

The trend of the wellness industry



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Introduction

There has been a considerable rise in the trend of the Wellness Industry mainly in Asia-Pacific. As Destination Spas are developing in the industry, it seems it is still rather vague as to what the future holds for this particular sector. The rising awareness of people towards personal health and growth is creating a demand for a service role that is currently evolving to cater to the demands of this progressing market trend. This study will investigate possible outcomes for destinations spas, Mandala Spa, in the designated geographical area.

Background

The globalization of wellness products such as Spas are increasing and evolving, whereas the philosophies and traditions of the eastern culture are penetrating the western context and vice versa. These spas are growing by incorporating physical, emotional and spiritual activities coupled with the pop psychology that mixes more esoteric practices to raise the level of mental wellness. (Smith and Puczko, 2008)

Wellness is defined as ‘ The multidimensional state of being “ well”, where inner and outer worlds are in harmony: a heightened state of consciousness enabling you to be fully present in the moment and respond authentically to any situation from the “ deep inner well of your being”. Wellness is an ever-evolving journey to a heightened awakening of the consciousness and working towards a fitter state in regards to the physical, mental and emotional sense of wellbeing, thus helping an individual to further

experience life to its fullest with the greatest longevity. (Bodecker and Cohen, 2008)

Figure 1: The Expanded Wellness Model

Source: Mueller and Kaufmann 2001 p. 6

Overview of the Wellness Industry

A considerable amount of visitors going to modern day health and wellness centers are mostly not aware of the historical and cultural backgrounds of the treatments they experience. It would be not so far fetched to say that these visitors have not realized that the Ayurvedic practices from India date back as far as 5000 BC, or that the current make-up brands that women are using these days hold similar cosmetic traits to those used by the Egyptian women in 3000 BC. The earliest recorded documentation of Chinese medicinal methods date back to 1000 BC, however in Western societies Chinese medical methods are regarded as exotic and somewhat new in their perception. According to a study made by the Spa Research Fellowship, the earliest reference to so called magical healing waters is 1700 BC and as the classic physician and philosopher of the Hellenistic age, Hippocrates, once said that "...water is still, after all, the best." (Health & Wellness Tourism)

There is an increasing awareness of the healing properties of water, whether it be thermal, sea or mineral water. Civilizations such as the Greeks and Romans understood the various health related aspects of water treatments and thus were quite focused on fitness and cleanliness through such practices. On the other hand, other ancient civilizations from The Middle East and Asia and other indigenous people around the world were already aware

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of the health benefits of other practices like herbal medicines, yoga, massage, meditation and other related spiritual practices, for centuries before the cultivation of health related practices in Europe. Although by Western standards, the quality of life in many parts of the world are seemingly low or of poor quality in comparison to Western societies, India and Africa can be cited as two better examples. These people living in such poor standards have developed their own ways of maintaining their wellbeing, although such conditions of deprivation favor the triumph of illness over wellness. These practices of preserving health and wellbeing are continuing to become more and more popular among day spa operators and subsequently the visitors of these days spas are growing interests keen enough to want them to visit the origins or homes of these practices such as Yoga and Thai massage. (Health & Wellness Tourism)

The term Spa, is an adapted acronym for “ Solus Per Aqua”, it can be translated as health through water. (Leavy and Bergel, 2002)

According to Associate Professor Rujirutana Madhachitara, PhD of Penn State University in her paper, Opening Up a Services Market – The Thai Spa Industry, “ From what we learn in the classroom and witness in real business life, market usually do not grow as explosively as health spas have done in Thailand. Hotels and resorts along with entrepreneurs have recognized the potential of spa development in Asia, it is even arguable to an extent that recent trend of spas has impacted the face of the Hospitality in the region.”

Intelligent Spas came up with the Spa Benchmark program across the major Asia Pacific markets and summarized the findings in the table below (Garrow, 2007)

Table 1: Asia Pacific Spa Industry overview

Malaysia – Since the year 2002, Malaysia’s spa growth has increased by 200% and continues to foretell increased growth.

Indonesia – Is home to the larger spas in regards to indoor space and more than half of them are destination spas, within the region it is also second most affordable next to the Philippines.

Philippines – Is the smallest in terms of market size but regardless it also possesses on average, the most numerous amount of treatment rooms, studies show that there is also strong potential for growth in this sector over the coming years.

