



EUROPE: UNITED KINGDOM

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

The Spa industry has continued to grow over the last 12 months. However, the strategy has changed from lengthy treatments to results-driven treatments to capture a results-driven audience. Quick fixes are more appropriate to the lifestyles that we lead, as opposed to longer stays and treatments. The spa industry is appealing to a younger and less affluent clientele, and a significant market share is men.

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

The market is limited, but wellness tourism is a growing sector centered around the concept of health and/or wellness, and it is a relatively new phenomenon in the UK market. Appreciation and understanding of the curative properties of natural mineral springs and seawater are much less deeply ingrained in contemporary British culture than in many European, Asian and Arab societies – although this has not always been the case. It is now more likely to be incorporated into peoples everyday lives, and seen as something that is key to a healthy and stress-free lifestyle.

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 hotel spa has had to adapt its strategy to attract a local clientele, as opposed to relying on hotel guests, with business travel having been affected by the economic downturn.

What is happening with destination spas?

Destination Spas have again had to look at their offering, and have put a focus on stress-related packages including sleep, stress management and life coaching.

What is happening with hot springs spas?

British spa history goes back over 400 years, and there has been major investment and refurbishment over the last decade in British spa towns, including Harrogate, Cheltenham, Bath and Tunbridge Wells

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

Investment has been conservative in new builds, but the existing properties have worked hard to maintain their market share and develop new innovations and offerings.

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

When symptoms of stress became an acceptable common ailment, spa therapy became a recognized remedy for it.

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