

Spa Business Development



Evolve your business with essential spa
knowledge and operational advice



Your personal consultant for new spa
start-ups and signature spa elements

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[WELCOME TO SPA KNOWLEDGE](#) - please see the index on page 138

The intention of this guide is to deepen and support your understanding and application of the origins, purpose and intriguing elements of spa culture, philosophy and experience. Within this guide you will learn the tools, wisdom and business awareness required in today's evolving spa culture to create your own full service spa or transform your existing salon into an oasis of calm renewal. Spa Knowledge serves as your own personal Spa Consultant advising and giving you the information required across a broad spectrum of issues from developing your own brand products, to Standards of Performance manuals and spa marketing, plus much more.

The theoretical and practical application of knowledge within these pages comprises information that is at the heart of the spa world, delivering the body and soul of trend awareness to fulfil aspirational spa seekers as much as the spa entrepreneur.

In today's global market it is essential to know the purpose of traditional and contemporary approaches to spa therapy and equipment usage to provide guests with an integrated philosophy of experience that makes the difference between acceptable to exceptional. In addition, Spa Knowledge lays out the path of how to set up and launch your business for success.

You can also benefit from Spa Knowledge if you are a sole trading therapist seeking to learn new approaches and skills enabling you to give clients uplifting and traditional spa therapy.

Spa therapies and spa culture are one of the major success stories of the past ten years, with an increase of almost 200% of new spa developments in this time period. This has been driven by the pressure of modern day living and the consequent rise in stress related disorders that has inspired people to seek a return to primal elements that deeply relax, de-toxify and provide the perfect setting to de-compress and re-balances body, mind and soul.

The spa is the antithesis of our fast moving world, offering us the opportunity to step out of the fast lane or the pressure cooker environment and breeze into an experience of timelessness and serenity – the elixir of the gods. And if it is true that we are made in god’s image – then this elixir is good for us too!

The purpose of spa philosophy is to allow the whole person, body, mind and soul, to let go of the daily pressures, humdrum and routine of busy lives and totally enjoy the peace, relaxation and pleasure of simply being alive. To re-dress the balance and be able to arrive at this experience of ‘simply being’, of actually *being able* to really enjoy the ‘feel-good factor’ and let go of our habitual activities and conditioned thought processes, the spa philosophy and environment provides a perfect solution that serves the basic needs to optimise good health and wellbeing.

Please take your time to digest the information given within these pages and it is highly recommended for you to go and visit or experience as many spas as you can in order to put this material into a practical context.

THE EVOLVING SPA CULTURE



As far back in history as records of the earths’ atmosphere and geological composition have been known, natural sources of hot springs are evident as an intrinsic part of the earths’ great resources throughout the world. In early tribal civilizations the natural magic and mystery of these dynamic natural spa

environments were honoured and considered sacred places of power and spiritual sanctity where people went in pilgrimage for ritual, prayer and thanksgiving. The pilgrims bathed in the waters as a vital part of the rituals and ceremony of their time and the searing hot water was quite possibly experienced as 'liquid fire', a god in its own rite; a force of purification. As civilizations evolved, many cultural, spiritual, medicinal and political beliefs and orientations changed, which altered the general public's view of the sacredness of natural hot springs, though its' essence was retained in more ethnic and shamanic belief systems, as places of power, healing and transformation.

Over 2000 years ago the great Roman Empire brought their ingenuity and team building skills to create the timeless architectural and recreational utilization of natural hot springs, which hundreds of years later would inspire a renaissance of spa culture for relaxation and healing. The heritage Roman Baths in Bath are evidence of this cultural importance and the legacy of that empirical era. You will also find prolific use of pure hot springs in many other countries, being particularly indigenous in Japan, North and South America, Bulgaria, Hungary, Belgium, Scandinavia and Italy who all cultivated their own cultural understanding of spa philosophy.



In Britain the therapeutic renaissance in spas was not ignited until the 16th century when the Englishman William Slingsly, returned from the town 'Spa' in Belgium where the benefits of drinking the natural iron-rich spring water for iron deficient illness, such as Anaemia, was first recognised in medieval times. On his return to Britain, Slingsly subsequently discovered an iron rich spring which became known as Harrogate, 'The English Spaw'. Though the water was only used for drinking it did become a popular destination for those seeking healing of many kinds. The Walloon

(Belgium) word for 'fountain' is 'espa', which has associations with the Latin word 'spagere' which means to moisten or sprinkle.

Throughout Europe, where hot mineral waters spouted from the earth, quite formal and disciplined medicinal spas rapidly developed, where bathing treatments were administered by trained doctors, nurses and physiotherapists. Each client was carefully consulted and treated for ailments such as arthritis, rheumatism, deep muscular tension, depression, skin imbalance, respiratory disorders, nerve problems, convalescence, deep relaxation and longevity. Along with periods of bathing in the therapeutic waters, treatments for these conditions often included massage type therapy with complete rest and relaxation as an important element in which to recuperate and heal. Today many of these natural spa environments still function within this medically based framework and a growing number are now offering beauty treatments and holistic therapies within a relatively relaxed atmosphere, so that the mineral baths can be enjoyed more as a holiday retreat rather than just for ill-health. Often set in aesthetically pleasing and tranquil environments these spas continue to grow and develop as centres of renewal, inspiration and regeneration, becoming modern day meccas' for the stressed and wounded.



In the present day spa culture we have greatly modified the authentic use of the term 'spa' to include a vast variety of different types of locations, settings and therapeutic services that can give people the *experience* of sanctuary they are seeking. However, it is important to acknowledge the history and origins of the spa, which stem from the natural resources inherent in our earth – the natural mineral hot spring. These geo-thermal hot waters are rich in magnesium sulphate (epsom salts), potassium, calcium, boron, silicon and many other trace elements and flow freely in many

countries and terrains throughout the world. When the body is immersed in these hot springs, the active minerals are absorbed through the skins' surface, into the muscles, viscera and bones, relieving pain and improving circulation thereby de-stressing the body and mind creating a profound sense of deep relaxation and wellbeing. In addition to the therapeutic waters, many of these natural spa locations have their own source of indigenous mineral rich mud and clays to use therapeutically that come directly from the surrounding terrain.

Over the past twenty years we have witnessed a massive expansion of the spa culture across all terrains, genre and cultures and it is considered one of the biggest growth success stories on a global scale. This growth has been largely influenced by the fusion of holistic therapies and spa concepts from other countries and those that have greatly contributed to our understanding of the spa are Turkey, Morocco, Africa, India, Thailand and South East Asia.



21st CENTURY SPAS

The growing trend in developing and integrating a spa philosophy, spa equipment, services and an atmosphere of wellbeing into all kinds of locations from the Country House Hotel to Sports Clubs, Golf Clubs, High Street Salons and dedicated Destination Spas has never been more prolific. Here are definitions of some of the leading spa environments as it is important to understand the different focus each establishment has and where your own plans and area of interest fit in.

Mineral Hot Springs as we have discussed, are locations that offer direct bathing in the naturally therapeutic hot springs as it flows out of the earth. There are many of these powerful places of healing and regeneration around the world and whole towns or small communities have been built around them.

Retreat Spas are rapidly developing as the optimum restorative break as they offer solutions for total well-being from their location to providing a collective and personalised menu of services and activities that may include very ethnic body therapy from ancient cultures and therapeutic beauty treatments. The emphasis is on the idea of 'real retreat' where people are part of a philosophy that may well have yoga and meditation classes at its heart. Cleansing and fasting, eating highly nutritious foods are often high on the agenda and guests benefit from the focus on creating an experience of deep peace and renewal.



Thalassotherapy Spas are situated on or near the sea where the ocean provides a rich source of minerals, salts and iodine which are the key active ingredients of thalassotherapy. The dynamic combination of the sun's energy and sea minerals creates a natural therapeutic spa experience where specific treatments and exercises are offered. The beneficial 'oligoelements' are the active elements in sea water that seep into the blood stream through the skin and act as a powerful source of detoxification and purification that help imbalances such as body -weight, skin problems, inflammatory disorders, stress, tension, fatigue and generally boost rejuvenation.

Destination Spas offer a fine balance of providing the guest with everything to support them in living a healthy, holistic lifestyle within an atmosphere of either 'boho' or luxurious chic, often in remote locations. These spas have become the most

desired spa holiday experience for many who love the attention to detail, the purity and pampering provided. Often situated in areas of spectacular beauty, treatment menus, diet, daily classes, spa cuisine and activities are all encompassing. There is often great flexibility in when, where and how you wish to receive your treatments and your accommodation can become an extension of the whole experience with in-room spa facilities. The term '**Barefoot Luxury**' is often associated with such spas as they offer an environment so clean, accommodating and pristine that you only need to take the bare essentials with you!



Eco spas are most certainly the most conscious forward thinking solution to the immense amount of energy and resources that are used within a large spa complex. New spas built with an eco philosophy aim to build carbon neutral buildings that run off a combined heat and power (CHP) to provide heat and electric. Swimming pools will be chlorine free using salt regulated water or ozone systems and the building can be fitted with solar panels to collect light all year round as another source of energy. In addition, spas may be able to resource and utilise local water to be piped into their hydro therapy and other pools. Treatment product houses used will also have a 'green' philosophy and be blended with organic and fair trade ingredients and conscious methods of manufacture and packaging. The possibilities for making as 'green' a spa environment as possible continues to expand with attention also given to materials used for therapists' uniforms, clients' robes and slippers.

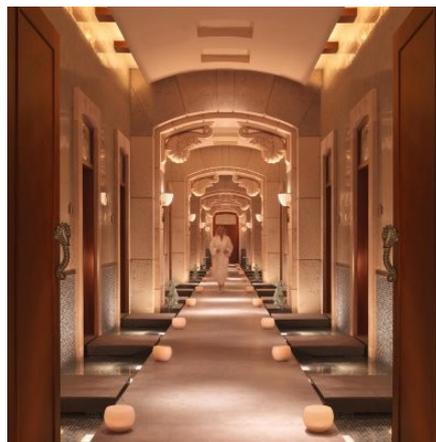
Day Spas, another growing trend, can offer a wide choice of therapies for body,

mind and beauty within a well thought out day use environment. Daily packages target certain areas such as de-tox, de-stress, weight-loss or beauty therapies. Depending on their size and location, the day spa can offer water and hydro therapies such as hammam, steam, sauna, swimming pools, yoga, nutritional food and enjoyable relaxation areas, providing an excellent mini-retreat or shared day out.

The Urban and High Street Spa may not have adequate relaxation areas yet do offer a wealth of treatments and may even include a rasul (discussed later).

The High Street Spa will mainly focus on maintenance beauty treatments, nails and maybe hair but many now offer a range of holistic massage and therapeutic services from reflexology to body wraps and even colonic irrigation!. As an accessible relaxed social environment for working women and local clients, transforming a beauty salon into a subtle spa environment can be an excellent place to educate and raise awareness of how to best take care of health and wellbeing. Those that may have just come in for a manicure may suddenly decide to experience a de-toxifying body wrap!

Male Grooming Salons/Spas are almost a revival of the traditional wet shave and barber shop that have dedicated body and skin care therapies and products specifically designed for this growing market.



Medi-Spas are the newest form of spa culture arising out of the growth in medical 'cosmetic procedure' such as botox and restylin treatments, as well as thread vein removal and even minor cosmetic surgery. These spas do require licensed professionals to carry out more intensive transformative body and beauty treatments, within a supportive spa therapy service that addresses the guests' total

wellbeing. In addition, spa therapists training will require further education on the benefits and contra-indications of treatments for these clients. The valuable addition of spa based holistic and complimentary therapies accelerates the healing process from medical procedures as well as aesthetic treatments, providing guests with a more nurturing and regenerative experience.

Fitness Club Spas focus primarily on an environment to provide activities for fitness and socialising with exercise classes of all kinds plus a pool and gym. Though these clubs are based on activity rather than relaxation many now offer body therapy such as sports massage and acupuncture as well as basic beauty treatments alongside hydro-therapy pools, steam and sauna.



Hotel Spas are another growing trend with even small hotels now upgrading their guest services to not only provide body and beauty treatments but whole spa philosophies, with steam, sauna and other specific spa environments. They are competing with the Destination Spa market and some hotels have created such wonderful spas that they almost become destination spas themselves.



Cruise Ship Spas are now a massive part of such holiday adventures and cruise ships have taken a very lavish and all-inclusive approach to offering deeply therapeutic environments, classes, rituals and treatments that support the total well-being of guests on board ship.

Movable or Transitory Spas have become the choice of the very dedicated spa seeker or celebrity guest and are often set in exclusive locations. These intensive and intimate spa experiences are organised and marketed for a fixed time period of perhaps of up to two weeks duration, for a limited number of people in a private setting such as a large villa or private house. A specific team of spa and beauty therapists, wellbeing councillors and teachers in many holistic health disciplines will be recruited to work together to create a round the clock program. People enjoy the privacy, exclusivity and intensive personal care that these transitory spas provide which often have excellent beneficial results.



WHY ARE PEOPLE DRAWN TO THE SPA

As our evolving high tech, fast moving world demands more and more from us, where we are often required to spend enormous amounts of time in artificial environments and stress inducing activities, people are searching for ways in which to re-balance their lives. Environmental stress and pollution is now a political global concern and we are racing ahead with researching solutions and alternatives to the negative effects of our consuming, toxic and technological lifestyle.

The detrimental effects of modern day pollution can affect us in many ways. For example, **sound pollution** can disturb our sense of balance, peace and clarity of thought by hearing unnatural sounds and persistent noise on a continuous basis. This could be as subliminal as the ongoing hum of your fridge to the blast of a jet plane flying overhead. IT equipment such as computers, mobile phones, MP3 players and Blackberries demand a specific level of body mind co-ordination and dexterity that can cause high levels of nervous tension and muscular stress affecting the body and mind.

Subsequently we are also victims of **electronic static pollution** that such equipment generates, weakening our senses and scrambling our nervous system thereby weakening our immunity.

Carbon emissions cause **air pollution** which is a constant health hazard, causing many breathing related problems such as asthma, persistent bronchitis, weak sinuses, panic attacks and allergies.

Likewise **preservative pollution** caused by the **toxic** preservatives that have been used for many years in the growth and packaging of food, can damage our internal organs and metabolism causing allergies, food intolerances and skin problems. These preservatives are also known to create hyperactivity and chemical imbalance particularly in children, though affect everyone, and can therefore potentially cause psychological and hormonal imbalance. Within the blending of mainstream body and beauty products toxic preservatives are also used which enter through the skins mutable surface and build up residues in the lymphatic system weakening our immunity and overall wellbeing. Hence the rise in organic alternatives and safer preservatives now often used in foods and product formulations.

We must also consider how the Medias' method of reporting news can cause deep, often unconscious psychological and emotional stress related responses within us, that can build up into unmanageable tension, depression and despair. This can be seen as '**mind pollution**' where our psychological state of mind affects our physical and emotional wellbeing. These subliminal messages are all around us and recently the government have also acknowledged that those suffering from depression and

related illnesses such as Bi-polar Disorder has risen to unprecedented levels over the last five years. This has been monitored by the amount of medication prescribed by doctors for patients with such conditions.

These toxic and intrusive influences can weigh heavily on us affecting the healthy balance of our lives in many ways. Stress can and does weaken our immune system creating havoc with our energy levels and hormonal balance. This causes the body to be more vulnerable and susceptible to prolonged seasonal colds and coughs plus other immune deficient illnesses such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, known as ME, which stand for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis. ME, for example, has become recognised as one of the 'illnesses of our time' (previously called 'yuppie flu'), caused by mysterious combinations of psychological, emotional and physical stress levels going beyond the persons' ability to cope, which breaks down the individuals reserves on a devastating level. Symptoms are from periodic mild exhaustion to extreme conditions where people can become unable to work or carry on a normal independent life for many years, once the bodies' energy system has been weakened to such an extent. Treatment solutions are still not totally understood as each persons condition varies so much, but qualities of peace, rest, right exercise, holistic therapies and good nutrition do help enormously to restore good health. These same qualities are relevant solutions for all stress related problems and illnesses caused by living a toxic or imbalanced lifestyle. Therefore, our bodies, minds and souls are in constant need of de-toxifying, de-stressing, rebalancing and re-energising to prevent the build up of these stress inducing factors causing irrevocable damage.

In response to these universally acknowledged environmental pressures, people are finding sanctuary in the peaceful and elemental environments that a spa can offer. Spa environments are an excellent preventative and recuperative form of therapy that can return us 'home to ourselves' in the secure comfort and purity of harmonious elements that are at the heart of our good health and are the key factors of a spa philosophy.

The key spa elements comprise the harmonious orchestration of -

- Caring Management leadership
- Careful Client consultation

- Awareness of Contra-indications
- Conscientious Customer Care
- Thoughtful and pleasant customer journey from entry to exit
- Hydro (water) therapies
- Temperature based therapies
- Professional, skilled, caring therapists
- Therapeutic touch
- De-stressing and rejuvenating treatments
- Harmonious sounds
- Restorative products
- Peaceful inoffensive visuals
- Nutritious sustaining spa cuisine
- Cleanliness on every level
- Comfort and support
- Peace and loving kindness
- Relaxation, space and time
- After care advice and support

All of today spas may not provide natural mineral hot springs or remote locations, but by being innovative, and grasping the concept of spa philosophy for relaxation and rejuvenation, a beneficial spa service can be successfully created. This essentially includes the key elements discussed above enriched by extensive body, mind and beauty therapies that not only purify and de-stress the physical body, but in so doing restore a sense of psychological balance and emotional wellbeing. Whether the spa has space for pools, yoga or flotation is not the issue to create a winning spa concept and philosophy.



WATER AS THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT

The biological make-up of our body naturally contains 75% water making it the key element that is essential to maintain the hydrating, absorbing, digesting and eliminating action of the whole body, and therefore, also the mind. Water is the primary channel through which energy and nutrition is conducted within and around our nervous system via the cerebrospinal fluids of the brain and spinal cord. The skin itself is also highly permeable, absorbing and eliminating moisture through the pores and ducts and through the lymphatic vessels that lie just beneath the skins surface. As human beings our genetic history has an unbroken connection with water since we evolved from its' depths many thousands of years ago and therefore have retained an affinity and fundamental need for its nature. The water element also claims over two thirds of the earths' service and may be expanding due to global warming.

The magic of water has defied mans' attempts to synthesise it and remains the primary giver of life, due to its purity, cleansing and rejuvenating qualities. We have seen how the natural mineral spring spa has the power of geo-thermal heat rich in minerals and trace elements. In a similar way pure glacial mountain water and Dead Sea salt water have their own well known, tried and tested rejuvenating properties that provide an ecological source of pure healing waters to many people and locations through aeons of time. Spa cultures and places for convalescence and healing have grown up around these natural sources of water due to the natural magnetism and successful regeneration of good health.



WATER IN THE SPA

The spa provides the space where the vibrancy of water can be utilized and experienced in many forms to cleanse, stimulate, calm and delight the senses. Inside and outside areas can be enhanced with visual water features, whatever scale and size your spa may be, whether that is through the natural sound of running water in small fountains and trickling springs or landscaped lakes, ponds and pools, or indeed the wildness of rivers and oceans. The simple sound and visual appeal of water has its own sensory therapy for the eyes and ears and should not be overlooked as being valuable and definitive of a true spa experience. Through centuries of literature and documentation on health and wellbeing, we see testament that being in the proximity of water for reflection, relaxation and recuperation brings its own subtle rewards.

At the core of all spa journeys lies time and space given to benefit from water based therapy in many forms. Whether that is plunging into the natural ocean and thermal hot springs or man-made hydro-therapy pools, hot tubs, herbal baths, cold plunges, aromatic steam rooms, floatation pools, vichy showers, power showers, rain showers and drench showers, these are just some of the facilities that initiate the cleansing and relaxing rituals that define spa culture.

Though these dynamic water therapies play an important role in spa therapy there is a wealth of specific treatment room spa therapies and rituals that do not rely on this dynamic and yet give your clients the benefit of the cleansing and relaxing spa philosophy we are creating.

In order for you to have a thorough understanding of the origins, purpose, action and contra-indications of the range of spa facilities available to you we will examine each type below. You will then be able to make an informed choice as to the appropriateness of utilising this equipment in your spa set up. Most spas and cultures have different rules and etiquette of how to use the facility appropriately so as not to offend others or its traditional use. Whether that is wearing swim wear, or towels, sheets or nothing at all will vary, so make sure you set a standard protocol for how you wish your facilities to be used and make sure your guests are aware of these standards for their comfort and safety.



STEAM ROOMS

Steam rooms have become very accessible over the years, and originate from Turkey where the Turkish Bath has become synonymous with a traditional spa experience. Steam rooms are in all kinds of spa environments and have been part of the British spa revival culture since the early part of the century as one of the staple facilities that support de-toxification and unwind the body and mind.

