

2016



13TH Annual Trends Report

TOP 10 GLOBAL SPA & WELLNESS TRENDS FORECAST

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2016 Trends Report

Top 10 Global Spa and Wellness Trends Forecast

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Each year when we develop the Spafinder Wellness 365™ Global Spa & Wellness Trends Report, our goal is to avoid the short-lived “trend du jours” and instead select meaningful trends that are changing how and where business is conducted—and redefining how we, and our families, stay well at home and work and where we travel.

This 2016 Report, our 13th annual forecast, is no exception. Our research team has worked for many months and considered hundreds of ideas before settling on a short list of 40-plus candidates. Then, after exhaustive research (and considerable debate), the team selected the top 10 spa and wellness trends you will find in this 90-page report.

The top picks for 2016 are unique in many ways: for the first time in our trends history, five of the 10 trends focus on the startling evolution underway in wellness travel. While the first wave of healthier travel was associated with stress-reducing spa treatments, yoga, and relaxation (now “must haves” for travelers), this report will educate you about emerging categories in wellness travel.

The 2016 Report also tracks the rise in serious, comprehensive wellness and spa treatments for children, which many believe is the most significant development in our industry. And we examine the rising focus (from spa retreats to hospitals) on a sorely missing component in the wellness explosion: mature, and inclusive sexual wellbeing approaches and programs.

Of course, technology continues to play a key role, as new apps make it possible to get a massage, manicure, doctor’s visit, etc., when and where you want it. But an opposite wave is also clear, such as the rediscovery of Mexico’s ancient temazacal traditions.

We hope you are inspired to think about what this forecast means to our industry—and to those who look to us to guide their paths to wellness!

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Our team of research analysts, editors, and industry experts developed the 2016 Global Spa & Wellness Trends Report. Findings are based on ongoing surveys of the 25,000-plus wellness travel, spa, fitness, wellness and beauty providers in the Spafinder Wellness Network, along with surveys of thousands of travel agents and hundreds of thousands of consumers. We also interview industry leaders and conduct extensive analysis of current market research.

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1



Surf's Up!

The New Wave of Wellness

Surfing (along with spin-offs like stand-up paddleboarding) is fast becoming one of the world's hottest wellness travel trends. It is also one of the hottest fitness trends—and today it's about girls and women and entire families.



Las Olas Surf Safaris for Women, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Surf's Up!

The New Wave of Wellness



Hotel Komune, East Bali

“Let’s go surfin’ now,
everybody’s learning how,
come on a safari with me.”

- The Beach Boys, 1962

It’s hardly breaking news that surf culture has been established as the apex of cool. The worship of surfing “style” took off in the ‘60s when the Beach Boys harmonized about a world where “everybody’d be surfin’ like Californ-i-a, and Bruce Brown’s documentary *The Endless Summer* brought images of boy-tribes on their globe-trotting quest for perfect waves to the world. And since the ‘80s when surf clothing brands exploded, you’ve been almost as likely to see a kid in Mumbai sporting Quiksilver as one in Malibu. Surfing itself has also boomed: growing from small, wave-obsessed clans from Hawaii, California and Australia, to the more than 35 million global surfers¹ catching waves today.

But across these decades of surf-worship, for most of us millions who didn’t jump in, surfing has remained a rather mysterious endeavor. Well, that’s changing fast, and surfing (along with spin-offs like stand-up paddleboarding) is fast becoming one of the world’s hottest wellness travel trends, expanding its demographics and global reach in extraordinary ways. It is also one of the hottest fitness trends, and surfing today is about girls and women, entire families, Silicon Valley execs, and the locals from Brazil to Bali, jumping in.

And as beaches in original surf meccas like California and Australia become overrun, surfers keep pushing to increasingly remote destinations in search of uncrowded waves. (Experienced travelers know that if you want to find the next great beaches,

FUELING THE TREND

Surfing Is Big Business

It's odd how ignored surfing has been by the travel industry. For decades surfers have been maxing out credit cards on trips, turning to websites like Surfline or Magic Seaweed (UK) to zero in on destinations. But the world is waking up to the fact that surfing (with travel the biggest share) is a \$130 billion annual² market. More than nine in ten surfers have taken an international surf trip within five years; 20 percent have taken more than 20.³ Tourism boards are now wisely promoting surfing: even Kim Jong-un recently took steps to rebrand the decidedly "un-chillax" North Korea as a surfing hotspot.

