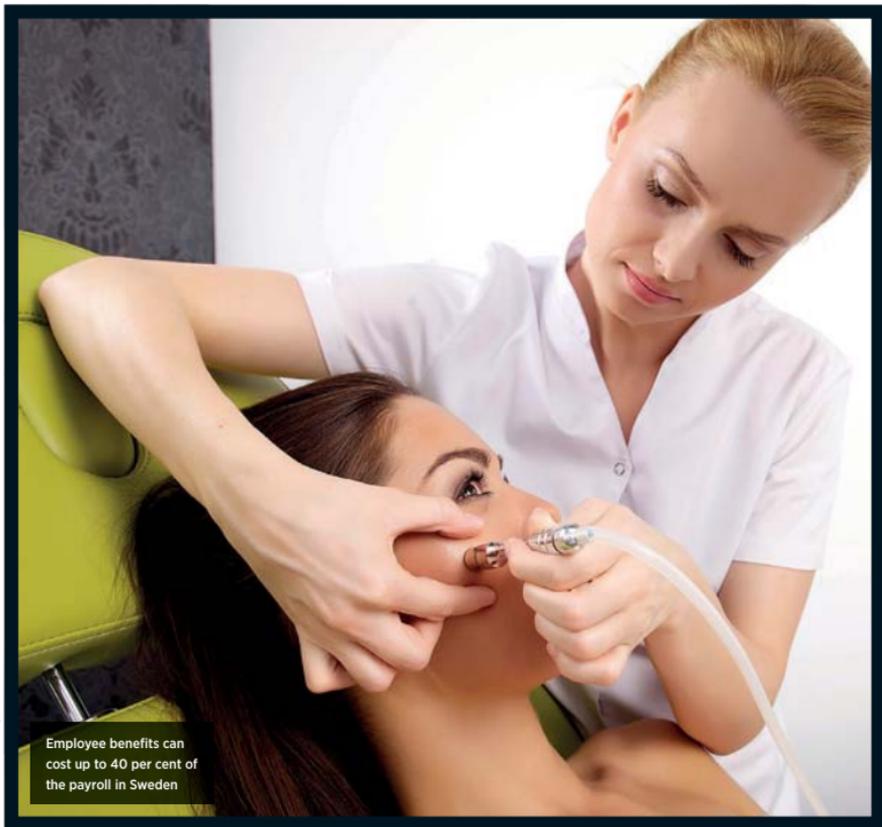
In the US, however, it's quite common for beauty therapists in day spas – which make up the vast majority of country's spa estab-

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Average Monthly Pay of Beauty Therapists Worldwide and Cost of Living in Comparison to New York, USA

Country	Average Monthly Base Pay in Local Currency	Commissions	Monthly Equivalent US\$	Cost of Living Comparison Index* (NYC=100)
Australia	AU\$3,333	n/a	US\$2,985	118.95
Brazil	BRL1,585	Range BRL900-BRL3,375	US\$694	59.68
Canada	CA\$2,150	5-10 per cent on service and retail	US\$2,091	80.52
Cruise Ships	18 per cent gratuity on services (no base salary)	10 per cent retail	US\$2,775	n/a
Hong Kong (Kowloon)	HK\$8,000-HK\$15,000	10-15 per cent on service; and 5-10 per cent on retail	US\$1,030-US\$1,930	62.28
Italy	€1,600	5 per cent on retail	US\$2,127	63.52
Malaysia	MYR1,000	10 per cent on service; and 5 per cent on retail over targets	US\$308	41.16
South Africa	ZAR5,000-ZAR8,000	5-10 per cent on retail	US\$506-US\$811	48.06
Sweden	SEK20,000	n/a	US\$3,070	89.17
UK	£1,250-£1,666	5-10 per cent on retail	US\$1,900-US\$2,530	78.16
US	US\$2,083-US\$4,166	10 per cent retail	US\$2,083-US\$4,166	100

\*Crowd-sourced data from Numbeo.com. Figures are based on major cities in relative countries in comparison to New York City



Employee benefits can cost up to 40 per cent of the payroll in Sweden

“

Even taking into account the cost of living from one place to another, there are still major variances in average monthly pay

”

lishments – to receive absolutely no base salary, earning all of their income as a commission on the treatment prices charged by the business. While this sounds unfair and quixotic, the result is that American therapists are the most highly paid in the world.

The US also provides the biggest variety of pay plans which vary between states and cities or even two businesses in the same block. As there's no one way things are done, methods of pay can be quite creative. Rather than paying a straight percentage for all therapists, for example, operators could offer more compensation to those who reach set benchmarks – such as better client reten-

tion rates and average customer spend – that help drive business. Alternatively, they can vary the percentage of compensation according to different services: paying less for treatments where a high amount has been spent on pieces of equipment, for example, to get a quicker return on investment. Slowly and incrementally, this is helping to off-set the high staff overhead that US spas face.

Retail commission – where therapists get a percentage of revenue from products they sell – is another possible add-on for salaries as spas all over the world offer products for home use. Globally, retail commission levels are fairly consistent at 5-10 per cent of the

retail price, which is typically all a business can afford on branded merchandise that already have high markup costs.

#### BENEFITS AND TAXES

Every country also has its own legal and cultural requirements for employers paying therapists concerning issues such as health insurance, retirement/pensions and other social service benefits. The costs vary widely also, from an approximate 11 per cent of payroll in the US to as much as 40 per cent in Sweden. It's certainly incumbent on any spa business opening in a new country to fully understand all the different taxes and ▶



There's no correlation between education and pay... but by hiring unlicensed therapists a spa may develop a bad reputation or incur additional in-house training costs



Twenty-one to 28 days paid holiday is standard, although six-day workweeks or longer aren't uncommon

- ▶ benefits that its expected to pay in addition to service provider salaries.

There's no correlation between a therapist's education and pay. Some countries require licensing for beauty therapy which typically involves up to two year's of study. Meanwhile, in the US an aesthetics licence can be earned in many states in four months of full-time schooling; and there are still many countries, such as China, South Africa, Cambodia, the Philippines and Brazil, where no licence is required at all. However, the countries with the highest education costs are not those that pay the most. This could be a false economy - while an operator could potentially save money by hiring unlicensed therapists, the spa may develop a less desirable reputation, and incur additional in-house training costs as a result.

Something that is standard internationally is workers typically receiving 21 to 28 days of paid holiday a year. In China and Hong Kong, staff get an extra months' pay for Chinese New Year, along with two weeks off. That said, many global workers put in a lot of time and effort to earn such benefits - regularly putting in a six-day workweek, and in some resorts or on cruise ships working daily for two to three weeks before taking a day off.

In the US, paid time off is less generous: small spas will provide no paid leave, while spas that are part of larger brands will offer a week off after a year of employment, and that may increase to two weeks after two or three years of steady employment. Therapist schedules are also becoming shorter, often three to four days per week, and part-time shifts are becoming more frequent as mandated health-care costs for full-time workers increase.

### GROWING CONCERNS

Staff pay is, in most markets, the single biggest expense in spa business operations. This makes sense, as the inherent strength of spas is a labour-intensive product. But as companies continue to expand, and brands proliferate across country regions and borders, spa management teams should be



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aware of the differing pay, benefit and tax conventions. It's not safe to assume that "what you've always done" in one country will be accepted in another, and this makes projecting turnover and profits more complex.

It's no surprise that countries which pay the least in direct salary also have the lowest cost of living, however, this may also be a reflection of the importance of personal care to a specific locale or region, or the value placed on overall health and appearance. Spa services sit right at the crossroads of beauty services and healthcare, and in most coun-

tries spas are attracting increasing numbers of practitioners, who deserve the right to a fair living wage. But in situations where the desired pay is outsized compared to other overheads, it can make the ability for a business to earn a profit almost impossible, and negatively impact the growth potential for the industry as a whole. ●



On top of her role at Wynne Business, Lisa Starr is a guest editor for the GSWs *Weekender* newsletter.  
Email: [lstarr@wynnebusiness.com](mailto:lstarr@wynnebusiness.com)



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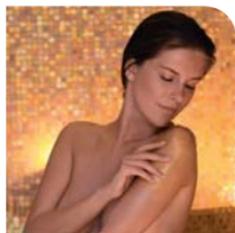
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# RUNNING

ON

# JUICE

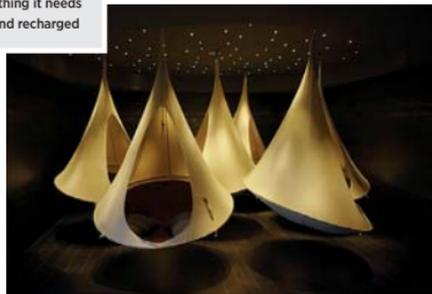
**Juice Master retreats promise weight loss, detox and disease prevention on only four daily juices. Kate Cracknell tries one out and talks to founder Jason Vale**

KATE CRACKNELL, JOURNALIST, SPA BUSINESS





The juice retreats aren't just about weight loss. They give the body everything it needs to feel better and recharged



**S**even days up a mountain in Turkey, exercising for five hours a day fuelled on nothing but four daily juices and plenty of water. Many thought me mad; and even I had my doubts. So why on earth was I doing this?

'7lbs in 7 days' would be a compelling reason – the amount of weight the average person loses over the week. And that's how the Juice Master retreat is marketed based on the bestselling book of the same name written by Juice Master founder and director Jason Vale. But there's much more to it.

### HITTING RE-SET

"The publisher wanted to call the book *7lbs in 7 days - Super Juice Diet*," explains Vale. "I didn't even want the word 'diet' in the title. Weight loss is a by-product of what we do – I think of the programme, and the retreats that we've set up based on that programme, as the most effective one-week recharge you can give your mind and body."

Interestingly, that sentiment was echoed by most people attending the retreat with me. Many had been at least two times before; one was attending for the seventh time.

"I come every year for a reset and a re-balance – to get my body back to feeling good,"

one guest told me. "It's not about losing weight. It's about energy and health."

"You feel so energised at the end," agreed another. "Your taste buds change too – you go home wanting totally different foods." So far, so intrigued. So what is it the retreat all about? And could juice alone really sustain me for a week?

### NUTRIENT-RICH DIET

"If you tell people you're just going to have juice for a week, they'll tell you it's dangerous – yet they don't bat an eyelid if someone's living off junk food," says Vale.

The focus of Juice Master is therefore on explaining why to juice, not just how. "Ultimately people want to feel good, and when you juice you're getting everything your body needs. You feel recharged, rebooted, full of energy. Your skin becomes clearer, your hair and nails better, you lose weight. It also has huge health benefits: the two biggest causes of all disease are toxicity and nutrient deficiency, and our programme addresses both.

"When you explain it that way, people find it very logical, very tangible. It isn't about going on a diet; it's about changing your diet."