The Benefits of Steaming

Steaming causes the pores of the skin to expand, opening the sweat glands and stimulating the lymphatic system to release any build up of toxins. De-toxifying in this way boosts the circulation of blood and fluids, generally encouraging the internal organs to relax, again stimulating release of toxic waste, excess fluids and breakdown of fats.

The temperature of a steam room must be carefully monitored to not exceed 40 degrees as the skin could easily scold with the condensation of water being a constant part of the steam experience. In addition, if the steam is too hot, the lungs

would find it difficult to breathe the fierce wet heat and the eyes would become sore and red. Correctly administered steam is also the perfect medium to introduce therapeutic aromas in the form of essential oils to help unblock the sinuses which can clear colds, coughs and headaches. Steam is very beneficial to overcome hangovers and for accelerating the bodies release of excess fluids from cold or flu type. Steaming also supports weight loss treatments and skin cell renewal therapy.

Many steam room manufactures provide products to use in your steam system but some can be quite unnaturally sourced or simply overpowering. For a fresh clearing action the best essential oils are eucalyptus, peppermint or lemongrass used in small measure. You will need to check that the kind of oil you use is compatible with your steam system otherwise it may block the steam vents so check with your steam room supplier first. Sometimes, for a more relaxing steam experience camomile, sandalwood or lavender can be used.

Steam rooms come in all sizes and shapes and can be custom made to fit into any space. Ideally tiles, stone, marble or granite should be used for the best comfort, experience and durability and there is a wide range of styles and luxury accessories such as changing colour spot lighting and seating options to choose from. However, if this does not suit your budget, you can purchase pre-moulded steam rooms made of fibreglass or hard plastics for a less expensive option which can be tastefully and comfortably fitted. For very small spaces you can buy shower units that have various settings to also create a steam affect.

How best to use

Steaming is an excellent way to prepare the skin before a spa treatment, whether that is a body scrub, body-wrap or massage as the circulation of the blood and lymph are brought powerfully to the surface of the skin. Ideally, people will use the steam room for approximately 10 to 20 minutes maximum and then complete with a cold or cool shower. The cool water rinses away perspiration and instantly closes the pores of the skin which have been expanded by the heat, and acts to re-balance the body temperature and homeostasis inside and out. Using the traditional cold water therapy after most heat treatments is an important and vital ritual protecting and strengthening the body from any vulnerability to outside temperatures. If the pores

of the skin are left warm and open it leaves the body very susceptible to potential ill health when exposed to chill, wind or other environmental changes.

You will find that steam rooms are more popular on the whole than the sauna as the heat is not so intense and therefore used by more people, making an excellent spa investment. Traditionally a steam should always come before a sauna so that the skin has been purified to receive the deeper dry heat.

Aromas rooms and **Tropicariums** are milder versions of the traditional steam room where specific scents and aromas are gently funnelled into the space which are often fitted with tiled heated seats (Draconian seats) for a less intensive, more relaxing and calming experience.

Drinking plenty of water is essential as excess fluids will be lost and you will need to re-hydrate and help your system flush out the toxins. Drink at least half a litre of water following a steam of 10 minutes or more.

CONTRA INDICATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

The Steam Room is not recommended for the following conditions.

- During pregnancy or possibility of pregnancy
- Not appropriate for young children (under the age of 12-14 years old)
- Not suitable for very old or frail people
- Where there is a history of heart related illness
- Any respiratory disorders such as asthma or emphysema
- After a facial or waxing treatment as the skin will be sensitive.
- When skin is very sensitive to heat and reddens easily
- When there is any infection or sores to the skin
- When there is diabetes or vomiting
- If there is any kind of fever or high temperature
- When a medical condition has been diagnosed

- When a medical treatment process is being undertaken
- When alcohol has been drunk up to five hours previously



SAUNAS

The sauna originates from Finland and the Finnish Sauna is also an ancient social custom which whole families participate in during the long Scandinavian winters. In these natural environments, rolling in the snow between a round of saunas' is a fun and therapeutic activity. The icy snow closes the pores of the skin, instantly cooling the body down, and locks the deep dry heat into the deeper recesses of the bones, muscles and joints. Another Finnish tradition is to gently beat each others with birch branches to improve the circulation and drinking beers afterwards to re-hydrate though not recommended in a professional spa environment! The interior of most saunas are traditionally made of wood and originate from the Austrian Tyrol region where pine was used. Cedar, Hemp, Aspen, Redwood and combinations of wood are also utilised but the actual benches are often built of Beech. The scent of the wood deepens over time and becomes an important part of this traditional type of sauna. An alternative type of Finnish saunas is the Rock Sauna that has walls of rock instead of wood.

Whereas steam is a wet heat, the character of a sauna is very dry form of heat and therefore temperatures can reach as high as 110 degrees without burning the skin. The temperature level is due to the evaporation of moisture on the hot coals, rocks or stones of the electric or infrared stoves most commonly used in Finnish Style saunas. However, the traditional wood burning stove is a truly wonderful experience, needs constant attention and a high level of security care. In all saunas the air is circulated through an air-vent built into the structure of the porous wood or canvas used to capture the heat, allowing oxygen to circulate. Traditionally a bucket of water with

ladle is kept near the stove to douse the coals, instantly increasing the temperature by creating steam evaporation. Some sauna stoves are not suitable for ladling water onto and most saunas will have simple instructions on how best to use.

Benefits of the Sauna

The intense dry heat reaches deep within the muscles and joints, therapeutically relaxing the muscular skeletal system and pushing out the toxins and tension trapped within. Saunas are very beneficial for respiratory disorders as well as arthritic and rheumatic problems, improving circulation and reducing muscular pain and discomfort. The effect is very soothing and calming for over taxed bodies to relieve tension from sport activity as well as other problems such as frozen shoulders, tired leg syndrome and general aches and pains. Saunas are also effective for skin problems such as acne and pimples and women are known to look exceptionally beautiful after a sauna. It can take longer for the body to perspire in a sauna than in a steam room and hence some people do not enjoy the dry heat as much as steaming, finding it claustrophobic.

To enhance the benefits it is best to rub massage oils directly onto the skin whilst in the sauna so that the therapeutic benefits can be carried into the joints and muscles. Massage oil blends with sandalwood, frankincense, lavender, ylang ylang and camomile can be very therapeutic. It is not recommended to put oils directly onto the hot coals as they are flammable and therefore can be a fire hazard, but placing leaves or branches of Sage or Rosemary in the corner of the sauna space create a wonderful aroma as the leaves dry out and their scent is diffused.

There are usually different seating levels of benches in a sauna so that the heat can be enjoyed at different intensities and it is quite acceptable to lie down on the wood itself or a towel. Sitting at the highest level within the sauna is hotter than the lower levels as heat rises. Peoples tolerance levels of the temperature will vary but a duration of 10 -20 minutes is recommended to allow the dry heat to penetrate therapeutically.

The heat draws the blood to the surface creating strong perspiration and therefore a cold plunge or cold shower after each sauna is essential to re-balance the circulation,

close the pores of the skin and tone the muscles back up, so they are not left exposed and vulnerable. Cold water also helps the de-tox process and two or three rounds of sauna followed by cold plunge or shower generate a tremendous boost to the circulation through the muscles and joints, trapping the heat into the body very effectively. This in turn also boosts the immune system protecting you from potential weakness and ill health. On a psychological level the dynamic interchange of intense heat and cold calms the nervous system and de-stresses the mind.

Saunas are an excellent pre-massage ritual as they deeply relax the muscles and joints improving the process of letting go and re-balancing. Those with high or low blood pressure will need to be careful carrying out the hot and cold frequency as it may be too much stimulation for the heart. Other cultures that have their own version of sauna/steam environments such as the Mexican Tamazcal, and the American Indian ceremonial ritual of Sweat Lodges are returning with more popularity as Retreat Spas and Eco spas develop worldwide.

CONTRA INDICATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

Saunas are not recommended for the following conditions.

- During pregnancy or possibility of pregnancy
- Not appropriate for young children (under the age of 12-14 years old)
- Not suitable for very old or frail people
- Where there is a history of high or low blood pressure
- After a facial or waxing of any kind as the skin will be sensitive.
- When there are varicose veins
- Skin is very sensitive to heat and reddens easily
- When there is diabetes or vomiting
- If there is any kind of fever or high temperature
- When a medical condition has been diagnosed
- When a medical treatment process is being undertaken
- When alcohol has been drunk up to five hours previously



HAMMAM

Hamman, as used in many spas today, have a similar action to a steam room though include more elaborate grotto style seating, drinking water fountains, perhaps small showering areas or hoses and the possibility to scrub your self with salts and brushes. Hamman like this provide a creative therapeutic environment to cleanse and relax. Like the steam room the temperature will not exceed about 40 degrees centigrade as the humidity in the atmosphere would scold the skin. Traditionally men and women hamman separately though now shared-sex hamman are very common in today's modern spa environment. The size can vary but are generally large spaces accommodating ten or more people.

Hamman originate from Morocco where the word is derived from the Moroccan word *hmm* which means 'heat'. These traditional hamman are the cultural social spas often at the heart of Moroccan towns where people go to cleanse and relax. These often, exceptionally beautiful buildings will provide three interconnecting rooms, one warm where people wash themselves and each other; one hotter steam room, and one cool to complete and balance the warmer rooms. Traditional Hamman are very atmospheric and aesthetically designed sanctuaries with domed stained glass ceilings, Moorish alcoves for seating, pillars, lanterns, tiling and lavish marbling throughout. Traditionally the ritual requires people to wrap silk or cotton around themselves, use body brushes, wash with special clay soap, and rinse themselves using jugs of water. Spa attendants offer body scrubs on marble slabs and

rigorous massage is often provided by therapists. In the country of origin water is treated with great respect as it is considered careless to use too much as it is always in short supply in and therefore, highly valued.

Hamman are a wonderful addition to your spa services if you have the space. Alternatively, you can offer a Rasul described below.

Please refer to Contra Indications and Precautions as for Steam Rooms.



THE RASUL

A Rasul is essentially a self contained mini hamman designed in similar style with tiles, marble or stone that can be tailored to fit into a high street spa, as easily as into a destination spa. Designs can be totally bespoke and creatively modified to suit your space and budget. The word 'rasul' originates from rasul mud which is a characteristic element of these treatments. Accommodating from one to six people rasul chambers are suitable for individuals and groups.

Spa attendants will guide guests into an anti-chamber to prepare for their ritual, which is ideally part of the Rasul Suite. Given bowls of salt oils to scrub with, mud for the body and clay for the face guests are shown how and when to apply the products for themselves. The Rasul experience has four stages. Following a shower and perhaps the salt scrub, guests apply the mud and clay and enter the Rasul chamber to sit in a dry heat of for 20 minutes, on very warm tiled seats until the mud dries drawing out impurities. This sauna like heat will probably reach approximately 80 to 90 degrees, when steam is automatically piped into the chamber which dissolves the mud and clay for a further 10 to 15 minutes. Following the steam some

rasuls are equipped with a rain-like shower that falls from the chamber ceiling, washing the mud away, but others simply use the outer shower for the final cleanse. Ideally, to complete this ritual, massage oils or enriched body creams should be applied to re-hydrate the skin. As the rasul does not require therapists' time, are fun and therapeutic, they offer a worthwhile spa experience that can be a profitable asset to any spa.

Benefits of the Rasul

The benefits combine an interesting and effective ritual of cleansing, de-toxifying and de-stressing elements and can help relieve muscular aches and pains as well as dehydrated or tired skin and hair. When very good quality mud and clay are used these benefits are greatly enhanced and the skin will also feel exceptionally smooth and balanced.

Post Rasul provide plenty of time for relaxation or following with a massage is highly recommended.

Drinking water is essential throughout.

Follow the contra- indication and precautions as for the steam and sauna.

THERMAL SUITES

Thermal Suite is a contemporary term used to describe an area of the spa set up that contains the sauna, steam, hammam and rasul or whatever hot therapy rooms are offered. These suites will include areas to refresh yourself with drinking water, benches or seats to cool down, showers, cold plunge pools and other complimentary therapies as discussed in earlier.

HOT TUBS



The hot tub is one of the spas' more classical and ancient pre-treatment experiences where people like to unwind and socialise at leisure. Hot tub sizes and shapes vary from the simple round teak wood design with seats, where the tub should be deep enough for the water to cover the shoulders when seated, to more elaborate structures. The simple teak tub is a peaceful bathe with no jets or motors and is best placed near to a cold plunge pool or shower for optimum balance and benefit. Simple hot tubs like this to more elaborate fibre-glass tubs with powered jets can be used very successfully inside or out to extend the relaxation element of the spa experience. When situated outside in nature, hot tubs are perfect for breathing is the fresh air while bathing and enjoying the open sky whatever the weather as well as for star gazing, full moon nights and snowy days where the steam of the tub in the cold air provides a wonderful aesthetic sense of being in the purity of the elements.



When near the ocean, sea water can be used to create a Thallosotherapy experience and pools can be made out of the indigenous rocks and stone for a more eco style design. Also individual simple tubs made out of metals or other materials are excellent luxury additions for your guests to have private baths with therapeutic ingredients that we will discuss further on.

Water Temperature

As most peoples' body temperature settles at about 98.6 degrees F, the water can be anything from 100 (warm) to 104 degrees F (very warm) for a comfortable soak. However, some people may find this too hot and the same contra-indications apply to the use of the hot tub as we have studied in use of the sauna and steam rooms, taking into consideration high blood pressure and other vulnerable health conditions.

The temperature of hot tubs will vary slightly depending on the rituals and protocols surrounding the use of the tub but on the whole as it serves as a relaxing leisurely experience, the temperature will be set at approx 104 degrees F.

It is advisable to use a thermostat and some hot tubs manufacturers will build-in a thermostat for safety and easy control.

Tub Maintenance

It is essential to keep the tub very clean and hygienic, emptied and refilled with fresh water on a regular basis. Some form of anti-bacterial system should be used, as in a swimming pool, as unfriendly bacteria will grow in the warm water if not treated appropriately.

Unclean hot tubs can become a soup of dead skin cells, hair and other body waste when not maintained efficiently and cause ill health to circulate rapidly through your spa.

Guidelines for best use of Hot Tub

- Test water temperature twice a day.
- Create a program of cleaning on a weekly basis.
- Get advice from spa and tub manufacturers on the best purifying anti-bacterial system to use.
- It is not advisable for people to use the tub right after a massage when the oils from the body will float into the water.
- Shower and wash before entering the tub in all circumstances.
- Shower after using the hot tub every time.
- Make sure guests know your hot tub protocols before using for their safety.

http://www.royalcrescent.co.uk/special_breaks.asp?SBID=1382&Action=ShowBreak



HYDRO THERAPY POOLS

These are the evolutionary big brother of the hot tub which takes the next step of utilizing the power of water, to channel it through high powered pipes and jets strategically placed to effectively pound into the muscles and joints for release of tension and stress to shoulders, back and neck. The benefit of hydro therapy improves general circulation of fluids throughout the body and can help to relieve pain from arthritic and rheumatic conditions and serves as a wonderful regenerating relaxation therapy. Combined with the more subtle water pulses targeted at lymph drainage areas and the imaginative hydro circuits now available, these areas serve as a therapeutic play area for pre-treatment relaxation or as a very enjoyable spa experience within itself.

Individual hydro therapy pools for one or two people sharing are suitable to add additional therapeutic ingredients such as salts, herbs and essential oils. This creates a very worthwhile spa treatment within itself and individual hydro therapy rooms have become very popular in many spas.

Depending on your budget, available space and overall spa philosophy hydro therapy suites will vary greatly but can be successfully integrated into most spa environment on some level. These hydro pools can have very expensive set up and running costs so make sure you find out the facts of building, maintaining and running the system, what part it will play in your spa business and whether it is a viable and practical asset to your guests experience of your spa service.

Hydrotherapy Pool Maintenance

As with the Hot Tub, Hydro-pools will require high levels of an efficient anti-bacterial system to maintain hygiene, even if ozone systems are used.

The guidelines for best use are the same as for the hot tub.



COLD PLUNGE POOLS

We have discussed the benefits of using cold water therapy in previous lessons and the addition of a cold plunge pool or cold tub big enough for one person to completely submerge their whole body, including dunking their head in one fell swoop is a great bonus to excellent spa therapy. This instantly contracts the muscles, balancing the expanding effects of any deep heat treatment. Powerfully stimulating and refreshing the blood rushes to the extremities, including the head and heart, and is instantly empties the mind of superficial stress. The cells of the skin, which is our largest organ, is also regenerated and toned by the cold temperature, boosting repair of scar tissue and signs of aging.

Cold water therapy is a wonderful feel-good boost for the circulation, brain cells, mind and emotions as the endocrine system is stimulated to manufacture the bodies own inner pharmacy of stress relieving neuro-chemicals and hormones that can transform the biochemical relationship between your body, mind and emotions. This also boosts the immune system to develop stronger defences against colds, viruses and other immune deficient diseases.

The same contra indications will apply as have been given for hot therapy rooms including those with high or low blood pressure or a weak heart.



ICE ROOMS

The Ice Room is a very luxurious and expensive facility to build and maintain as it is like a large refrigerator. In locations of extreme cold, such as countries near the North Pole, ice rooms, like the Ice Palace, can be built seasonally and are therefore easier to maintain. However, in these locations the most exhilarating and fun way to spa of course, is by rolling in the snow!

Ice rooms serve as an extreme Cold Therapy following intense heat of the steam and sauna, giving an intensive boost to the circulation, closing the pores of the skin to radically tone and regenerate the skin cells. As we have discussed this also boosts the immune system strengthening our defences and general health making us more resilient. The combination of intense heat and cold is also excellent therapy for reducing muscle inflammation, accelerating healing of scar tissue and as a powerful anti-ageing treatment.

Due to space and expense of building an ice room, one can improvise with icy cold tubs of water for cold plunging! Not as glamorous but the effects are the same.

Commonly used alternatives now are small ice making machines adapted to dispense crushed ice into troughs outside steam and sauna rooms so that the ice can be manually rubbed over the body and face by guests themselves to create similar benefits.



WET ROOMS AND AREAS

Wet rooms have become an integral part of the spa set up and therefore the spa experience as it liberally provides the space to carry out treatments where water is a key part of the therapy. The wet room facilitates water flowing freely onto the floor in various ways such as shower heads, hoses or other means, like the Vichy Shower treatment where water flows onto the client from above, over a waterproof, perhaps fibreglass couch onto the floor.

Wet rooms accommodate treatments such as body wraps and scrubs where access to water in the treatment room provides an easy process for the guest and therapist. Due to the water flow electrics must be safely placed to avoid any contact with the water in any form. Consideration to the overall design of the wet room must facilitate easy drainage of water and the products used in treatments. Therefore tiled floors may need to be structured and tilted slightly towards a major drain aperture that is large enough to drain any muds, salts, seaweeds and clays that may have been used within the treatment.

Dedicated body scrub areas that often have bespoke designs of benches made of granite, marble or stone with hand showers attached to them are becoming very popular, and actually originate from Japanese and Moorish spa traditions. These body scrub areas can be situated near the pools and thermal suites so that guests can seamlessly go from the spa area into a private room or stall set up for this purpose. These scrubs are relatively quick treatments which make an excellent stand alone therapy or as part of a more extensive spa ritual which will be discussed later on in this course.

The organisation of the wet room in terms of the type of couch needed, towels,

heating, practicality of water flow and how the therapist keeps dry and presentable throughout requires innovative room layout and practical clothing design. Most spa design companies will be able advise you on these important points.

Wet Room Maintenance

As in all spa spaces hygiene is essential but the wet room requires deep cleaning every day. From the floor and all surfaces to the couch, drain apertures and shower heads, as this room facilitates the cleansing the skin in a very abrasive way. Dead skin cells mixed with the oils, salts and muds used in treatments will stick to surfaces and can leave a stale unpleasant smell in the room if left to diffuse in the atmosphere.

Make sure that time is allocated after each treatment for the therapist to give the important areas of the wet room a quick clean in-between clients. Then at the end or beginning of each day your cleaner or staff should clean the room thoroughly to safeguard against infection or ill health spreading and to keep the room smelling fresh.

Products used in these wet rooms are often blended with fresh aromas such as juniper, peppermint or lemongrass so there will always be a certain pungent or uplifting fragrance to the space which does add a rich element

WATSU POOLS

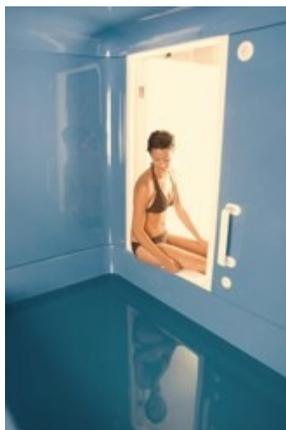
Watsu is a holistic form of body therapy that has its roots in Shiatsu and is carried out in warm water preferably of 37 to 39 degrees centigrade which is body temperature. During a watsu treatment the therapist supports the client throughout the session within the water taking them through a series of stretches and aligning techniques that has a deeply calming, balancing and therapeutic effect on the body, mind and spirit. As a session can last up to one hour it is vital that the body temperature is maintained throughout for receptivity, safety and relaxation.