Surfers Invented "Parts Unknown" Travel

Watch an early surf documentary like *Endless Summer* to see how surfers have been pioneering experiential travel for 50 years. In their quest for perfect waves, they revealed cultures no one had ever seen. And this surf travel "mindset" dovetails perfectly with what travelers crave now: not stuffy luxury, but the authentic and exotic; healthy, local food; and real community. The new surf + wellness properties hit just these notes.

Surfing Is Fashion

Since the 60s, when the Rip Curls and Quiksilvers brought surf fashion to the masses, hundreds of brands have sold the surfer look on mainstream shelves. Surf fashion is a multi-billion-dollar business, but one that works by a tricky mechanism: because surf culture is intensely anti-commercial, when brands go big, they're rejected as uncool. So the surf fashion mechanism—always chasing the indie—never stops spinning. And now that women are jumping into surfing (and paddleboarding), there's as much haute couture in women's surfwear (i.e., \$300 rash guards) as there is for yoga. Who would have thought 20 years ago that chic surf shops would be all over Manhattan, London and Paris?

Women & Girls

Surfing has long been male-dominated. But now an unprecedented number of women/girls are paddling into the line-up. Consider: 36 percent of U.S. surfers are now women.⁴ And it makes sense as surfing doesn't require brute strength, and women, often

shorter, lighter and more nimble, actually have an advantage in normal waves. Celebrity male surfers like Mick Fanning (AU) and Gabriel Medina (Brazil) now share headlines with women like Carissa Moore (Hawaii) and Stephanie Gilmore (AU). The Women's World Surfing Championships drive big sponsorship money, while a new pack of pro-surfers-turned-models, like Alana Blanchard, draw Twitter followers in the millions. And women surfers are also driving the sport's globalization, as girls worldwide perceive the "surfer chick" as an emblem of empowerment. Like teen Bangladeshi surfer, Nasima Akter, who's winning local contests, despite a taboo against women swimming in her country...much less surfing.

Demos Go High-End

The surfer stereotype: a broke, young beach bum cruising beaches in an old van. Reality: the average surfer today is in his/her 30s, well educated, and earns \$75K a year.⁵ The surfer demographics are shifting everywhere: mindfulness-crazed Silicon Valley start-ups are starting surf clubs, and a rising trend is well-heeled surfers buying second homes at un-crowded surf-breaks. Surfing, mindfulness and money are increasingly intertwined.

Surfing as Super-Fitness

More people are embracing surfing because of a rising recognition that it's an extraordinary type of fitness. As Tony de Leede (who knows a few things about fitness, as founder of Australia's famed Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat and the new, surfing + wellness-focused Hotel Komune) notes, surfing delivers the "trim, tight body that is in now in, rather than the old, bulky 'gym' body."

De Leede explains surfing's workout: "Paddling delivers intense cardio expenditure, as it builds arm, shoulder and back strength; popping up and down on the board engages all core muscles; balancing builds leg strength and flexibility. It's interval training: aerobic bursts, followed by rest. It's low-impact, functional cross training, covering things it would take many machines and classes to do." Medical studies also show surfing prevents depression/stress.⁶ And if surfers are perpetually "stoked," studies suggest why: wave turbulence releases charged ions into the atmosphere, which release endorphins in people.

follow the surfers.) Surf tourism is now happening in at least 160 countries.⁷ Anywhere there is an ocean, people are carving up the waves: from the balmy North Shore to the frigid North Sea, from Biarritz to Bali, from Cape Town to Cabo San Lucas, from San Sebastian to Sri Lanka, from Ghana to Guatemala to Guam.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

1) SURFING + WELLNESS PROPERTIES— A NEW GENRE OF WELLNESS TRAVEL

Not long ago surf camps were often bare-bones dives that only a die-hard surfer would stay in. But because of the swell of well-heeled, wellness-seeking and women surfers, there is now an explosion of surf + wellness properties just about everywhere great waves break. Properties originally focused on surfing are adding wellness experiences (from yoga to spas), while resorts at great surf breaks are adding surfing schools. It's a smart move: when the waves aren't breaking, it gives guests much to do, and keeps the "surf widow" (who may now be a man), happy and healthy.

