



AUSTRALIA: AUSTRALASIA

What is making news in your country when it comes to spa and wellness?

In Australia wellness is finding a stronger focus, with health retreats expanding. Likewise, public knowledge, acceptance and interest are all on the rise. Spas are more frequently linking their offerings to their own brand of spa products. Australian products have unique points of difference and sell very well in the international marketplace.

What is happening in your country when it comes to wellness tourism and/or medical tourism?

We have a strong ability to service wellness-based tourism in Australia. Whether it be urban spas, health retreats or hot springs spa destinations, we now see a large variety and diversity in offerings.

Please give us one sentence to describe the latest developments in your country for each of these spa categories:

What is happening with hotel spas?

Hotel operators are now more convinced that a spa is as critical to a hotel's development as, say, a swimming pool, and therefore hotel spas are becoming more of a mainstream feature.

What is happening with destination spas?

We've had quite a strong focus on health-based retreats over the last 30 years. We have a wide selection of health retreats that are leading the industry in a way comparable to the international market.

What is happening with hot springs spas?

The hot spring market is growing and the number of facilities in Australia continues to rise. This market is more open and experiential.

What has been the general attitude about investing in the spa/wellness arena in 2013?

Hotel operators are investing in new spas, as are some independent health retreat companies.

Looking back at the past four decades of spa and wellness, what would you consider "a defining moment?"

When I started in 1997, there were approximately 6 urban day spas in Australia; now we have well in excess of 300 (though not all of these are full service spas with a hydrotherapy offering). The growth in the day spa market has happened mainly in the last 10 years and even though Australia is still a very young spa market, we are starting to see a much broader public acceptance of spa and wellness overall.

SUBMITTED BY:

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