On our first morning up the mountain, retreat manager Becky Lennox explains: "You get more good nutrients in one juice than most people get in a day." You might

feel a bit hungry, although in my experience not as much as you'd expect. You might even get a headache for a day or two – withdrawal symptoms from the likes of sugar, salt, caffeine, alcohol. But while our stomachs might be used to more volume, inevitably our normal daily diet will include a good smattering of junk food – food with little nutritional value. Give it a week of freshly extracted, live juice (none of this tetra-packed, pasteurised, longlife stuff) and you've replenished the live enzymes, vitamins and minerals it needs to remain healthy, while simultaneously removing all the toxins.

"We often eat the wrong things – things that make our body acidic, which is the cause of a number of diseases," continues Lennox. "The body works best in an alkaline state, and juices – especially green juices – help put your body into this state. Sugar is the worst offender. It's the number one ingredient that contributes to acidity, and it's very addictive. Our retreats help break that cycle.

"People ask why not just eat the vegetables, but one of the benefits of juicing is that it gives your body a break from having to digest food; digestion takes up a huge amount of energy. When you juice, the nutrients go straight into your system, your body can preserve its energy to heal itself. Not only that, but if you look at everything that goes ▶

## SPA RETREAT

**“Juicing can help all illnesses. Never underestimate the power of the body to heal itself when given the right nutrients and opportunity to do so”**

- ▶ into one glass of juice, would you really sit and eat your way through all that?”

She continues: “Juicing also retains a much higher percentage of the nutrients in fruit and vegetables than if you just eat them. And you can get everything your body needs. People often ask about protein or fibre, but we use superfoods in our juices – avocado and spirulina, which is a very complete plant-based protein including all the amino acids. Apples are in most of our juices too and they include pectin, which is a fibre.”

### ONE DISEASE, ONE SOLUTION

There will still be some who question the science, but the testimonials speak for themselves – including, on our retreat alone, a diabetes sufferer who almost halved his insulin dose just in the space of the week, and a regular juicer whose husband has seen his MS symptoms improve dramatically since she got him onto juicing every day.

Meanwhile a number of studies link juicing to a range of health benefits, from apple juice to alleviate asthma in kids (National Heart and Lung Institute, UK) through to three-times weekly juicing leading to a 76 per cent lower chance of developing Alzheimer’s (Vanderbilt School of Medicine, US).

The Juice Master team is also a living, breathing case study. Lennox uses juicing as a way to manage her arthritic condition, while Vale originally came to juicing in his late 20s in a bid to cure his head-to-toe psoriasis. “At the time I smoked 50 cigarettes a day, I was overweight, unfit, drank too much, had asthma and eczema and various other allergies – and then there was the psoriasis.”

Discovering a book by Norman Walker, considered a pioneer of juicing, Vale read that psoriasis could be treated with a juice of celery, cucumber and spinach. “But I hated vegetables and I just couldn’t drink that combination, so I tried carrot juice instead – I’d read that a man used it to cure himself of



bladder cancer. I spent months just drinking carrot juice. It didn’t work for my psoriasis though – I just turned orange!

“So I went back to the original recipe but added other ingredients to make it more palatable, including fruit. It cured my psoriasis – and all my other conditions too.”

This holistic approach is echoed by a number of experts. Charlotte Gerson – daughter of Max Gerson, who devised Gerson Therapy, the controversial nutritional regime that’s said to cure cancer (see SB08/2 p62) – famously said: “You can’t heal selectively... When the body heals itself, it heals everything.”

This is what Vale calls ‘one disease, one solution’. He explains: “Juicing can help all illnesses. Never underestimate the power of the body to heal itself when given the right nutrients and opportunity to do so.”

He reasons: “I accept that there are times when medical intervention is necessary, for

short-term, acute conditions. But for long-term chronic disease, it’s nonsensical to only treat the symptoms and not the causes.”

He’s certainly not advocating that people do nothing but juice forever. “Yes, you’ll eat again – who would want to live on juice alone? Out of sheer desperation to rid my body completely of psoriasis, I once did a juice-only programme for three months – not even any smoothies or superfoods. Would I recommend it? Not in a million years. I lost too much weight – excess fat, but also healthy fat and lots of lean muscle.”

The recommendation is to wean yourself back onto food carefully, starting with raw foods – salad and so on. The idea is that you then progress to, as far as possible, a diet of what Vale calls Low HI (human intervention) foods – those that “don’t need a label to explain what they are”. Around 50 per cent should be high water content foods such as ▶



Juicy Oasis in Portugal opened in June. Bigger than the Turkey site, it has a five-treatment room spa



## JUICE MASTER RETREATS

"We ran our first retreat in Turkey 10 years ago – the *7lbs in 7 days* book had done incredibly well, and we contacted our database to see if anyone would like to go," says Juice Master founder Jason Vale. "It was such a success that we found a location we could rent throughout the summer."

Located in the mountains outside the village of Gocek, the rustic Juicy Mountain retreat offers 11 rooms and four luxury tents. There's a pool with mountain water, a covered space for exercise in the heat of the day, a platform for yoga and rebounding – high-energy classes using mini-trampolines – and beautiful surroundings for the daily walks.

Nothing is compulsory, and there are a few hours in the middle of the day for relaxation, but guests are encouraged to participate in as much as they can, with around eight hours of activities scheduled daily. One-to-one yoga or fitness training is also available at £40 (US\$62, €46) for an hour, as well as 50-minute massages for £50 (US\$78, €58).

Meanwhile, Juicy Oasis launched in Portugal in June 2013. The new retreat – this time wholly owned by Vale – is bigger and more luxurious, but again offers 'stylish camping' options. As it's open all year, it also includes a small gym and the Eden Spa. "There's a beautiful relaxation room with suspended cocoons, a hot pool, five treatment rooms and an outdoor loft sauna overlooking the lake," says Vale. "There's also a yoga dome and a huge exercise platform overlooking the lake."

And Vale has plans for more Juicy Oases. "I'd like two in the States – one on the east coast and one on the west. I'd also like one in Australia and one in England, in Cornwall. But if, on my travels, I came across a spot on the beach in Thailand that I could buy and make a rustic retreat with wooden tree huts, I'd consider that too!"

Prices for the week, excluding flights and transfer, range from £450–£1,150 (US\$698–US\$1,800, €526–€1,350) for Turkey, or £645–£2,150 (US\$1,000–US\$3,350, €754–€2,500) for Portugal. The Eden Spa treatment menu includes colonics, starting at €65 (US\$101, €76) for 45 minutes; and a range of massage-based therapies starting at the same price and going up to €140 (US\$217, £164) for a 100-minute Vichy shower massage treatment.

**Details:** [www.juicemaster.com](http://www.juicemaster.com)



“If we were to work with a spa again, we’d want to take over the whole place for five days, with the operator taking it back for weekend trade”

► fruit, veg and juices, with the rest being lean proteins and wholegrain carbs. For it to be sustainable, up to 10 per cent can be what Vale calls ‘party foods’... the naughty stuff.

#### JUICING THE WORLD

Speaking to Vale it’s clear that, in spite of the weight loss successes of his programmes, it’s the health aspect that most interests him.

“We’re currently filming a documentary – *Super Juice Me: One Disease, One Solution* – focused on eight people with conditions ranging from fibromyalgia and arthritis, to eczema and high cholesterol. We already know we can reverse type 2 diabetes in four to six weeks, but now we’re setting out to prove that, in just one month of juicing – with exactly the same treatment – the vast majority of those conditions will get better. This will have the biggest impact of anything we’ve ever done.”

So what else is new? “We’ve just opened our second retreat in Portugal, which I’m really excited about. It’s stunning, and includes a gym and spa [see p72].

“We have a 5lbs in 5 days programme coming out in January 2014, as people were

telling us they found it hard to maintain a juice-only diet at weekends. It aims to give the same results but in a shorter timeframe, incorporating high intensity training.

“Juice Master Delivered is a relatively new service where we deliver frozen juices directly to your door – if you freeze them immediately, it maintains the goodness. It’s only for really busy or really lazy people, but it’s already taken off to the point that we’ve had to bring someone in to take it over for us.

“Similarly, we have a franchise concept for Juice Master juice bars in shopping centres. We currently have seven sites, with a few more in the pipeline – in Dubai, Canada, Ireland, Scotland and Belgium.

There’s also an online shop selling carefully selected Juice Master products and merchandise such as ‘Running on Juice’ t-shirts and ‘Juice Junkie’ flasks. Vale says: “It helps create a community and spread the word. It’s my mission to ‘juice the world’.”

#### COLLABORATIVE VENTURES

So are there any opportunities for spa operators to join forces with Juice Master?

“We ran a three-day detox at Champneys in the UK for four years but our guests kept having to walk past the café. At our retreats there’s not even a village shop nearby – nothing to tempt you. So, if we were to do something like that again, we’d want to take over the whole place for five days, with the operator taking it back for weekend trade.”

The health angle of juicing also fits very nicely with the spa industry’s shift towards wellness and prevention. “With our new *Super Juice Me* documentary, which we’ll also roll out into a book and a programme, we want to coin the phrase and put it into everyone’s psyche,” says Vale. “Instead of people’s first reaction being ‘you should go to the doctor for medication’, we want them to think: ‘you need to be super juiced’.

“After all, if you don’t look after your body, you will have nowhere to live.” ●



Kate Cracknell is the editor of *Health Club Management*, the sister magazine of *Spa Business*.

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# WEE WEI LING

As the St Gregory spa brand consolidates its presence  
in Singapore, we meet the founder and COO

NEENA DHILLON, JOURNALIST, SPA BUSINESS



Wee is on the board of the Pan Pacific Hotels Group – the parent company of St Gregory

The past year has been one of expansion for St Gregory, the spa brand owned by the Pan Pacific Hotels Group (PPHG), on home ground. Most notably, the Singaporean company has opened at Parkroyal on Pickering – PPHG’s SG\$350m (US\$273m, €204m, £176m) ‘hotel-in-a-garden’ concept, which has been hitting the headlines for its groundbreaking use of integrated landscaping.

“Our spas have to fit into the individual hotel’s design to ensure continuity of experience,” points out Wee Wei Ling, the chief operating officer of St Gregory. “So we were happy to sign off on the significant inclusion of teak wood, natural decorative motifs and outdoor features as a reflection of the overall garden concept.”

The modest-sized spa with four treatment rooms forms part of a 4,085sq m (43,970sq ft) wellness floor with an infinity pool, whirlpool, gym, 300m (984ft) garden walk and brightly hued relaxation cabanas shaped like Chinese birdcages. Indeed, it blends in seamlessly with the WOHA eco-designed hotel which boasts 15,000sq m (161,460sq ft) of sky gardens, planter terraces, water features and living green walls.

Hot on the heels of Parkroyal on Pickering, is the reopening of the spa at Parkroyal on Beach Road – which is St Gregory’s flagship property – following a major design overhaul. “We knew we had to improve it, particularly since it’s the big sister to our new spa at Parkroyal on Pickering,” says Wee. Under the direction of local design company KKS International, the refurbished 780sq m (8,396sq ft) eight-treatment room facility shows no sign of its original Balinese aesthetic, instead adopting abundant foliage,



St Gregory has received much press attention with its latest spa at Parkroyal on Pickering

outdoor landscaping and earthy tones to create a 'forest in the city' theme.

