



EUROPE: FRANCE

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

A new way of living - healthy diet, bio food, exercise are mostly associated with wellness. Spa is either a deluxe product limited to 5-star hotels or connected with health cures like Thalasso therapy.

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

There is no economic incentive to go to a medical destination since the French health system is very generous. Wellness tourism, on the other hand, is growing very fast.

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?

Spas are expanding nowadays and there is competition over who will have the most sophisticated treatment for females, and for more and more male customers.

What is happening with destination spas?

The traditional spa destinations associated with mineral waters (Evian, Vichy, etc.) are making a comeback and offer a wide range of treatments, alongside conventional entertainment, like classical music festivals and art exhibitions, to attract a new type of customer.

What is happening with hot springs spas?

There are very few hot springs destinations in France, though the few places that do exist enjoy a small but constant flow of visitors.

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

The trend is mainly in improving the existing spas. More generally, wellness is becoming more important in consumer decision-making. Senior citizens and the body-conscious, affluent segments of the market are leading the movement, and this has prompted growing press coverage.

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

The defining moment came when wellbeing became important in people’s minds. The causes are numerous: stress, urbanization, the desire to look young and stay healthy. The trend has been growing steadily since the 1990s.

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