

Spa Business Solutions

SKIN INC.®

NOVEMBER 2007

www.SkinInc.com

International Trends

PLUS

Best of the Best
Spa Snapshot
Needs-based Plans



Allured
Global Information Leader



By BRYAN DUROCHER



Photo courtesy of Spa Studio, The Lanesborough, a St. Regis Hotel, London.

EUROPEAN SPAS

TRADITION AND INSPIRATION

Everybody tours Europe differently. Some people head straight to the museums, galleries and opera halls for a dose of old-world culture, while others study the dining guides and book tables at the finest four-star eateries in the continent's dining capitals. Some like to rent a villa and spend their time luxuriating beside a sparkling pool, and still others grab a credit card and a currency exchange cheat sheet and hit the fabulous shops.

Another European must is visiting as many spas as possible to uncover new ideas, approaches and strategies to take back to the States. It is important to learn about the latest ingredients and services, and experience new products and treatments. Study the décor, the protocols, the customer care strategies, the cultural influences and the distinct touches that make these places unique. Be on the lookout for those distinctions that will give you something to make your business stand out among the crowd at home.

For the past few months, I have traveled extensively, and have had an opportunity to visit wonderful spas in London, Paris and Germany. What I have concluded, now that I'm home, may surprise you. It certainly surprised me!

In the United States, more and more spas are relying on the latest, quickest strategies for instant results. This particular

spa experience is all about injecting, buffing, sloughing, peeling and prodding the skin. Effective, yes, and strident anti-aging treatments are what many clients want. But, based on my European experiences, I believe that many spas are losing sight of something very important—namely, the traditional spa experience. What makes this memorable? Four things: quality, customization, service and the opportunity to spend uninterrupted, self-focused time away from a life that's full of endless distractions.

A recent International SPA Association (ISPA) study polling spa-goers and non-spa goers in the United States and Canada revealed a core group of about 3.5 million dedicated spa devotees in this country; these are the clients you want to attract and keep. To do so, and in order to stand out among the U.S. spas that are trending more and more to the clinical and the impersonal, a business owner would be well-advised to stop, take a look back and determine how the traditional aspects of the spa experience could serve a modern establishment. And what better place to study these aspects than Europe, where many spa concepts actually originated?

Five of the spas I experienced recently serve as prime examples of how quality, customization, tradition and service never go out of style. Here's a peek inside each.

Spa Studio

LOCATION: The Lanesborough, a St. Regis Hotel, London

SUMMARY: Intimacy, privacy, seamless treatment flow

Overview. This richly appointed intimate spa in one of London's most elegant hotels has only two treatment rooms. The facility is a brilliant marriage of traditional English- and Far Eastern-inspired styles. The Serail Room, created by the German-based Balnea group, is a beautifully tiled aromatherapy steam and shower room, illuminated by a ceiling of twinkling lights.

My experience. At Spa Studio, I opted for the Serail Mud Treatment with Indian Head Massage. Completely contained in the Serail Room, the treatment began with a self-application of colored, detoxifying muds as essence-infused steam permeated the room. After 20 minutes, a gentle warm rain washed away the mud and a therapist performed a balancing massage using lypolipic oil with mint and bitter orange. An Indian head massage with cedar and lavender completed the experience.

The takeaway. I took note of several important things at Spa Studio. First and foremost were the intimacy and the privacy of the experience. Every element of the treatment—wet and dry—was performed in the Serail Room, eliminating the necessity to move around during the course of the service. In addition to the convenience of the multipurpose room, a single therapist, well-trained in multiple protocols, performed every segment of the treatment, maintaining intimacy, privacy and consistency.

The flow was impeccable. Two hours passed seamlessly and I never felt rushed, or as if the technician was ticking off a mental checklist as she worked. Additional details worth mentioning are the fine aromatherapy products used in the shower room and the treatments; the ultra-thick, luxurious towels; and the presence of a button in the treatment room that allows the client to discreetly signal the therapist when ready for the next phase of the treatment. This smart feature eliminates the need for knocking and negates the possibility of the therapist entering the treatment room at the wrong time.

Photo courtesy of Spa Studio, The Lanesborough, a St. Regis Hotel, London.



Spa Studio at The Lanesborough in London is a brilliant marriage between English- and Far Eastern-inspired styles.

Ark Spa

LOCATION: Wimbledon, England

SUMMARY: Getting personal, outstanding training, nonintimidating service

Overview. One of four Ark Spa locations, the Dermalogica Signature Spa in this delightful English village reflects the modern, airy, California-informed esthetic of the American-based skin care company. Fresh and vibrant with light wood floors and white walls, Ark Spa is comfortable, friendly and welcoming. Located on a lower level, the treatment rooms are quiet and immaculate.

My experience. At Ark, it's all about personalization and customization. A comprehensive intake form, which thoroughly assesses lifestyle and health matters, as well as personal preferences, allows the therapist to take the spa's core facial treatment and customize it with specific products and procedures. The consultation also delves deeply into exactly what the client is experiencing on the day of the visit, which can affect treatment choices considerably.