These surf + wellness properties represent a new "genre" in wellness travel. And they come at an astounding array of price-points, including Four Seasons or Six Senses uber-luxury.

All this global growth in surfing—and in its demographics— is driving these trends:

- A rising genre in wellness travel: the surf + wellness property, with retreats that blend surfing and surf classes with yoga (practiced by surfers for years for building breathing capacity, strength and flexibility) combined with many breeds of fitness, spa/massage and healthy, organic food. All have strong appeal to both hardcore surfers and the uninitiated
- New surf + wellness retreats at every price point, from unpretentious, authentic, affordable properties, to super-luxury—far beyond the "SURF-SLEEP-EAT-REPEAT" camps of old
- Warm, welcoming all-female surf retreats and schools
- Growing awareness of surfing as a uniquely powerful mind-body workout: a low-impact form of functional and cross training, delivering a lean, flexible body. So much so that surfing-simulating fitness brands like Surfset are rising
- A surfing-spinoff fitness mania: from the explosion of stand-up paddleboarding (one of the fastest growing outdoor sports) to kite surfing



The Surf Lodge, New York

Surfing is hot on the "other" coast, from Maine to North Carolina. **The Surf Lodge** (Montauk, New York), combines farm-to-table cuisine, a roster of star-taught fitness classes and surf lessons.

Hotel Komune's flagship **Hotel Komune Bali** represents the most evolved example of the surf-meets-wellness trend, marrying destination spa levels of wellness and fitness activities with one of the world's best surf breaks at Karamas Beach.



Hotel Komune Bali, East Bali

But the heartbeat of this property trend falls comfortably in the middle: smaller, authentic, affordable retreats that deliver great surfing and a lot of meaningful, if straightforward, wellness. Common elements: rustic or mod design (on the eco-lodge model); all-inclusive packages, with healthy meals; a social atmosphere; great waves for advanced surfers and gentler beaches for the surf school; oceanfront yoga; and small spas, or just terrific massages.

In general, a lot of "beachy" (not bank-breaking) health and happiness. What many travelers want... even if they have no interest in surfing.

It's painful to limit examples: for every category spotlighted, dozens were omitted.

Shining Example – Hotel Komune

What do you get when the founder of a world-famous destination spa, Gwinganna Health Retreat (Tony de Leede, Australia), hatches the idea (along with partner Tony Cannon) to open properties at the world's best surf breaks? You get Hotel Komune, whose flagship Hotel Komune Bali represents the most evolved example of the surf-meets-wellness trend. Komune opened in 2012 for the surfing at Karamas Beach in East Bali. But in 2015 they completed an innovative "Health Hub," morphing the surf resort into a comprehensive fitness/wellness destination.

Komune delivers "destination spa" levels of wellness. Multiple conventional/functional equipment training areas and a lap pool. Three gorgeous yoga pavilions with top-notch instructors. A full-blown spa. Classes

in everything from surfing, paddleboarding, Surfset, boxing, healthy cooking, and qi gong. Hiking, scuba diving, white water rafting and mountain biking. Organic gardens, and a new organic agriculture specialist, to supply the Health Café. And the first floodlit night surfing in the world... cool for surfers, and spectacle for guests. And it all starts at \$89/night.

De Leede notes, "Komune Bali is essentially 'Gwinganna Lite' married to incredible surfing. And blending surfing with wellness experiences meets a real, global demand, and is an exciting new direction in wellness travel."

Komune is on the march: with plans underway for an amazing upgrade to their Komune Gold Coast (Australia) property by 2018, overlooking the famed Superbank surf break and home to the Quiksilver Pro WCT event: with cool, wave-inspired architecture and a comprehensive Health Hub like Komune Bali's. The Bali property is building more luxe villas, and they're eyeing new locations from Lembongan island (off Bali) to Portugal (near big wave-break "Landings").

