

AUSTRALIA: AUSTRALIA

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

Billions of internet users are becoming more educated and demanding as consumers. We see an increasing need to communicate, obtain information and make decisions in less time. Consumers will demand more bang for their buck and, as skin care therapists working alongside product companies, we will need to demonstrate treatment and product efficacy, and provide faster and more effective results. From an educational point of view, ongoing training for therapists will be necessary due to the evolution of products and treatment modalities to meet the demand of consumers.

The integration of wellness into spa services is ongoing. Spas are also integrating more clinical aesthetics services to meet steady growth in the professional beauty sector and the clinical/medical sector. Spas are increasingly adding full-service beauty providers to spa and wellness to meet customer demands. Whilst good for the bottom line, these trends create a problem by blurring the distinction between spas and standard professional aesthetics businesses.

2. With the buzz about wellness technologies, how do you see spa and wellness establishments using wellness technologies in your country? In the future?

The anti-aging movement will be a major focus for clinic/spas. Products and treatments that deliver results will be included on all treatment menus. Skin treatments, as opposed to facials, will be considered essential. Technology will be incorporated into treatments more than ever before. Effective and safe devices will be necessary for transdermal delivery of cosmeceutical ingredients.

3. When it comes to wellness tourism, what is happening in your country?

Wellness education will be a priority for clients. An educational slant with wellbeing strategies will be a requirement for clinics and spas to provide.

A more concise skin consultation will be needed to create successful clinic treatment plans and prescribe skin care programs that deliver results and build a successful business.

We have seen a steady increase in wellness-oriented practices and offerings in the hospitality sphere (with or without an in-house spa). There has been a slowed increase in wellness-oriented tourism marketing, largely because of industry stabilization after the explosive spa/wellness boom of the past decade.

4. Please provide one sentence that best describes the latest developments in your country for each of these categories:

Hotel spas: Evolution of services to include a wider range of clinical, wellness and beauty/aesthetics/grooming services in addition to traditional spa services.

Destination spas: Social or group spa-going is an increasingly important component.

Hot springs spas: There are limited hot spring development opportunities in Australia but there is an early groundswell of next-stage development.

Wellness living communities: Slow growth.

Corporate or employee wellness programs: Slow growth.

5. Fast-forward five years and tell us what you think the spa and wellness industry in your country will look like.

Stem cell-based products will gain a larger share of the market, as will tyrosinase inhibitors and organic ingredients to treat conditions such as photo-aging and hyper pigmentation, one of the key skin concerns we struggle to treat successfully in clinics.

Professionals will need to improve their knowledge of skin science and ingredients science, and develop business strategies on how to manage a business with multi-generational employees.

Education for graduates in salon, spa and wellness therapies will be offered with a holistic view regarding service excellence. As a result, graduates will be distinguished by their integration into the salon, medi spa or wellness environment. They will need to be equipped with the unique attributes that generate return visits and promote client advocacy.

Escalation in numbers of spa clinics and medi spas, with the term spa clinic slowly replacing the term medi spa. Early stages of maturation of group visitation to destination spas and spas with tourist hotels for focussed cosmetic clinical and wellness clinical services. Early evolution of spa and wellness-style palliative care and rehabilitation. Increase in development of mineral spring and hot spring opportunities.

While we need to consider all of these points, the need for personal service and the 'human touch' will still be important.

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