An optimum size for a stand alone watsu pool for one treatment at a time is approximately five square metres. However, any large body of water can be used as long as the temperature is consistent and there is a peaceful unruffled atmosphere. No jets or motorised water should be used at any time during a watsu treatment and

though watsu pools can be outside in warm climates, in the UK they tend to be inside.



Watsu therapy has become very popular in large spas since it was first created by Harold Dull, a well known shiatsu practitioner whilst playing in the water at Harbin Hot Springs in California, USA over 30 years ago. Harold now has a large training centre at Harbin Hot Springs but there are now practitioners and trainers in many parts of the world including the UK. Watsu has grown into a superb all embracing water therapy suitable for people of all ages.



FLOATATION ROOMS

Floation as a form of therapy in spas has become a very popular way of attaining a very deep state of relaxation which allows the right and left sides of the brain to synchronise and generate an altered state of consciousness. The effect takes the body and mind into a Theta state, which is also reached through practicing deep meditation and yoga nidra (a yogic form of deep relaxation therapy).

The experience of floating gives a sensation of the dissolving of the physical and sensory barriers that usually define our body and mind, hence creating a floating sensation, like being suspended in outer space. This sensory shift expands the mind and the relationship to the body leading to a state of deep relaxation.

Floataion Therapy can be carried out in very small Floataion Tanks, ready built to function in a relatively small space and these tanks can be bought in various styles and models from Floataion equipment suppliers. However,, larger water sealed chambers where you can stand up and move around more easily if you wish are being custom made to suit the spa environment.

A Floataion space contains approximately 12 inches of Epsom salt water solution, maintained at body temperature, which you can float on like the Dead Sea. Within the tank all your senses are subdued by the chamber being completely dark, soundless and still, your body suspended in the water completely free of the pull of gravity. It is often described as a womb-like environment. Oxygen and air are funnelled into the tank to circulate freely. Usually a tank will be situated in a private, secure room where the internal lighting can be controlled from within the tank itself. Sessions last between 30 minutes to one hour, or longer if requested, though the salt solution may affect the skin causing irritation so a shower is advised straight after a float.

Originally called 'Sensory Deprivation Tanks' by John Lilly a ground breaking psychologist from America in the 1960's, he created the first floataion tank following his work in the ocean exploring the consciousness of dolphins and the way they communicate, plus other mind expanding theories of the time.

Other Benefits of Floating

Floataion is now used as the ultimate de-stressing therapy for those that find it very difficult to let go through other stress reducing treatments. It has also proved an effective environment for improving the benefits of listening to guided relaxation or personal development recordings, as the receptivity of the mind is heightened in this deep state of relaxation and influenced on a subliminal level. The benefits also reduce many forms of physical discomfort such as back pain, muscular tension, migraines and can accelerate the healing process of injuries. Other proven benefits are known to reduce chronic depression, anxiety, insomnia, phobias and high blood pressure.

In addition floatation has become an extraordinary tool for sportsmen and women who use these float rooms as the perfect environment for virtual training of techniques and circuits and for psychological preparation before a race.

DRY FLOATATION BED

These multi-purpose water filled dry floatation beds primarily create a weightlessness that comfortably supports the muscular system and improvises the effects of a wet float experience but is not quite so intensive or psychologically transformative. Flotation beds are designed with a water filled bed-like apparatus that has a latex surface that is soft and pliable. The water can be motorised to move and hence a control panel with various settings generates different pulses and rhythms of massage pushing the water pressure into the latex surface. When guests lie down on the latex cover they can control the water pressure jets themselves that create a massage-like techniques of various strengths, to release tension and stress from the body all the way from the legs to the back of the neck.

This is a worthwhile de-stressing treatment and is effectively utilised during a body wrap to combine simple floatation therapy with the wrap to aid relaxation and hence better de-toxification. On completion of the wrap the massage element can be used to apply a lymphatic drainage massage pulse to shake up and release toxins effortlessly.

As a treatment within itself, whilst listening to guided relaxation or soft music in a low lit space the dry flotation bed creates a deep sense of receptivity, therapeutically calming the nervous system and relieving muscular tensions.

The flotation bed can be set up in a wet room or in more multi-purpose space as it is a great treatment to offer guests when all your therapists are busy – it's like having another pair of hands available for work and is always there! It is an excellent addition to support a busy spa environment, and as an added bonus to spa rituals of all kinds.

Maintaining the Dry Floatation

These are heavy pieces of equipment so if placed upstairs make sure the floor and ceiling below can support it safely.

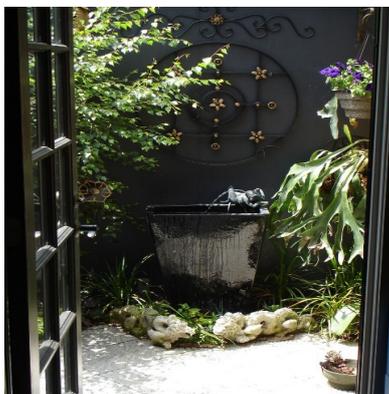
This kind of equipment is best acquired on a lease basis where you have a Service Contract built into the lease agreement. The bed would be set up for you by the suppliers.

Usually towels will be placed on the latex surface for clients and then wiped over with a cleansing agent in between each use. However the main elements that requires attention are the electrical components so the Service Agreement is essential.



THE VICHY SHOWER ROOM

This wonderful spa therapy massages the body with a continuous flow of warm water that flows from jets above a soft, often gel massage style bed. This equipment can be bought as ready made piece of apparatus or designed especially in alignment with your specifications. It is often used after a body scrub or body wrap to encourage lymphatic drainage and improve circulation and elimination of toxins. The benefits also hydrate and soften the skin increasing absorption of therapeutic products. The Vichy Shower is a very enjoyable therapy that also allows guests to experience this peacefully without too much intervention from therapists.



MEDITATION GARDENS AND ROOMS

Meditation gardens have become the inner sanctum of the journey offering guests the beauty and grace of a space designed and devoted towards conscious reflection and meditation. Landscaped with labyrinths, trickling water fountains or streams, Buddhas and shrines, places to walk and sit in silent bliss are a joyous addition to any spa.

Meditation Rooms provide a simple space with meditation cushions, incense, inspirational books, art or paintings encouraging all those who enter to discipline their minds and hearts with the practice of meditation.

THE RELAXATION SPACE

Spas therapies are centred on creating an experience that allows guests to feel totally removed from the pressures of their lives and enjoy respite from the sensory onslaught discussed earlier. Relaxation is an art and one, that as human beings, we are often far too unfamiliar with, due to the speed and demands of our day to day conditioning. Relaxation is an essential quality that could, and should, be taught in schools, as research has shown that it promotes efficiency in learning skills, improving memory retention, emotional and psychological balance, and a sense of physical wellbeing. Without the ability to relax deeply and unwind the stress accumulated in our day to day lives, our sleep can become adversely affected. Sleep is the primary environment where our minds can freely explore the imprinting of the day on a subliminal level, so important to our sanity, and where our bodies regenerate the stores of energy to replenish our resources and awaken to achieve another day. When our sleep is continually disturbed or shallow, our health is compromised and weakened on every level of life.

Consequently, the time and space to integrate the benefits of spa therapies in a dedicated relaxation room is an important part of the spa journey, not to be underestimated as essential to the success of the spa business.

A well situated and enjoyable relaxation room or spaces where guests can just be free to feel and integrate the benefits of their spa rituals is a valuable asset to all concerned. This space also provides time for reading and an inspirational selection of books and magazines that support the spa philosophy of wellbeing is a good

investment to educate your guests on how to further enhance their lives. A Relaxation space also provides time for reflection which is key to our psychological health, and by simply being in a harmonious, uplifting, completely stress-free environment guests feel rewarded. When everyone wears the same robes and slippers, it creates a welcome anonymity that is levelling and nourishing to the soul.

Depending on the philosophy, budget, orientation and location of the spa, relaxation spaces will vary enormously. Relaxation areas with views and vistas where the eye can travel over miles or overlook a well stocked garden is liberating and therapeutic. Relaxation means different things to different people so there is plenty of scope to be creative with outdoor and indoor spaces. Loungers, cushions and even beds in hidden areas of the landscape and garden create magical places to become part of nature and feel the elements whatever the weather. Providing blankets and pillows, meditation cushions and refreshments within easy reach all give a sense of freedom and total leisure.

Vital elements of a successful relaxation space are a comfort, flexibility, warmth, natural light or an aesthetically pleasing softly lit space with candles or reading lamps. Liberal use of fresh towels and blankets, sensitive calming aromas and a rich variety of subtle good quality music all adds ambience and sensory peace! Muscially do not allow a recording to be programmed on 'repeat' as it becomes irritating and monotonous.

In luxury spas where treatment rooms are actually suites, private relaxation spaces are integrated into the design that allows those in need of stillness and isolation for deep relaxation, meditation and regenerative sleep to let go blissfully without concern of being disturbed; or disturbing others with a snore or two. Ideally, there will be comfortable and varied relaxation areas outside, inside and in privacy as an integral part of the spa facility.

Actual Sleep Rooms have also become a popular addition particularly in international spas where guests can sleep off their jet lag directly after treatments and benefit from the effects of deeper spa treatments where sleep is an important part of the ritual.



Maintaining the Relaxation Room

This space is not only a comfort zone but also a visual feast that speaks of peace, care, comfort and harmony. Excellent Feng –Shui! Therefore, lounging beds or chairs must be neatly dressed and prepared to welcome guests. The space should be regularly tidied of empty cups, used towels and any disarray so that the space always looks like it is just waiting for each guest who is special and valued.

YOGA ROOM

Yoga has become integral to the spa philosophy as it encompasses a perfect balance of body, mind and spirit in movement and awareness. The process of practicing yoga naturally detoxifies the internal organs and reduces tension from the muscles and joints and so harmonises well with spa philosophy. The breathing element of yoga further enhances deep relaxation and regeneration of the brain cells and circulation, and calms the nervous system. Therefore many spas are creating dedicated areas for classes or one to one yoga practice that can give clients that extra dimension of activity to further enrich their total wellbeing.

Ideally a relatively clear and quiet space with wood floors will be sufficient, but yoga can also take place outside in nature or on terraces when weather allows. Yoga mats and cushions are essential and depending on the style of yoga taught the addition of straps and blocks may be required.



THE CHANGING ROOM

The Changing Room in today's spa culture has become representative of your spa management principles and so holds an important place in the spa journey. Often small urban and high street spa salons will not have the space to provide full service changing rooms as the focus is on treatment room therapy rather than the whole thermal and hydro spa experience. However, there may be space for a separate unisex shower room, or in room showers to facilitate offering wraps and give guests the opportunity to shower off before a massage if they have been working all day. They will be more comfortable and able to relax when feeling clean and fresh so even a small shower and changing area is a good investment when possible.

In large spas where there are thermal suites of any kind or size the changing room becomes a vital part of the spa journey and of course are separate for men and women. Pre treatment this is where guests can leave their belongings safely in lockers, be provided with slippers, robes and other accessories like a light-weight bag to carry their reading glasses and a book. Here guests can change into swim wear for thermal therapy and shower and bathe if they wish before entering the spa itself, which should be recommended.

Post treatment, the changing room can offer a welcome pampering facility with power showers and well equipped vanity areas with seating. Due to laundering issues some spas will give guest towels upon entry or in their locker, but when possible it is a luxury to have a store of fresh towels rolled up in the changing room for guests to help themselves. Bins for wet towels should be placed in easily accessible areas and guests encouraged to use them!

Often large spa changing rooms have their own foot baths, steam room and sauna which give both men and women the opportunity to enjoy these facilities free of clothing if they wish. Some may not feel comfortable naked but in many cultures this is actually accepted as the right and professional way to spa, even in mixed sex areas. However, in the British culture it is better to only allow clothes free areas in separate sex facilities.

Products are best made available in dispensers fixed to the wall as products do 'walk' with the dishonest guest from time to time, as do towels and robes. On the whole you will find that this is rare, however most spas will build in a 'theft loss' or 'risk assessment' estimate into their budget to account for these indiscretions.

Notices in changing rooms should be at a minimal level but it is advisable to put a disclaimer in the actual lockers stating that once guest belongings have been stored and locked by the guest the contents are their responsibility as are all their belongings left out in the open changing room.



Changing Room Accessories

The quality of robes, slippers and skin care products available to the guest speaks volumes about the care management have taken in making sure the guest has a wonderful pampering experience. Make sure your robes will fit even the largest man or woman and not swamp the tiny! It is best to start with a mix of 'medium' and 'extra large' size robes and slippers to cover all your bases. Order enough so that each guest will have fresh accessories to cover a two day period of business accounting for laundry time and unforeseen eventualities.

Purchase the best quality accessories you can afford as soft comforting materials and a good brand of grooming products will put you well on the way to making your guest happy and relaxed from the moment they enter the changing room. The

aesthetics of the rooms are also enhanced with aromas, scented candles, flowers and practical, comfortable seating.



List of Changing Room Basic Essentials

- Lockers
- Showers
- Mirrors with good lighting
- Vanity area with shelf space
- Wash basins
- Some form of seating depending on size and style of spa
- Robes
- Slippers
- Hand size towels
- Bath size towels
- Small Box in lockers to put guest jewellery
- Shower caps
- Wet/used towel/robe bins
- Waste bin
- Hand wash
- Hand lotion
- Shower gels
- Shampoo
- Hair Conditioner
- Facial Cleansing product
- Facial Toner
- Body Cream or Lotion
- After shave lotion (men)
- Cotton wool

- Cotton Buds
- Tissues
- Hair dryers/straighteners
- Spare hair brushes
- Nail file, razor kits



Changing Room Maintenance

Like all spa spaces cleanliness, hygiene, order, harmony and practicality are the top priorities in maintaining the first class welcome and care you desire for your guests. Large spas will have full time spa attendants who are in and out of the changing room at all times clearing wet floors, picking up towels, replacing toilet paper and generally maintaining the aesthetic order and helping guests with robes or other dressing needs. In any event, to assure good housekeeping, make sure you have a dedicated rota for your spa team to check the changing room regularly monitoring when busy days call for higher maintenance and deep cleaning all areas of the changing room every day.

It is a great disappointment and frustration to guests so find no toilet paper or shampoo or dirty showers and sinks or broken hairdryers, and this may make or break your customer relations, so keep a high level of standards at all times in the changing room.

LAUNDRY

This can be a complex and expensive organisational operation if not thought through right at the start of your spa operations. Good management of towels, robes and

linens is fundamental to the successful running of the spa, so this whole area of your business needs to be carefully considered.

The main two options for laundry are 'in-house' or to 'out-source' to a dedicated laundry company.

In House Laundry

Setting up your own laundry room can be expensive but for small and medium size spas can be a better option in the long run. A specific laundry room with heavy duty washing machines and dryers can be operated by the therapists themselves and therefore a well organised room with space to fold and shelve dry towels and robes is essential. However, busy spas will have spa attendants focused on this area of spa operations who also take care of the changing rooms and relaxation spaces.

As with all electrical equipment a good service contract is an invaluable support that you must ensure you have in place as breakdown of your machines can cause havoc to your business as spas become almost impossible to operate without towels or robes. Also have a back up out-source laundry on your books to use in an emergency.

Even large spas can manage their own laundry if organised well. By situating a number of smaller laundry rooms throughout a large treatment room area, therapists can take care of this aspect themselves with used towel drop off points and storage of fresh towels within easy reach. As machines obviously cause noise and vibration make sure the laundry room is situated at a distance from the treatment rooms and relaxation areas so as not to disturb the peaceful ambience.

Out Sourcing Laundry

Some laundries will also include a towel hire service as well as pick up and delivery. They may charge per quantity or by weight and make sure you know exactly what your costs will be by estimating how many towels and robes you will use per day as costs can soar into thousands of pounds per month! Check on the washing detergent that the company uses as high PH levels can cause sensitivity to your client's skin and will also wear out the towels much faster so inquire about more gentle options.

Make sure you have control of your towel and linen inventory so that at any time the count being laundered or soiled and the number on the shelves and in the treatments rooms adds up to your total amount of stock of each towel size.

TOWELS AND FIRST ORDER ESTIMATION

It is valuable to know how ordering your stock of towels and robes is calculated at this stage of the course as it will impact on many aspects of your organisation. You will find this information very useful when calculating quantities of linens and other accessories required too.

Example Per Day

- Calculate how many of which size towels are used during each treatment
- Calculate at 100% productivity how many of each treatment you will give
- Multiply the number of each size towel required for each treatment
- For example if you require 2 bath towels per massage and you carry out 20 massages per day you will need 40 bath towels for that service per day
- Calculate how many towels will be required daily in the changing room
- If you have a total of 40 guests passing through the changing room each having one bath towel and one hand towel you will need 40 of each size towel. 40 bath towels and 40 hand size towel.
- Add all the towels required for each treatment together plus changing room requirements and you will have the total of towels needed per day at 100% occupancy.
- This total stock required per day is your 1- par supply – a term used by hotels.
- To have a full back-up set of towels means you must double up on the total quantity. This is called 2 –par supply.
- It is advisable to have a 3-par supply that means you can have one in use, one on the shelf and one in the laundry.

The 3 par supply is more essential when out-sourcing your laundry as turn around time on delivery will limit your in spa store of ready towels.

Ordering Robes

Calculate in the same way with ordering your stock of robes.

THE STAFF ROOM

The staff room provides your spa team with a space to prepare, refresh, eat, drink, communicate and rest whilst at work. Do not underestimate the importance of this facility as the care of your team is vital to creating harmony within the heart of your spa business and generating a team spirit. Therapists are also your clients in one way or another and need to be supported and cared for in the spirit with which you wish them to take care of your spa guests.

As space is often at a premium you will want to consider the size of your team and how many staff may use the staff room at one time.

Essential facilities of the Staff Room

- Lockers for their belongings
- A private changing area or cubicle
- Hanging area for uniforms
- Coat rack, Shoe area
- Table, benches ,chairs
- Notice board, staff mail pigeon holes
- Sink unit & shelves
- Refrigerator, Microwave, kettle
- Cupboards
- Cups, plates, cutlery, utensils, etc
- Comfortable seating area when possible
- Staff toilets near by when space provides
- This space may also serve as a laundry room in very small spas

MANAGERS OFFICE

Spa managers require a personal office to take care of spa operations and manage the spa team. Managers have an ongoing list of daily, weekly and monthly tasks such as creating in house marketing initiatives and therapist's incentives, monitoring inventory, ordering products, raising invoices, interviewing therapists for

recruitment, disciplinary meetings, rotas, client care and generating Profit and Loss reports to name just a few of their responsibilities.

This office will also store all SOP manuals (standard of performance), treatment protocols and training manuals, Health and Safety information, Licences and Certificates plus all files and paperwork relating to spa operations. It is also useful to have a Safe to lock away takings at the end of the day. Therefore full office facilities are a must for a successful spa operation.



THE SPA KITCHEN AND PROFESSIONAL USE PRODUCT STORAGE

As the trend for fresher, naturally sourced, active and organic spa products has become more desirable they have acquired a mainstream popularity. Therefore a work space is necessary that is used by therapists to store and prepare products such as mud, clays, scrubs and oils that require fresh blending and may be mixed with fresh fruits, fluids, vegetables, roots and herbs as well as indigenous plants from the locale.

Please keep in mind that some designs of treatment rooms do have the capacity to do blending but a separate kitchen for these processes keeps treatment rooms cleaner and gives spas greater potential for product usage.

Making fresh spa products can become a key signature USP (unique selling point) to your spa business and creating your own brand product range may also be an option for you which will be discussed later. However, many ready available spa product brands also have fresh blending procedures that require the spa kitchen facility.

The spa kitchen provides the space and tools to mix large and small batches of product as required. Depending on the size of the spa ,the kitchen needs to be kept quite cool, with low lights and will consist of one or two large sinks, drainage areas, shelving for mixing bowls, trays and other receptacles used to serve the products in the treatment room. Spatulas and spoons, protective aprons and wet treatment clothing are also stored here.

A refrigerator has become an essential tool to keep special blends and other active professional ingredients fresh, preserving their effectiveness. As containers for spa body products can be 5 kilos size or more you will need a spacious fridge.

Though this is not a secure product store room there will need to be an inventory of professional size products stocked for blending purposes. Therapists will need to come and go freely to the spa kitchen so it is not used for retail product storage.

