

EUROPE: ITALY

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

Wellness is more and more synonymous with prevention, good-balanced nutrition, and the appropriate combination of exercise and relaxation. Many traditional doctors are now offering integrated programs to support the health and beauty of their patients who demand and expect customized protocols and services.

Many blogs have flourished on these subjects, bringing cultural influences from other countries to Italy: they are particularly appealing to Millennials, along with the wide diffusion of mobile apps and technological devices supporting the commitment to self-care in everyday life, helping one to keep motivated, informed and to measure the results. Growing urban stress is compensated with short breaks, regenerating escapes to natural sites where it is possible to combine a well-being experience in spas and traditional thermal spa centers along with good-tasting food and various sports activities.

“Silent” eco-luxury hotels are also a new trend where one can escape to completely regenerate. A brand new example is the Adler Lodge Alpe di Siusi, Dolomites – part of the UNESCO World Heritage.

Another trend is represented by the Longevity Retreats offered by more traditional thermal spa locations where history and wellbeing meets a modern integrated approach. One of the most famous, and appreciated also by international clientele, is the Fonteverde Hotel in Tuscany, recently awarded by Spafinder as the Best Countryside Hotel in Italy.

Moreover, naturally healthy and organic products, according to a recent Euromonitor study, are performing better and better, proving that a deep change of consciousness is really taking place, positively influencing the consumer’s choices despite their reduced disposable incomes.

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

Spas: The most interesting Italian phenomenon is represented by the mini spas developed within pharmacies, which are now starting to offer medical, nutritional and beauty solutions. More than for the numbers of new openings, it is really significant since it shows that the connection between health, beauty and wellness is now perceived as essential and that the integrated approach is becoming mainstream. In many regions, spas are also part of the winning strategy implemented by hotels to attract national and international clientele and to ‘de-seasonalize’ their offer.

Wellness Tourism: Tourism performed well in Italy particularly thanks to the domestic and international wellness travelers attracted by our unique combination of wellness, nature, art and culinary cultures. A new component of wellness tourism is represented by fitness tourism, which combines the pleasure of being in beautiful natural and historic locations with a variety of specialized sporting activities.

Wellness Living Communities: They do not exist in Italy except for a few hotel/resort spas which offer the possibility of spending time in independent villas or condos close to the local thermal spa. Italians still prefer to have their own near-home spa and gym or to move to touristic wellness locations.

Wellness Real Estate: Eco-design is very much in demand, especially by Millennials, for private houses. In addition, touristic and public buildings are now more sustainable and take into consideration the wellness of those who will inhabit them. A very recent good example is a 100% eco-sustainable public kindergarten in Guastalla by Cuccinella.

Beauty: Less invasive surgical solutions for face and body are still very much in demand to help match stereotypical beauty features along with complementary solutions, such as supplements and special beauty foods specifically conceived to have anti-aging remodeling benefits.

Fitness: Now more frequently connected to the medical world in order to offer programs that empower the body without compromising its balance and vital organs. Almost 2/3 of the population is actively concerned about physical well-being and practice some sport activity.

Nutrition: A key topic more than ever this year in Italy, thanks to the 2015 Expo, which has supported a message of healthy balanced nutrition very much discussed in the digital as well as the conventional media. "EAT WELL, INVEST IN YOUR HEALTH" has been the motto of the recent national campaign by the Italian Ministry of Health. It is an important response to the very dramatic phenomenon of growing childhood obesity due to processed food taking the place of the home-cooking that was common for the past generations, and to the lack of diet and wellness education.

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

More and more companies are developing projects and activities to support the wellbeing of their workers, offering organic food, medical consultation, fitness facilities, and cultural and special programs to educate on how to live better. In particular, Technogym, a world-renowned Italian Company, has created and is promoting specific wellness programs for companies, supporting a very important

message: Investing in Wellness is the best route to increasing the company's productivity.

In Davines/[comfort zone], we opened a Longevity Bar which serves organic food. We also offer mindfulness sessions, and have a very special project led by a philosopher to favour a harmonious productive environment so that work can contribute to the building of a satisfying life project.

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

Major investments have been done in specific regions such as Trentino-Altoadige, Lombardia, Tuscany, Veneto and Emilia Romagna to support the relaunch of ancient traditional thermal spas as well as to making hotels more competitive and appealing to both domestic and international clients searching for a quality regenerating time.

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

Creating a well world is everyone's responsibility, yet the more we have cultural, material or political means at our disposal, the more we have the duty to keep us in balance and to care for the people and the environment around us, and for the next generations. This is a duty but also a very important creative and "binding" possibility: we should remember it every day when we wake up and plan our working, family, and social day. We can truly improve the quality of our life as well as influencing others, by leading by example and by sharing positive, wellness-oriented thoughts, habits, projects and even very difficult challenges to stimulate intelligent solutions. Companies, schools, associations can indeed facilitate these processes, and social media can support this in a fantastic way, communicating and diffusing positive inspirational messages.

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