



THE AMERICAS: MEXICO

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

Recently, former President Enrique Peña Nieto announced that one of his government's priorities is to regain Mexico its position as one of the 10 top world destinations. According to the World Tourism Organization, Mexico has fallen from 7th place in 2006 as a world destination to 13th in 2012, mainly due to a lack of a marketing strategy and financial incentives. All this is changing; a few weeks ago, President Peña Nieto announced an investment of over \$8.6 Billion in tourism, distributed in over 150 projects which will generate over 33,000 new rooms, more than 30,000 new direct jobs and over 70,000 indirect jobs. The Secretary of Tourism has pointed out the medical and wellness tourism as one of the fast growing segments in the sector. Accordingly, strategies are under development to embrace this project.

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

Mexico has more than a dozen medical destinations specializing in oncology, orthopedics, heart, and plastic surgery. Recently the Joint Commission International approved 7 hospitals and the Mexican Health Department certified over 100 hospitals which comply with international standards. According to some former patients, the main attractions of México as a Medical and Wellness destination are professional service; the warmth of the medical and nurse staff; the great weather conditions and extraordinary wellness destinations for a relaxing recovery, which also include a diversified variety of entertainment.

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?

The importance of a complete Spa in a Hotel can make a difference in the successful operation of the finances of the hotel.

What is happening with destination spas?

The business of Destination Spas is growing, especially when Wellness is involved.

What is happening with hot springs spas?

Hot springs spas represent Tradition. This is where the first spas were established in México.

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

Positive. As mentioned before, President Peña Nieto recently announced an investment in the tourism sector of over 8.6 billion dollar which include over 150 projects. If we consider that most of the hotels located in touristic destination have a spa, we very well can expect the opening of new great spas. Apple Leisure, Marriott and Four Seasons, among others, have announced new investments in top Mexican destinations.

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

For me, the defining moment came when people realized that as a result of stress, lack of exercise and improper eating habits, our health has diminished. Statistics show that the main causes of death are caused by diabetes, cardiovascular and brain diseases. Although people is living longer, they are in poorer health. Recently, people have gained consciousness and now are willing to take care of themselves. As a result, there has been a significant growth in day spas, gyms, wellness clinics and specialized stores.

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