RETAIL PRODUCT STORE ROOM

The retail product storeroom, or cupboard if the spa is small, needs to be secured and locked with access only given to those who are given charge of this area. Keeping your products safe from pilfering is another area to be vigilant about though do not be too paranoid as this creates a bad feeling of mistrust. All spa staff will understand the financial investment in your product stock so having a locked area is totally acceptable and usual procedure.

Some product brands will have retail and professional size products in quite similar sealed containers that need to be carefully stored in a cool room away from direct sunlight and spot lights to preserve their shelf life.

Each treatment room will be allocated their own product supply for treatments and when therapists need to replenish a product or sell retail (if not already on display), they will usually go to the person in charge of the store room to give them access to the stock. Your manager, head therapist or reception staff will be responsible for carrying out an inventory of stock on a regular basis. This inventory is dated and

made visible in the storeroom for therapists to see and upon which they can sign off which products they have taken for their treatment room.

Product Stock Levels

Your order system for all products is based on agreeing stock levels for each product over a specific time period and making sure you always have this quantity in your store room to avoid running out and not being able to fulfil treatments booked.

When starting out with a new business it is difficult to know exactly which products and treatments will be more popular than others so you will have to estimate quantities over a three month time period. Seasonal changes will also influence sales of treatments and products so if, for example, you offer a St Tropez Tanning service, you know that the summer months will require higher levels of stock.

Maintaining stock levels is a learning curve and is based on the type of spa business you operate. However, the common denominator is that all spas need a secure product store room and an excellent stock taking system.

THE MULTI PURPOSE TREATMENT ROOM

Each spa has its own particular style, design and philosophy as well as budgeting considerations so treatment rooms will vary considerably. However, there are common denominators for creating the optimum spa treatment room environment whatever your position.

The treatment room environment is the very private, intimate, one to one space where your therapists and valued guests will interface and experience the heart of their spa journey. This is the real 'me time' where expectations are high, so the entire focus of the room, the therapist and the treatment needs to be unwaveringly on fulfilling the guests wellbeing and exceeding expectations. Therefore on entering the treatment room all of this 'intent' should be visible and felt in the rooms' ambience and manner of your therapist. The treatment room is like the 'inner sanctum', a sacred space where the privacy encourages the guest to feel safe, to let go, to breathe, to trust, to enjoy and feel a warm welcome of being in the right place at the right time. For most people this is a treat to give themselves the reward and

the 'time out' to be pampered, de-stressed and comforted and the treatment room needs to reflect these aspirations wholeheartedly.

The Treatment Couch

The treatment couch for a multi purpose therapy room will be one of the most important pieces of equipment. A good couch is an investment that will see you through many years of consistent use. Your clients will be spending a great deal of time lying down and they will remember whether they enjoyed the comfort you have provided. There are a vast choice of suppliers who sell excellent ready made designs and many are able to customise your couches to suit your requirements of budget and size, as well as design, colour, depth of padding, and accessories for face positioning, arm rests and more. The varied range allows you to choose the style and functionality that is right for your treatment menu. From earthy wood frames with simple adjustments to metal, hydraulic or electric couches that have many modes of movement to comfortably support different parts of the body, as well as the height of the couch for the therapists ease and safety. You can either go to the suppliers show room or some suppliers will come to your premises and advise you on what will be the best option.

The following points are important to help you make the right decision for your set up before buying.

- Chose as wide a width couch as possible that gives the client excellent arm support whether lying on their back or front.
- If budget allows have as much bed padding into the surface of the couch as you can for comfort during longer spa therapies.
- There are excellent soft latex surfaces that also create more softness so inquire about the varying textures available and whether they clean well. Chose a colour that fits into your décor and design.
- An adjustable height couch will allow more than one therapist to use the couch. For health, safety and comfort the therapists knuckles should reach the top of the couch when they are standing with arms relaxed at their sides.
- Wood frames couches are better to conduct energy for holistic treatments.
- All couches need to have a head rest that is also a face hole for good alignment of the neck and general comfort for wellbeing.

- Electrically adjusted couches are excellent when the treatment room is being used by different therapists' during the day so that height adjustments can be made quickly and easily.
- Electric couches need to be plugged into a socket in the floor beneath the couch so that leads and wires are not a health hazard.
- Couches that have electrical adjustments for knee support and back rest, are useful when long aesthetic treatments are offered. Also if the room is for hand and foot treatments.
- If the couch has pegs to adjust the legs it is best to have one therapist per room per day.
- Most couch suppliers will also provide bolsters, couch covers, step up stools to suit your couch.



○



Room Design

- Whatever design you chose for your treatment rooms make sure there is a continuity of style, colour and fabrics, is easy to clean and maintain with a sense of order, harmony and comfort.
- If décor is too 'busy' and products look chaotic and disorganised it does not allow the guest to have confidence in your service or relax.

Room Size

- A minimum size for treatment rooms is 10' by 12' which of course does not include showers or additional relaxation areas.
- Therapists will need at least 2.5' around the couch in order to work comfortably. Very small rooms are very restrictive for multi-purpose use and are not advised. Guests often feel unhappy about receiving expensive treatments in them unless it is a simple waxing or something along those lines.



Double Treatment Rooms

When couples and friends come for spa breaks over a weekend and have booked a few treatments they may find themselves apart for much of the time. Consequently the trend in double couch treatment rooms is more accessible to accommodate two treatments being given at the same time. When space allows these rooms can also provide a bathing and relaxation area that facilitates the whole pre cleanse and post treatment experience being shared in one private space. Even in small spas it is recommended to have one room large enough to facilitate two couches, keeping in mind the dimensions needed for the therapists to work effectively around each couch.



Floors

- Floor surfaces for holistic therapies are best made of wood as this material is easier for therapists to work on as it is receptive and earthy. However, when the room is also used for body treatments there are many other alternatives such as slate, stone, tiles, marble, cushioned rubber or other forms of linoleum can be useful. This is also a design and functionality feature so consider your room usage.

Lighting and Electrics

- Dimmer switches for spotlighting or wall lighting for relaxing treatments.
- Movable Spot Lamp lighting for facials and other close-up treatments
- Stream lined lighting above task area.
- Multiple socket outlets on all walls including a double socket in the floor for electric couch, plus around task/sink area.

Heating and Ventilation

- Any heating or air conditioning vents and fixtures should not be positioned over the couch as hot or cool air will flow directly onto the guest.
- All vents should be pointing upwards.
- Thermostat control for each room within easy reach
- Ventilation – depending on the climate and environment the circulation of air should be carefully monitored.
- Cupboards that have electrical equipment should also be vented.

Plumbing

- Practical size and shape sink

- Hot and cold swivel mixing tap.
- Large drainage plughole

Cupboards and surfaces

- Water proof surfaces around sinks
- Additional surface for blending products – (optional design dependent)
- All work top surfaces to be finished in durable non stainable materials that are easy to clean.
- Hidden tops for sinks and closure of all shelves and cupboards to create an uncluttered style (optional design dependent)
- In the event there is no Changing Room provide in room cupboard to hang guest's clothing and provide a robe.
- All exposed surfaces to have protected seals.
- Further display areas
- Trolley – and space to slide trolley under shelving if desired
- Cupboards to keep stock of equipment required for in room treatments.
- Cupboards for product storage
- Cupboards for all treatment room accessories ie: cotton wool,
- Shelving for extra towels

Other treatment room considerations

- Hot Towel Cabinet for wet mitts etc:
- Hot Towel Rail near shower (if available)
- Ergonomically designed stool or chair for therapist
- Comfortable chair for guest
- Hooks on door or wall for hanging the guest's robe.
- Mirror
- Step up Stool to help guest on and off the couch
- Music set up in room or controlled from central area and piped in.
- All Doors to be sound proof, hinges well oiled to avoid creaking and closure of doors to be quiet on shutting.
- Some form of symbol or signage on treatment room door informing that the room is in use.
- Extra blanket

- Cushions
- Bolsters



THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

So far we have focused on identifying the function of key spa spaces and rooms that contribute towards creating the spa environment and a sense of wellbeing which authentic spas are designed to provide for their guests. Whatever the size of your spa; whether you intend to use hydro therapy equipment or not, the essence of the spa experience rests in fulfilling what is known in the industry as 'The Customer Journey'. The Customer Journey takes the guest through a predestined process of 'touch points' which gives the desired results. 'Touch points' implies that there is a specific path to travel through the spa experience through which the guest is guided in various ways.

How you communicate the journey to your guests will be a combination of key important factors. The key foundation is a well designed plan of how to build and structure the spa layout which is primary to creating a comfortable spa journey and managing spa operations. This will allow guests to go easily from one area to the next in an order that makes common sense and feels harmonious. The spa philosophy is another key factor as the customer journey must reflect the ethos and spirit of the spa services.

These key factors are supported by good signage, though not garish or abrasive, as these should be kept to a minimum when the layout is well thought through in the

initial spa plan. In addition, clear verbal directives from the spa team helps to create a seamless customer journey. There should be no need for guests to feel lost or unsure of where to go or what to do next.

For example, the spa layout will be such that the changing rooms will have easy access to the hydro pool areas; that showers and cold plunge areas are next to hot areas. That the relaxation room is in a quiet area of spa operations so people are not walking through at all times and that retail products are displayed and visible at reception where people can look, play and buy. All these aspects, plus many more need to be considered in your overall plans.

Therefore it is best to write up the actual experience of how your Customer Journey will be in reality within the spa structure and design to ensure your plans work as a successful and therapeutic Customer Journey, where any stress or confusion to the guest, caused by a haphazard spa layout, is removed.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

A well thought through customer journey gives guests the opportunity to achieve the sense of balance and wellbeing they are looking for, in the knowledge that each part of the journey is an important part of their spa experience. However, knowledge comes with a certain level of understanding and therefore, like all worthwhile life experience, there is an element of learning and becoming confident with the unexpected, the new and the unpredictable that needs to be taken on board by guests unfamiliar with your customer journey.

For the newcomer to your spa, even those seasoned spa goers, there will always be differences from one spa to the next and therefore it is imperative that you give your guests' all the information they need to enjoy the experience with a sense of ease and confidence. It can be quite daunting for guests to arrive at the spa and not know exactly what to do first, let alone use the facilities successfully to achieve the best results and not feel embarrassed in any way or at any time. Some people will be quite shy, even too shy to ask what to do, so its important to leave no space for hesitation and give your guest a thorough orientation of the spa layout and the spa journey they are about to embark upon.

Here is a basic Customer Journey that does not include any specific hydro, heat or water facilities you may have. This list simply defines the fundamental guidelines for Initiation, Orientation and Completion through any spa journey.

Basic guidelines for your Customer Journey through Orientation, Consultation and Completion

- On arrival check the name of the client and confirm that treatments booked in for them are correct.
- If you have space for booking additional treatments, you may like to ask the guest client if they would like to have another treatment.
- Give your guest a Consultation Form to complete and assess if there are any contra-indications to using the facilities or the treatments booked. (An example Spa Lifestyle Consultation form is given further on)
- Having read the completed guest consultation form, if any facilities are contra-indicated or the treatment needs to be altered, explain this to the guest immediately.
- Give the guest a written schedule of their itinerary with times and location of treatments clearly. (useful for large spa or when guest is receiving more than one treatment that day).
- Take the guest to the changing room and show them their locker. Open the locker for them and show them the slippers, robe and how to wear them and how to use the changing room facilities.
- Tell the guest they are responsible for their key (if there is one) and their belongings.
- At this point you can either, take the guest into the spa area and explain how to best use the thermal facilities you have and how much time they have prior to their treatment.
- Also to point out the Relaxation Room, Toilets, Treatment pickup area, and other key areas of your customer journey. If the facility is small you can simply tell them this information.
- At the treatment pickup point the therapist introduces themselves to the guest and checks they have the right client!

- Therapist has copy of the Consultation Form and has already read it or will do so with the client. Other questions may need to be asked depending on the treatment specifications. This can be done in the treatment room.
- Therapist leads guest to the treatment room, which is immaculately prepared for the guest, and explains exactly what will happen in the treatment.
- Treatment is carried out according to protocols.

On Completion of the Treatment or Therapy

- Guest is robed and taken to Relaxation Area and offered refreshments.
- Therapist or spa attendant checks that guest is happy and if they need anything or are preparing for another treatment. They are told they can go back to the changing room at any time.
- A Prescription of recommended products of further treatments is given by the therapist to the guest and a copy to front of house reception.
- When the guest is ready to pay and go the reception can also confirm the Prescription product and treatment recommendations.
- Reception can close the sale of products by bringing the products to the guest if not already done by the therapist.
- Reception asks the guest if they enjoyed the treatment and whether they would like to book another appointment then.
- Reception also informs guests of any special offers, promotions and in-spa events.

SPA LIFESTYLE CONSULTATION

When the guest is confident of how to move around the spa this naturally allows them to relax and let go rather than worrying about whether they are in the right place or dressed appropriately.

As the spa environment can include experiences which may not be suitable for everyone it is important that you have all the information required to make sure that Health and Safety protocols are being followed accurately at all times and in every treatment. Your salon or spa team **must** have a completed Consultation Form from every client which should be kept on record and stored safely as 'Client History.'

This process protects your therapists, your business and your client's well being in case of any unfortunate reactions a client may have from a treatment or experience at your spa. The consultation becomes the document that assures and insures you have asked all the right questions and that the answers given by the guest were responded to correctly by the spa staff. It is unlawful to carry out **any** treatment without such confirmation from your guest and a serious error if your therapists do not keep up with this protocol. All Consultations should be signed by the guest on the day of receiving the treatment.

Repeat and Regular Clientele

Though your regular clientele may not appreciate filling out a complete Consultation Form on every visit, you are bound by law to make sure that your therapists have a copy of the original guest Consultation Form to hand at every session and checked for any possible contra-indications with the guest. In these situations you can have an abbreviated Consultation Form that the guest signs to confirm the treatment being received and any other conditions the guest may have on that day that could influence the success of the treatment. In addition some treatments will require special questions based on the protocols of the treatment every time that treatment is given, no matter how many times the guest has received this service from you. All this information should be noted and stored.

As spa therapy and environments do focus on total wellbeing in body, mind and soul of your guests, the following consultation embraces this level of care and inquiry. This is an example consultation form and you can alter or add questions according to your spa services. There is a * next to the questions which are mandatory for all treatment consultations.



LIFESTYLE CONSULTATION FORM - example

*TODAYS DATE _____

*GUESTS NAME _____ DOB _____

Address _____

Tel: _____ -email _____

*THERAPIST NAME _____

*TREATMENT/s BOOKED _____

* FACE AND BODY - please circle

General Circulation	Poor	Normal	Overactive
Water Retention	None	Average	Above Average
Body skin condition	Oily	Dry	Combination Sensitive
Facial skin condition	Oily	Dry	Combination Sensitive
	Acne	Rosacea	

Hormonal changes _____

*Is your skin sensitive _____
(if so a skin test is required)

*Are you allergic to any products _____

MEDICAL HISTORY - please circle Yes or No plus your comment if necessary

*Are you presently taking any medication or under medical supervision?
Y/N _____

*Have you suffered any injury?
Y/N _____

Have you suffered any recent shock or trauma?
Y/N _____

*Have you suffered any recent accident or surgery?
Y/N _____

*Are you pregnant or planning a pregnancy?
Y/N _____

*Do you suffer from any of the following conditions? _ please circle and discuss with your therapist

Allergies Arthritis Eczema Psoriasis

Varicose Veins Headaches Migraines Asthma
 Rheumatism Epilepsy Heart Condition Depression
 Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME) MS Diabetes High Blood Pressure
 Low Blood Pressure Iodine (seaweed allergy) Nut Allergy Sciatica
 Any other conditions? _____

***Female Imbalance ? - please circle**

PMT HRT Menopause Contraception
 Irregularity Other _____

LIFESTYLE - Please tick the box

What is your stress level *Low *Medium *High
 How well do you sleep *Deep *Light *Disturbed
 What is your activity level *Sedentary *Average *High
 How often do you exercise *Never *3x wk min: *Weekly
 What kind of exercise *High impact *Gym based *yoga/pilates/tai chi
 *All
 Do you smoke *Never *1-10 per day *10 +
 Do you have children *Babies *6-12 yr old *months pregnant

BODY MIND SPIRIT

Do you generally feel positive *often *sometimes *hardly ever
 Do you feel energetic *75 -100% *30- 50% *hardly ever
 Do you feel balanced *75 -100% *30- 50% *hardly ever
 Do you relax or meditate *often *sometimes *hardly ever
 Can you feel peaceful *often *sometimes *hardly ever
 How is your memory *excellent *OK *Poor

DIET

Do you eat fresh food *Daily *Often *Hardly
 ever
 Do you eat breakfast *Daily *Often *Hardly
 ever
 Do you take supplements *Daily *Sometimes *Hardly ever
 Is your digestion good *Yes *No *Mostly
 Is your elimination good *Yes *No *Mostly
 How much water do your drink daily?

***How is your general health ?**

Excellent Good Fair Poor

***Do you have any area of your body that you do not wish to be treated or touched?**
Y/N

***Are there any other health related issue that you need to tell us about in order to give you a beneficial treatment?**

What is the main purpose of your visit today?

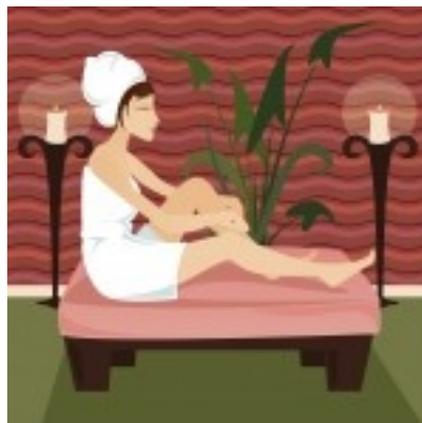
***Have you had this treatment before?** Yes No

I hereby give the therapist permission to carry out the treatment or ritual I have requested.

Thank you for your details which will remain confidential to

Guests

Signature... ..**Dated**... ..



CREATING A SENSE OF RITUAL

Further to the care you give to the orientation of your guests the spa has become a Sanctuary that allows them to feel a sense of escape and reward, inspiring and educating guests as their experience unfolds. To achieve the optimum spa experience of feeling cleansed, rejuvenated and uplifted a sense of Ritual needs to be created.

The idea of Ritual comes from a sense of the sacredness and ceremony that is inherent in any act that is carried out with qualities of purpose and consciousness in the body, mind, heart and spirit of those leading and receiving the ritual.



What elements transform a spa experience into a Ritual?

By bringing this sense of purpose and consciousness to your customer care and communication in how the guest is guided through the spa experience, and the manner in which treatments are carried out, will give a natural feeling of ceremony and ritual. The key lies in **the intention** of the spa team to truly focus on **the purpose** of the guests chosen therapies which automatically empowers the benefits considerably. The spa team is then communicating a deep understanding that there is a continuity of awareness to be supported at each stage of the guests' journey to create a seamless, harmonious and caring feeling that embraces the well being of the whole person body, mind and soul.

The guest is then no longer just someone who is being given a treatment. They become involved in an experiential process feeling valued and included in the ritual of the spa journey.

A spa ritual is being guided and lead by the therapist so their own state of mind and understanding of procedures, as well as their therapeutic skills, their energy, spirit and ability to communicate affectively are essential. In addition the therapist must master the orchestration, organization and thoroughly understand the effectiveness of the products used.

Spa Rituals are also greatly enhanced by creating a visual therapeutic element using decorative and artistic presentation of the products drawing on the cultural origin of the treatment. In this way each ritual or spa philosophy can have its own distinctive character that reflects the culture and location of the spa with perhaps use of indigenous plants, herbs and flowers to bring a sense of beauty and freshness to the ritual. Rituals can also include special music or bells or other uplifting and calming sounds to deepen the sensory element and allow hearing to part of the ritual therapy. By using indigenous plants and natural sounds this creates a natural link to the environment, an important and powerful aspect of any authentic spa therapy.

By definition Rituals need to have a clear beginning which can be called 'initiation' and a conscious ending called 'completion'. By beginning the ritual with intention in a specially orchestrated way to orient your guest into the therapeutic experience, and completing with a sense of stillness or affirmation of goodwill for the guest, the ritual is protected and empowered boosting the positive benefits.

Within a ritual the actual treatment protocols will remain the same for each spa allowing for a uniform standard of procedures to be carried out in the spirit of true ritual.

Ayurveda

Ayurveda originates from India and has become an extremely popular form of spa therapy as its treatments are all divinely designed rituals that address the individuals

needs at that time. Following indepth consultation the rituals use highly therapeutic pure oils enriched with medicinal herbs for all forms of massage. Ayurveda means 'The Science of Life' and comprises a rich and unique philosophy of understanding of how each persons body, mind and spirit requires a different balance of fundamental elements to be healthy and happy. Ayurvedic rituals are an excellent addition to the spa environment and the availability of products and training in treatments is now easily accessible.