Surf + Wellness in Established Hotspots

Costa Rica: Travel agents recently named Costa Rica the fastest-growing wellness travel destination,⁸ and with its extraordinary nature, beaches and national obsession with all things "Pura Vida", it makes sense. Surfers represent a quarter of inbound tourists,⁹ so Costa Rica abounds in affordable and luxe surf + wellness resorts. At the all-inclusive Surf Simply (Nosara), it's all about taking surf coaching to another

level (for both beginners and the experienced), combined with yoga, massage and healthy meals. At The Harmony Hotel (Nosara), there are expert surf lessons, a great juice bar, open-air yoga studios and a spa/healing center with edible, all-natural treatment ingredients.

Morocco: Morocco's massive coast has become the European surf and wellness seekers' backyard (replete with camels on the sand). And from ancient Essaouira down to Agadir, surf resorts/schools are proliferating. The chill Paradise Plage (Taghazout) runs a Rip Curl surf school combined with daily yoga and healthy food. Surf Maroc offers all-inclusive retreats for the surf- and yoga-obsessed at four Moroccan locations.

Europe is surf-mad, from Donegal, Ireland to Portugal...and everywhere in between. Just one example of Europe's suave surf + wellness resorts: the Scandinavian-hip Surfer's Lodge (Peniche, Portugal), created by a former Swedish surf champ, with its unique Surf Academy, yoga classes, massages, organic food—and even circuit training specifically designed for surfers.

U.S. – Beyond California: California is U.S. surf central, with too many surf + wellness resorts to name: from San Diego's historic Hotel Del Coronado, with its great spa and spinning and surfing classes on the beach, to the Fairmont Grand Del Mar, marrying surf lessons with a 5-star spa. But surfing is hot on the "other" U.S. coast, from Maine, to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Just one example of

the chic properties: the Surf Lodge (Montauk, New York), combining farm-to-table cuisine, an amazing roster of star-taught fitness classes, and surf lessons. Website Well+Good even held a series of "Surfside Salutations" events here, days of classes with celebrity yoga, stand-up paddleboarding and cardio instructors.

New Frontiers from India to Iceland

Surfers seeking empty, Edenic waves are pushing to every corner of the world, where the locals are getting surf-crazed, too. And the cold zones (from British Columbia to Northern Japan) are surfing's new hotspots—even Russia's wildly remote Kamchatka Peninsula is developing a rabid surf culture. So, cool surf + wellness resorts are popping up in increasingly unexpected places.

India: It's yoga central, but surfing? Yes. India boasts a vast coastline, and tropical Kerala, "the birthplace of Ayurveda", is surf central. One great property example: Soul & Surf, which combines expert surf lessons/tours with tons of wellness "soul": sunset yoga, pranayama, meditation, massage, Ayurvedic consultations and music programs—and with strong community "giving back," including a surf club for village kids. It nails the nice, affordable, unpretentious and packed-with-wellness surf retreat trend, and has held pop-up retreats in Cornwall, UK. Soul & Surf is also building a new surf + wellness boutique jungle property in Sri Lanka.



Soul & Surf combines expert surf lessons/tours with wellness "soul": sunset yoga, meditation, massage, Ayurvedic consultations—and a surf club for village kids.

Iceland: Even Iceland, chilly land of surreal beauty, is drawing intrepid surfers, and with the summer midnight sun you can surf all night long. One property example: luxury resort Deplar Farm (Skagafjörður) set to open spring 2016, which will blend adventure, surfing and spa. An Eleven Experiences resort (U.S./ European wild-adventure-focused properties), there will be surfing, heli-skiing, horseback riding and a cool spa with saltwater floating tanks.

Women-Only

The era of surfing as a Boys' Club is over, and so many more resorts and camps are now focused on making surfing less intimidating for women/girls, with retreats typically blending a whole lot of yoga, healthy food, beauty, fitness, self-empowerment and social fun into the surfing mix. Unexpected brands are even getting into the women's surf + wellness retreat mix: trendy clothing company, Free People, this week launched FP Escapes at Xinalani Eco-Resort (Yelapa, Mexico) with surf classes, star yoga and healthy eating instructors, and women's empowerment workshops (Hawaii and Spain look to be their next destinations).