Taking into account the unveiling of another St Gregory spa at Pan Pacific Orchard back in October 2012, there are now six outlets in Singapore, with six more dotted around China, Malaysia, Vietnam and Japan.

But why did Wee initially develop the spa concept and what do the facilities bring to the PPHG business?

## A GUEST AMENITY

"I was general manager of Parkroyal on Beach Road and I needed a unique selling proposition to bring more people to the area," recalls Wee whose hospitality career spans nearly 30 years. "During travels to Europe and the US, I'd come across health centres that were of particular interest to me because I'm health conscious. So I decided to offer some basic treatments to my hotel guests by bringing in a local beauty salon. It seemed to work, which prompted us to open a spa at another one of our hotels situated by a small lane called St Gregory and the name stuck."

Back in 1997, though, spas hadn't shrugged off the murky association with massage parlours and many of Wee's colleagues wondered why a reputed company would want to

operate such a business. Fortunately Wee, who studied in London and visited the city regularly, took the decision to work with British brand Elemis and St Gregory remains its exclusive distributor in Singapore. She also brought in holistic treatments, in particular traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) therapies such as tui na and reflexology, but ensured their efficacy by having them delivered by qualified physicians. Indeed efficacious treatments form one for the four pillars of the St Gregory offering, alongside quality of touch and service, cleanliness and good housekeeping.

St Gregory is run as an independent business – it has its own P&L and isn't restricted to operating in PPHG properties. That said, nine out of its 12 facilities are located in Parkroyal or Pan Pacific hotels – PPHG's two major hospitality brands that account for over 30 owned/operated sites across Asia, Oceania and North America. PPHG itself is a subsidiary of Singapore's respected property-focused UOL Group, led by chairman Wee Cho Yaw, who is also Wee's father.

Wee, who also serves on the board of PPHG, explains that it's not always right to think of spas purely in terms of revenue. "A spa should be seen as a guest amenity first and profit-making centre second. Wellbeing ▶

## St Gregory portfolio

### SINGAPORE

- Conrad Centennial
- Marina Mandarin
- Pan Pacific Singapore
- Pan Pacific Orchard
- Parkroyal on Beach Road
- Parkroyal on Pickering

### MALAYSIA

- Parkroyal Penang Resort
- Parkroyal Kuala Lumpur

### JAPAN

- LaLaport Toyosu, Tokyo

### CHINA

- Pan Pacific Suzhou
- Pan Pacific Xiamen

### VIETNAM

- Parkroyal Saigon



The spa at Parkroyal Kuala Lumpur has won numerous awards

#### WEE WEI LING FAVOURITES

**Spa:** Onsen in Japan  
**Treatment:** I regularly have tui na massage to maintain my health and wellbeing  
**Book:** Any reading material on management or philosophy  
**Film:** *My Fair Lady* and *The Sound of Music*  
**Food:** I'm a simple eater and prefer light Asian meals such as congee  
**Activity:** I take lessons in singing, keyboard and ballroom dancing. I also love gardening and Chinese tea appreciation  
**Time of year:** Christmas  
**Piece of advice:** Learn from the lessons that life provides. It's never too late to achieve things  
**Who do you admire:** My dad

► facilities are an extension of the hotel experience, a way to offer value to our guests. But not all [third party] owners agree and sometimes they'll lease out their spas to squeeze out more profit. Consequently we've seen owners hurt by negative publicity because they've brought onboard tenants who don't deliver quality control or consistency of service. Such publicity can also be damaging for us as a hotel group even though we don't operate the spa."

#### ADAPTING THE MODEL

Not every PPHG hotel has a spa, explains Wee, so when one is included – where PPHG is also the owning company – business requirements are assessed and the model adapted according to location.

The revamped wellness floor at Beach Road, for example, is targeted at a local membership base including corporate clients, as well as hotel guests, because it's surrounded by mixed-use developments. Annual mem-

bership, costing SG\$2,500 (US\$1,950, €1,450, £1,250) a year, includes access to the facilities and fitness classes, as well as discounts on spa services and retail products. Approximately 60 per cent of guests at this location hold membership packages.

Wee is less concerned, however, about manipulating her treatment menus to feel local. She says: "Frankly I have no idea what a Singaporean spa treatment is supposed to be because we don't have a native spa culture to speak of. I don't believe in manufacturing treatments for the sake of it nor offering fanciful therapies for marketing purposes."

She's refreshingly honest when it comes to the subject of spa size, too. At Parkroyal on Pickering, which is a 367-bedroom property, the decision to limit the new spa to four treatment rooms may raise eyebrows. But St Gregory's founder is clear about the rationale: "This hotel is situated in the central business district and caters for corporate rather than leisure travellers as well as busy executives who want to drop in for short treatments. There's no point having empty treatment rooms."

Wee acknowledges that she, like many entrepreneurs, was once preoccupied with size. But she's witnessed 'over-the-top facilities' in the industry struggling to cover basic monthly costs and being forced to close. "When people ask why our spas aren't bigger, why we don't have more outlets, I respond by saying I don't believe in Cinderella dreams," Wee explains. "I don't



Wee feels spas should be thought of as guest amenities rather than profit centres



While spa décor changes to suit locale, the menu remains relatively similar

When people ask why our spas aren't bigger, I say I don't believe in Cinderella dreams... I don't want staff to feel pressured into pushing products because we're only driven by the bottom line

want my staff to feel pressured into pushing products and treatments because we're driven only by the bottom line."

### THE GO-TO-CHOICE

Although St Gregory is unable to disclose financials, its approach seems to be paying off in terms of above-industry-average capture rates and peer recognition. At resort locations such as Parkroyal Penang Resort in Malaysia, at least 10 per cent of hotel guests have a spa treatment while the urban locations capture at least 5 per cent. St Gregory at Parkroyal Kuala Lumpur has been named Best Luxury Hotel Spa in Malaysia for the third year running at the World Luxury Hotel Awards, while the brand's signature treatments are regularly lauded in consumer magazines.

Wee puts this down to the strength of her partnership with her two main suppliers, Elemis and Thalion, as well as the training

standards for therapists. Yet recruitment presents a sustained challenge, particularly as Singaporean regulations restrict the length of time that overseas therapists can work in the country. Add the competitive climate in the region as more spas open and Wee points out how this leads to an unproductive environment in which there is little staff loyalty. "You can become like a training centre if you're not careful," she says. "You invest in staff, give them a career path, but they're either poached or forced to move on. Retention can be a real problem. Fortunately we have staff who've stayed with us for 10 to 15 years because we spotted their potential at reception level, trained them up as therapists, and then promoted them to managers. That's why our therapists, on average in their 40s, are older than at other spas."

As a homegrown brand with the backing of a Singapore Exchange-listed company, St Gregory carries credibility in a market

where members of local spas have been left high and dry after closures. As such, all St Gregory membership package holders in Singapore are protected by its recognised insurer. Through links to UOL Group's associate banking company, UOB, holders of select credit cards also receive attractive discounts on St Gregory spa services, cementing the brand's reputation as the go-to-choice for affluent clients seeking consistency of treatments and service. "Spas should be the symbol of a successful hotel operation," Wee concludes. "They must be viable, they must break even, but beyond this it is about giving our guests peace of mind and a good experience. I'd love to think that we secure repeat hotel custom because our clients are impressed with St Gregory." ●



Neena Dhillon is a spa, hotel and travel journalist  
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# MOVING TARGET

China's luxury consumers are becoming more sophisticated and their spending patterns are changing, according to research by McKinsey. Leonor Stanton analyses the findings

LEONOR STANTON, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

China. Without doubt one of the biggest emerging markets for spas. The growth is fuelled by its rapid rising economy and unprecedented consumer spending on high-end goods. With a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27 per cent between 2008-2012, the Chinese market for luxury brands is now the largest in the world and is expected to continue on an upward trajectory until 2015.

Despite this robust outlook, consumer buying patterns are extremely changeable. A recent report by McKinsey – *Luxury Without Borders: China's New Class of Shoppers Take on the World* – identifies significant challenges facing luxury brands including “the globalisation of Chinese luxury shopping,

the rising sophistication of the country's consumers, and the changing ways in which those consumers make purchases”.

While the report isn't directly focused on spas, it outlines some interesting parallels for any operator in the luxury business.

## MARKET SIZE

Based on “interviews with over 1,000 luxury shoppers in 14 cities, extensive data analysis and conversations with industry leaders”, McKinsey forecasts that Chinese consumers will generate 34 per cent of demand for global luxury goods, totalling CNY726bn (US\$118.2bn, €90.2bn, £77.5bn) by 2015. Luxury goods include ready to wear fashion, shoes, handbags, watches and fine jewellery.

Growth is expected to slow to 12-16 per cent CAGR between 2012-2015 – partly due

to the economic slowdown in China and concerns over gifting to government officials. Yet the outlook is still positive as a result of:

- the rising number of those with disposable incomes above CNY1m (US\$162,500, €124,200, £106,750). McKinsey forecasts that the number of very wealthy people will grow at over 20 per cent annually between 2012-2015. While only accounting for 0.4 per cent of China's population, this segment is intended to generate 28 per cent of demand for luxury goods in 2015 (see graph);
- new entrants to the market such as the rising and aspiring middle classes;
- relatively high levels of financial confidence;
- women now account for three fifths of luxury purchases and are a fast growing segment;
- individual gifting is “embedded in Chinese society... seen as a way of nurturing relationships – so it's not about to diminish in importance anytime soon”, even in the face of increasing concerns about gifting to government officials; and
- changing lifestyles – more socialising among the wealthy provides them with opportunities to wear their luxury purchases

## CHALLENGES IN CHINA

Given the positive background, there are the obstacles facing luxury brands in China.

**Market Splintering** – even consumers with just a few years' experience of buying luxury goods now want “low-key and under-



A consistent, quality in-store experience is becoming increasingly important



Chinese consumers will generate 34 per cent of demand for luxury goods worldwide, totalling US\$118.2bn, by 2015

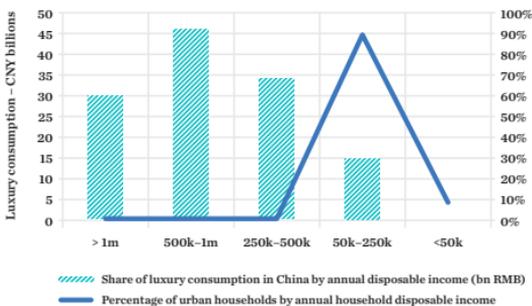
stated goods to ones that are emblazoned with popular logos". But new entrants still prefer "widely-recognisable brands that show off their status". This presents a dilemma as trying to satisfy all markets "risks diluting their brands' cachet". This is a particular problem as 49 per cent of tenured shoppers, who've been purchasing luxury goods for over 10 years, "like to discover new brands before others, compared with only 31 per cent of new entrants". Brands face the danger that as new entrants become customers, the "loyalty of more tenured consumers may weaken... as they seek to differentiate themselves... with a smaller, niche product... and new entrants may even follow [suit] leaving the once-fashionable brand abandoned by both ends of the market."