A dedicated Ayurvedic therapy room is essential to carry out the specific rituals because therapy tables and procedures differ from western approaches to spa treatments. You should seek advice from your Ayurvedic product supplier as to the dimensions of the room and equipment necessary.



TRADITIONAL SPA JOURNEYS

Stages of the journey

The following stages embrace the traditional spa journey that create the results that spas are designed to achieve. Even though you may not have a thermal suite or bathing or relaxation facilities it is important that you know and understand the traditional process which can be creatively modified to fit into your customer journey whether you are a spa, or a salon with limited space.



1. **Cleanse and Unwind**

Pre treatment cleansing and relaxation serves an important preparatory purpose. In spas with thermal suites such as steam, saunas, hot-tubs, hammams and cold plunges these are the areas utilised to begin the unwinding process preparing body and mind for one to one treatments. As we have seen water/hydro therapy and alternating hot and cold treatments boost the circulation, stimulating the release of toxins and tension. By releasing stress in this way the guest is already half way there in their aim for a total sense of wellbeing. The cleansing element is also vital because when the skin is clear and the body warm the blood is brought closer to the skins' surface encouraging the shedding of dead and dry skin cells. This naturally begins the process of skin cell regeneration causing the internal bodily system to work harder to release toxins thereby exercising and prolonging the healthy function of all the internal organs.

This process prepares the skin for treatment by making it more porous and therefore hydrated; more absorbent to absorb the benefits of the treatment products to be used and also more receptive to the therapists' touch so that tensions are more easily released. This pre treatment process is, as you can see, a very helpful part of creating successful benefits to the whole spa ritual. It is also rejuvenating and youth-enhancing giving people a radiant healthy glow.

Psychologically this pre-treatment unwinding of stress and tension relieves the mind of peripheral chit-chat, worries and anxiety creating a calmer and more positive frame of mind. Feelings of relaxation actually do lengthen the brain-waves from Beta Waves to the calmer Alpha Waves, so that a sense of wellbeing and 'feel good factor' are aroused.

In smaller spa offerings or salons where you intend to give a spa-type treatment, a shower with good quality, pure body cleansing products that smell fresh and natural plus warm quality towels and robes can help towards achieving this pre-treatment stage. Make sure that guest waiting areas and the spa as a whole smells inviting, refreshing and relaxing by burning pure essential oils or good quality scented candles. Aromatic therapy is a powerful element in reviving the brain cells and creating a different ambience affecting the mood of your guests and therefore should not be overlooked.

TRADITIONAL SPA TREATMENTS

The following spa therapies are naturally holistic as they embrace the whole person in an experience that powerfully encourages the release of any build up of toxins and tension and are designed to boost sluggish circulation. This clearing action also applies to the skin itself, our largest organ, and to the lymphatic system just beneath the skins surface, that plays an important role in our immune system. The function of other internal organs that benefit from these treatments are the liver, spleen, colon, lungs and kidneys which all relate to elimination through the skin. The skin is the 'final frontier' of these organs as they release their toxins and other waste such as gases and fluids through the pores of the skins surface.

PHILOSOPHY

Body Wrapping as a Ritual

The ancient practice of wrapping the body in various modalities has been practiced for centuries across many cultures for similar purposes. Primarily used to reduce and eliminate the build-up of toxicity or old waste matter from the blood and lymph the ritual protects the bodily system from potential ill health and disease. This process naturally cleanses the vital internal organs enabling them to function more efficiently and improving overall well-being.

Often toxicity can weaken the immune system causing frequent colds and coughs, and a persistent feeling of being run down. Likewise, problems within the skeletal structure and joints such as arthritis or rheumatic pain can be caused by a toxic

build-up. De-toxing the system can help reduce these painful and debilitating symptoms.

As this is a holistic approach to de-toxification and regeneration, special attention is also given to 'unplug' and detoxify the mind. The body and mind naturally work in unison and can be harmonized to restore a sense of emotional balance. All aspects of our experience are connected and therefore need addressing within the de-tox process. The sense of smell, hearing, seeing, breathing, tasting, thinking and touching are all doorways through which we experience the world and can easily become congested and stressed through sensory overload, pollution, poor diet, anxiety, lack of exercise or beneficial relaxation. This spa ritual creates a sense of inner space as well as physical purification so that maximum results can be achieved embracing the whole person, body, mind and spirit.

Therefore this Ritual needs time for a completion relaxation to allow for balance and release of any emotional or psychological changes plus time for integration, and deep relaxation.

THE STAGES OF BODY WRAPPING AS A SPA RITUAL

Time - 1.5 to 3 hours depending on option of procedures seen below.

As a ritual the different aspects of the treatment are usually carried out in the following order:-

1. If there are spa facilities direct guests to use the Hydro pools and Steam Room.
If not, make sure the guest has showered and cleansed first. Time allocated - 15 minutes to 1 hour
2. Body Brush - 10 minutes
3. or Body Scrub procedures - 20 minutes
4. Application of Body Mud procedures - 30 minutes
5. Removing of Muds and products. - 10 minutes
6. Whole Body Massage with Oils. - 10 mins to 1 hour

Benefits of Body Wraps

- Helps with weight loss
- Boosts low energy

- Improves elimination through the colon
- Breaks up cellulite and fatty acids
- Balances digestive problems
- Reduces arthritic and rheumatic pain
- Reduces muscular pain
- Releases excess fluid retention
- Cleanses and boosts the liver of excess alcohol
- Cleanses the kidneys of excess caffeine and lactic acids
- Deepens breathing expanding the lungs
- Drains the lymphatic system boosting immunity
- Regenerates skin cell renewal
- Feeds and nourishes the skin
- Releases muscular tension
- Calms the nervous system
- Relaxes the mind
- Encourages deep sleep and relaxation
- Leaves skin smooth and deeply hydrated
- Re-energises the whole bodily system
- Promotes feelings of renewal
- Uplifts the spirit

TREATMENTS PROCEDURES

Body Brushing and Body Scrubs primarily work on the surface of the skin to exfoliate off any dry dead skin cells. However, these techniques also stimulate the lymphatic system and therefore drainage of excess fluids boosting better elimination of toxins. Exfoliants vigorously open the pores of the skin and will treat the skin type more specifically depending on the type of products used and the techniques applied. Body scrubs can be offered as a stand alone skin cleansing treatment and are often a very popular service as they are quick and comparatively inexpensive. However, as described, body scrubs of some description will often precede a Body Wrap as it is the perfect way to prepare the skin for this level of spa therapy.

Below are the two main methods of achieving the desired results:



DRY SKIN BRUSHING

Benefits

Body Brushing is an efficient, fast and extremely effective way of stimulating skin cell renewal and boosting lymphatic drainage. It can be done on a daily basis prior to showering for helping to reduce weight and is a great preparation before a weight loss Body Wrap.

The Method

This method uses a medium strength natural bristle body brush which you can obtain through many retail and wholesale suppliers of body care and salon to spa products

- The guest lies on their front flat on the couch with towels covering to maintain modesty throughout.
- The direction of brush strokes is always towards the heart.
- Strokes are very light and short in length and the therapist will follow each brush stroke to the skin with a smooth stroke of the hand .
- The therapist usually begins with the feet and lower legs
- Then the buttocks and hips
- The direction of brush strokes then move from the lower back up to the heart
- And then from the shoulders down to the heart
- Strokes up the arms from wrists to shoulders
- On the front of the body begin at the feet and up the legs again
- Then brush the abdomen in a gentle cycle from right to left
- Completing with chest and arms.

BODY SCRUBS

Body Scrub Products and Exfoliants

Product blends in this category are available ready blended. The difference in the quality of these body scrubs will vary greatly from one brand to the next so these are the points to look out for in choosing an excellent salt based body scrub.

1. Find out whether the salts are soft enough to dissolve easily with water and that they squash when you rub them between your fingers. Large, bulky grains of salt can scratch the skin and are not small enough to benefit the skin sensitive surface or do the work they are meant to. Salt is used because it naturally draws out fluids from beneath the skins surface and begins the process of purifying the blood. If large grains of salt are used this process will not happen at all! Find out also where the salt is sourced ie: are they Dead Sea Salts, which are a common source for these products.
2. Vegetable oils are blended with these salts which are best sourced from almond, sesame, jojoba, or even a good quality olive oils and usually there will be a few types mixed together. These body scrubs can be further enhanced and therapeutically upgraded with use of essential oils.
3. For a more stimulating action to boost elimination look for blends that contain essential oils such as lemon grass or juniper or ginger and lime. If you want to create a more hydrating and nourishing body scrub then essential oils such as lavender, rose, orange and sandalwood are required. To generally refresh and cleanse the skin eucalyptus, mint, lemon and bergamot are beneficial ingredients. (These essential oils are also sometimes blended in the Mud to create a different Body Wrap action.)
4. Brands that create these products will usually offer you different choices but if want to blend your own body scrubs it is quite simple and very effective. It is wonderful to prepare your own body scrubs as a signature blend of your spa service as it is the simplest spa product for you to mix. You can make this treatment a USP in your spa marketing.
5. Here is a recipe to give you approximate ratios for 1 litre of product. If you do not want to mix too many base oils you can adjust the quantities to suit you but make sure the blend is not too runny. It needs the heavier oils to give it more of a consistency and weight.



Body Scrub Recipe

750 grms of soft medium to small grains of organic Dead Sea salt.

250 ml Sweet Almond Oil

250 ml Grapeseed Oil

250 ml Sesame Oil

150 ml Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Add essential oils as recommended above to create the desired therapeutic benefit.

Use a total of 100 drops of essential oils per litre of product.

ie: To refresh and cleanse the skin use eucalyptus, mint, lemon and bergamot which would be approximately 25 drops of each essential oil.

How best to apply Body Scrubs

As we have discussed, Wet Room Areas can provide excellent dedicated facilities for exfoliation body scrubs. The directions given below for the application of the product may vary if you have a dedicated wet bench/couch with attached manual showers as discussed in the description of spa spaces. In this situation you would shower off one side of the body before the guest turns over to exfoliate their other side.

Equipment for Body Scrub

200 ml of Body Scrub Product (may be more less depending on size of person)

Couch

Hot Towel Cabinet

Paper pants

1 Bath sheet size towel

2 x Bath size towels

2 x Hand size towels (one to cover chest , 2 to support cleaning body of salts)

5 x pairs of mitts if using Hot Towel Cabinet

Or 2 x pairs of mitts if using hot water to rinse them.

(Plastic or foil sheet if apply Body Wrap straight after the Body Scrub)

Body Scrub Procedures

It is best if the guest has had time to spa or shower and damp dry before a body scrub but if no shower is available then the product can be applied to dry skin.

Lifestyle Consultation Procedure for Body Scrub and Body Wrap as a Ritual

The body wrap consultation requires an holistic approach to health and well-being that gives the client an insight into other areas of their life that may need balancing to achieve optimum results.

- Make sure that the guest has filled out the Consultation Form thoroughly and check the contra-indication for the scrub and the wrap.
- Priority Check that there are no cuts, open wounds, inflamed areas or skin abrasions.
- Review medical history and assess any contra-indications to carrying out the treatments.
- If the skin is sensitive carry out skin test on the inside of their arm of the body scrub and mud
- Explain the treatment procedure.
- Give information on the products and their benefits.
- Discuss aims of the treatment, the well-being of the guest and the desired outcome of the treatment.
- Offer the guest paper underwear.
- Discuss any queries directly with the guest.
- Ask guest if there are any areas of specific vulnerability or areas to avoid.

Couch set up for stand alone Body Scrub

This procedure is followed when a body scrub is given without a following body wrap. Though please note that a scrub before a massage is an excellent spa therapy.

- Prepare the couch with a base of 2 Bath size towels (for dry room couches) so that this base covering can be easily removed after application and the scrub has been washed off. Paper sheets can be used on the couch if you prefer, though towels are a better as paper tends to crumple.
- 2 Towels should be used – one for the upper back and upper body, one for the legs. This way they can easily be removed without disturbing the guest too much.

Couch set up for Body Scrub with Body Wrap to follow

- Place a plastic or foil 'Body Wrap Sheet' under the towel the guest is lying on.
- This plastic body wrap sheet will then already be in place once you have removed the body scrub product.
- (The guest can then continue to relax whilst you carry out the body wrap.)

Preparing to give the Body Scrub

- Therapists can use thin plastic gloves to apply the salt scrub which protects their hands if they are using this product regularly.
- Guests can be given small disposable underwear and hair is best clipped up if long.
- Direct the guest to lay face down on the couch and cover them with one large bath sheet size towel.

Preparing your Client

For a stand alone Body Scrub begin procedures with client lying **face down**.

They then finish face up. Please note that this is also '**the easy**' method for applying a Mud Wrap to follow a scrub. However, this method does NOT give coverage of the buttock area but does create a more seamless procedure.

*** Note that where the skin is excessively dry around the heels, elbows and knees special attention to exfoliating thoroughly should be applied.**

Method of applying the Body Scrub

- Fold back the towel from one leg all the way to the buttock.
- Take a scoop of the salt mix in you fingers and distribute by dabbing all the way up the leg.
- Beginning at the heel and ankles rub in the scrub into the skin with light to medium pressure in outward circles technique, using both hands on either side of the leg. Repeat this sequence 2 x.
- Continue all the way up to the buttock making sure you cover all exposed skin.
- Cover this leg with the towel and repeat on the other leg.
- On the back area fold down the towel from the shoulders to the hips.
- Apply the scrub by dabbing quantity into the spine and shoulders
- In outward circles scrub from the centre of the spine to the sides of the hips, waste, shoulders and outer periphery of the arms. Repeat 2 x
- Turn the guest over and begin again with legs in upward and outward circles from the feet and ankles to the hips - 2x
- Take a small towel to cover the chest and fold back the towel to reveal the abdomen and scrub in gentle circles from right to left. 2 x
- Cover the abdomen and gently scrub the pectoral area, around and above the chest and breast. 2x
- Lift each arm and scrub upwards from wrists to shoulders. 2x
- Include the hands and fingers.

To Remove the Body Scrub - Options

With showers

- In room showers can be used to easily shower off the salts.
- Do not wash the product off with shower gels or soap as this will defeat the purpose and benefits of the treatment.

Without showers

- In treatment rooms *without* showers you can use hot wet mitts or small towels from a hot towel cabinet to remove the salts and oils.
- You will need quite a few sets of gloves if you are taking them from the cabinet.

- Alternately, mitts or towels can be repeatedly rinsed out in hot water from the in-room sink. This can be a slower and messier process so a hot towel cabinet is advisable.

Method of Removing the Scrub with mitts

- Unfold towel from one leg
- Ask guest to bend their knee at a soft angle to place foot on the couch.
- With Hot Mitts on both hands place hands on top of thigh and sweep down the front and back of the thigh towards the knee.
- Turn the mitts over and sweep from the knee through the foreleg and foot.
- Depending on how much salt there is you may need to repeat this same area.
- Take a warm dry hand towel and sweep down to remove any excess salts.
- Repeat on other leg.
- Remove damp and salty towels from under the legs. (There should be either another towel already there or the plastic sheet for the body wrap)
- Place towel across chest and open towel to reveal abdomen.
- New hot Mitts to sweep over abdomen, turning the mitts to repeat.
- Use dry towel if necessary to sweep over abdominal area.
- Arms - fresh mitts sweep from shoulders to hands - flip mitts and repeat.
- Do both arms.
- Ask guest to turn over or sit up.
- Ask guest to sit up and sweep clean the back area with fresh mitts and dry towel.

BODY WRAPS

Sourcing your Mud based products

Many spa and salon treatment product brands prepare Mud for body wrapping in different formulation to address different conditions. The mud itself is a highly therapeutic compound but is hardly ever used 'neat' unless you are in a natural spa setting where mud is available from the indigenous terrain. Most muds are transformed into blends that have been added to, to create either de-toxifying or hydrating therapeutic actions with other active botanical ingredients. The composition of the mud will be discussed later in spa products.



CONTRA INDICATIONS FOR THE DE-TOX BODY WRAPS

Please note that some Body Wraps that are not blended as detoxifying may be suitable for these conditions. However, you must check the ingredient listing of the Product Blend you will use for any contra- indications.

- Pregnancy or planning pregnancy
- Sunburn
- Chronic migraines
- High or low blood pressure
- Epilepsy
- Eczema
- Psoriasis
- Chronic varicose veining
- Chronic asthma
- Any breathing difficulties
- Very sensitive skin
- Seaweed allergic
- Nut oil allergic
- Overactive thyroid
- After body waxing

Preparing the Mud for Treatment

Warming the Product - As the purpose of Mud Body Wraps is to draw impurities out from beneath the surface of the skin, to cleanse the tiny lymph vessels and bodily fluids as well as to enrich and feed the skins layers, it is essential to heat the product

to a comfortable warm temperature of approximately 37 degrees. Cold mud feels unpleasant and is not so actively therapeutic.

Use between 200- 400ml of the blended mud depending on the size of your client.

Ways of heating the Mud

- The best way is to place quantity of mud in a bowl then cover and in a larger basin of very hot water for about 10 minutes.
- Microwave can be used though is hot holistically endorsed.

Application of the Mud

- Apply swiftly but accurately as the guest may become chilled.
- Allow the mud to lie on the surface of the skin so that it is opaque.
- Apply with hands or large flat soft body brush can be used.



Client begins downward facing

- Ask the client to lie on their front.
- Begin with the legs applying the mud in smooth strokes upwards towards the hip.
- Apply to both legs and buttocks.
- Apply the mud to the lower back, middle back and shoulders.
- Apply down the back of the arms.
- Ask the client to turn over slowly to lie on the back.
- Apply mud to the feet and legs.
- Wrap the foil/plastic or muslin firmly around the feet and legs.
- Apply mud to the abdomen, chest and shoulders.
- Apply down the arms and hands.
- Wrap the upper body.

- Then cover the whole body in two layers of towels, a blanket or heated blanket for insulation.
- Check the client is comfortable.
- The client will be wrapped in this way for approx 20 minutes. It is not recommended to leave the client alone at all during this time.
- During this time a head or facial massage can be carried out.
- Dim the lights if bright.
- Check that the client is comfortable.
- Make sure hair is lifted away from the back of the neck.
- Support the head with a flat folded towel.

To remove the Mud

- Turn the shower on for the guest so that it runs very warm.
- Make sure fresh warm towels and a robe are provided.
- Slowly unwrap the guest and help them to sit up.
- Take guest into the running shower immediately.
- Give them a sponge or wash cloth to wipe off any excess mud.
- Help them to wash the back if required.

Completion of Wrap

- The guest returns to the couch for either a swift application of hydrating body oils or creams.
- Or
- Therapists give a full body massage of between 30 to 60 mins using lymphatic drainage strokes and enriching oil blends.



CLIENT CARE AFTER DETOX TREATMENTS

Following powerful detoxifying treatments in the spa guests will need time to integrate their experience, relax and re-hydrate in comfort. Detoxifying the body can occasionally cause symptoms such as headaches or slight feelings of nausea and excess tiredness due to the toxins and tensions leaving the deeper recesses of the body and mind and rising to the surface. This will pass and the guest can be informed of the reasons for these symptoms arising and given the following care. This is why massage is recommended to complete the de-tox body wraps as this greatly helps to release toxins and encourages the de-stressing process balancing body and mind. Guests may well want to go to sleep in the Relaxation Area or in the 'Sleep Room' if you have one, or be directed back to their own rooms in residential spas.

However, in all situations the guest must be offered a place to lie down and relax and provided with plenty of fresh water to drink as well as other fluids such as freshly made cleansing drinks. Many spas will create their own signature de-tox recipes and here are two examples of fresh and light drinks to offer.

The recipes below help the blood, lymph and liver to flush out the toxins more efficiently and are very refreshing. You can serve a large glass with straws or make large jugs and leave in the relaxation areas for people to help themselves.



Ginger Juice

Recipe for 1 pint of Spring Water

Grate 20 mm of Ginger root and squeeze the ginger juice into the water

Add 1 tablespoon of honey

Juice of 2 or 3 Lemons

Serve with a slice of fresh lemons or limes



Lemongrass Juice

Recipe for 1 pint of Spring Water

Chop up 2 to 3 sticks of Lemongrass

Add a handful of chopped fresh mint leaves

Add 1 tablespoon of honey

Juice of 1 Lime

Serve with a stick of Lemon grass

SPA SPRODUCT KNOWLEDGE

The following information is valuable knowledge to give you a more in-depth understanding of the sources, purpose and benefits of the key ingredients that are used in traditional spa treatments.

Whether you will be buying product brands that are dedicated to giving authentic spa therapies and have the product knowledge to support their claims, or whether you intend to embark on creating your own product brand, this knowledge will add the wisdom and ability to be a discerning buyer of quality products. We will discuss The Own Brand Product Journey further on.