For example, although I have an oily complexion, extensive travel and jet lag had left my skin quite dehydrated, and the technician adjusted the products and her approach accordingly. When I left, my skin was revitalized. What's more, as a male, I appreciated the fact that the product fragrances were pleasant but subtle.

The takeaway. Ark skin care therapists are incredibly well-trained, with two years of undergraduate education and extensive ongoing postgraduate sessions. As a result, they instill confidence through their knowledge and abilities. That confidence is enhanced during the treatment because they thoroughly describe and explain every step and each product that they use. At Ark, one receives five-star quality and customer service at an affordable price in an extremely nonintimidating environment.



The no-nonsense Thalgo Institute focuses on ingredients, especially the company's marine-based formulas.

THE THALGO INSTITUTE

LOCATION: Adjacent to the Golden Tulip Hotel, Paris

SUMMARY: Water, water everywhere

Overview. In France, professional skin care is as fundamental as professional dental care is in the United States. French women make it a priority to beautifully care for their skin. At this no-nonsense skin care center, the focus is on the

ingredients—specifically, Thalgo's marine-based formulas. Water, therefore, is a key component at the Thalgo Institute, including hydrotherapy treatments and aquatic exercise.

My experience. My Gentleman's Detox Marine Facial featured Thalgo products containing *Algue Bleue Virale*, a blue algae sourced from lakebeds in Oregon, which, the company claims, stimulates cellular renewal and offers anti-aging properties. This was a classic facial in the very best sense—featuring virtually painless extractions and a truly transforming face, shoulder, neck and hand massage—performed by one of the most competent therapists I have ever experienced.

The takeaway. This classic European facial left my skin looking and feeling better than it had in years, which highlighted the fact that it's important to avoid underselling your tried-and-true treatments. Don't lose sight of the fact that a good, foundational skin care protocol can be every bit as effective as a newer, high-tech or high-impact treatment. These approaches have worked for years and they allow you to offer effective results, along with the luxury and relaxation that clients crave.