Singapore – relatively, the country has a mature market but is still predicted to grow at 11% annually over the upcoming years. There is a considerable amount of day spas of which half are said to be salon type oriented spas.

Taiwan – Over 81% of Taiwan’s 300 spa facilities were day spas, a large group of their spas use group brand names, whilst spa franchises are very common. Growth rate is said to be slow in the coming years.

Table 2: Asia-Pacific Global Spa study

The Asia-Pacific spa industry is the quickest growing region on a global basis, however it is yet relatively young. A larger proportion of spas are preset in

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emerging markets while resort/hotels spas are currently leading development. Typically, destinations spas are regarded as spa resorts. Growing but yet underdeveloped health resorts in a sense. In comparison to Europe, spa revenues in the Asia-Pacific are 35% lower and 19% lower on a global average, however hotel spas are only 3.75% to 5.8% lower respectively. Whilst in terms of staffing, hotel spas are at an average of 27 employees per establishment and 17 per spa. Intelligent Spa's Global Benchmark Report, May 2009, states that the treatment room occupancy in the Asia-Pacific is 37% higher in comparison to other regions, 45% of total revenue accounts for payroll, and with an average treatment rate of US\$77 it is the lowest economically among all regions. (Samantha Foster)

The term Destination Spa holds a particular standard of luxury for spa-goers, as they were places where the rich and famous would go to slim down. These days destination spas offer more than just a luxurious way to get slim fast, they offer a variety of products that cater to the overall wellness of their customers. Such services offered are healthier diet alternatives, lifestyle lectures, yoga seminars and more traditional methods of energy attunement to find your own sense of inner and outer balance. (Leavy and Bergel 2002)

Mandala Spa brands itself as a destination spa incorporating all the fore mentioned services and more, in 2005 they won the prestigious Asia Spa Award for “ best destination spa of the year” and “ spa treatment of the year”. Since then they have continued to win awards in 2006, 2007, and 2009. Since its inauguration in 2001, Mandala Spa has touched the lives of many people and has grown from a four-villa Day Spa to a full fledged Wellness Resort and Destination Spa. (<http://www.mandalaspa.com>)

Aims

The author will conduct an in-depth research on what the future holds for Destination Spas in Asia Pacific, focusing on a developing boutique Destination Spa brand, Mandala Spa as a prime reference.

Objectives

To review literature about the Wellness Industry with emphasis on Destination Spas.

To investigate the trends and variables influencing the development of the Wellness Industry with focus on the Destination Spa sector.

To understand the strategies that Mandala Spa is using for its success and how they will use these for future development or expansion;

and

To recommend any findings to Mandala Spa and the Asia Pacific Spa and Wellness Coalition for the overall benefit of the industry and for future research;

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Wellness Tourism

According to (Verschuren, 2004) Wellness tourism is very different from health tourism as wellness tourism is considered a unique product within the health tourism segment thus it is not a category in itself but a sub category of health tourism.

Figure 1

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According to (Kaspar 1996), health tourism is “ the sum of all the relationships and phenomena resulting from a change of location and residence by people in order to promote, stabilize and, as appropriate, restore physical, mental and social well-being while using health services and for whom the place where they are staying is neither their principle nor permanent place of residence or work”.

By definition of (Mueller and Kaufmann 2000), following (Kaspar1996), wellness tourism can be the sum of all the relationships and the phenomena resulting from a change of location and residence by people whose main motive is to preserve or promote their health. They stay in hotels that are specialized in providing the individual care with the appropriate personal know-how. To further the statement these guests require and expect certain service packages that are comprehensive in nature, such packages may include physical fitness, meditations, dietary advise, beauty care and education.

According to The International Spa Association (ISPA) spas are defined as “ entities devoted to enhancing overall well-being through a variety of professional services that encourage the renewal of mind, body and spirit” (ISPA, 2006)

A comprehensive categorization of spas has been produced by the International Spa Association is listed below:

Club Spa -

Day Spa -

Spa Hotel –

Holistic Spa –

Medical Spa –

Bath –

Resort Spa –

Sport Spa –

Structured Spa –

Definition of a Destination Spa

There is no universally accepted definition of destination spas, rather the following academics present these definitions:

Destination spas predecessors were referred to as “ fat farms” due to their somewhat rigorous detoxification and weight loss programmes. These “ fat farms” were perceived as the to-be places for communities high societies, yet most of these establishments were not deemed a pleasant holiday experience as most of them were ran similar to boot camps in a sense, where their guests would undertake restricted diets or fasting seminars where the promised results of weight loss would be achieved, however in no manner pleasant. Few of these “ fat farms” would feature beauty treatments, relaxation or meditation programmes and even less provided in education in terms of how to maintain their lost weight, thus guests would eventually gain the weight back. The destination spa of today offer more than just weight loss programmes but are now geared towards more

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meaningful exercise programmes, education on lifestyle, wellness seminars, consultancy on diet and cleansing, and some offer medical tests or evaluations. (The Spa Encyclopedia)

“ Destination spas are built with the primary purpose of providing spa/wellness activities for guests” as compared to resort/hotel spas who’s primary purpose is to sell their rooms while the spa is an augmenting facility, the purpose of destination spas are the exact opposite of this. (Gibson 2008)

Destination Spas are a place where visitors go for short retreats/wellness programmes that are somewhat life changing or produce a high impact on the guest’s lifestyle. (Spa bodywork: a guide for massage therapists)

Asia Pacific Wellness Traditions

The wellness traditions of Asia follow a more holistic approach to health and wellbeing, treating the mind, body and spirit as one. Their way of healing is by finding the essence of the problem and supporting the body in healing itself therefore boosting the body’s natural immunity against illness and disease. Therefore the approach through natural healing, in Asia, is rooted in spirituality and tradition rather than on a basis of natural assets.

In Japan the traditional bathing establishments of “ onsens”, which are Japanese hot springs, are commonly visited by locals in seek of meditation or relaxation and has grown in popularity among the tourists. Reiki and Shiatsu are two of the most prevalent wellness therapies from the Japanese culture and are currently very common treatments provided by western spas.

The legacy of India's historic culture has existed before that of Ancient Egypt as even scholars regard " Ayurveda" (the science of life) as one of the oldest healing systems in the world. It is still commonly the first form of traditional healing in Nepal, India and Sri Lanka.

The traditional forms of Chinese medicine were focused on an individuals overall state through a variety of therapies, such as " Chi" (the overall flow of life force or energy of a person), " Shen" (the persons mind that is responsible for their mental abilities and consciousness), and " Jing" (The governing essence of a persons vitality). Traditional Chinese medicine, similar to Indian Ayurveda, leans towards the aspects of preventive and holistic approaches towards health in regards to physical movement, spirituality, diet and emotional wellbeing. A myriad of therapies are offered, some of the most popular to mention are Tai Chi, Qi Gong, herbal medicines, and acupuncture which focus on the flow of energy throughout the body.

Thailand is currently said to be the leading country in spa development within Asia, featuring a wide array of services, products, aesthetics and centres. The basic principles of Wat Pho traditional Thai massage and the Lana traditions of Northern Thailand are what constitute the concepts of Thai spas. The Temple of the Reclining Buddha, Wat Pho, located in the capital city of Bangkok by the Grand Palace, is where traditional Thai massage was born. During the era before the temple was built, the area was a site for the practice of traditional Thai medicine that has its relational origins from " Ayurveda".

Malaysia has a set of unique spa programmes and ambiances through the incorporation of village or kampung traditions along with the wellness traditions practiced in the royal courts. Pressure point and long stroke massage techniques which are the basis of “ Urut”, the traditional Malay massage, which is the main feature of the services offered along with traditional post-natal care in women’s health programmes. The foundation of these therapies are based on causative theory building on the organizing principles of cold and hot, damp and dry and of the natural elements air, fire, water and earth, derived from links to “ Ayurveda”.

Indonesia’s mainstay of promoting wellness and beauty comes from Jamu herbalism, traditionally it lies in the center of managing the populations healthcare. The spiritual approaches to wellness, along with traditional massage techniques and fresh herbal ingredients, are highly incorporated in Balinese and Indonesian spas.

Vietnam, regarded now as the ‘ new Thailand’ amongst south east Asian investment circles due to its promising economy and influx of new beach, golf and health resort developments. The main medicinal tradition of the country is referred to as “ Thuoc Nam” of which is based more on traditional folk knowledge. A Buddhist monk and scholar, Tue Tinh, developed “ Thuoc Nam” into a national system. He consolidated all the local medicinal knowledge from Vietnam and established clinics within monasteries along with herbal gardens coupled with educating the public on the herbal home medicine. (Dung and Bodeker 2001)

The Philippines, being an archipelago, has its traditional medicinal techniques deeply rooted in the multitude of ethnics groups found on its thousand of islands. Its traditional massage practice is known as “ Hilot” and is just as diverse in techniques, practices and tradition as it varies from region to region within the country. It is however being standardized, and thus growing ever more popular among the spa programmes in the Philippines. (Marana and Tan 2006)

Key Theories on Spas

Compare and contrast an approximate of 3 key theories here, identify who your subject matter experts are through seeing who are the names who are always cited in the various journals and books you have on Spa. Support with some models, I think you have one model in your Chapter II already!