Las Olas Surf Safaris for Women, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Las Olas Surf Safaris for Women (Puerto Vallarta, Mexico) pioneered the women's surf + wellness retreat concept back in 1997. Their mantra, "Make Girls Out of Women", involves daily surf lessons and yoga, surf-focused massages, cooking classes, salsa

dancing, and a focus on bonding with each other and the ocean.



Surf with Amigas, pro-surfer Holly Beck's retreats in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador.

Surf with Amigas, pro-surfer Holly Beck's retreats in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador, pack in a week of surfing lessons, yoga, jungle adventure and "feel good" voluntourism. Swell Women offers a blissful combo of surfing lessons, yoga, massage and healthy food in Maui, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Panama. Surf Sistas surfing+ yoga+ wellness retreats take place in Cornwall UK, France, Morocco, Bali and Costa Rica.

Schools: Just-for-women "day" surf schools are rising. Great example: Surf Sister in the tiny, chilly town of Tofino, British Columbia, known as the town where women surfers rule...in large part because of Surf Sister, which gets more than 5,000 people out surfing a year. (Stay at the lovely spa resort, Wickaninnish Inn, or Pacific Sands Beach Resort, and they arrange your Surf Sister lessons.)

Luxury Surfing = Exclusive Waves & Wellness

The luxury surf resorts of today would be unimaginable twenty years ago. But for more people and families, a dream trip is not only about world-class resorts, but also access to world-class waves. "Exclusivity" takes on new meaning here: often about controlled access to epic, uncrowded waves. And while many surfers more than understandably decry the privatization of waves at resorts, the luxury surf market is there, and for many, these pricier experiences are priceless. The



Nihiwatu, Indonesia

The Indonesian island Sumba is home to **Nihiwatu**, known for unique surfing and spa offerings—and **Mamaole Tree House** bedrooms. The surf school is run by pro, Mark Healey.

EXAMPLES OF SPA PROPERTIES WITH SURFING ELEMENTS

The Maldives: Earth's most photogenic islands are also a surfer's paradise, and luxury wellness resorts have them covered. Four Seasons Resort at Kuda Huraa has a TropicSurf school, a "Ticket to Ride" pass allowing only 8 surfers on the boat heading out to the waves, while the ultimate surf-splurge, the Four Seasons Explorer, takes surfers on a seven-day seaplane adventure to hidden atolls. Other standouts: Six Senses Laamu, where daily trips to The Yin Yang, one of the Maldives' famous waves, are arranged, and Maalifushi by COMO, with its expert-led surf sessions.

Indonesia: Bali has countless surfing + wellness resorts, but fewer know about Indonesian islands like Sumba, home to Nihiwatu, with its unique surfing and spa offerings. The resort gives exclusive rights to cult-status wave ("Occy's Left") limited to ten surfers, and the surf school is run by pro, Mark Healey. Combine that with its creative full-day "spa safari," kicking off with morning yoga, then breakfast in a treehouse, followed by a spa treatment journey in various remote, elevated platforms in nature.

trend is everywhere: tour companies like Waterways Travel arrange \$10K+ weeklong surf safaris from Peru to Fiji. Luxury schools like Kalon Surf School (Costa Rica) offer heavily personalized surf coaching, with touches like private chefs and surfing-tailored Pilates and massage.

Luxury Resorts + Residences: A trend is unfolding, "surfer real estate,"¹⁰ with surfers snapping up homes where waves break, from Australia's Gold Coast to Mexico. And these real estate developments not only combine resorts with residences, they're integrating comprehensive wellness. Just one example: Tres Santos Mindful Living Community (coming May 2016, Todos Santos, Baja Mexico) will give surf-loving residents a community revolving around organic gardens, yoga and meditation – alongside a new boutique surf + wellness resort, Hotel San Cristobal. On-trend minds are behind it: Chip Conley, head of global hospitality for Airbnb and founder of Joie de Vivre Hotels, is a principle.

Hawaii: Oahu's North Shore, with its world-famous breaks, is home to Turtle Bay Resort, with its amazing watersports menu and crackerjack, pro-surfer-helmed surfing (and stand-up paddleboarding) schools. (Especially amazing for kids, because they use surfing dogs to get them excited). A recent \$45 million remodel added heaps of wellness: from the expanded Nalu Kinetic Spa and Fitness Center, to beachside yoga, to healthy dining.

