



Industry Briefing Papers 2016

EUROPE: SPAIN

1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to spa, wellness, wellness travel or well-being?

Spain is fast becoming the premier European destination for both health & medical tourism and spa & wellness holidays. Health tourism is growing at a rate of 20% per year.

The excellent reputation of its hospitals and clinics, the high level of its professionals, its spas and health resorts and the most modern treatments make it the destination of choice for health and wellness tourism. The cultural, sport and leisure offer, its cuisine and Mediterranean lifestyle mean it is the perfect place for relaxing and recovering from any condition.

2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think is the most important development in your country for each of the following wellness sectors:

Spas: It is not just international tourists but even domestic tourists that are increasing the number of thermal spa holidays or health-related trips they take within Spain. The welcoming of a new face of tourism will open up plenty of opportunities to tourism industry professionals and allied businesses.

Beauty: With the country having a higher number of people of an older demographic, Spain's beauty and personal care market has been impacted in a positive way. A demand for natural cosmetics is growing, as consumers are making natural products for beauty and hygiene a focus point in their purchase.

Fitness: Spanish citizens are among Europe's most fitness-conscious, with some 4.9 million people signed up to gyms. The low-cost gym model has allowed the fitness industry to ride out the crisis.

Nutrition: Increasing awareness of food allergies and intolerance drives sales of food intolerance and organic products.

Wellness Tourism: The rise of health tourism in Spain over the past years has given the Spanish tourism industry a wakeup call to start making active efforts to capitalize on a sector that is all set to be the future of tourism in Spain. Spain has one of the best healthcare systems in the world and has been awarded with the 7th rank by the World Health Organization in this regard. This, in addition to factors like easy accessibility, affordable treatments, excellent hospitals and clinics and English-speaking medical professionals have led to the country being seen as one of the top medical tourism destinations.

Wellness Communities or Real Estate: Spain is the world's 2nd largest tourist destination for residential tourism, where foreigners acquire a second residence. Spain Health System is ranked 7th best in the world and the country has the 8th best life expectancy. Factors such as the most European citizens are covered by the Spanish public health, the very easy going life style, the Mediterranean diet and the excellent climate, are extremely important for people leaving their home land, particularly for those who have retired. Spain represents, for the northern European "baby boomer" the most suitable alternative when buying or renting a retirement home, second home or future retirement home, in terms of a fully integrated Active Lifestyle and Wellness Style real estate offer. The concept of "European Florida" occurs in the south of Spain.

3. Our theme this year is "Back to the Future." What do you feel is your country's most significant contribution to what is now a global wellness economy?

A global study by the World Economic Forum has found Spain has one of the most competitive tourism industry in the world. The report takes into account indicators measuring elements such as a destination's natural and cultural resources, its health and hygiene conditions, its travel infrastructure, its security levels, its price competitiveness and its adaptation to new technologies. Many will know Spain as an excellent holiday destination, home to beautiful beaches and a warm climate. However it also happens to be home to some of the best spas in the world. Spain offers everything - pampering spas, minor cosmetic surgeries, detox and weight loss packages, sleep clinics, stop smoking and other programs to get fit and active. There are spas that are built atop healing thermal waters and others situated right along the beach. Spain truly can provide a spa holiday to suit anyone and everyone.

4. What do you feel is the biggest challenge in your country when it comes to growing the wellness economy?

During the last decade, Spain experienced a big boom in terms of the number of spas and wellness centers in the market. However, this development in terms of quantity was not matched in terms of quality of services and treatments. It is essential to improve the training of professionals. Not only at the therapist level but also at the management and investment levels.

5. While no answers are right or wrong, we would like to know what you feel is the difference – if any – between the terms/concepts of “wellness” and “well-being” in your country.

Wellness is the state of being healthy in body and mind (positive mental approach, correct nutrition, physical movement)

Well-being is a wider concept, meaning living a satisfactory life by being health, prosperous and happy. So we may say that Well-being includes the concept of Wellness.

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