LE PETIT CHATEAU FONTENAY

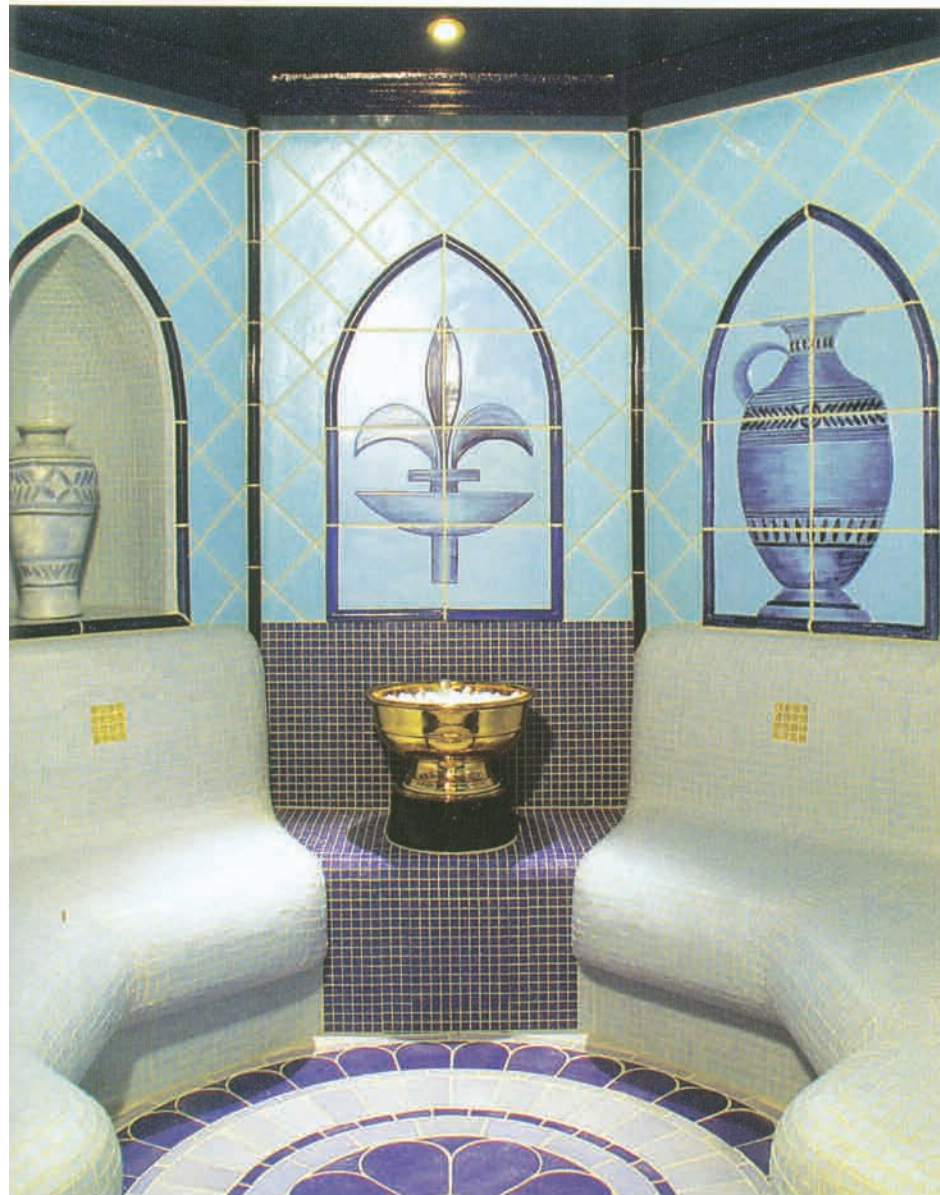
LOCATION: Bad Wörishofen, Germany

SUMMARY: Health first

Overview. A European destination spa in the purest sense, Fontenay, situated in a lovely, forested area about two hours outside of Munich, focuses solely on health and well-being. This is not the place for 18 rounds of golf or fruity drinks by the pool. Comfortable but no-frills, Fontenay is all about wellness, and guests come here specifically for better health and increased vitality. The spa philosophy is modeled after the approach of Sebastian Kneipp, a 19th-century German healer who is recognized as a spa industry and integrative medicine pioneer. Kneipp contracted pulmonary tuberculosis as a young man and developed his own cure, which involved taking full-immersion dips in the icy waters of the Danube to literally shock his



Photos courtesy of The Thalgo Institute, Paris.



Comfortable but no-frills, Fonteney is all about wellness, and guests come specifically for better health and increased vitality.

system back to health. For the rest of his life, he defined and refined his Kneipp Therapy, which is comprised of The Five Pillars: hydrotherapy, herbs/phytotherapy, exercise/kinesiotherapy, nutrition/dietetics and lifestyle/regulative therapy, all of which are practiced at Fonteney.

My experience. During my three-day stay, I experienced a number of Kneipp hot and cold hydrotherapies, wraps and massages, all based on the fundamental Kneipp principles. Everything else at Fonteney—from the cuisine to the bracing mountain air to the hypoallergenic bedding in the rooms—supports this wellness focus. In true German style, the facility was a model of efficiency.

The takeaway. Classic European health spas such as Fonteney have thrived for centuries,

probably originating in Baden Baden (literally “bath”), Germany, when the Romans discovered the healing properties of the natural springs there around A.D. 100. In today’s hypertoxic world, with the ever-increasing awareness of all things organic and natural, the time may be right for a return to naturopathic approaches such as Kneipp in the United States.

HAMAM MATHILDEN

LOCATION: Munich, Germany

SUMMARY: Revival and community

Overview. The basic Hamam concept originated thousands of years ago and is commonly known as the Turkish bath. In ancient times, the Hamam was much more than just a

NEW!! Professional Facial Kit

888-881-0004

clinicalcaresolutions.com



Aesthetician / Cosmetologist

(Zn)Kit Includes:

- Facial Scissors
 - Slant Tweezers
 - Snub Nose Tweezers
 - Needle Nose Tweezers
 - Comedone Extractor
 - 5 - CCSS Lancets
 - Convenient Carrying Case
- FREE DESTROYZIT (Spot Zit Treatment)**
FREE Instructional DVD

CLINICAL CARE
skin solutions

place to cleanse the skin. It was intimately bound with everyday life; a place where people of every rank and station—young and old, rich and poor—could come freely. Hamams enjoyed a resurgence in popularity in Europe during the Victorian era. Today, modern Hamams offer invigorating cleansing and relaxation. The structure of interconnected rooms promotes socializing and community, making it ideal for couples or groups.

My experience. Like most Hamams, my experience began in the Warm Room, or tepidarium. There, in the hot dry air, the body begins to relax, perspire and detoxify. Next, I moved to the Hot Room, or *saklik*, where the intense heat accelerates the detoxification process. In the Hot Room, guests are invited to ladle cool water over their skin to remain comfortable. After the *saklik*, I moved to a private room for exfoliation and massage. Exfoliation is the traditional soap scrub with *gommage*, followed by a head-to-toe olive oil soap scrub down. Next, the attendant performs a deep massage with fragrant oils. The last stop is the Cool Room, or *sogukluk*. In this quiet haven, guests can sip tea, relax and even nap before departing. The result is truly invigorating and leaves the body smooth and refreshed.

The takeaway. Technology continues to eliminate more and more opportunities for socialization in the modern world because many spend the majority of their time sitting in front of computer screens or communicating via text messaging. The Hamam concept offers a way to pair healthful body treatments with socialization and connection; a combination that's sure to appeal to more and more people as technology increases feelings of isolation.

LUXURY LIVES

In Europe, luxury lives. So do impeccable training, unparalleled service quality, memorable environments, and a deep regard for the individuality and essence of the client and the sanctity of the moment. For decades, skin care and spa treatments have been integral elements of beauty and self-care in European countries. And they continue to thrive, even in a world that offers an ever-expanding menu of quick, aggressive anti-aging strategies. That's why if you are wondering how to set your business apart in the United States, Europe's spas just may hold the answers. ✂

no. 1 choice for spa & salon

JMT GROUP
www.jmtbeauty.com
Toll Free: 1-866-JMT-8368