Figure 1. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Schütte and Ciarlante’s Asian Equivalent Model. Adapted from (Athena H. N. Mak, Kevin K. F. Wong and Richard C. Y. Chang)

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the Asian equivalent model

Tourist motivation embraces psychological as well as physiological facets because travel is expected to satisfy different levels of needs such as psychological (e. g. intrinsic, personal and interpersonal rewards) and physiological needs (e. g. food, shelter, safety, health and fitness) (Witt and Wright, 1992). Maslow’s (1970) hierarchy of needs is one of the most popular theories of motivation used by researchers to study tourist motivation (Iso-Ahola, 1980). Maslow proposes that human needs as motivators form a five-level hierarchy comprising of physiological, safety, love/ belonging, esteem

and self-actualisation needs. He further states that the lower-level needs should be satisfied first before an individual could move up to higher-level ones in the hierarchy. Mill and Morrison (1985) cite that motivation is a phenomenon that takes place when an individual seeks to satisfy a need, and suggest a correlation between Maslow's hierarchy of needs and tourist motivation.

Maslow's model is based on Western culture, so Schütte and Ciarlante (1998) have questioned whether self-actualisation (a personally directed need) is existent among Asian consumers. They contend that Asian countries predominately have a collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1980), so the idea that a personally directed need is at the highest level of needs would neither be readily accepted nor regarded positively in the Asian culture. Instead, socially directed needs seem to be more apposite in such cultural context. Schütte and Ciarlante thus put forth an Asian equivalent model, one that eliminates the personally directed self-actualisation need and emphasizes the intricacies and importance of socially directed needs, namely, affiliation, admiration and status.

Based on the research conducted by (Athena H. N. Mak, Kevin K. F. Wong and Richard C. Y. Chang) Their study identified the motivating factors for Hong Kong spa-goers seeking spa experience when they travel. Their perceptions of spa, as well as their socio-demographic characteristics, were analysed. In addition, an instrument to measure motivation in the spa tourism domain was developed. Factor analysis results show that 'relaxation and relief', 'escape', 'self-reward and indulgence', and 'health and beauty' are important underlying motivating factors for spa-goers, as shown in the <https://assignbuster.com/the-trend-of-the-wellness-industry/>

study. The result contrasts interestingly with general European spa-goers' perception that spa experience is largely for curative or therapeutic purposes (Miller, 1996; Douglas, 2001), and American spa-goers' perception that spa experience is a means of self-reward (Kaspar, 1990; ISPA, 2006). For the Hong Kong context, it is actually an integration of self-reward and health, together with relaxation and escape motivations. This distinctive combination of motivating factors reflects the unique underlying needs of Hong Kong spa-goers.

The demand for spa is anticipated to grow continuously (ISPA, 2006), and the opportunities associated with spa are many and varied. However, despite the bright outlook for the Asian spa market, it is imperative for the spa industry to maximise the potential for this niche market segment outlook for the Asian spa market, it is imperative for the spa industry to maximise the potential for this niche market segment.

Current Situation of Mandala Spa

Here you do a write up discussing the current situation of Mandala Spa as a destination spa in the Asia Pacific region.

What is the key to Mandalas Success?

“ You have to understand, that when you analyze wellness... and a commitment to wellness and the wellbeing of other people, you realize very quickly that taking care of other people or being a good care taker for people, a very essential Christian quality, this is not something you do as a job like flipping hamburgers... it is something that has to be developed inside of a person as part of their personality, inside of their heart, so Karen Reina