DETOXIFYING INGREDIENTS

MUDS

The Mud is formed by decomposing botanicals such as trees, seeds, plants, leaves and other living things that fall into the earth and over time create 'bogs' and steamy 'mud pools' rich in raw ingredients such as trace elements, minerals, organic substances, enzymes, natural antibiotics and vitamins. The deeper the source of the mud, the richer the compound and therefore it makes an excellent product for being absorbed through the skin's surface and into the bodily system.



The quality of the base mud can vary enormously from brand to brand so it is good to find out from where the mud originates. **Dead Sea Mud** is very popular, though **Hungarian and Black Moor Mud** are also highly active sources of mineral rich elements. The richer and darker the mud the more intense the active elements are within it. In 'mining' mud the top layer is less potent than the deeper, more 'vintage' older layers that are further down in the composition of the earth, so costs, quality and effectiveness of the mud will vary accordingly.

Precaution:

You would probably never buy raw mud unless you were skilled and trained in knowing how to clean, treat and prepare the Mud for blending in a laboratory for

Health and Safety and acceptable use in a professional treatment. Also, as the pure smell of the mud can be quite repellent it is always blended with other ingredients such as essential oils, clays, vegetable oils, herbs and other therapeutic ingredients.



CLAYS

The use of Clay in products for purifying body and face masks is an ancient practice due to the absorbent quality of clay that effectively draws impurities and excess oils out through the layers of the skin leaving it very smooth and silky. **Kaolin Clay** and **Green Clay** are popular sources for their extremely fine texture and are excellent for sensitive and problematic skin. Clay is not as deeply de-toxifying or penetrating as mud but does have a miraculously balancing effect on the skin. Natural Clays blend very well with lipids, fats, base oils, flower waters and other therapeutic ingredients to form elegant spa products.

SEAWEEEDS



Seaweed is a miracle plant and has a myriad of benefits to be considered. It is a cardio tonic good for the heart, and an excellent trace mineral supplement; it is known as a protective force against radiation and cancer, is an anti oxidant, anti

toxic, anti-bacterial and antibiotic. It is also known as a great rejuvenator and diuretic, cleansing the digestive tract and bowel.

Not only is seaweed used in Thallasotherapy that uses the sea, its minerals, energy, plants and sunlight for their therapeutic benefit; seaweed is also a valued and well used ingredient at the heart of many de-toxifying product blends. All types of Seaweed contain a wide variety of essential nutrients, including enzymes, nucleic acids, amino acids, minerals, trace elements, and A, B, C, D, E, and K vitamin complexes.

Laminiaria and **Carrageenan Seaweeds** are used extensively to create bathing products and body wraps. Seaweeds contain many trace minerals amongst other detoxifying properties and are a great source of purification and healing for the body. Used in scrubs, wraps and baths to create a detoxifying and stimulating action.

Precaution:

Make sure that clients do not have an iodine allergy.



SALTS

Dead Sea Salt and **Black Sea Salt** powerfully draws out impurities and is a natural skin cleanser when added to scrubs with base oils, essential oils and other active botanical ingredients to create therapeutic and enjoyable products. Salt has many anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory benefits when applied to the skin and works well with water based therapies to also relieve stress and tension from muscles and joints

OILS AND LIPIDS

A word about Massage Therapy

Massage therapy remains the top selling treatment across all spas, in all cultures and in all countries. The winning combination of nourishing and hydrating oils, with the therapeutic touch, releasing and balancing tension in body and mind is the most sought after spa treatment which requires excellent quality of oils and innovative remedies and choices to fulfil this experience. You do need first quality oils.

Using Oils

Naturally sourced vegetable oils suitable for the body, still remains one of the key ingredients in many skin care blends which are used 'neat' or combined with other active ingredients to create deeply therapeutic products. Pure aromatherapy for example, utilises vegetable based oils as 'carriers' for the more potent concentrated 'essential oils' which are extracts of various resins, herbs, flowers and roots that have actively therapeutic properties.

Oils are used in many therapeutic treatments, whether in massage blends, scrubs, wraps, facial cleansers and creams plus other products and the quality of the oils plays an enormous part in the overall result of the product and the treatment. As oils are often used as the 'carrier' of other ingredients and therefore form a large part of the blend, poor quality oils will imbalance and weaken the other ingredients whereas good sources of oil will add value and endurance to the blends. Oils have been used for thousands of years to hydrate, nourish and heal the body internally and externally and the medicinal effects of olive oil, for example, is well known as a power-food for both inner and outer health and beauty. The ancient beauty rituals of the Himalayan women, which are still practiced today, includes grounding apricot kernels to a pulp with a pestle and mortar to create the esteemed Apricot Kernel Oil that is rich in anti-oxidants and amino- acids to protect their skin from the harsh sun

and cold winters at the high elevations of the mountains. Likewise Sesame oil has been used in Ayurvedic treatments for equally as long for its powerfully regenerative and age defying preservative properties.

As agents to feed and nourish the skin the variety of oils that can be sourced is becoming more liberally available as demand grows from discerning product designers and manufacturers.

Research has shown that cold pressed oils, called **Lipids**, retain far more of their vital active ingredients and so when researching your products for the body treatments find out about the origins of the oil bases. If the product brand does not have the product knowledge you require it is best not to buy the product in bulk. Remember that your clientele may well be seasoned spa travellers who know a great deal about the standard of products to expect.



COLD PRESSED OILS

Known as Lipids which are produced by cold pressing therefore not destroying the oils vital therapeutic elements.

General Properties of Lipids

1. Important unsaturated and essential fatty acids.
2. Amino Acids
3. Vitamin A, B1, B2 & B6
4. Vitamin C, E & D
5. Linoleic Acid
6. Omega 6
7. Enzymes
8. Natural antibiotics

Oils Benefits and Properties



Extra Virgin Olive Oil has been abundantly used since ancient times for grooming hair and skin and for guarding the skin against sunburn. Its high fatty acid content makes it an excellent product for nourishing and protecting the skin and preventing it from drying out. Olive oil is used for anti-wrinkle and eye creams, for body lotions and nourishing hand creams, massage, as well as for hair preparations, lip balm and creams for dry and sensitive skins.



Peach Kernel Oil possesses wonderful revitalizing, nourishing, regenerative and moisturizing properties, and helps prevent dehydration, smoothes wrinkles and encourages elasticity and suppleness in all skin types. It is especially beneficial for sensitive or inflamed skin, such as with eczema or psoriasis conditions and exposure to sun or wind, and also delicate or mature complexions. Its regenerative and tonic effects help to cleanse and tighten the pores of the skin. It is particularly useful for facial massage blends. This oil contains vitamin E, antioxidant and preservative properties, and also vitamin A - if not over-refined. It is also high in essential polyunsaturated fatty acids.



Raspberry Seed Oil is extraordinarily high in Omega-3 and Omega 6 fatty acids, Red Raspberry Seed oil is a superb anti-oxidant. It contains 83% essential fatty acids. Much research has shown the healthcare benefits of internal use of Red Raspberry Seed oil. Its high level of Vitamin E is known to be an important ingredient in skin repair and conditioning. It is useful in skin creams and bath and body massage oils and is effective as an emollient. The benefits are lubricating and conditioning and create a lipid barrier providing protection to the skin and provides moisture retention for the skin. Its anti-inflammatory properties are greater than those of better known oils such as virgin Avocado Oil, Grapeseed Oil, Hazelnut Oil and Wheatgerm Oil.



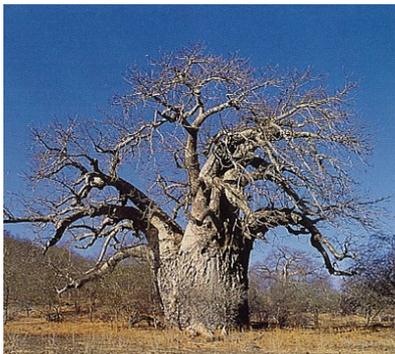
Calendula Oil is excellent for reducing swelling, heals wounds and burns, helpful for acne, impetigo, eczema. It is antiseptic and regenerating. Calendula oil is said to be anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, helps healing wounds. useful for bed sores, broken veins, bruises, inflamed gums, varicose veins. Effective on rashes, dry, chapped or cracked skin. Wonderful when used in salves and especially helpful for eczema.



Apricot Kernel Oil contains minerals and vitamins, especially Vitamin E which benefits all skin types and is very rich and nourishing. Excellent for prematurely aged, sensitive, inflamed, delicate or dry skin conditions. Apricot Kernel oil is superb for skin protection, since it is both emollient and nourishing. Its light texture causes it to be readily absorbed by the skin. It is beneficial in relieving the itchiness caused by eczema and is most suitable for sensitive skin or dry and aging skins.



Quinoa Oil is extracted from the germ of the [Chenopodium quinoa](#), an [Andean cereal](#). [Quinoa](#) itself is a great source of [protein](#) and is most similar to [corn oil](#), which is rich in essential [fatty acids](#) ([linoleic acid](#) and [linolenic acid](#)). Quinoa and corn oil both have high quantities of natural [antioxidants](#), making them more stable for blending purposes.



Baobab oil has effective nutritional and medicinal properties and is rich in Vitamin C: a natural moisturizer for dry, weathered or sun damaged skin.



Hemp oil contains over 80% of essential fatty acids consisting mainly of Omega 6,

including Gamma Linoleic Acid (GLA) which is said to help regulate blood pressure and treats sensitive and mature skin conditions. It is therefore an excellent oil to calm and balance the heart muscle.



Sesame Seed Oil is also a highly effective skin nutrient and moisturizer and is widely used for many skin preparations, and is especially therapeutic in nourishing creams for dry and ageing skin, as well as anti-wrinkle creams and lip balms.



Jojoba Oil is special is that it is quite similar to the skin's own chemical composition called 'sebum.' When applied to the skin, the oil combines with the sebum and helps free impurities and is mainly used to combat aging and dehydration. It is also beneficial in hair masks and scalp treatments.



Avocado oil is a powerful base ingredient composed primarily of tracylglycerols, and although sources vary in their assessment, the raw fruits are said to contain vitamins A and B1, B2, B6, C, D, E, protein, copper, iodine, calcium, folate, magnesium, phosphorous, potassium, pantothenic acid, zinc and selenium, although many of these are found in trace amounts. Avocado oil is high in amino acids and monounsaturated fatty acids including palmitic, palmitoleic, stearic, oleic, linoleic, alpha linolenic, arachidic and gadoleic, and is also rich in lecithin.



Evening Primrose Oil is rich in beta-sitosterol and citrostadienal, besides containing a minimum of 9% gamma linoleic acid (GLA) which is essential for reinforcing the immune system. The oil contains a variety of unsaturated fatty acids, important for immune system, strengthening the cell membranes and the nourishing and revitalization of skin tissues. The oil is frequently used by women to alleviate the painful symptoms of pre-menstrual tension and also to treat menopausal problems.



Macadamia Nut Oil is a deeply enriching, very thick oil that has a sweet, nutty aroma. It is used in combination with other carrier oils, as its viscosity is dense but highly restorative creating very rich blends.



Grape Seed Oil has a high concentration of lipids (up to 20%) and is very rich in phenol, steroids and linoleic acid (essential for the cell membranes), as well as many other essential fatty acids, all of which make Grape seed oil important for the nourishment and strengthening of the tissues cells and for preserving the natural moisture of the skin. It is beneficial for cell renewal, regenerating creams for damaged and ageing skin, skin nourishing and eye creams, as well as for lip balms. Also helpful for delicate, damaged or dry hair conditions.

BUTTERS AND FATS



Shea Butter is extracted from the sacred 'Karite Tree' or Tree of Life and has a wealth of benefits for dry skin and is known in Africa as Womans Gold for its youth preserving properties and gentleness for sensitive skin and babies. It contains Vitamin A & E, complex fatty acids and 'cinnamic acid' that helps protect the skin from harmful UV rays. In addition it has anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory properties. The rich buttery consistency blends well with oils of all types as well as other therapeutic ingredients.



Cocoa Butter is one of the most stable and concentrated fats known and melts at body temperature being easily absorbed to nourish and enrich the skin. Its texture and properties creates a protective layer on the skin and, like chocolate, is known to reduce stress in body and mind. Recent research has also shown that its richness, complex concentration of fats calms the nervous system benefiting over active hormonal systems that can cause psoriasis and can also help conditions such as fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome. A very helpful and healing ingredient to include in stress reducing body wraps and creams.



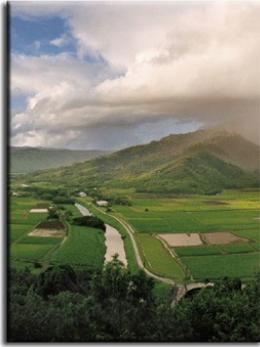
ETHICALLY SOURCED PRODUCTS

As the spa culture becomes more popular, yet also more niche, environmentally conscious, more sustainable and 'green' in the use of materials, the search and research for purer, more rarefied naturally sourced ingredients has grown bringing greater knowledge and awareness of the benefits. Likewise the growth in 'own brand' product formulations that reflect individual spas signature philosophy, has also boosted the search for ethically sourced and organic ingredients.

Ethically Sourced products refer to the way that plants and other materials are grown, harvested and sourced. Ethically Sourced brings to light facts about how botanicals have been farmed for their ingredients to avoid abuse or endangering the plants through over farming and therefore possible extinction. Also issues regarding use of harmful pesticides and the assimilation of genuine ingredients by using synthetics. The assimilation of products can sometimes be seen in the manufacture of Essential Oils which may be mixed with lesser grade quality oils or in fact are not from a natural source at all but generated synthetically in the laboratory. The trading of genuine essential oils is a massive export/import industry and so open to certain levels of misconduct and poor quality products. Therefore some product laboratories who do not have their own growers will visit the farms and distilleries personally to check the guarantee of their authenticity before buying wholesale quantities.



Fairtrade is another global initiative that has become the byword for products of all descriptions that have been traded fairly so as not to abuse the growers and traders in poorer areas of the world. The Fairtrade Foundation is a development organization committed to tackling poverty and injustice through trade, and the UK member is known as the Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO). The Foundation works with businesses, civil society organizations and individuals to improve the position of producers and growers worldwide to help them achieve sustainable improvements for their members and their communities. Fairtrade Certification and product labeling, is evident through the FAIRTRADE mark that can be seen on many products now available in our stores from food to clothing.



ORGANIC AND WILD CRAFTED INGREDIENTS

The demand for organically grown ingredients has also upped the anti on trading standards and the marketing of pure spa product formulations. When going to a spa people do want to feel that the products used are not going to add further toxicity to their system, as is the case with many brands created before 2005, when the dangers of certain preservative such as parabens, alcohols and petroleum used in skin care products were identified as highly toxic and maybe even a cause of cancer. Since then many new brands have been developed that are paraben free, petroleum free, not tested on animals and in some cases totally free of unnatural preservatives.

Some brands do claim to be 100% organic which is actually very difficult to attain, though now that the trend for less complex formulations that rely on perhaps three or four naturally sourced active ingredients, in pure product bases, being 100% organic is more achievable. In respect of preserving the product with natural preservatives brands now take more care with the packaging so that no air can reach into the product to contaminate it or shorten its shelf life. Also it is important to consider that there are an abundance of natural preservatives such as honey, spices and certain essential oils which do a very good job of preserving the freshness and potency of organic blends.



To obtain a stamp of recognition from the Organic Soil Association costs time and money, which is particularly difficult and expensive for small farmers in India and the Far East. Therefore suppliers from farms that do not have the Soil Association certification may actually be 'organic' but are not able to claim so. These products are known as **Wild Crafted** which means that the ethics of growing pure, uncontaminated plants in clean soil is followed through by the farmers.



CREATING YOUR OWN SIGNATURE PRODUCT BRANDS

Creating Own Label Products to support your spa philosophy serves as a wonderful endorsement of your unique spa service and branding and becomes an excellent cross marketing tool to advertise your services in the retail market. As a representative and memory of your spa, guests do like to buy something on-site that has your signature brand label. Whether bought for themselves, or as a gift, the product is working for you to promote your business, even if it is just one product such as a scented candle with your signature aroma. Cross marketing also means that you may be able to sell the products in other retail outlets, such as small boutiques in your locale or bigger stores who may like your particular branding and style. If you have been able to employ good PR (public relations) and recognition for your spa or salon people will then recognise your signature label and want to buy into it, to be part of your brand philosophy by using the products. Likewise, by having a good product that performs well and receives recognition within its own rite, you are also raising awareness of the quality of your spa and its' location to drive people to your business.

Own brand product developments have become increasingly more popular, even though there are so many product brands on the market, as they do carry a strong message to promote your business. You can begin to tap into this enjoyable aspect of spa marketing at various levels of undertaking to suit your budget and development plans.

Depending on the type of products you wish to formulate and the number of different products you would like in your range there are quite a few ways of achieving your goals. Below are the key options for creating some form of Own Brand products with guidelines and criteria for developing this area of your spa business.

1. Own Label – Ready Formulated Products

In this category you will be utilising ready formulated products to which the manufacturer is willing for you to add your own Signature Label also known as 'Private Label'. There are many product manufacturers both in the UK and countries such as France, China, Thailand, USA and Australia who provide this service which you will need to research either over the internet, through a spa consultant or directly through other product companies you may know and like. This is an excellent option if you are a small spa or have a limited budget or just like the idea of one signature product to showcase your brand such as a body lotion, scented candle or room scent, or a even a body scrub. You can add more IDs (individual products) gradually, instead of doing a whole range all at once. This means that your initial outlay is relatively small and you can test your market on how well an own label will work for you.

Guidelines:

- Decide on what kind of products you want and need to represent your spa philosophy. ie: organic, aromatherapy, herbal, mainstream etc: and research brands you like or want to be similar too.
- Research and contact the brands or product manufacturer or laboratory that is able to fulfil your specifications of ready products available for 'private labelling'.
- Ask them to send you samples of the products you are interested in.

- Ask for a product ingredient list to check whether it fulfils your specifications.
- Test them over a three week period by using them yourself and on a few other people before deciding.

Find out whether the manufacturer can:-

1. Design and print your label for you and the cost.
2. Provide you with all legal information as per regulation standards for retailing products safely in the UK and or abroad to print on the label.
3. Whether they provide standard bottles, jars, lids and closures or a variety of containers for you to choose from.
4. That they can recommend which type of containers is best suited to the product you are interested in.
5. Whether they have unlabelled 'ready' outer boxes (if you require them) or an outer packaging design service to recommend.
6. A breakdown of cost on all packaging.
7. Whether there is a stock level required ie: minimum orders or if you can order quantities as needed.
8. Total cost per unit - filled, labelled and packaged.
9. Turn around time - delivery time from date of order.
10. Whether they can fulfil an on-line order and shipping service to your individual customers if required.
11. Provide Product Knowledge Training Manuals and/or trainers to come to your location.

2. Signature Product Research and Development

When embarking on a completely new product development it is important to be aware that this is often an expensive and lengthy process. Research and Development of a new product range is usually undertaken in direct contact with the laboratory or via a spa consultant who can guide you through the process with experience, advice and recommendations at every stage of the development. As specifications for your products will rest in your own philosophy or ideas of how the products should reflect your spa ethos, you will want to have a close relationship with the key people who are developing your brand.

Guidelines:

Laboratories will have a standard fee for R & D (research and development) per product. This fee should include:

- Discussion of your requirements on the product philosophy and specifications for your own brand.
- Discussion on who will own the rights to the product once developed. Many labs will only produce if they retain the ownership of the actual formulations for manufacture. However, you can sometimes buy the rights to ownership which means you have more control of who manufactures the products.
- Discussion of your budget and ask for a quote re the whole R & D process.
- Discussion of the time-line for completion of the R & D. It could be anything from 3 months to 1 year depending on the size of your project and your decision making process.
- Discussion of your budget for projection of the final retail cost. The laboratory can then work more efficiently to source ingredients within your budget so you can make a reasonable profit.
- Laboratory recommendations of suitable ingredients for your purposes.
- Creation of blends according to clients brief.
- Sampling of products - usually 3 different sample per product sent for clients review and testing.
- Minimum order quantities for professional use and retail.
- Whether they can provide the service to fill, label and ship your product.
- Most R & D services will ask for a 50% upfront payment to initiate work on the project.
- Signing a mutually binding business Contractual Agreement.

On Agreement of each product formulation you should receive the following product information for certification and legalities.

- Full INCI list (ingredients list)
- MSDS – material safety data sheet
- Listing of allergens
- Microbiology test
- Compatibility test
- IFRA Certificate – fragrance % safety
- Cost per minimum quantity for each product for example cost per kilo or per unit of retail.
- Shelf life of products opened and unopened.

Important points of reference for R & D of new products.