McKinsey advise brands to "focus on the core and build on heritage... highlighting the skill of craftsmen... the length of history... Brands shouldn't completely avoid expanding into new categories, rather they should do so in a way that enhances their key narrative."

**Pricing** – should be "based on a strategy that's coherent with the branding, merchandising and the global image". McKinsey advises that in general "iconic categories and products that never go on sale should be kept distinct from those that might". Promotions should also be limited to VIPs it believes.

**Consistency** – outbound tourism by Chinese residents is predicted to grow from 57 million trips in 2010 to 94 million by 2015.

### Proportion of Households in China by Annual Income vs Their Share of Luxury Consumption



As a result, an increasing number of luxury purchases are now made abroad. In 2010, 65 per cent of shoppers purchased luxury goods in mainland China only. By 2012 this had declined to 38 per cent. Macau, Hong Kong and increasingly Europe are the key shopping destinations overseas.

However, brand consistency is difficult to achieve in different jurisdictions. China imposes taxes ranging from 20-70 per cent on imported luxury goods, leading to wide ranging retail price disparities. This can lead to price differentials on say, a handbag, of up

to 40 per cent. While some luxury operators have recently reacted by increasing prices only outside Asia, and certain government officials have expressed the willingness in time to reduce import duties, "the price gap is unlikely to disappear... any reduction in taxes is almost certain to be gradual".

In addition to price consistency, operators are also "obliged to maintain consistency of excellence in their retail establishments around the world... with the importance of the in-store experience for Chinese luxury consumers becoming ever more evident". ▶

Surprise and impress with personalised and exclusive offerings... starting small, with a few initiatives offering high-impact pampering, is often best

► **In-store experience** – the growing frequency of buying on impulse or after only a short consideration propels the in-store experience into a priority. McKinsey found that over half of survey respondents cited some aspect of the in-store experience as important in their purchase decision and “the longer consumers shop for luxury, the more they care about the stores they patronise”.

Operators have responded by increasing the size of outlets, in some cases significantly – “for some brands, a three to five-fold expansion of space in the average outlet since 2007”. Given annual rent and wage rises, this is an expensive investment.

McKinsey advises that “striking the right balance between store numbers and quality” is becoming increasingly important. “It’s advisable to... ensure that sites are prominent and stores globally consistent in terms of look and feel. Expanding selectively in a few untapped lower-tier cities may be desirable”. The researchers believe that opening outlets in non-exclusive locations “can hurt brand image”. Brands should also focus on airport duty-free outlets as the Chinese travel to more overseas destinations.

**CRM and pampering to the ultra-wealthy** – in the pursuit of customers, McKinsey suggest luxury brands “should fit their CRM programmes to surprise and impress their customers with personalised and exclusive offerings... starting small, with a few initiatives offering high-impact pampering, is often the best way to go”. The researchers found that ultra-wealthy consumers seek a VIP, individualised shopping experience – private rooms or floors and dedicated (Chinese speaking) salespeople. “In China, some brands have flown their best customers on all-expense-paid trips to enjoy fashion shows, art shows, and cruises; for VVIPs, these excursions can involve destinations as far away as Paris”. McKinsey also suggest “customising brand and product portfolios, using limited-edition offerings



Customer dilemma – tenured consumers want understated luxury, while new customers want widely-recognisable brands that show off their status

to create an aura of exclusivity... Super-rich Chinese consumers love, and count upon, ‘over-the-top’ VIP treatment”.

**Embracing the online opportunity** – while online purchases in the luxury sector in China are still in their infancy, “and not about to displace in-store shopping anytime in the foreseeable future”, this channel should not be ignored according to the researchers. Three-quarters of respondents to the survey cited worries about counterfeiting as a reason for not buying online. As elsewhere, consumers are increasingly using the internet to gain information – price comparisons, viewing editorial comments by other users. Those who did buy online reported price savings on websites such as Taobao.com and ihaveu.com. Official manufacturer’s websites only derived 4 per cent of online purchases. McKinsey advises “tailoring e-commerce operations to be ready if and when the channel takes off... through password-protected websites for select groups of registered customers” in order to confront fears of counterfeiting and payment security.

Implementing these strategies is unlikely to be cheap or easy, but essential to keep-up with the ever-changing sophistication of the largest luxury consuming market globally.

## LUXURY 2.0

Interestingly, a May 2013 study by global business consulting firm Bain & Company confirms many of the McKinsey findings. *Luxury Goods Worldwide Market Study, Spring 2013 Update*, which analyses the market and financial performance of more than 230 of the world’s leading luxury goods companies, reports that the key for winning in the luxury market over the next 10-15 years is “to get ready for Luxury 2.0, where success will be defined by a relentless focus on three luxury goods management principles”. Those principles are:

1. Superior customer service;
2. Flawless retail management; and
3. People excellence

“We’re entering a new phase in the evolution of the luxury market”, says Claudia D’Arpizio, a Bain partner in Milan and lead author of the study. “More markets, more segments, and more diversity of tastes all combine to create more variables to solve when pursuing the right strategy for growth.” ●



Leonor Stanton is an independent hospitality and spa consultant.  
Email: lstanton@spabusiness.com



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# The Christina Company

With over 30 years in the skincare and cosmeceutical industry, The Christina Company is helping spas deliver visible results to clients with its highly advanced preparations

## How did the Christina Company come to be established?

The Christina Company was founded in Israel in 1982, and was the vision of esthetician Christina Zehavi. She saw there was a great market need for skincare products that provided visible, measurable results, and her goal was to design such products without endangering or damaging the skin's overall health. She started developing and manufacturing products that provided solutions for a large variety of skin conditions. They focused on the internal causes, without neglecting the external and environmental effects that led to these conditions. Christina products can now be found around the world, and our growing list of partners has spread to over 52 countries, and all continents.

## What is Christina Zehavi's background in skincare?

Before she formed the company, Christina worked as an esthetician in hospitals, advising doctors on preparing and treating the skin of patients suffering from severe skin complaints as well as the many burns victims resulting from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Through her work, Christina identified many ingredients that could have a wider application, such as hyaluronic acid, which had not been considered for general skincare products at that time.

Now with 45 years' experience in the industry, Christina is considered one of



—CHRISTINA—  
It just works

the foremost leaders in the field of professional cosmetics. She spends 50 per cent of her time outside of Israel, travelling and speaking at medical and skincare conferences, lecturing doctors and specialists in all aspects of skincare and cosmeceuticals.

In Israel, she regularly appears on a daytime TV lifestyle programme, and she's also the Israel editor of the French beauty industry magazine *Les Nouvelles Esthetique*. She practices what she preaches, and you could never guess her age!

## How would you sum up the Christina brand?

Christina has eight product lines (representing over 350 products) – and a ninth coming out in the next month – each one targeting a specific skincare concern. They all combine cosmeceutical efficacy and innovation with strong treatment protocols, as well as incredibly effective homecare products. We deliver to customers what we promise. As our brand tagline states: 'It Just Works!'

## What about your product research and ingredients?

Christina has a world class team of scientists and estheticians who are constantly working to create the most effective and innovative skincare products, addressing immediate market needs. Our founder Christina is still closely involved with this process. All products are researched, developed, produced and manufactured at our HQ, following the most stringent quality controls.

We use many ingredients from the natural world and combine them with state of the art scientific preparations to ensure the highest efficacy for clients.

## When did you enter the spa market?

We entered around four years ago, at a time when professional facials weren't really a popular spa product – the demand was for pampering beauty treatments only.

But the market has changed significantly and now customers are looking for highly results-driven and instantly visible effects from their spa treatment, whether it's in a medical spa, a resort spa or a day spa.

We currently work with well over 100 spas worldwide, including Spa Shiki in the US, the Carmel Forest Spa in Israel, and many European facilities such as the Marbella Club spa and the Royal Marbella Hospital in Spain.

We also believe that when high quality treatments are delivered in the tranquil and healthy atmosphere of a spa, it enhances the visibly impressive results even further. Spa centres now have access to an increasing number of advanced cosmetic products, and we see the future of esthetics lies in the hands of this market.

## What advantages do you offer your spa partners?

Each of Christina's products and treatments comes with a simple step-by-step protocol. By adhering to our special processes, spas



The award-winning anti-ageing range



All Christina's skincare lines are researched, developed and made at its HQ in Israel



The market has changed significantly and now customers are looking for highly results-driven and instantly visible effects from their spa treatment, whether it's in a medical spa, a resort spa or a day spa

and therapists can ensure their clients have a satisfying experience and see amazing results every time

By consistently producing outstanding results and experiences for their clients, spas can be assured this will translate into increased visits and retail product sales.

#### What are your most popular product lines?

Our Forever Young product line is an award winning anti-ageing range designed for Baby Boomers and Generation X. It protects internal skin structures and corrects external symptoms of ageing, using a combination of biopeptides, botanicals and antioxidants to encourage skin cell repair.

Wish is also very popular, designed for older women (from 45 and up). It's an overall age-control treatment that encourages skin's natural repair process

Our Silk treatment is a very popular pamper experience that gives immediate visual effects. Real silk fibres and proteins penetrate the skin and reinforce its natural collagen matrix for a flawless finish. After just one silk treatment, clients can see an 80 per cent reduction in the appearance of fine lines. Used together with Silk home products, customers can experience long-term wrinkle reduction.

#### What new products have you launched recently?

Our newest and most innovative product line is Muse, which is based on a unique species of rose. It's a complete beauty complex treatment, helping the skin optimise its natural repair processes.

In October, we'll globally introduce Christina Château de Beauté – our new Vinotherapy treatment, a luxurious face and body treatment combining grape and wine extracts with advanced technology. The antioxidant components enhance the rejuvenation process and are amazingly effective in diminishing the contours of wrinkles and rehabilitating collagen in cells.

And due to the huge demand for Christina's BioPhyto products, in April 2014 we'll upgrade them to focus even more on the purity of natural minerals, plants and herbs.

#### What training do you offer?

Our commitment to clients is ongoing, with a support system that includes worldwide educational conferences and workshops.

Christina's training sessions are usually 2-3 full days of hands-on training for each Christina line. The sessions go much further than ensuring the therapist knows how to use the product, covering important pre-treatment intake and evaluation

skills, customer communication and advice on homework protocols for optimum results. We assist both sales and spa personnel, turning it to a whole educational experience.

We also offer educational and marketing materials – tutorials, catalogues, brochures and manuals – to ensure estheticians and spa professionals have the best knowledge base and tools to deliver real results.

#### What other services do you offer?

We work with the spa to design the best treatment plan for their needs, with signature treatments where required. We help with branding, art and graphics displays, and presentations to express the spa's unique character. We offer custom-made sponsorship opportunities, support through social media, as well as direct mail programmes to help with customer outreach. Our specialist spa team help clients bring their ideas to life.

#### What's next for the company?

We'll continue to develop our products and treatments, and expand our business partnerships in global markets. Our first flagship facility is in development, and will open in a location outside Israel in the near future.

