



## EUROPE: *Germany*

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### ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Despite the present economic situation, wellness vacations still rate as very popular amongst Germans. One out of three German households, which equates to 11.5 million, considers taking this type of vacation and 5.6 million households have been on a spa vacation already. Nearly half of the German population considers the topic of wellbeing as an important part of their life. It is important to mention that in Germany “wellness” is not regarded so much as beauty treatments but more as relaxing heat experiences such as sauna, steam baths and spa or health treatments such as massages and hamam treatments. These kinds of wellness vacations are spent mostly in wellness hotels.

For consumers to decide which hotel one will spend their vacation in, independent and reliable quality seals are becoming more and more important. These are even more important for hotel selection than articles in magazines or newspapers or information and ratings from the Internet. This is leading to an emergence of new quality seals for spa and wellness hotels in Germany. Another positive development for the country’s hotel industry is that more Germans are deciding to spend their vacations in Germany, which was not a traditional holiday destination in the past. Nowadays three out of four spa vacations are spent in national regions. But even though the number of national guests increased by 5%, the actual bookings of spa treatments declined slightly. Yet this is not a dramatic development, considering the above-average figures for the industry from the previous years.

### STATISTICS

Even though the economic situation at the end of 2009 compared to the end of 2008 was rated worse by the hoteliers, their forecast for 2010 turns out to be much more positive. One reason for this brighter perspective is the reduction of the VAT rate from 19% to 7% in January 2010 for overnight hotel stays. This has resulted in a stronger desire for the industry to invest. 80% of hoteliers indicate that they want to invest the savings from this tax reduction into their hotel.

Besides investing in new or better conference equipment, hoteliers are willing to invest more in the wellness and fitness areas of their hotels than in previous years. This is a result of guests’ requests and expectations.

### INNOVATIONS

During the last year the German hotel and spa industry started to pay more attention to the uniqueness of their range of services and facilities. The Roomers design hotel in Frankfurt, for example, has become a hot spot for the national and international design elite. The combined conference and spa

## SPA INDUSTRY BRIEFING: *Germany*

area of the Roomers hotel was created by 3 deluxe biorhythms as a holistic communication vehicle comprising contents, and the interior design was staged via a combination of materials, tactile stimulation, light and sound.

Another example of giving uniqueness to a hotel is the Kameha Grand in Bonn, which belongs to the Leading Green Initiative. The hotel has its own geothermal system and is able to cover around 70% of its own heating and cooling requirements.

KLAFS newly launched sauna PURE is a good example of high quality standards and well thought out design concepts. It was honored with the iF product design award 2010. It is important to get customers physically involved in KLAFS' products these days therefore new showrooms were opened in Zurich, Switzerland and Dusseldorf, Germany, in 2010.

In the current economic situation, we are putting emphasize on innovation and R&D. KLAFS participates, for example, in a new research centre - the Fraunhofer Institute in Duisburg. The so-called Future Lab develops the hotel room of the future with a first time ever open heat experience area inside the bathroom. Also, KLAFS is presenting a concept beyond hot and cold stimulation: the Energy-Lounge a relaxing lounge for power napping—with a unique and new room concept. As proven by scientific experiments, the frequency of the movement is in perfect synchronization with brain waves. A sensor conveniently starts the oscillating movement, allowing you to drift into deep dreams.

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