Nicaragua is angling to become "the new Costa Rica", and Aqua Wellness Resort is its surfing + wellness star, a barefoot-luxury, treehouse property near famed waves, with surfing lessons, yoga, meditation, a great spa and organic food. And it's about to get even more high-design and deep into wellness as Lionheart/Six Senses has taken over the property. After the coming \$20-\$40 million upgrade, it will be the first Six Senses in Central America, and one that looks to have surfing and surf fitness still firmly at its core.



SurfSet Fitness, taught in 250 fitness studios across 19 countries, created **RipSurferX**, a freestanding board that rests on balancing discs and moves to simulate ocean waves, challenging class-takers to balance and work their core.

Surfer Spa Treatments: The surf and spa connection is so strong that resorts are rolling out surfing-specific treatments. The new retro-surf hotel The Break (Narragansett, Rhode Island) not only offers surf lessons and Surfset fitness, but a “Surfers Massage” – while Aquaterra Spa at Surf & Sand Resort (Laguna Beach, California) has its “Body Surfer” Treatment, rejuvenating skin/muscles after surf sessions.

II) NEW WAVE OF SURFING AS FITNESS

Surf-Based Fitness Brands

Because surfing is a complete – and uniquely joyous – workout, fitness brands that simulate the experience are a hot trend. The leader is SurfSet Fitness, created by a surfer who wanted to keep his “surf body” year-round. Its RipSurferX, a freestanding board that rests on balancing discs and moves to simulate ocean waves, challenges class-takers to balance, working their core, as they move through a series of exercises. And if SurfSet launched just a couple years, it’s on an expansion tear: now taught at over 250 fitness studios across 19 countries: from North America to Asia. And SurfSet can also be enjoyed at spas/resorts, from the Montage, Laguna Beach (California) to Eden Roc (Miami Beach),

Surfing Spinoff Mania: From Standup Paddleboarding to Kite Surfing

Offshoots of surfing, like stand-up paddleboarding (SUP), are, of course, massive trends in their own right. Pro surfers like Laird Hamilton popularized them as an ocean workout when the waves weren’t great, and the fact that SUP is easier to learn than surfing (using a bigger, more stable board), and can be practiced on any water (lakes, rivers, resort pools), has helped make it one of the fastest-growing outdoor sports. Consider: in the U.S. paddleboarding participation grew three-fold from 2010-2014.¹¹ And SUP is now being combined with yoga and Pilates in trendy classes like FloYo or Aqua StandUp that can happen in any pool.

SUP + yoga + Pilates is on fire virtually everywhere: from Hong Kong’s PilatesAthlete to The Standard in Miami. And it’s getting wildly creative: at Washington School House hotel (Park City, Utah), guests do yoga on paddleboards inside an ancient crater in the dead of winter. Almost every surf + wellness resort offers SUP, and because paddleboarding is being embraced by young, old, men, women and children, it’s seriously growing these properties’ appeal. The surfing-spinoff options will just keep getting spun off, like the kite surfing trend, where you’re strapped into a board and winged along by small parachutes.

Simulated Surfing Parks Boom

Not everyone lives near a beach, but a global wave of man-made surfing parks is underway. The Center for Surf Research's director has stated that these new surfing pools will, "create an entire new generation of surfers...not just in the U.S., but in Russia, China and Europe."¹² And while many surfers will scream "unnatural," others argue that the new technology delivers much-desired wave consistency (good for competitions, like the Olympics, where surfing looks to be added in 2020), and allows people worldwide to give surfing a whirl.

An amazing number of surfing parks are now built, or under development, globally: from Wadi Adventure in the dry United Arab Emirates, to plans to transform part of Rotterdam's downtown canal into a simulated surfing river in 2016. Many more companies are evolving wave technology. American Wave Machines is behind eight surfing parks from Montreal to Sweden - with more coming, like The Wave in Bristol UK slated for 2016. Wavegarden is behind the new Surf Snowdonia in North Wales, the world's longest surfable wave lagoon, which offers lessons, surf yoga and fitness classes. (The technology can still

have kinks, as Surf Snowdonia had to shut recently for repairs.) Wavegarden is also behind the massive NLand Surf Park coming to Austin, Texas in spring 2016, as well as six more parks under development worldwide. Even pro surfer Kelly Slater has a start-up wave-tech company.