For details call +972 3 752 4488 or visit [www.christina-cosmeceuticals.com](http://www.christina-cosmeceuticals.com)



PART TWO

# SKINCARE PRESCRIPTION

In our final focus on skin analysis, we look at the spa brands which are successfully using skin testing to prescribe homecare products

KATE CORNEY, PRODUCT EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

## PRESCRIBED SKINCARE

### SOTHYS

L'Institut Sothys, Paris, offers a free five-minute face and body analysis to provide a beauty prescription for the client. Before facials, a beautician asks the client about their skin routine and allergies, then analyses the skin's age: its firmness, wrinkles and elasticity, using their fingertips. A shorter analysis is also offered before all purchases of products after treatments.

Isabelle Villey, the training director at L'Institut Sothys says: "We sell more products after a prescription. The average sale is about three products. It's also the way to sell a complete course of treatments."

Sothys also offers a body beauty diagnosis included in the cost of all body treatments, which begins with a questionnaire about their general health and areas of concern to determine the areas to be treated. A slimming beauty diagnosis is carried out before slimming treatments and concentrates on defining the type of cellulite a client has. It involves the beautician looking at the areas of concern and testing the skin using fingertips to determine whether the client has aqueous, adipose or fibrous cellulite. The beautician will then prescribe a course of treatments and the client is given a retail programme for home care.

SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORD: SOTHYS

## SKIN ANALYSIS DEVICE

### HYDRATEST

UK company BeautyPro manufactures a new skin analysis tool for spas called the HydraTest. The pen-sized device measures oil and hydration levels in four seconds by using bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA) technology. The electrical currents detect the skin's conductive moisture levels – if the reading is low, the skin is dehydrated and vice versa.

The device can be used in facial treatments to measure results, in pre-treatment consultations and for skincare prescription. Costing £59 (US\$90, €68), it's affordable for all spa businesses and can be an add-on to treatments or a paid-for extra.

The HydraTest can be co-branded to a spa or product house, as well as being sold as a take home retail device. It's currently being used by the spa at the Four Seasons Doha and is distributed by Scrip Companies in the US.

SPA-KIT KEYWORD: BEAUTYPRO





## ▶ PRODUCT FOCUS



■ Pure is a new, customisable product line

### CUSTOMISED SKINCARE

#### AW LAKE

AW Lake therapists use sight and touch, plus a health questionnaire, to analyse the skin and determine its type and any problems, such as dehydration, acne, rosacea and pigmentation. The therapist will also take note of the guest's age for treatment and skincare prescription.

AW Lake encourages its spas to have recommended retail product cards, and prescription or post treatment notes as tools for the staff to communicate the benefits of the products they wish the client to buy.

Richard Williams, AW Lake consultant, says: "Prescriptive follow-up is a great tool to boost revenue by building trust, encouraging repeat business and facilitating retail options to better care for the client post treatment with home care."

The prescriptions are based on the new Pure skincare range, which is comprised of a Basic face cream or gel plus Supercharged serums, containing bio-active ingredients for specific skin concerns.

SPA-KIT KEYWORDS: AW LAKE



■ Using the machines can increase retail sales three-fold says C+K

### SKIN ANALYSIS MACHINE

#### COURAGE + KHAZAKA ELECTRONIC

Germany's Courage + Khazaka Electronic (C+K) manufactures machines with various probes to measure aspects of the skin including moisture, oil, pigmentation and elasticity. The machines include the computer-based Multi Skin Test Centre MC 1000 and the stand-alone Multi Dermascope MDS 1000. C+K also makes a photo booth for full face photography to determine pores, wrinkles, spots and skin colour. The equipment costs between €200-€4,500 (US\$267-US\$6,000, £173-£3,900) depending on the machine and number ordered.

Marketing manager Christiane Uhl says: "Beauticians claim their sale of additional care [products] is increased at least three-fold when such devices are used. Other clients state even higher turnover of products and treatments."

The analysis begins with a software-based questionnaire, which can be customised to a company's product range. Using these answers, combined with the machine's measurements, the software selects suitable treatments and products.

SPA-KIT KEYWORD: COURAGE



### CUSTOMISED SKINCARE

#### BABOR

Babor offers a free skin analysis before facial treatments which incorporates its customised skincare range SkinovagePX.

An hour-long treatment begins with a lifestyle consultation with a Babor skin expert who uses a magnifying glass to assess the skin type and its condition. A special gel mask can also be used to check skin vitality – it incorporates nettle

extract which causes the skin to turn a darker colour the more nourished it is.

The SkinovagePX system can be tailored to suit five skin types. The range includes Vita Balance for dry skin; Calming Sensitive for sensitive skin; Perfect Combination for oily and combination skin; Advanced Biogen for tired, stressed skin; and Pure for blemished skin. Each has its own set of products, which can be mixed

and matched, or boosted using Intensifier serums.

Dr Helmut Drees, head of training at Babor says: "When using customised skincare, you don't just offer an hour of relaxation, but a visible improvement of the skin and complexion. Customers are amazed and, therefore, willing to pay a higher price."

SPA-KIT KEYWORD:  
BABOR

## DNA ANALYSIS

# GeneOnyx

at The Organic Pharmacy

**G**eneOnyx is a digital DNA-based skin analysis tool, created by professor Chris Tamazou of Imperial College London, which is being piloted by skincare company The Organic Pharmacy in London. The Organic Pharmacy offers it as part of a one-hour £295 (US\$452, €345) Anti-Ageing DNA test and consultation at its Kings Road store.

The session starts with a lifestyle questionnaire and a saliva sample DNA test which is processed by the cloud-based geneOnyx machine in 30 minutes. The analysis provides a recommended list of skincare ingredients based on the client's DNA with a focus on how quickly the body breaks down collagen – the faster collagen degrades, the more prone people are to showing the signs of ageing. The software matches these ingredients with existing products from the Organic Pharmacy range for a skincare prescription. The test is delivered by a homeopath so that lifestyle, nutrition and general health advice can be incorporated.

Margo Marrone, founder and owner of The Organic Pharmacy says: "Young people can use the genetic information for preventative ageing, while older people can use it for corrective measures. It adds value by establishing us as the experts in the market."

In the future, geneOnyx will be looking to partner with other skincare companies to make this technology available to more customers over the counter.



■ The geneOnyx machine tests DNA to determine how quickly customers breakdown collagen

### FIRST-PERSON EXPERIENCE: Kate Corney, product editor, *Spa Business*

**O**n arrival at The Organic Pharmacy, I was led to a basic consultation room with a desk, chairs and the geneOnyx machine, which is a white electronic box. I filled out a health and lifestyle questionnaire on an iPad, connected to the geneOnyx, which covered my existing skincare routine, general health and any concerns.

As my saliva sample was analysed by the geneOnyx, the homeopath talked to me about my skincare routine and a broad range of questions focused on whole body health. The 30 minutes seemed like a long time for a consultation and could have been enhanced with a mini treatment as an added extra.

Eventually, my results showed a list of 36 ingredients which the geneOnyx identified as suitable to my skin and gave eight recommended Organic Pharmacy products containing these ingredients – with those featuring the highest number of ingredients listed first.



The homeopath whittled this down to four products for my skincare prescription, based on our consultation, but not all of these were the geneOnyx's top suggestions so I gathered that the in-person consultation was equally as important as the machine-based analysis. The prescription was based on cleansing, hydrating, repairing and moisturising products, most of which I felt were appropriately prescribed for my skin when I tried them out back at home.

Compared to The Organic Pharmacy's free non-technical skin consultations, the DNA testing is certainly expensive, but the cost is in line with its other technical treatments on offer, such as the 125-minute Ultimate Lift & Rejuvenate Facial – an oxygen facial which costs £260 (US\$397, €302).

**SPA-KIT.NET KEYWORDS:** ORGANIC PHARMACY

# FAST FORWARD

Tabata, a science-based workout, promises results in just four minutes.

We talk to Jane Irving of its licensing company Big Shot Productions about how it could be used to innovate spa fitness offerings

KATE CRACKNELL, JOURNALIST, SPA BUSINESS

There's increasing research focused on the value of exercise, from its protection against many chronic illnesses to reducing stress and lengthening telomeres: the DNA structures linked to biological and aesthetical ageing (see SB13/1 p54). Collectively, these numerous studies demonstrate that exercise is one of the biggest contributors to longevity and wellbeing.

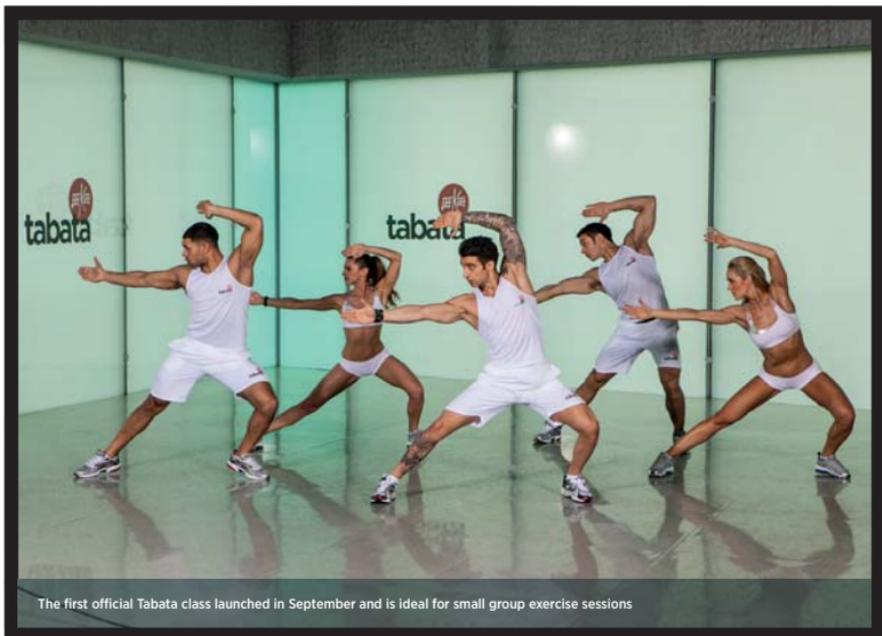
This knowledge has encouraged a growth in science-based exercise protocols with measurable health outcomes that make them suitable for spas. Some of the most interesting are focused on high intensity interval training (HIT) – vigorous exercise systems which claim to deliver the same, if not better, results than traditional workouts in a much shorter time (see SB12/4 p84).

Tabata™ is one of the more radical forms of HIT: its four-minute session is designed to get you fitter than an hour's moderate bike workout. It's been created by a Japanese scientist, professor Izumi Tabata, who's collaborated with fitness programme producers Big Shot Productions and global distribution company Universal Pictures Entertainment International to adapt the protocol into a group exercise format and license it to fitness facilities worldwide. The classes, which are also ideal for small group training programmes, debuted in 50 Fitness First clubs in London, UK in September and a US launch is imminent.

With more science coming into exercise, and the public increasingly in-tune with lifestyle and health choices, spas need to make sure their fitness offering is up to date.



