



ASIA: SINGAPORE

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

The recent national election and national policy changes to reduce the number of foreign workers has significantly affected the industry, and I would expect a shake up in this sector with some of the wellness companies restructuring and consolidating their businesses and weaker ones closing down.

More government institutions such as Institute of Technical Education and Republic Polytechnic are training new entrants into the wellness and spa industry, as well as at mid career level.

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

There are a growing number of quality international branded spas that have opened up in Singapore in the past year, with ESPA positioned as a destination spa at Resort World Resort.

Banyan Tree has launched their very first spa in Singapore, and along with the launch of the W Hotel and the Westin hotel, the number of quality spas that attract both international tourist as well as locals has increased.

Medical tourism has always been one of the key growth sectors that are strongly being encouraged by the government. Next year with the launch of Connexion, the medical tourism market will see a new first for the Singapore market with the twinning of Farrer Park Hospital, a 220-bed private tertiary hospital with a luxury hotel named One Farrer Hotel & Spa. One Farrer Hotel & Spa offers its guests choice accommodations ranging from serviced apartments to villas to standard hotel rooms. The centre is equipped with video-conferencing capabilities linked to Farrer Park Hospital's operating theatres and the Institute of Nutrition.

Hotels that target high end medical travelers from around the region will increase the number of beds offered for medical travelers and suites for their families.

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?

With the launch of the integrated resorts in Singapore, the strong growth in the number of tourists has increased significantly. The launch of new hotels such as W, Westin, Marina Bay Sands, Resort World Singapore in the last year has also brought with it new and exciting spa brands and concepts to Singapore. However, there are challenges with staffing especially with the cuts in the number foreign workers.

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

Although the demand for spa and wellness services has increased over the last five years, the challenge in finding staff continues. This will certainly impact some of the new players and may slow down the investment in new day spas for the next year or so until things stabilize.

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

The moment is now, as the wellness industry associations are effective in engaging the policy makers to raise the profile and image of the wellness and spa industry. A major research study was commissioned last year and some of the

recommendations are being implemented at the governmental level and association level.

Examples include: the setup of the first registry of wellness and spa professionals in a e-registration platform; funding for using e-booking systems; and the separation of sex workers from therapists when it comes to health and sexual disease screening and education.

At the same time, there is a lot of emphasis on productivity training and grants to support the use of technology to improve business performance and practices.

The next five years will see a sleeker and better-trained industry.

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