- Decide on what kind of philosophy and specifications you wish your products to have. ie: Fair Trade, organic, aromatherapy, herbal, ayurvedic, botanical, vitamin rich, oil rich, mainstream, floral, Oriental, Asian and so on.
- List the products you wish to develop – for example:-
Face – cleansers, exfoliants, toners, creams, eye balms, serums, masks. Each product may require three formulations for 3 different skin types, for example, oily-dry-complex skin conditions.
Body – scrubs, hydrating gels, lotions, massage and bath oils, various wraps.
Amenities – shampoo, conditioners, shower gel, body lotion
- Does the laboratory charge storage fees for your bottles and packaging.
- Make sure the laboratory can give a professional Fulfilment Service which includes the filling, labelling, packaging, shipping of your products to support your business.
- Product Knowledge Training Manuals for your staff and/or trainers.
- Find out what the Return Policy is from the laboratory or manufacturer on damaged or poor quality goods being shipped to you or your clients.
- Contact the Trading Standards Organization in the UK to check on any new legislation and criteria relating to retailing your products. This could include information required on the label and outer packaging.

- Find out about Product Liability Insurance as this is a necessary legality for selling any kind of skin care and professional use in treatments.

Packaging and Branding

- Does the laboratory offer a good Packaging research, Design and Branding service for all your signature packaging and labelling requirements.
- Alternatively, research a professional Product Packaging company that specialises in this area as it is not recommended to take on the complex and potentially expensive Research & Development of packaging without experienced guidance.



CHOOSING PROFESSIONAL AND RETAIL PRODUCT BRANDS

Spa product brands can provide you with an excellent service to support many aspects of your business. Each brand will carry its own philosophy in treatments and product formulation as well as the 'message' within its marketing dialogue to be seen in their brochures, their advertising and any media coverage they may have. Research their client list of other spas and salons which will inform you in what context the brand is appreciated and used. Alternatively, if there is a certain spa you like find out which brands they use as this could be their winning point. Big spa brands give an all embracing service that even includes spa design, treatment menu design, uniforms and advice with your customer journey. In choosing your brand decide how much input you would like them to have in the set-up of your spa. It could be a great support or may feel like your own vision and goals are being compromised so find out as much as you can about their objectives and customer service policies.

When choosing the brand make sure their philosophy either reflects your idea of the clientele you wish to attract or adds extra value to your overall service.

Brands will also have their own criteria of where they see themselves best suited so the choice you make may not necessarily meet with the brands requirements for using their products.

The following list gives the key elements of what to research and expect from your relationship with a product brand. Product brands see themselves as 'Your Spa Partner' and so excellent initial and ongoing communication is essential to support a healthy spa business. You need to be on the same wavelength with an understanding of each others business priorities.

This list is not exhaustive and is also not common to all brands, but it is valuable knowledge when reviewing a new spa product and treatment service.

- Minimum Opening Order quantity of professional and retail stock.
- Possible Contractual Agreement of a minimum of 1 year use of the brand.
- Request possible exclusivity of use for your region (within a specific mile radius) for an agreed number of years.
- Allowance ongoing of complimentary product brochures and other sales support literature.
- Retail product knowledge and sales training.
- Ongoing sales consultancy support and training.
- Professional product knowledge training.
- Treatment menu choices - some brands require you take ALL their products and treatments. Others are more flexible.
- Treatment descriptions for your menu.
- Recommended retail costs for treatments.
- Treatment training with protocols, manuals and refresher courses for therapists.
- Certification of therapists.
- Product and treatment sales incentives for your spa team. This means that the brands will reward your staff if they achieve a certain level of sales.
- Support with marketing your spa through the brands PR department.

- Support with launching their brand in your spa by being present and educational.
- Support and advice with Product Promotions for the launch of their new products and treatments and for seasonal promotions incentivising your clients.
- Return policy on goods that arrive damaged, do not perform well, do not sell at all or do not fulfil their shelf life.

COMBINING DIFFERENT BRANDS

As brands often specialise in certain areas of expertise and treatment philosophy such as aromatherapy blends, or facial skin care, or body focused holistic range, it can work very well indeed to have 2 or 3 different brands that achieve specific results. This also attracts a broader clientele. The style, strength and message of each brand reflect the services you offer.

Even if you have opted to develop your Own Brand Label of spa products it can show your knowledge and appreciation of the purpose of treatment lead products by complementing it with other brands who have a different philosophy.

Depending on the size of your spa you could combine for example:

1. A selection of excellent therapeutic pure Massage Oils which may not be suitable to retail though some brands do produce blends that double-up as bath oils that could retail. Massage makes up approximately 50% or more of treatments booked so the quality and range of oils is an important factor.
2. An Organic or Botanical Body and Skin care range that focuses of detoxifying and uplifting the well-being of the guest through special holistic rituals and treatments with ethically sourced product formulations. These will have a specific philosophy such as Seaweed or Herbal or Ayurvedic therapeutic formulations. The retail product sales from these treatments should be at least 25% of treatment sales.
3. A Results-driven skin care brand that focuses on specific skin care such as age-defying, wrinkle treatments, sun damaged and sensitive skin conditions.

The retail product sales from these treatments should be at least 50% of treatment sales.

4. Mens specific products is a growing area of service. Some brands already embrace this aspect within their range and men now comprise up to 30% of spa clientele.
5. 'Mothers to be' pre and post natal products provide a safe and increasingly popular product and treatment option. There are some very good brands focusing on this area to research.



THE TREATMENT MENU

The treatment menu is your spokesman and visual art dealer which serves to inspire, relax and entice your guests to experience as many new treatments as possible and re-assure them that you know the staples of an excellent spa service. A spa menu should be uncluttered and reflect the sense of relaxation, beauty and wellbeing in its design and use of language. This allows the guest space to read it peacefully without being bombarded by too much information.

A Treatment Menu can be such a prized, highly valuable asset to a spa business, that some opt to not publicize or hand out treatment menus at all outside of the spa itself. When appointments are made over the phone reception staff will give treatment options following the clients' questions and requests. This limits any copying from other businesses though is more common in very niche or residential spas where a menu is given only when arriving at reception, often in a specially bound cover. It looks like a holy book or something sacred, welcoming you to their world of bliss and beauty.

In writing treatment descriptions it is best to keep to no more than 50 words per treatment as you do not want to lose the guest half way through reading it by being too explanatory. The language should be descriptive in an experiential way giving the guest a tiny taste of what is to come.

An introductory page can present your spa philosophy with an aspirational paragraph that sets the tone for the unique service your guests are about to experience. Work the introduction if possible into about 50 words. If more words are needed break the text up into paragraphs so the text is not heavy and be careful about saying too much. Showing good images of your spa says so much more than words ever can and it has become increasingly popular to have more pictures than words, allowing the images to tell the story. Let the dialogue be simple yet elegant and poetic to inspire and ignite their curiosity. Images and pictures are used extensively in brochures as they speak more to the right side of the brain which deals with emotion and attraction, balancing the over-activity of the left side of the brain which relates to analysis and calculation. This subtly gets the guest in the mood, the 'right frame of mind' for relaxation and reflection.

You may have own brand Signature Treatments and Rituals to promote as key attractions to your spa and these can be highlighted in a separate category or integrated into the overall menu. The menu headings below give an outline of the categories recommended which then lead into the specific treatment names and their descriptions. It is advisable to not have more than six different choices in each category as this can confuse, over burden and tire the guest.

Treatment Menu Categories

Suggestions for category headings you can include in your menu. Each category may have up to six different types of that kind of treatment each with their own explanation. In the Massage section there is an example of this:

- ❖ Massage – Deep Tissue Massage, Swedish Massage, Aromatherapy Massage, Signature Massage, Hot Stone Massage, Back Neck and Shoulder Massage.
- ❖ Facials

- ❖ Body Wrap
- ❖ Body Scrubs
- ❖ Spa Rituals – can include the hydro and thermal suites, hammam, rasul and herbal baths plus other facilities available with special combinations of treatments according to your spa philosophy.
- ❖ Retreats – can include day or longer sp breaks and residential stays that have a special focus such as De-stress, De-tox, Pamper and so on
- ❖ Hand and foot treatments
- ❖ Just for Men
- ❖ Tailor-made Spa Time
- ❖ Holistic Therapies - this category can include special therapies such as reflexology, watsu, nutritional counselling, Indian head massage and so on.
- ❖ Mothers to Be – this maybe integrated into your other categories depending on the product brand and your clientele
- ❖ Refinement – Grooming - Finishing Touches - Essentials – the heading for this category varies and includes waxing, threading, eye lash tinting, tanning, manicures, pedicures and other services in this area. If you offer this category of treatments it will require more than six options so should not be restricted to any particular number.
- ❖ Hair treatments – this could include a hair salon service and more holistic hair and scalp masks and therapies.

Tailor-made Spa Time

The most personal approach of spa menu listing is to have a category that simply sells blocks of time that can be filled with whatever most suits the guest's needs and desires. The cost will be based on an average per hour rather than the cost of the individual treatments. For example this could be headed - 'Three Hour Spa Journey – let us guide you into creating your own personalised combination of spa treatments and rituals to lead you into the perfection balance of relaxation and renewal.'

Price Lists are often placed on a separate loose page as an insert to your main spa treatment menu, as prices may change more frequently than the menu and it also promotes the experience rather than the cost.

STAFFING YOUR SPA

Your spa team, which includes the therapists, reception, spa attendants, spa director and/or manager, are all vital to your success as they will be the ones fulfilling your service by advising, guiding and treating your clients one to one. The spa team is also a key aspect to factor into the planning and forecasting of your business at the beginning and as an on-going concern.

The following points are essential to consider before you embark on the recruitment and training phase of your spa development.

Therapist Skills

Depending on the treatment menu and the kind of clients who will use your services you need to assess the following.

- Your spa philosophy and product brand will influence the choice of therapists recruited so you will need to evaluate whether they need to have, for example, a good grounding in holistic approach to treatments or be more of an aesthetician for beauty oriented treatments.
- If you offer a good balance of aesthetic beauty treatments, spa body rituals and massage on the menu you will require multi-skilled therapists who are cross trained in beauty and body therapy disciplines and have the qualifications required to be trained in your specific treatments.
- A healthy balance of multi-skilled therapists will give you more flexibility and ease in managing your bookings and in fulfilling the more personalised treatment requests highlighted in the treatment menu.
- In the event that you know that bookings for massage will exceed all other treatment requests, you will need to employ therapists who are well trained and strong in this area of therapy and willing to receive further training as well.

Calculating the number of staff required

- Calculate the number of therapists you will need based on the number of hours of business and the number of rooms you need to service on a daily basis.

- For example, to achieve maximum utilization of ten treatment rooms that are open eight hours a day you will need to employ ten full time therapists.
- When business hours exceed eight hour days you will need to run two shifts a day. This is best managed by hiring part-time therapists to fulfil the longer hours and support peak times of business.
- If manicures and pedicures are a popular aspect of your service and you have three stations and want to achieve 100% utilization in this area you will need three more therapists.
- Reception staff in a spa of this size will need two or three staff manning the desk and phones to make appointments, take care of payment and possibly selling retail products.
- If you have on site laundry facilities and large changing rooms or other spa facilities to maintain you will also need two or three spa attendants to service these areas.
- Including the Sp director or manager this creates a spa team of eighteen individuals based on a ten room spa working toward 100% utilization.

The goal of achieving 100% utilization in the beginning stages of opening a new spa is not very common or realistic, but 40% to 50% utilization is a more reasonable goal when marketing is very good plus there may already be a client base to support the new business and therapists may also bring their own clients. The first year's revenue will be affected by all these factors and very new spas may want to work on a 20% or 30% utilization in the six months so that recruitment and payment of salaries does not exceed the financial ability.

Therefore it is better to reduce the total number of staff for initial recruitment by approximately half, building up over time as you see the business pick up. This way everyone is occupied or busy most of the time which makes for a happier environment for all concerned. Over staffing or under staffing can greatly affect the success and harmony of your business so this is a crucial area of decision making and investment. Remember it is always easier to employ new people when needed than to have to let employees go because you cannot afford them.

The total cost of salaries for service staff, which does not include the spa manager or director, should not exceed 30% of the total revenue. This figure is based on UK, European and USA standards but the % will be much lower in far eastern countries where therapists salaries are lower, yet the cost of treatments can be similar to the west in upmarket spas.

Recruitment and Trade Testing

A spa that knows its philosophy well; is familiar with the demographic and has clarity on the ambience and customer journey it wishes to offer, will find recruiting the right staff much easier. If you are clear about what you want to achieve and how you see your success happening, you will be able to communicate this impressively to potential staff. Employing the right people who are sympathetic to your vision and goals is the first step on the ladder of finding your spa team. In order to help you simplify the recruitment process, prepare a standard presentation document of your company to give to applicants. This document should contain the following information:

Recruitment Presentation Pack

- A profile of your spa philosophy and a brief history.
- Your Mission Statement that reflects this philosophy.
- Benefits and perks of being an employee with your spa.
- Training and opportunities for future growth.
- Job Description – an example of which is shown below.
- Contact information and name of Company Interviewer.
- Confidentiality Agreement (optional)
- Questionnaire that asks for professional and some relevant personal information.

Each Applicant will bring to the Interview

- CV to include training and work experience.
- Certificates
- Qualifications

- A photograph of themselves. When interviewing a lot of people this helps to remember them more clearly.

The interview process is best carried out in two stages, meaning two separate interviews on separate days.

First Interview

- The purpose of the first interview is to meet the applicant and though it is a formal situation, it is best to create an slightly informal atmosphere so the person relaxes and you can observe their communication and personality.
- Give the Presentation Pack and simply go through the headings and they can read it all at home.
- Go through and fill out the questionnaire with them.
- Look at their qualifications and certificates with them.
- Review their CV, past work experience and future goals with them.
- Tell them that you will call them within (give a time frame) to let them know whether you would like them to return for a second interview which will be a Trade Test of their skills.

At the end of the first interview make some of your own notes about them and organise all documentation you have received from them together with the completed questionnaire. Even if you decide not to invite them for a second interview it is good practice to write a letter or email thanking them for coming in and saying you do not wish to take the process further at this time.

Second Interview

Trade Testing Applicants for Therapist Positions

This purpose of the second interview is to establish whether the therapist's skills are good enough for your spa and meet or exceed your expectations. Even if they have little experience of techniques, their potential skill can be evident in the actual quality of their touch and treatment room etiquette so that with further training they could become an excellent therapist.

Depending on what treatments you would like to experience from the applicant, allocate enough time for half hour treatments plus a short meeting afterwards. It is

preferable for the manager or head therapist to experience the trade test but keep in mind that the person needs to know what they are looking for as client and as a manager. Even though each spa will have its own treatment room protocols and specific training of customer care you can assess the following key areas:

- You can give the applicant the formal Consultation Form but is not necessary as it then gives the therapist the opportunity to ask key questions to establish if there are any contra-indications to giving the treatment at that time.
- Observe therapists direction on how to lie on the couch so the client has clear instructions and therefore feels more at ease and confident.
- Observe therapists overall manner and tone of voice to give a sense of calm and professional confidence.
- Observe therapists towel management skills to maintain modesty and comfort throughout.
- Be aware of how the therapist moves around the couch and the room, not disturbing the tranquillity or order in the room.
- Notice if their smell is predominant, either their body odour or breath as if unpleasant will need careful consideration.
- Feel the touch of the therapist's hands to see if they feel soft, competent, sensitive and accurate.
- Observe the quality of the techniques, whether they are professional and in line with safe procedures and comfort zones.
- On completion of the test ask the therapist to give you any information about your skin if it is a facial or any advice about body tension if it's a massage.
- Equally ask for advice on nail care and other areas of skill if that has been trade tested.

- On completion of the trade test chat ask them they would like to ask you anything or further information you may need.
- Ask for references.
- Inform them you will be back in touch within a certain time frame.
- Again make your own notes on the Trade Test and keep with the questionnaire and other documentation you may have for that applicant.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A well thought through job description can give the applicant a very clear picture of your expectations of them as an employee, and what they can expect from the employer.

Having all these points clearly set out is an excellent way to set the standard right at the start, so that management will always have this as a base from which to communicate.

Below is an example of how a Job Description for a Spa Therapists role could read. Keep in mind that each spa business will have its own criteria and variation of responsibilities to ensure.

JOB TITLE

Spa Therapist

DEPARTMENT

Spa Team

LOCATION

The Spa in the Woods, plus address

WORKING HOURS

40 hours per week - rota based

REPORTS TO

Head Therapist or Spa Manager

RESPONSIBLE FOR

Giving spa treatments and all protocols as trained, delivering client care and customer journey, product sales and company standards of health and safety.

OVERALL SCOPE OF JOB AND PURPOSE

- Therapists contribute to increasing revenue of the Spa by giving professional treatments to clients at all times and exceeding customer expectations.
- Therapists advise clients on treatments and products, sharing professional and product expertise.

- Under the guidance of the Spa Manager and Senior Therapists within the limits of Spa in the Woods Policies, spa therapists ensure that all operational procedures, codes of conduct and standards of appearance, established by the Spa Manager are adhered to.
- Contribute to the Team Spirit by creating a positive working environment.
- Support your Spa Manager in their endeavor to motivate the team so as to ensure the smooth running of the Spa at all times.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Core responsibilities are the key part of your job and form the basis of your daily, weekly and monthly activities -

- Delivery the company's philosophy and culture on a daily basis to ensure Client Satisfaction.
- Day to day responsibility to ensure that all Spa work areas are clean and well maintained at all times.
- To carry out exemplary treatments as appointed at all times for every client.
- Ensure that your treatment room is tidy, clean and stocked with linen at all times.
- Ensure that you follow all Standards and Procedures as agreed with the Spa Manager.
- Responsible for the day to day procedures of Spa protocols
 - Punctuality
 - Personal presentation and hygiene
 - Treatment Room presentation and hygiene
 - Consultations
 - Treatments
 - Client Care and Customer Journey
 - Prescriptions
 - Product Sales
- Where appropriate ensure that equipment is maintained in good working order.
- Maintain a pro-active working relationship with all spa team.
- Promote a 'One Team' approach to all working relationships.

- Ensure that the interests of the guest is of paramount importance at all times and show a professional attitude at all times, particularly with regard to punctuality, appearance and general manner.
- To communicate all messages promptly and to keep the Spa Manager informed as to any complaints, be responsible for dealing with customer complaints in a professional and pro-active manner. .
- To assist in the smooth flow of the guests journey throughout the day.
- To have a thorough understanding of Spa, all treatments offered in the Spa and all retail products.
- To be willing and available to attend spa meetings
- .Demonstrates professionalism and confidence in all client interactions.

SPA PROCEDURES

- Focuses on giving the client prescription ensuring that it is introduced and distributed to every client for follow through advice.
- Ensures every new client completes a spa personal profile, which is refereed to prior to commencing the treatment.
- Ensures that the client personal profile is updated for all clients at the end of each treatment, with specific notes made.
- Understands and adheres to the spa policy on client discretion.

TEAM EFFICTIVENESS

Understand the importance of working as a team rather than as in individual.
Follows the standards set by the Senior Therapist, Assistant Manager and Spa Manager.

- Takes responsibility for supporting team members in the development of treatment expertise, client service, selling skills and product knowledge.
- Supports new colleagues.
- Strives to achieve all team, Spa and Company goals and objectives.
- Strives to ensure that own short-term absence is kept to a minimum and reporting of own absence in line with the Company procedure.
- Takes responsibility for own timekeeping is at work on time on all occasions.
- Takes responsibility for own decisions, actions and results.

- Completes all delegated tasks within the required timescale and standard set by the Spa Manager.
- Builds and maintains good working relationship with all team members and other areas of the business including the stores and head office.
- Plays an active role in the weekly team meetings, sharing business information, recognising success and discussing improvement areas.
- Is proactive in communicating and is willing to try new ideas.
- Demonstrates commitment and flexibility to the team and Spa Manager.
- Portray a professional image at all times, in line with the Company appearance policy.
- Accepts change in a positive way.

CONCERN FOR ORDER AND STANDARDS

- Ensures spa room standards are adhered to and always delivered in line with the spas visual standards.
- Ensures spa hygiene standards are adhered to and always delivered in line with Company standards.
- Ensures consistently achieves housekeeping standards in the spa in line with the Company standards.
- Carries out all treatments in line with Company standards and procedures.
- Proactive in the replenishment and housekeeping of stock to ensure every treatment is carried out in line with company standards.
- Understands and adheres to all Company loss prevention practices.
- Supports the Spa Manager in the execution of store stock takes in line with Company procedures.
- Follow up on customer enquires ensuring that they are handed over to front of house or Spa Manager.
- Takes responsibility for own health and safety, ensuring adherence to the Company Health and Safety policy, communicating health and safety concerns immediately with the Spa Manager.

I have read and understand this job description for

Signed.....Date.....

Spa Manager

Signature.....Date.....

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

Once you have decided to employ a new staff member an offer letter can be sent to them that clearly redefines the terms of employment. Along with the signing and Job Description the document should also be signed by both parties. The following headings are advisable for inclusion in this Contract Agreement.

Offer Letter of Employment

To confirm that you would like them to come and work for you and thanking them for the interview process.