Scientist Izumi Tabata invented the protocol while helping to train the Japanese Olympic speed skating team in the early 90s



## Q&A

### JANE IRVING

Jane Irving, owner of Big Shot Productions, tells us more about Tabata, the exciting new protocol that's hailed as an "exercise superbrand"

#### What is Tabata?

Tabata is a clinically proven way to get fit in just four minutes. The protocol consists of 20 seconds of intense exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest, repeated eight times. It's scientifically proven to be a highly effective way to increase both aerobic and anaerobic fitness.

#### Where did the idea come from?

The system was developed by a Japanese scientist, professor Tabata, while working as an advisor for the Japanese Olympic speed skating team in the early 1990s. The head coach had developed a training technique that involved the athletes exercising in short bursts of high intensity; professor Tabata was asked to analyse the effectiveness of this training regime. He compared various HIT systems and found this technique to be the best at improving fitness levels.



#### What's the science behind it?

Research suggests that just one four-minute workout results in better fitness levels than an hour's moderate training session on an exercise bike.

Professor Tabata's original research involved two different trials. The first was conducted among reasonably fit young students majoring in physical education and playing university sport. One group cycled at a moderate speed for an hour and at 70 per cent of their maximal oxygen uptake (VO2 max). Another group took part in the so-called Tabata Protocol: 20 seconds of high

intensity exercise, then 10 seconds of rest, repeated eight times and lasting a total of four minutes. This group cycled at 170 per cent of their VO2 max. Both groups carried out their routines five times a week.

By the end of the six-week trial, fitness levels in the four-minute group had improved more markedly than in the hour-long group. Both groups saw an improvement in aerobic fitness, however, while the hour-long group saw no improvement in anaerobic fitness levels, this went up by 28 per cent in the four-minute group.

In a second experiment, he compared the Tabata Protocol with another form of HIT involving 30 seconds of even higher intensity – 200 per cent of VO2 max – with two minutes' rest in between. Again, the Tabata Protocol improved both aerobic and anaerobic fitness, whereas the other HIT system saw no significant improvement in either measure.

Although the two studies were carried out over a number of weeks, results were actually seen in participants after just one week of doing the Tabata Protocol.

Professor Tabata has also conducted a new experiment – due to be published this year – with results indicating that Tabata continues to burn up to 150 calories in the 12 hours after a workout.



The class is 20 minutes long and has adaptations of exercises to suit fitness – beginner moves don't involve jumping for example

► **How can spas get involved?**

Fitness instructors will be taught by highly qualified Tabata master trainers. This will ensure the protocol can be delivered correctly – while trainers can use the Tabata moves in any order they like, it's imperative that they don't adapt them as they'll no longer bring about the benefits clients want.

No special equipment is required, although there are plans to add small hand weights to the programme at some stage.

This is the first fitness system born in a lab, not a gym. It hasn't been made up by a fitness instructor or dancer – it's the result of an internationally renowned scientist's clinical findings. Professor Tabata has also approved all of the exercises in the programme.

**How does the Tabata class work?**

The group exercise classes will go on for 20 minutes, but to stay true to the authentic Tabata methodology only four minutes will be all-out. There will also be a 10-minute warm-up – four minutes of mobilisation and then six minutes to run through the Tabata exercises that will follow in the main four-minute section. Finally there will be a six-minute cool-down and stretch.

Two classes could easily be scheduled in the space of one hour, or they could work as an express session in lunch breaks.

Team Tabata has worked for over a year to create exciting new body weight moves for trainers and fitness operators to take back to their clients: moves like the 'skiva', which



Professor Tabata created the protocol

is adapted from capoeira, or the 'cockroach', which is a take on primal training.

The key is to make sure these moves are being performed at the correct intensity level to have a true Tabata effect.

**Who's the target market?**

Tabata is fast, effective and credible, hence our key message: 'four-minute fitness, scientifically proven.' In a time-pressured society, that's a great hook to get people interested.

The great benefit of Tabata is that people of completely different fitness levels can share a class and reap benefits from it. Team Tabata has developed a system of levels in the workout, with adaptations of exercises to suit beginners as well as advanced clients.

Many of the body weight moves, for example, will involve jumping for the fit, but not for the beginner. Every class will have an easier option for less fit participants.

While we'll focus on rolling out the system in health clubs and gyms, we see no reason why Tabata couldn't run in spas like any other fitness class – provided that the consumer isn't expecting a relaxing experience. So maybe operators would like to advise that a session comes before a massage or facial!

**Why is Tabata really only now coming to the forefront?**

Professor Tabata has never given his backing to an official Tabata exercise system before. Until now, it has just been gyms interpreting his research – and getting it wrong a lot of the time.

He wants to see his clinically proven research used in a way that will really benefit the population. He's already been approached by the Japanese government to help tackle the obesity epidemic there, and is keen to see Tabata used in other markets too – in the correct way – to help combat this growing global crisis. ●



Kate Cracknell is the editor of *Health Club Management*, a sister magazine to *Spa Business*, that's focused on the European health and fitness industry. Email: [katecracknell@leisuremedia.com](mailto:katecracknell@leisuremedia.com) Twitter: @HealthClubKate



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# Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary

Mia Kyricos pays a visit to the Japanese-inspired spa in California that's famous for enzyme baths

MIA KYRICOS, PRESIDENT, KYRICOS & ASSOCIATES

## THE BACKGROUND

California's Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary was founded in 1985 as a "vision of healing, beauty and inner peace" by Michael Stusser, originally an organic gardener who studied Japanese gardens and Zen Buddhism in Kyoto. While there he discovered the Japanese Cedar Enzyme Bath heat therapy which inspired the creation of Osmosis, regularly referenced as one of America's most spiritual spas.

Set deep in a valley of Sonoma County, north of San Francisco, the eco-conscious spa property is spread across five, lush acres and features a large, Zen-like meditation garden and a two-storey spa with 17 treatment rooms, including four outdoor pagodas, and three large enzyme baths. Most recently, *Sukiya Living: The Journal of Japanese Gardening* ranked Osmosis as home to one of the top Japanese gardens in the US.

## THE OFFER

Osmosis' signature Cedar Enzyme Bath, unavailable anywhere else in the US, is a 'dry bath' based on a mix of ground evergreens including cedar, rice bran and plant enzymes that naturally heat via fermentation. The baths require more than 600 active enzymes which, in addition to the heat, are said to influence body chemistry and natural cleansing processes. Reported benefits, aside from deep relaxation, include relief from joint and muscle pain, improved circulation and mobility, stress and fatigue reduction, improved digestion, detoxification and cleansing of the skin.

More traditional face and body treatments are also available using organic and natural

## VITAL STATISTICS

Address: 209 Bohemian Highway, Freestone, CA 95472, USA

Times: 9am - closing (depending on demand)

Web: [www.osmosis.com](http://www.osmosis.com)

products from Organic Male, Naturopathica, Phyt's and a private-label range. 75-minute services start at US\$129 (€98, £84).

## DESIGN

Found off secluded road in farmhouse-style building, Osmosis is reminiscent of the Woodstock era with burning incense and communal living. Inside, the spa unfolds in unexpected ways - from the front-desk a sliding door reveals narrow hallways and a hidden staircase leading to a 'nook and cranny' treatment area - this is not a purpose-built spa and is admittedly tired in some places. Elsewhere a tea garden, for pre-treatment contemplation, overlooks a small inner rock garden complete with a miniature footbridge; while a large double-bay room is reserved for the cedar-filled tubs.

With its mix of hippie-style spaces and Japanese touches, the design may be unusual, but it's also charming and captivating.

## THE EXPERIENCE

When I called ahead to make a reservation, I was impressed with the, information and attentiveness. When enquiring what treatment went best with the enzyme bath, I was quickly up-sold "the popular" 2.5-hour Reju-

venation Package comprising a signature tea service and 20-minute bath followed by a meditative garden walk and 75-minute massage for US\$199 (€151, £131).

On arrival, I was graciously greeted by name and ushered to fill out the standard questionnaire and liability forms. Guided to a small changing area, I put on a comfortable, flannel robe and was directed to the tea garden for a Japanese tea with digestive enzymes to further help the detoxification process.

The enzyme baths are wooden crates filled with a dry, fragrant mix of shavings and secret ingredients that naturally react with one another to create heat. Using a large shovel Jenny, my therapist, prepared a dent in the mix and invited me to disrobe, step in and lie down. She then covered me with the shavings - akin to being buried in the sand at a beach - while being careful to ensure the comfort of my head and neck.

I was very surprised by how fast the mix heated, but found the intensity relaxing - I wished I'd been given the option to stay in it longer - and Jenny checked on me every five minutes to freshen a cool, wet cloth on my forehead, and to wipe away perspiration. Aside from the relaxation, I must admit to also feeling somewhat cleansed: lighter if you will. Easily the least appealing part of the service was the shower that followed as the mix sticks to the skin and the pressure, likely due to the site's eco-friendly approach to preserving water, was quite weak. I rushed to get to the meditation garden walk - a meandering stone path fringed by beautiful landscaped grounds, including



Guests are served tea (below left) to help further aid the unique detoxifying effects of the enzyme bath (above). Kyricos says the Esalen massage she had was one of the best she's ever experienced (below right)



## MYSTERY SHOPPER: OSMOSIS

### WHAT'S THE SCORE?

Treatment offering:	8
Facilities:	7
Staff:	10
Experience/treatment:	9
Value for money:	10
<b>Overall experience:</b>	<b>8.5</b>

▶ a bamboo forest and a compelling display of bonsai and local vegetation, that culminated with a spacious Zen garden, pond and deck covered with pillowed seating. The walk is designed for mindfulness and reflection and I was quite happy my package allowed enough time (15-20 minutes) to experience this, before heading for my massage.

Without question, Osmosis saved the best for last: the signature Swedish Esalen massage. Esalen massage is a unique form of bodywork that's been developed by the Esalen Institute – a humanistic alternative education retreat – in Big Sur, California over the last 40 years and is said to use “long, flowing full-body strokes for full body connection and awareness”. Frankly, I'm not sure how to describe it, nor can I say if the divine treatment was due to technique or talent. Either way, Jeremy delivered one of the best massages I've ever had; a benchmark for all future treatments.

Finally, it's worth noting that Osmosis has a fairly extensive boutique retailing a number of unique items – from Japanese robes to meditative music, digestive enzymes, teas and health aids. However, there was no suggestion to purchase something for home use. And I must admit, after the grand finale massage, I could have been convinced to buy anything.

### THE GREEN EXPERIENCE

It's easy to see that being environmentally friendly is not just a marketing ploy at Osmosis but a core value that permeates all



Osmosis has some of the best Japanese gardens in the US

aspects of the property and business. Green practices from recycling to water resource and conservation are in operation throughout. The product houses have been chosen for their eco-credentials and locally-grown, sustainable whole foods are offered in partnership with the CERES Community Project: a local non-profit association that trains teen chefs to create nutrient-dense “meals as medicine”.

It makes perfect sense that founder Stusser is one of the original masterminds behind the Green Spa Network. Environmentalists should absolutely make note.