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and I realized very quickly that if you want to be sincere in the wellness industry by taking care of other people one way or the other. It could be in the spa industry, the hotel industry or that might simply be in the nursing or physical therapy industry, the most important quality is the love and compassion and ability to have positive relationships with the guests. We decided that this is one of the most essential qualities a place can have, this is what we have to focus our service on, the rest is really technical training, skill training, attitude refinement, the way your presenting yourself with etiquette training, but what makes us very different from all other aspects of the hospitality industry is that when your working really close with people, when your touching them literary with your hands and fingers, when your all over their skin... YOU CANT FAKE IT! If your not real, people will realize it the latest at that point, when somebody's hands are all over them, that's when they realize if that service is real or fake, they are just pretending to give me a loving and caring service and just see it as a job. This is what really is the very essence of mandala spa, and this is what makes us different from many other places to start out with... our outlook was not based on a well organized spread sheet full of figures, our first challenge was and still is always, how can you install a culture and a commitment to the essence of hospitality in our staff, a corporate culture as it is called... this is the same challenge others in the same field are experiencing now in hospitality, where they say that cutting edge is where the guest is loved or feels loved, what better hospitality can you give other than true love and true care? No matter on which level, and this is what our people and guests come back for. So when people ask what was their best holiday experience, it is often the very small relationships they had with their host, it is all about love, care and

respect, the rest is really just dressing up. You very quickly realize that when you think that way, well its different that hamburger flipping in a way that you have to teach that way of thinking, you have to communicate that, you have to install that as a part of corporate culture.. that we want to do things with care, that we want to do things to maintain or better the environment, that we are caring for our employees as people and not just by looking at the annual growth rate of the company, caring by making an effort to communicate with them, by trying to provide personal growth opportunities for them, no matter if its through Yoga or personal talks or through participation in our social responsibility programs like planting trees, improving the environment, and they are proud of that, they should feel proud of being gentle, of being caring, of being compassionate. These are all the values we are trying to install within our corporate culture, not just the training to start out with and technical perfection, quality of touch, I am doing that myself. But what really brings everything through and what brings everything together is really when your heart is open and your heart is in it, and this is a big part of Mandalas secret, we're trying really to maintain that corporate culture that is true to itself, that walks the talk. Wellness and wellbeing is not a five to nine job for Mandala Spa, it is a way of life for Mandala Spa. Conclusively, a lot of people working with us or working with me are not there just for the job or the rewards or the growth opportunities on a professional career level, they are simply there because they love the way of life that they can live during eight hours of their prime time.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm and Design

The Research Paradigm used in this dissertation is that of interpretivism in which is a comprehension of the differences between humans as social actors. The social actors in this case refer to interview respondents.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) presented an argument that the business world is too intricate to be at the disposition of theories and definite `laws` in which rich insights may be lost in the process.

In line with this paradigm, the author maintains an empathetic stance and attempting to understand the social world from the point of view from the research subjects. As each situation is unique and stands alone, all these are a function of a specified set of individuals and circumstances brought together at a particular time.

The epistemology of this paradigm is on subjective meanings and social phenomena with a focus into an in depth study on the details of destination spas in the Asia Pacific, the background reality and motivating actions. It will have a subjective axiology due to the research being value bound and the author being inseparable from the research.

An inductive approach is used here in which the author theorizes that the wellness industry is a sub category of the health industry health tourism and from recent trends it is predicted that the health industry is beginning to adapt aspects of the wellness industry as a more informed clientele demand for an integration of wellness and nutrition into healthcare. This proposed theory is to be backed up with collected interview data for testing of validity.

Qualitative Study

Data Collection Development

Open ended questions are structured or at least semi – structured. It is important that the author guides the interview and steer it back on topic should digression occur. Nonetheless, for the purpose of the B. A (Hons) dissertation, structured interviews should be used.

If you use interviews but did not manage to meet the person face – to – face, attach a copy of email correspondence in appendix. Or save MSN conversations into rich text format.

Sampling

Data Collection

Data Analysis

Ethics

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

Profile of Participants

How many of them

Number of contacts (overall sampling frame)

How many returns? (% of responses) DO NOTE THAT FOR ONLINE SURVEYS, THE ACTUAL QUANTITY IS NOT EASILY DERIVED AND IS MAINLY AN ESTIMATE.

Give evidence of screening (How many were null? Even if person answers all strongly agree, it is null!)

“ Proper steps supersede absolute numbers.”

Report the final, n = 19 (%)

Who are the participants? (Use your background questions to assist you.) For qualitative interviews, you've been in contact with the person. Describe their qualification to prove that they are the appropriate person to individual on the subject.

Background of Participants

Analysis of qualitative data

Reiterate that an inductive approach was used and that it is an exploratory paper

You have a choice here of analyzing your data using a condensation, grouping or ordering process.