

# ASIA: INDIA

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## **1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to wellness or wellbeing?**

India is one of the youngest countries in the world with nearly 60% of its population below the age of 30. As such, wellness is not necessarily on the top of its priority list, in spite of India being home to a major Wellness Systems like Yoga, Ayurveda, Meditation, etc.

In Nov 2014, the Government of India formed the Ministry of 'AYUSH' to promote Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy. As part of this initiative on "Indian Wellness" by the current government - The International Yoga Day was held in Delhi on 21st June 2015. It heralds a revival of Yoga in India among the common person. Ayurveda and Meditation too are making a strong comeback. Wellness is also part of the 25 sectors that have been identified by the current government initiative - "Make in India Campaign".

Most 5 and 4 star hotels have Spas that offer Ayurvedic therapies. The Day Spa business is also growing exponentially with Gyms, Beauty Salons, Ayurvedic Spas, and Foot Spas mushrooming everywhere. Another interesting aspect is that there is that there are a number of Organized and Franchised chain of wellness centers coming up all over India.

## **2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think are important developments in your country for each of the following:**

**Spas:** With increasing disposable incomes, stressful lives led by young Indians the need to de-stress on weekends is on the rise. This has led to an increased growth in Day Spas in India. The rise in day spas range from luxury spas in seven star hotels to premium spas in malls and value spas around residential blocks. Indians are willing to experiment with different types of massages from across Asia. Beauty Salons, Fitness centers and Ayurvedic Day Spas are fast growing based on a franchise model.

**Wellness Tourism:** India's wellness tourism industry is poised to grow at a CAGR of 22% compared to the US growth rate of 5.8%. This is primarily due to the increased awareness and acceptance of the benefits of Yoga, Meditation and Ayurveda. India has luxury destination spas like Ananda and Vana in the Himalayas and Orange County, Kumarakom Lake Resort, Somatheeram, etc in the South. It also offers premium and value offerings to budget travellers. India is finally poised to be a major destination for Wellness Tourism following easing of government regulations for visa such as visa on arrival, e-visa, etc.

**Wellness Living Communities/Real Estate:** We can trifurcate wellness into Body, Mind and Spirit. The most famous wellness international commune related to the Mind and Spirit in India is Auroville in Tamilnadu, which is not owned by anyone and free for anyone to join. India also has many Ashrams related to various Gurus, which are large communities by, themselves be it the Osho commune in Pune or the Art of living Commune in Bangalore and the Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's commune in Tamilnadu.

Most high end gated communities in Indian Metro cities now boast of Wellness offerings like gym, yoga halls, etc, although the concept of Wellness living communities like in the West with real estate focus and ownership is still a distant reality.

**Beauty:** This segment is the one that is growing the fastest based on rising awareness and higher disposable incomes. Medical aesthetics clinics are also gaining popularity. Hair transplants, weight and inch loss clinics and Beauty salons are rapidly growing. Organized and franchised based Beauty Salons and Hair Services chains have started to mushroom in the metros and tier 2 cities in India and are replacing the 'unorganized neighborhood' salons.

**Fitness:** Fitness centers are becoming very popular driven by role models in Bollywood and availability of gyms in almost all localities in major cities in India. Other forms of fitness like running, walking, cycling too are getting popular.

Technology savvy cities like Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai, etc. have taken to fitness apps, although price is a major role in determining the brand.

Marathons are becoming increasingly popular in India and Indians have taken to running like never before. Fitness products like heart rate monitors, fitbit watches and nutrition supplements are seeing an increased growth in India.

**Nutrition:** India is the diabetic capital in the world. Sugar free foods are being aggressively marketed. Supplements and herbal products especially marketed by Patanjali (promoted by Baba Ramdev) and other herbal companies have taken the market by storm. Organic food is becoming increasingly popular with most premium groceries and online food companies offering organic products. Large companies like Fabindia and Organic India are growing very fast in their nutrition offerings for the health conscious Indians. Consulting dieticians and nutritionists is also becoming very popular in India.

### **3. How would you describe the state of workplace wellness in your country?**

Corporate Wellness programs are currently becoming increasingly popular with major corporates sponsoring marathons and “stepathalons” in India. It’s common for HR to launch programs like “Couchto5k” to promote running and health. Most of the large corporates in metros also offer gyms within the office campuses.

In nutrition, health food is being offered in company canteens and green tea is served commonly in most companies. Companies are also willing to sponsor training programs to promote “emotional and mental wellness” amongst employees by training them in techniques like EFT, meditation and yoga etc.

Corporates in India are yet to wake up to Indian wellness in a big way and are currently busy experimenting with international methods of wellness and fitness. “Wellness Off sites” are a couple of years away in India.

### **4. What has been the general attitude about investing in spa/wellness in your country in 2015? Specific examples?**

Spas and beauty salons in India are fast growing through the franchise route through investments by individual businessmen. There are various examples of spas and beauty salons registered with Franchise India like Aroma Thai Spa, the four fountain spas, Sukho Thai, Naturals Beauty Salons, Richfeel trichology Centre etc. Stand-alone Spas have also mushroomed by investments by individual entrepreneurs. Last year saw an investment in Tattva Spa by the Indian Angel Network and Enrich beauty salons raised series B funding last year through private equity placement.

The VC industry and the PE industry’s current attitude is to invest in tech based platforms/ e-commerce platforms like nykaa.com - a beauty and wellness retailer which raised series B funding of 9.5 million \$ this year. On demand home salon services, home and wellness portals also raised funding this year. Some examples include - Purplle.com, Fitmein.com, Curejoy, Hijinny, The homesalon, Vanity Cube, MSM Box, Zoojoo.be, Belita, Vyomo etc. Organic food e-tailer Naturally Yours also raised seed funding this year.

A lot of action is expected in the Indian wellness space in the years to come as far investing from individuals and VC funds is concerned.

### **5. Whose responsibility is it to create a well world?**

A well world resides within each one of us.

Hence, it is the responsibility of each one of us to find the path to this world. However, this journey need not be done alone. Joining support groups, friends,

ashrams or even taking help of a guru or a coach may help make this journey interesting and rewarding. While, the path may start with physical well-being it must transcend to mind and soul to find lasting bliss and true Wellness.

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