### THE BUSINESS

The unique Cedar Enzyme Bath treatment at Osmosis is clearly a strong marketing tool. Prior to the visit, I asked a few Sonoma County residents if they'd heard about Osmosis, and everyone I spoke to cited the

signature treatment and beautiful grounds with personal experience.

The facility has also put together some interesting packages to boost business, rather than relying on one-off treatment sales. It offers custom experiences and packages for up to 36 people with bespoke programming options – including a communal foot-bath designed to suit parties of friends, families or associates. Additionally, the spa sells wellness programmes throughout the year, entitling local members to monthly services varying from breath training, cleanses or other detoxifying treatments. And, like all services, pricing appears fair and reasonable, which is seemingly uncommon for both the area and industry – group packages start at US\$75 (£57, £49) per person, while a four-week cleanse programme is priced at US\$499 (£378, £325).

### SUMMARY

In a word, Osmosis is honest. It's not the most glamorous of spas, nor is it the most convenient to access, but it's easily one of the most authentic spas I've had the privilege to visit. The employees are sincere, the treatments are good, the pricing is fair, the setting is peaceful and the environment is respected. These days, that is a luxury. ●

Mia Kyricos is president of spa consultancy Kyricos & Associates  
Email: mia@kyricos.com  
Phone: +1 207 200 3683

### RIGHT TO REPLY

MICHAEL STUSSER, FOUNDER, OSMOSIS

We are most grateful for the deserving acknowledgements of our talented, dedicated staff. The secret ingredients at the foundation of Osmosis are shared vision, the right livelihood and meaningful work. We feel we're just getting started fully understanding the wide range of therapeutic benefits of the unique enzyme bath. As science unravels the dynamics of the microbiome – the microorganisms inhabiting the human body that impact on our physiology – we see a very promising future for the potential of live fermentation bathing. There are many very evident benefits from this treatment due to the metabolic enhancements that are delivered via the skin. The wonder of Mia's massage may have had more to do with the bath than she attributed. We hear “that was the best massage I ever had” every day.



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**M**any see gift vouchers as a last-minute solution for that age old issue of what to buy as a present! With the industry now worth approximately £4.5bn (US\$7.1bn, €5.3bn) in the UK, its popularity is obvious. Voucher sales growth has outshone retail in the last few years. People love a bargain, and the days of scouring through teletext to find the best holidays is an activity well and truly in the past. We find it almost second nature to Google our way to the best TVs or search TripAdvisor before we commit to our next holiday. So why not capitalise on this by offering vouchers online? Even if you feel your client base wouldn't purchase vouchers online, why deny them the choice? Ez-Runner fully integrates with your online brand and customer journey. Unlike many of our competitors all of this functionality is within the same software.

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Think about the data capture and marketing opportunities alone. How good would it be to monitor customer spending patterns online and in your business? Ez-Runner would hold all this data ready and available for analysis. Combine this with our Campaign Manager marketing tool and automated emails or text messages can be sent to customers based on usage or spending habits. Why not send voucher eshots to clients who've had three treatments in a month? How about sending out promotions to customers who bought

certain products or treatments? How beneficial would it be to your business to be able to analyse (from one place) how many repeat visits clients have after purchasing vouchers? Ez-Runner will give you the ability to market to both purchaser and redeemer. All of this can be examined automatically. You can have the results emailed to you as required and fine tune your campaigns as the business evolves. ●



**Increased sales** – A number of our high profile clients have increased sales over and above existing retailing, since introducing our online services. One saw an increase of more than £250k (US\$392k, €292k)

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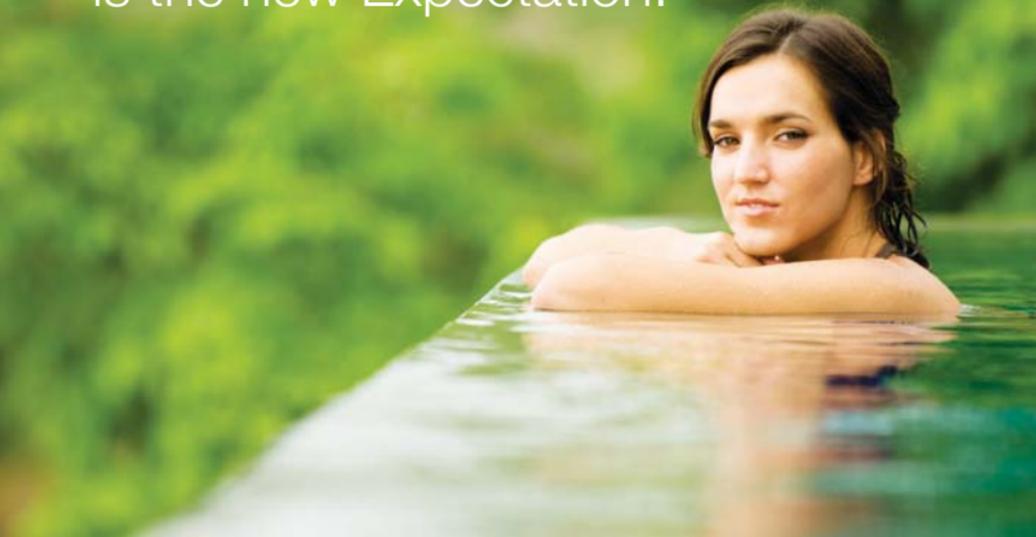
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# Personalization is the new Expectation.



Your relationship with your guest is built around many small interactions that when added together create trust in your brand. To truly service a guest "one to one", you ideally need to have one, rich customer profile across all of your departments and touch-points. Today's guest may prefer to engage in different ways--either face-to-face or by phone, web, email, mobile or even via facebook. It starts with a guest-centric foundation and it must always end with a delighted guest.

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# SPA SOFTWARE CEO BRIEFINGS

Massive change in the tech industry is transforming our lives - from mobile payments to new consumer devices. Spa software CEOs explain how their businesses are embracing these trends in the third part of our series

KATE CORNEY, PRODUCT EDITOR AND LIZ TERRY, EDITOR, SPA BUSINESS

## Adrian Burns

Agilysys

“  
Having the spa and hotel management system (PMS) fully integrated with the spa software is a huge advantage for the operator.

For example, once a spa appointment is booked, it's listed in the bedroom reservation, enabling the PMS to charge the treatment directly. In addition, expenses for incidentals - such as retail products - are charged separately.

Integration also ensures that if a guest cancels a room reservation, their spa appointment can be automatically cancelled mitigating lost revenue from a no-show.

### What new functionality are you working on?

Mobile solutions are the way forward and we have a strong track record of harnessing the latest technologies for client engagement. The ability to engage clients through mobile technology creates an endless array of possibilities enabling multi-channel marketing and service provision to a single device. Email, diary, SMS and web browsing capabilities can be paired with scanning and payment technologies or interactive apps to create a cohesive and easily synchronised personal device.

### What types of spas are your products targeted at?

Agilysys' target clients are hotels operating a spa where the service offering includes both residential stays as part of a package or alternatively hotels providing day spa treatments.



Adrian Burns

### What's the price range?

Agilysys operates a flexible and competitive pricing model which reflects a modular system design where only those functions that are used are licensed and charged for.

In addition, Agilysys offers an alternative to the traditional CapEx (capital expenditure) investment with a SaaS (Software as a Service) model where the costs are spread over a fixed term and are treated as an OpEx (operating expense) investment.

### What's your vision?

Our aim is to be a leader in transforming the guest service experience by providing innovative technology-enabled solutions. We want to assist our clients in winning the guest recruitment battle against their competitors by engaging with their guests at every stage: pre-arrival, in the moment and post-departure.

### What tech trends do you see in the industry and how are you responding to them?

At Agilysys, we're harnessing and embracing all forms of mobile technology. Smartphone adoption, 3G and 4G penetration with unlimited data plans have all deepened the integration of mobile devices into everyday life.

As the mobile ecosystem continues to develop - including progress in mobile advertising and commerce - we believe that mobile is destined to become a vitally important platform for digital marketers and service providers across all industries.

Web: [www.agilysys.com](http://www.agilysys.com) Tel: +1 877 374 4783

Email: [info@agilysys.com](mailto:info@agilysys.com) Spa-kit.net keyword: agilysys

## Yun Ho Kim

Digital Right Brain

A few years ago, people were talking about e-commerce. I guarantee that soon, they'll be talking about mobile commerce – or 'm-commerce'

M-commerce allows customers to pay with their phone, eliminating the need to carry credit cards. SalonPOS will integrate with mobile, so users can accept payment via smart phones.

### What's your vision?

SalonPOS has elements of a traditional POS system, but at the same time, we're finding new ways to make our software relevant. We're providing a platform for spas to stay connected with customers via Facebook and Twitter and other social media and tech services, which are indispensable tools businesses need to reach customers.

### What's new and exciting?

We're focusing on providing affordability and flexibility. Here at SalonPOS we realise that one size really does not fit all. You can't expect a day spa owner to pay the same price as a mobile therapist.

## Hervé Colly

ADN-informatique

Nymphaea's new module enables spas to automatically email a questionnaire to clients after their visit, to track satisfaction

Managers can view the results on an online dashboard, respond to customers (75 per cent are recovered), publish the best comments on their website and recruit fans on Facebook. The module is delivered in partnership with a company specialising in online satisfaction surveys.

Questioning clients about their expectations is the best way to ensure continuous and sustainable improvements to services.

### What makes Nymphaea different or better?

Nymphaea manages all spa activity: appointment scheduling, online booking, CRM, gift vouchers, membership, loyalty programmes, invoicing, pricing, point of sale, inventory and reporting. But its best feature is its booking engine which automatically optimises scheduling and the allocation of resources: it's an essential asset.

### What types of spas is your software targeted at?

Any type and size, from urban and hotel spas to thalassotherapy and thermal spas and from independent to multi-location, high-volume.



Yun Ho Kim

The needs of each vary. Some focus on appointments, employee tips and commission, others on marketing. We strive to cover them all and to provide the functionality each needs at a price they can afford.

### What types of spas do you target?

Our software can be used by any type of spa or beauty business. Whether day spa or mobile operation.

### What makes it different or better?

It's user-friendly and portable and has easy to use features that allow spas to manage clients, employees and schedules anytime, anywhere. We chose to make it for the iPad, which means operators can take their businesses with them wherever they go.

### What's the price range?

The price starts from US\$49.99 (€38, £32) and goes up depending on need. There are no monthly or upgrade fees. This is a one-time payment, with the exception of payment plans. A spa – with, let's say, 10 employees – will pay around US\$1,850 (€1,390, £1,170). Again, the bottom line is that one size does not fit all. We personalise the software to each company's need. Spa operators can try our software by downloading the free trial from the Apple app store.

Web [www.salonpos.net](http://www.salonpos.net) Tel: +1 631 524 5335

Email [info@salonpos.net](mailto:info@salonpos.net) Spa-kit keyword: salonpos



Hervé Colly

### What's the price range?

Nymphaea starts at £100 a month (US\$158, €119), including software, support and regular updates by our team of specialists and trainers seven days a week.

