



ASIA: Japan

ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Last year, especially beginning last autumn, the Japanese economy has been darkest – consumers have stopped spending on luxury items, and lots of magazines who targeted rich consumer segments are collapsing. Many have stopped to issue their magazine or gone bankrupt.

Consumer have largely stopped going to spas which charge over 400USD for one treatment which is found in some high end hotel spas. Lots of top hotels introduced special introductory packages which has created new spa goers ie, younger generation, those in their 20's and 30's and their friends and moms.

Top hotel spas who introduced special introductory packages have gained a new customer base – local customers. They are a relatively younger generation, which is good news for hotels because it brings in a demographic that could be a regular for many years in the future. These new spa-goers are much younger than the previous customers who were generally hotel guests from overseas – women in their 40's and 50's.

There is sign of a recovery in Japan, however it seems limited to Tokyo. This country seems spread into two countries, one is Tokyo and the other is Japan without Tokyo. Tokyo is attracting lots of tourists from other Asian countries especially wealthy markets who would like to spend money for shopping and food, plus relaxing.

INNOVATION

- It is interesting to note that there is considerable market entry of foreign capital to the Japanese wellness and tourism market – especially Asian money.
- The traditional Japanese Onsen Ryokan has become an international standard spa itself with in-room massages, stone saunas, and high-end hot mineral water bathing facilities.
- Our food, drinks as well as Onsens are widely known to the Asian tourist, so our next innovation will be from our old traditional style of hotels. Service is changing to reflect international destinations as well as Onsen spas now and in the future.
- SpaFinder Japan has been introducing spa gift tickets (gift certificates) to consumers

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