

2008 SPA Industry Trend Watch

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From hemlines to hair colors, we love to watch trends come and go. As the spa industry has become engrained into everyday culture, many spa trends have actually extended their stay and moved into full-blown tradition. As the voice of the spa industry, the International SPA Association has been forecasting spa industry movements since the early 1990s and welcomes 2008 with this Spa Industry Trend Watch.

'Savvy spa-goers are shaping the trends. Spa professionals want to create the best experience possible, so it's a 'buyers' market' for consumers who express their wants and needs,' said ISPA President Lynne McNees. 'The spa lifestyle is in fashion, though it's also timeless. As a leading leisure industry, spas have the staying power similar to that of cruise lines, skiing and golf.'

Compiled through comprehensive research, as well as daily communication with a vast network of more than 3,000 members in 75 countries, ISPA releases the following Spa Industry Trend Watch:

Plenty of Cooks in the Kitchen - You'd be hard-pressed to find a better combination than spa treatments and delicious, healthy food. Spas are responding to reports from the restaurant industry that the gastro-travel phenomenon has taken off with more families organizing vacations around food. In fact, 19 percent of U.S. spas offer cooking experiences with these running the gamut from week-long schools with celebrity chefs to private lessons with tips on taking the healthy cooking experience home.

Spa Lifestyles Equal Healthy Lifestyles - Eating nutritious food, exercising and relieving stress are critical in leading a healthy lifestyle, and spas are championing this effort by teaching these basic principles. In fact, 51 percent of U.S. spas offer educational programs and nutritional consultations, 40 percent offer healthy eating classes, 26 percent have educational offerings on obesity or weight gain issues and 17 percent offer exercise programs for children and teens.

The Next Generation of Spa-goer - The teens are coming! Nearly 4 million of them have been to a spa where they learn how to deal with stress, eat nutritiously and care for their skin. With 16 percent of spas offering teen programs, 34 percent offering teen packages and 17 percent offering packages for children, Millennials will never have to worry about a bad MySpace picture.

Corporate Wellness - Google was selected as Fortune's No. 1 company to work for in 2007. Google is also a member of ISPA and offers on-site massages to its employees. According to the American Journal of Health Promotions, for every \$1 spent on wellness programs, employers can expect a return of up to \$10 through lower medical claims, reduced absenteeism, improved productivity and other factors. 'A spa experience is the perfect way for employers to show their team that they care about their health and well-being,' added McNees.

High Touch and High Tech - In our constantly-connected society, in order for some people to take a time out, they still need to be plugged in. Spas are incorporating technology such as Wi-Fi in relaxation rooms, cyber treatments that combine biofeedback technology with guidance from wellness professionals and light therapy to help those suffering from depression, Seasonal Affective Disorder and insomnia.

Customized Relaxation - You can make almost anything your 'own' today from custom workouts built into your Nikes, fragrances blended to suit your nose or a zenned-out playlist on your iPod. Spas are creating unique experiences for their guests as well with 24 percent indicating that clients can book blocks of time instead of specific services. This time block allows them to create a treatment that is all their own from the music to the products to the room temperature.

Luxury Brands Opening Luxury Spas - Too much of a good thing is... well, a good thing! Brands that are known for their chic designs are opening over-the-top spas around the world. Some of the well-known brands include the first Armani-branded spa in Tokyo, Versace Group's spa at its Australian resort, spas at Bulgari's hotels in Milan and Bali, and Prada Beauty's line exclusively at Ritz-Carlton properties.

Greening Grows - As 76 percent of U.S. spas apply environmentally sustainable practices, the spa community's commitment to the environment is not a passing phase. On-site organic gardens, products made from locally-grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and plants, mineral makeup, and green building tactics are just a few of the ways that spa professionals are showing their commitment to the earth.

About the International SPA Association

ISPA is recognized worldwide as the leading professional organization and voice of the spa industry. Founded in 1991, ISPA advances the spa industry by providing invaluable educational and networking opportunities, promoting the value of the spa experience and speaking as the authoritative voice to foster professionalism and growth. More details on ISPA are available on www.experienceispa.com.

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