### What's your vision?

Spas will take a more prominent role in resort and hotel businesses and be increasingly viewed as assets which give a competitive advantage. Technology will have a role to play in reducing recurring management tasks, so staff can dedicate more time to clients.

### Do you have other news to share?

By working really closely with spa managers, we've created a reporting module. The module provides visibility and a thorough understanding of their customer data and their operating results through dashboards and statistics. The advantage is that they receive, and can process the results, directly in Excel.

### What trends are you responding to?

Cloud computing, mobile and tablet. They offer flexibility and availability via online and mobile. Resort managers need a single tool that integrates management, sales, marketing and reporting: this is what we intend to do.

Web: [www.adn-informatique.com](http://www.adn-informatique.com) Tel: +33 4 79 72 96 26

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## MANAGING YOUR BUSINESS

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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/MICHAELJUNG

**Damien Tamisier,**  
DIMMbiz Ltd

“It would be great if software competitors could work together to create the best solutions – starting with the development of industry standards, for example.”



The new trend is collaboration. Spas will work together far more to solve the challenges of the economic crisis. In anticipation of this, we're starting a new technology platform to serve global needs. It will launch on 26 September during the ISWKC event at Thermae-2000. The aim is to revolutionise the way spas do business.

**Tell us about your new features and functionality?**

I know this will sound weird, but our goal is not to create exciting functionality, our goal is to expand our solution only with features which help our customers achieve a good return on investment.

In the past we focused on cost reductions, automating all the operational and financial flows. Since the beginning of the recession our focus has moved to the generation of sales and marketing for customers, as well as social media integration, loyalty systems and database marketing – to name just a few.

**What types of spas are your products targeted at?**

xPlan has been designed for large spas and companies with multi-properties. We have a cloud-based version too for smaller spas.

**What makes it different or better?**

I'm personally convinced that respectable solution providers shouldn't try to compete with others, but should analyse real market needs – in doing so you won't be influenced by others.

xPlan is built to be as 'real-life' as possible, that makes the solution flexible, strong and reliable. Are we better than others? We prefer that

you ask this question of our customers. One thing is sure: xPlan is solid, fast and reliable.

**What's the price?**

Our price strategy is based on return on investment (ROI), we want our customers to achieve their ROI as quick as possible, but we need them to be involved enough to be willing to achieve it. As we want to be fair to all, our prices grow and shrink proportionally with the energy a customer invests in the project. The price is completely customised to the real needs of the customer. Bankless financing is possible if needed.

**What's your vision for xPlan?**

Seven years ago, xPlan started as an underdog. Now we love this position so much we don't want to shout everywhere that we intend to monopolise the spa world. Ninety-five per cent of our new business comes from word-of-mouth referrals, this is our best publicity.

**How are you responding to tech trends?**

Everybody knows that a strong online presence is a must: smartphone apps, online booking engines, websites... we do it all and have done for years. We've proven that it helps reduce the operational costs drastically, if done well.

**Do you have other perspectives to share?**

I think that we have one of the widest fully integrated solutions in the market. It automates the management of nearly every aspect of a big spas' operation, up to those serving a couple of thousands of guests a day. Many of our features are unique, and can be found on our website. At the end I would give the reader one single tip: never believe what we say – call or visit some references to check if the reality matches the stories.



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# it's about

managing my spa's  
schedule on the go



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## Tom Bentley-Taylor

Shortcuts Software

“**People are using social media to do their research and share opinions, so we've had huge interest in our review management tool.**”

This tool lets spas post positive reviews from confirmed clients, straight onto Facebook. Our main goal is to help spas get more new clients, to retain them, get them coming back, spending more and referring their friends.

### What's new and exciting?

We have new features and some enhancements coming soon. The global clients functionality will improve a spa's operations where a client visits more than one venue of a multi-location business, while the loyalty and membership features are being enhanced. There's also an online client information card to relieve congestion in the reception area.

### What types of spas is your software targeted at?

There are versions for any size of business, from the single operator to multi-location chains, and also functionality for different types of spa. We cater for differing operating hours via our 24/7 helpdesk.

## Chris Parker

ESP Online

“**Our Business Intelligence on Demand brings spa information to life, with a top-down view and interactive journey**”

This new feature directs spa owners to pinpoint problem areas in their company, meaning they don't need to sift through pages of reports in order to get an holistic view of their business. It means any money spent or actions taken will have the best results.

### What types of spas are your products targeted at?

We focus on all types and sizes as our system is modular. Our product also has third party PMS integration and multi-site integration which makes it suitable for groups.

### What makes it different or better?

What makes our system unique is its comprehensiveness. From bookings to balance sheets and everything in-between, we focus on covering as many of the spa business processes as possible.

Also, our hybrid combination of desktop and cloud capabilities means that spas can work offline or online, which in some countries is a real need due to internet connectivity being unstable.



Tom Bentley-Taylor

### What makes it different or better?

As well as the core software, Shortcuts has developed a range of cloud-based products that can be added to enhance the system. This is called the SMART System and allows spa owners to do a number of things: monitor and manage automated marketing campaigns; manage online reputation by checking client feedback; compare the business against industry benchmarks; monitor online booking; maintain listings on mylocalsalon.co.uk and; allow remote access to the appointment book

There's one log-in and everything is accessed through a central place, making it easy to navigate.

### What's the price range?

The core software starts from less than £100 (US\$158, €119) a month. The SMART System is an additional £50 (US\$79, €60) per month. We monitor the return on investment spas make from the software and notify them of this to show how much the system is doing for their business.

### What's your vision for your business?

To constantly develop useful and easy-to-use solutions that benefit spas in every area of their business – such as our iPad functionality – especially picking up on trends such as mobile, social and the cloud.

Web: [www.shortcuts.co.uk](http://www.shortcuts.co.uk) Tel: +44 161 972 4900

Email: [marketing@shortcuts.co.uk](mailto:marketing@shortcuts.co.uk) Spa-kit keyword: shortcuts



Chris Parker

### What's the price range?

Our model offers upfront purchases, rental and Software as a Service. Rentals start at US\$50 (€38, £32) a month; upfront purchases at US\$300 (€226, £190) and US\$1,500 (€1,128, £948) per licence. Ultimately it depends on the needs of the user.

### What's your vision for your business?

Having the right product is only a part of the equation: working with the right company is just as important.

Software partners need to be integral to your business, because the closer the relationship the better the results. Software isn't like an electronic appliance you turn on, use, and turn off again, it depends on input from users and they have very different needs which change over time. It's a journey that evolves. This is why we're called an Evolutionary Service Provider (ESP): we help evolve your business.

### How are you responding to tech trends?

Our plan is to leverage the opportunities provided by the cloud, but do it with a difference rather than just tick off the fact that we have a specific feature. We offer custom development and our policy is that whatever development takes place will be provided to all our clients, so everyone benefits.

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**Carita focuses on haircare**

Carita has ventured into haircare with its new product and treatment system Haute Beauté. The system focuses on personalised haircare consultations and treatments along with new scalp and hair products including shampoos, conditioners and elixirs to treat specific scalp and hair issues such as unruly hair or dry scalp. It's already launched in France and Japan, and will debut in Thailand next March.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **carita**



**Pure simpler range by AW Lake**

AW Lake has developed the Pure skin, hair and bodycare range. The skincare line comprises a Basic face cream or gel plus Supercharged serums, containing bio-active ingredients for specific skin concerns. Made with natural ingredients, plant essences and botanical extracts with high concentrations of bio-active ingredients to target specific skin concerns, it allows users to customise their skincare.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **aw lake**



**Cellulift.Pro machine by Thalgo**

The Cellulift.Pro machine is part of Thalgo's new anti-cellulite Slim and Go treatment range. Using skin lipo-stimulation techniques, it is designed to smooth, reshape, and firm specific areas of the body. Three levels of intensity are available depending on the amount of cellulite a client has and the machine comes with three attachments for therapists to tailor treatments for the knees, ankles, and face.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **thalgo**



**Drink supplement for skincare**

French wellbeing company Evo2lution has developed a seaweed-based cosmetic drink concentrate for spas. Reinforce Skin Firmness is a liquid supplement designed to complement the efficiency of all facial treatments and skincare regimens. It's part of Evo2lution's nutricosmeceutic concept and is a series of 15ml vials of skin nutrient concentrates that can be taken over 14 or 28 days.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **evo2lution**



**Russie Blanche expands range**

Russie Blanche has launched two face and body products. Its latest addition, forming part of its Siberian Petals face range, is the Balancing Mask with Plants, which uses Siberian ginseng and golden root plus green clay. Meanwhile, the Banya Hydra-rose Firming body cream contains caffeine concentrate with Siberian ginseng and golden root, plus rose, geranium patchouli and chamomile.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **russie blanche**



**Purexpert concept for oily skin**

Purexpert by Germaine De Capuccini is a new skincare concept for oily and normal skin. It incorporates a cleanse, renew and hydrate programme and products include the Purifying Mattifying Foam, Refiner Essence and Oil-Free Hydro-Mattifying Gel-Cream. Ingredients in the foam comprise prebiotic, manuka concentrate and willow extract. In total, there's one treatment and nine homecare items.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **germaine**



### Luxsit's organic facial mist

The Enrich Hydrating Facial Mist, by Swedish-based natural product company Luxsit, is designed to refresh and hydrate the skin on a daily basis. The mist can be used with or without make-up to help reduce fine lines and dryness, and also protect the skin from external environmental damage. Ingredients include birch tree sap, cucumber extract, and beta glucan from Avena sativa oats.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **luxsit**



### Telomere technology in skincare

Aromatherapy Associates has introduced a fresh skincare line – the Rose Infinity collection. Comprising a serum, moisturiser and eye cream, the range incorporates telomere cell research and technology. Telomere cells are part of our chromosomes which relate to skin tissue degeneration and ageing (see SB13/1 p54). The products use hydrolyzed soy and yeast proteins designed to protect and rebuild telomeres.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keywords **aromatherapy associates**



### Voya's Get Glowing clay mask

Voya has revealed its Get Glowing clay mask which has been created to help purify the skin to leave a brighter complexion. The mask contains a blend of rosemary and organic seaweed to detoxify, along with eucalyptus to eliminate oils and toxins, plus palmarosa, lavender and baobab oil. The cooling mask also contains kaolin clay to help reduce the production of sebum in summer.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **voya**



### The Gemya Evo bed by Lemi

The Gemya Evo spa bed by Italian design company Lemi has been developed with exceptional comfort in mind, and comes with a face hole and cover, for ease-of-use for various types of massages. It features integrated adjustable armrests and a variable-tilt headrest. The armrests are designed to provide more comfort while the customer is lying down. The bed can be used for both face and body treatments.

[spa-kit.net](http://spa-kit.net) keyword **lemi**

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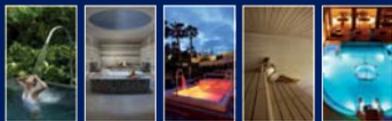
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