Term of Employment Contract should include:

- Name and all personal contact details for the employee
- Job Position which is confirmed by also signing the Job Description
- Hours of employment on a weekly or monthly basis
- Start date of formal work
- Training and Induction period
- Employment capacity - part time, full time, as needed.
- Probationary period to assess mutual suitability.
- Salary, when and how paid.
- Any further benefits of employment
- Employee incentives
- Holiday time and pay details within a specific time period
- Sick leave details the amount of days paid for sickness in a specific time period
- Employment termination details
- Statement of Commitment from Employee to carry out their Job Description

- Statement of Commitment from Employers to carry out their responsibilities.
- Date and Signatures of all parties



STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE or OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Standard of Performance 'SOP' manual contains the detailed information about how you operate your spa which includes all protocols, policies and procedures for the different areas of the business. Some spas may find it useful to have two manuals.

- One manual for therapists and other spa team members who interface with clients and take care of the spa on a daily basis and is the Staff Guidebook or bible.
- The second manual which is for Spa Management and focuses on the Operations of the business on a broader scale.

These SOPs are extremely important documents that should be kept in a safe place with a known number of copies on-site. They are highly valuable sources of information about the spa business and a certain level of security needs to be associated with them. SOP Manuals are used for all induction and training of new staff members and copies must be stored in the managers office for referral at any time. When a staff member wishes to read the SOP it is best to let them sign the manual out and sign it back in. Many businesses will not allow the Manuals to be

taken from the premises as it can then become a source of copying and liability as it also contains very valuable signature information.

Being clear from the start about what your expectations are from your staff is essential for their success and the success of the whole business. Staff need and want to know your vision and goals and what their responsibility is within that on every level. The SOP Manual clarifies all areas of work involvement and should leave room for no doubt from your team that they are being lead with professionalism, integrity and excellent management principles for client and staff care. Staff need to be managed and the Manual will support both management and staff alike to create well rounded and rooted communications on how to operate and work within the spa service.

Each business will want to formulate its own SOP but there are very clear guidelines as to what areas should be included within it. The manual will need regular updating as the business changes and grows so manuals are best presented within a ring-binder format in order to allow for refreshing and adding new information.

The knowledge and insight you have learnt in this course will give you much of the information required to be able to adequately write your own SOP Manual that represents your philosophy, business and management priorities and style. The points detailed below will also give you clear direction on most of the areas that require mention in the manual. This list is by no means exhaustive and can be added to, or topics omitted at your discretion.

Below you will find an example list of key Headings to be included in the SOP Manual for the Spa Team.

SOP MANUAL HEADINGS

- **Spa and Company Name and Address**
- **Key Contact Details**
- **Important Phone Numbers**
- **General Opening/Closing Times**

- **Spa Mission Statement**
- **Spa Philosophy**
- **Employment Procedures:- to include**
 - Shift Start and Shift End Times
 - Training Commitment – to attend Training as requested
 - Probationary Period
 - Staff Job Description
 - Staff company records
- **Work on the Premises Protocols**
 - Product usage
 - General behaviour
 - Lunch and break policies
 - Rota Change Request Protocols
 - Use of telephone and IT facilities
 - Smoking policy
 - Random search, bag check policies
 - Staff room and personal locker care
 - Drug testing policy
 - Emergency procedures
- **Professional Standards**
 - Job description responsibilities and protocols
 - Off sick communication protocols
- **Communication Guidelines**
 - Meeting and Greeting protocols
 - Scripting if required for certain areas of service
 - Acceptable and unacceptable vocabulary
 - Negative attitude and conflict resolution policy
 - Staff Complaint Protocols

- **Working as a Team**
 - Responsibilities as a team member
 - Respecting and honouring others
 - Keeping all staff areas tidy
 - Representing the face of the company
- **Use of Spa Facilities**
 - Knowledge of using spa equipment
 - Hydro, sauna, steam etc:
 - Service Contract Agreements for equipment maintenance
- **Customer Care Protocols**
 - Standards of care
 - Guidelines for inappropriate client behaviour.
- **Therapists Daily Routine**
 - Arriving on the premises
 - Room preparation and set up protocols
 - Room cleaning protocols
 - Laundry management
 - End of day treatment room protocols
 - Leaving at end of shift protocols
- **The Client Journey**
 - Step by step Description of Client Journey from booking to payment
 - Prescription Card
 - After care procedures
- **Client Consultation Process**
 - Pre treatment consultation procedures
 - Storing of client history
 - Updating client history
 - Confidentiality and privacy policy

- **Treatment Protocols**
Details of how to carry out each treatment
- **Contra Indication Procedures**
Specific symptoms and conditions contra-indicated for certain treatments
When guest has had bad reaction previously and still requests the same
Offering other services
- **Client Referral Protocols**
Who therapists are permitted to recommend clients to
Responsibility to not disclose other therapists history
- **Inventory Protocols**
Frequency of Inventory counting and recording
Unpacking and de-canting procedures
Store room protocols and security guidelines
- **Salary and Payment Protocol**
System of payment
Frequency of payment
Bonuses
Tips
- **Health and Safety Protocols**
Complete protocols for all procedures pertaining to
health and safety in the environment including Fire
Emergency procedures
Certification and legal documentation
- **Treatment Menu Descriptions**
Of all services offered
- **Client Complaints**
Line of support for therapist – Manager
Advised manner of communication from staff

Compensation for client procedures

Client Complaint Log

- **Operational Procedures**

Use of products

Equipment maintenance

Treatment room standards

Disinfection and Sterilization

Towel and linen procedures

- **Accidents**

What to do in the event of an accident for staff

And for clients

- **Personal Hygiene**

Personal Cleanliness

Perfume protocols

Hair protocols

Nails protocols

Clothing and shoes protocols

- **Uniform Protocol**

Items to wear each day

Allocation of uniform

Care and standard of uniform

- **Jewellery and Personal Presentation Protocol**

What jewellery can and cannot be worn

What make-up can and cannot be worn

Tattoos and body art protocols

- **Mobile Phone Protocol**

When and where it can be used for therapists

And for guests

- **Rota's**
 - Who is responsible for the forming the rota
 - Personal responsibility to check rotas daily, weekly, monthly
 - Frequency of change of rota if any
 - Changing shift with other therapists
- **Warning and Dismissal Protocols**
 - Number of warnings given before dismissal
 - Dismissal process
- **Staff Meeting Protocol**
 - Responsibility to attend all staff meetings
- **Security Protocols**
 - Random checks of staff bags and lockers
 - Store room protocols
- **Staff Appraisals**
 - Frequency of appraisals
 - Purpose of appraisals
 - Requesting an appraisal
- **Front of House Protocols**
 - Answering the phone dialogue - scripting
 - Treatment Knowledge for recommendation
 - Recommending therapists
 - Booking clients
 - Up-selling treatments
 - Prescription usage
 - Point of Sale
 - Credit card authorization
 - Rebooking client
 - Selling retail products

Redeeming gift vouchers

- **Retail product Sales Protocols**

The purpose of selling products for home use

How to obtain the retail product

- **Licensing Protocols**

Depending on your location

Licences visible in SOP to carry out treatments of

Nails

Hair

Body

Beauty

Aesthetics

The detailing of the SOP is your support and safety net for many scenarios. These guidelines will prove very helpful when you come to formulate your own manuals and documents for successful spa management.



RESEARCH AND MARKETING

The Art of Communication

Marketing your spa is all about *how you communicate* and share the knowledge of your services with the local and global community. This can be a very creative and

exhilarating process as it reflects your passion and purpose of what the spa means to you. Everything in our living world, the vast variation of cultures, beliefs, lifestyles and policies is propelled by the power of communication, whatever the language or the medium. It is through sharing ideas and visions that we become aware of new things and of one another.

Excellent communication is the pulse of a successful business. Marketing communication is the voice and face of 'your message' and you can see how invaluable and important it is by the amount of time and money that is spent on advertising and public relations (PR). Whether it is through local events, promotions, magazines, telephone, TV and radio or via websites, emails, blogs and face book, the power of the written and spoken word plays a key role in spreading interest, attracting attention to your business. Equally, the power of photography and pictures sends influential and impressive images to the mind that stays with people a long time. In the section on Treatment Menus we discussed how this part of your marketing becomes your 'visual art dealer' designed to entice and inspire your existing and new clients.

The language, clarity and frequency of your marketing messages are vital to support your business. Do not underestimate the persuasiveness of ongoing communication and revival of your message as time goes by. Unless you actively tell people about your services, who you are, where you are, what you offer, what's new and how people can benefit, your business will not develop and grow at a successful pace.



MARKET RESEARCH

Mystery Shopping

Therefore, to create a strong signature style to your marketing and promotions you need to first be clear on who you are. An excellent way to start is by doing an exercise called 'Mystery Shopping'. Mystery Shoppers are often employed by business owners to go into their spas or stores as an unknown customer to experience first hand the standard of service given. Shoppers will be given questionnaires to complete after their experience which is then given back to the owner for review. The Mystery Shopper should read the questionnaire before the experience has taken place so that they know what to pay attention to and make a mental note of to complete later. For owners who want to check on the professionalism of their staff this is an excellent way to find out what is really going on when not under the eye of management.

Mystery Shopping is also a brilliant way of experiencing and assessing spas that you want to find out more about for various reasons. Perhaps because you like their marketing, products or style and want to know how they deliver that service, or because they have some treatments or products you have never experienced or heard of that you would like to test from a customers point of view. You may also just want to check out the competition and see how your service will differ. This exercise will give you a great deal of information about their customer journey, their services and how true they are to their own marketing message.

When you have assessed the mystery shopping experience, perhaps having created your own questionnaire for evaluation purposes, this will give you further clarity on what you really like and don't like and what you rated as good or not. This will reveal how your ideas, vision and service differ in comparison defining your approach more clearly. This 'difference' then becomes your unique selling point, your USP which can be built into your marketing message.

Define your business and ask yourself the following questions?

What is my message and Mission Statement?

Your Mission Statement is a clear and strong reflection of your business philosophy, purpose and intent put into one or two sentences of no more than

about forty words. This mission statement becomes your key communication strategy that in a few seconds can convert new clients to your service by its instant appeal and recognition. It can also be used as a 'strap line' which is text that goes beneath your business name in marketing information. For example here is a fictional mission statement.

'Your Spa on the Hill'
Our blissful spa on the hill is dedicated to giving you space, care, touch and time to free yourself from stress, returning you to good health and beauty in tranquil style.

What is my philosophy of customer service?

Define how you as a customer likes' and wants to be treated, and how this should make people feel. Draw on your Mystery Shopping experience and write down your ideas for how you intend your customers to be treated in all situations.

What kind of style and image do I want to create and project?

Look at market trends and styles and write down how and where you see yourself in the spa market. Rate ten of your favourite other spas or salons on different levels of value, style and performance and compare how your business fits into that scale. Write down your own style.

How does my spa service differ from others in the area?

Having compared your service with other businesses write down your unique selling point, your USP and any other important factors you think will make you stand out.

What type of people live locally?

Find out about your demographic and the predominant lifestyles. Is the area family oriented with lots of young mums perhaps free in the morning but not later in the day? Are there a lot of smaller homes where single people live or

perhaps student dwellings? Is this an affluent community with an expendable income or a more modest lifestyle? What is the average age of residents? All this information can be sourced through the Chamber of Commerce and other related search groups.

Who will come to my urban spa?

This knowledge is based on the information you have found about your demographic and will give you clear guidelines about who to target, or in other words, communicate to, so that you can market your services and promotions, pitch your prices and special offers to focus on attracting these people. For example, if it is an up and coming area where a lot of aspirational working singles and young couples live you may well be very busy after working hours and weekends. Therefore to keep consistently busy offering special rates on your more unique and pricier treatments at quiet times will help bring in business most of the time.

Who will come to my destination spa?

Those who visit destination spas are seeking a total renewal of wellbeing from the inside out. The spa philosophy will be an important message giving people a sense of whether they will 'fit in' to the culture of your environment and that it resonates with their own self image and ideals.

Many people will chose a destination that is far away from home to be out of familiar territory which can help them let go more deeply, or somewhere nearby because it cuts down travel time and is convenient for shorter day or weekend breaks. These spa seekers will arrive with huge expectations of the service they anticipate receiving and how they will feel at the end of their stay. Therefore it is essential that you communicate the 'story' of your spa in excellent pictures as well as very well chosen words defining your services. Be clear on:

- How to get to the location via various transportation
- When to arrive for a booking to benefit from using all the spa facilities.
- The best spa packages to have within a certain time frame.

- The quality and availability of refreshments, food and water
- The personal service of the accessories such as robes and slippers

All of this information will avoid disappointment on the clients behalf and prepare them sufficiently to enjoy there 'time out' wholeheartedly.

What do these people want?

Spa clients want to feel good inside and out. You will recognise the points below from the first sessions of this course which talks about why people go to spas.

1. They want to be assured they can de-compress and relax.
2. They want to feel restored, regenerated and cleansed.
3. They want to be pampered and treated with gentleness and kindness.
4. They want to feel rewarded for all the hard work they do.
5. They want a real break from every day activity.
6. They want to look radiant and refreshed.

Once you are clear on all the points above you have an excellent framework to deliver a strong message through your marketing strategies to your clients

CONTINUITY OF YOUR IMAGE AND STYLE IN MARKETING

As we discussed in Signature Branding having a continuity of image and style that is recognisable in everything that you produce through your business is essential. You do not need to constantly be re-inventing your wheel. At the heart and on the surface of all your business marketing should be your own signature 'recognition factor' - the 'R' Factor. All brochures, leaflets, website, newsletter and advertising must depict your logo, your name, your colours and any other vital branding signs or messages you rely on to be recognised. Over time you will see that this consistency of image builds a stronger and more stable position in the market place.

People like familiarity; they like to feel that they *know* you and who you are. In this way the immediate identification with your marketing style, image and

message will ring bells in the clients' body and mind reminding them of a wonderful experience they have had or heard about. This positive feeling will create a sense of inquiry and loyalty into anything new you are offering growing your business potential.



LAUNCHING YOUR BUSINESS

Launch your business with as much fanfare and market awareness as possible. You can do this yourself or employ a PR or marketing firm to support your opening launch event. The guidance in this section will support the success of your launch.

Dry Runs for Spas

A dry run is the term used to test all spa operations. In a large full service spa a minimum of 7 days is recommended prior to your opening date. There could then be a 2 day further adjustment for staff team meetings and changes that may need to be made. The purpose of this is to make sure that the reality of your customer journey flows harmoniously and that every area of your spa equipment and services, from the IT booking system to changing room to hydro suites, and delivering treatments to after care sales works perfectly. There will always be hiccups, snagging and review of certain processes and this should give you time to deal with it., or simply want to promote your one to one treatments, this information will help you to launch and market your business.

Before you open the doors of your business to the public and start selling your services you will need to set the wheels in motion to achieve market awareness at least three months before your launch date. You need to be prepared and

confident that your opening will go well. The dry run also gives you an opportunity to invite other local businesses to come in and receive treatments without charge and give feedback of your services. This is an excellent way of getting local future business and creates goodwill in your neighbourhood.

PRE-LAUNCH MARKETING PREPARATIONS

Whether you are planning a small or large scale spa; upgrading a salon with new treatments and services you will need to prepare the way to raise awareness of your new business in advance.

Website and Internet Marketing

- Design your website in line with the image and look of your brand and prepare it to be available for viewing three months prior to opening if at all possible.
- Create a facility on the website for people to sign up to be informed of new promotions and other benefits.
- Gathering your mailing list is one of your prime marketing strategies and over time will give you a great resource to communicate your services to.
- Sending a monthly Newsletters or a Newspage that links into your website also keeps you in the frame of peoples' minds, with links to Face Book and Twitter.
- You may also like a page that highlights your individual therapists' skills and profiles which can be changed as needed.
- Make sure that your website address and all email contact details are on every piece of information you produce whether a treatment menu, an invitation, a prescription and all advertising.

IT AND SOFTWARE EQUIPMENT

Resource a spa specific software IT package that fulfils all your requirements and make sure the system will:

- Captures clients booking history data
- Create an email and address file for clients
- Can send out marketing client emails and reminders of appointments
- List therapists skills
- Can provide status of client at all stages of process- booked, arrival, paid.
- Tracks and logs products bought
- Logs any complaints
- Gives STAT reports
- Tracks top selling treatments per week, per month.
- Logs revenue per therapist, per treatment type.
- Logs statistics for room utilization and therapists utilization
- Plus any other specification you wish to install

PRESS RELEASES

A press release is a concise **News Bulletin** that clearly brings notice to the facts about your spa launch or whatever else you wish to tell the press and media about. Editors are always busy and receive many Press Releases everyday so you need to keep to the point, make it factual and interesting with a personal touch of reward for the editor or journalist.

It should contain:

- ❖ Name and Logo of Business – possibly the Mission Statement
- ❖ Date press release sent.
- ❖ Address of the business.
- ❖ All contact details – name of manager, email, website, phone number.
- ❖ Brief ‘story’ or philosophy of spa or the creator thereof.
- ❖ The news information to include date and time of event.
- ❖ Any special launch offers for treatments.

- ❖ Personal invitation to the editor or journalist to come for a complimentary treatment.

- ❖ **Send a Press Release** about your new business and launch date to the beauty editors of the magazines you would like coverage from **3 months in advance**. The Glossy magazines are always 3 months ahead so be prepared with your marketing information at that time. Along with the press release and invitation to the opening event, invite the beauty editor or journalist to come in for a complimentary treatment in exchange for more editorial in their magazine.
- ❖ **Local newspapers** are usually a week ahead and you can send them information not more than one month prior to opening with the same press release and invitation that you have given to the magazine.
- ❖ **Send a Spa Launch Invitation** to all local businesses, old clients and all involved in the set up and development of your spa to come to your opening event or launch party.
- ❖ **Offer special prices** on all or certain packages of treatments for the first month. Put the details of this information on your website, press release and any advertising.
- ❖ **Contact local radio** stations to review your spa.

THE LAUNCH EVENT

The actual event should be fun so you can offer some bubbly or wine as well as fruit juices. Prepare little 'goody bags' of sample products and perhaps a voucher detailing a special reduction off their first 2 or 3 treatments.

All your spa team should attend dressed in uniform and offering little hand massages or 15 minute trial massage or mini facial in the treatment rooms on a first come first served basis.

You may like to present a small introductory talk to the spa expressing your happiness and appreciation for the clients and the new launch but this is not essential.

Evenings are best when more people will be available to attend and limit the time to about 2.5 hours for example 6 to 8.30 pm.



ONGOING PROMOTIONS AND MARKETING

Once you have launched the business be aware that this is just the beginning. As discussed earlier a consistent and dedicated approach to marketing your spa and keeping in the public eye is vital to your success. Here are some example ideas to keep the flow of interest growing and evolving your service.

For Salons and Spas

Loyalty Reward Program

A Loyalty Card or booking system that monitors and records all clients visits. Every tenth treatment is complimentary or 50% reduction.

Recommending a client rewards with 20% off their next treatment.

Seasonal Promotions

To highlight the benefits of certain treatments at specific times of year. For example, Spring Renewal - Detox the body after the winter with scrubs and bodywraps boosting the circulation and reviving body and mind.

Festive Party Season – Packages offering facials, manicures and back cleanse pre New Year.

Plus special promotions for , Mothers Day (mother and daughter packages), Fathers Day (stress busting massage therapy), Summer Skin, Winter Blues and so on.

Specific Target Groups

Brides and bridesmaid packages

Total pampering and refinement

Pre and post natal skin and body treatments

Men's skin care treatments

De-stress treatments and rituals

De-tox treatments and rituals

Age-defying therapies

Body and Mind Balance

Teen skin care

Weekly Promotions

Every Monday % reduction off all treatments

Tuesday receive 20% off second treatment booked on that day.

Courses and Packages of treatments

There are many variations for offering bundles of treatments either on one day as a retreat or over time.

6 Massages booked and paid for the price of 5

4 Facials booked and paid for the price 3

All to be redeemed with 2 months.

Product Promotions

Involve your product suppliers into promoting their brand on your premises

Giving trial products with new treatments

Seasonal gift offers.

Ongoing Promotional Events

Creating events similar to your launch with different seasonal themes can be held successfully about twice a year. Just before Christmas to celebrate the festive atmosphere and promote sales of retail and gift vouchers. Springtime is a popular season to promote the spirit of renewal and rebirth after the long winter, bringing freshness and beauty to the foreground.

Each culture and country will have its own special holidays and spiritual festivals so this must be brought into the marketing plan to accommodate new and enticing promotions and experiences.

In Conclusion

Spa Knowledge is a never ending process, always evolving and changing. This presentation will open the door to support and inspire your own vision and goals which will take on a life of its own to create your signature spa. Enjoy the process - its part of the journey.



SPA KNOWLEDGE

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