THE FUTURE

The cliché is that surfers never grow up, but surfing certainly has. And all of the trends above will only grow, and more women, more professionals, more families - more people from the UK to Korea—will jump into surfing. Surfing will increasingly be married to more wellness at properties, and as that equation is balanced, these properties will appeal to just about everyone. And the surfing-spinoff fitness mania, along with the wave of manmade surfing parks, will bring "surfer wellness" to more people even if they live far from a beach.

Tooling down the California or Australian coast you see hordes of boys and girls in surf schools/gym classes. It's the new ballet class or tennis camp, and that will grow globally. More people will get introduced to



Surf Snowdonia, North Wales

Surfing parks are under development around the globe. **Wavegarden** is behind the new **Surf Snowdonia** in North Wales, the world's longest surfable wave lagoon, which offers lessons, surf yoga and fitness classes.

The all-inclusive **Surf Simply** (Nosara), takes surf coaching to another level for both beginners and the experienced—combined with yoga, massage and healthy meals.



Surf Simply, Costa Rica

surfing on vacations. And some percentage of these people will be bitten by the surfing bug. Because, as William Finnegan, who has a brilliant new book *Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life*, put it, surfing isn't so much a sport, as an "addiction...it's monomaniacal."

When you hang out at one of the new surf + wellness retreats, you meet people from all over the world who, even if they just started surfing, have revised their travel bucket lists to hit the wide world of surf spots. We predict that the travel industry will finally wake up to how passionate and high-spending this wellness travel market is. And as the surf "brand" gets increasingly linked to wellness, yoga and all things organic, surfing's appeal will only grow.

Within surfing culture there has been a strong ethic of (and many organizations around) protecting the ocean environment and controlling runaway coastal development. Economists have even pioneered "Surfnomics" to quantify the monetary value of public beaches, as a weapon against over-development. And as surfing (and surf resorts) get built out in so many new nations, philanthropic organizations (from Peru's "Waves for Development" to Panama's "Give and Surf") are forming to ensure that the armies of surfers descending actually benefit local communities. So, as surfing booms, sustainable surf development

will become even more crucial in the future, from controlling coastal development to ensuring surf travelers benefit the local community.

Surfers have always known that it's the magical alignment of reef, sand, bathymetry, wind and weather, in an exact location on the planet, to receive the swells created by far-off storms, that turns the ocean into a watery playground.

Surfing IS wellness and it's all about SOUL...and only protecting the oceans and beaches will keep it so.

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- 1 *The Economist* citing the International Surfing Association: surfers worldwide grew from 26 million in 2001 to 35 million in 2011 (May 2012).
- 2 Center for Surf Research report, 2015 (citing O'Brien & Eddie study, 2013).
- 3 Center for Surf Research report, 2015 (citing Barbieri & Sotomayor study, 2014).
- 4 *Fortune* magazine, "Surfnomics 101" 6/2013.
- 5 Surfrider Foundation research, 2012.
- 6 California State University (impact of multi-week surfing program) 2010.
- 7 Center for Surf Research report 2015, citing Martin & Asenov, 2012.
- 8 Spafinder Wellness "State of Wellness Travel" report, 9/2015, based on survey of travel agents.
- 9 Cited at La Prensa Libre, 2013.
- 10 See: "Where Surf's Up, Buyers Are Putting Down Roots" – *The New York Times*, 6.18.2015.
- 11 Outdoor Industry Association, 2015.
- 12 For an excellent, early overview of trend, see, "The next big thing in surfing is artificial waves you can ride anywhere, anytime." Quartz, Dec. 2013.

2

Sexual Wellbeing

Taboo No More

We've lived in a schizo world, where sex is all about sensation-alism and shame.



Sexual Wellbeing

Taboo No More



2015 was the landmark year for LGBT rights—and it opened up empowering, new conversations about gender and sexual identities for all.

Ours is a world where every kind of “wellness” imaginable is explored and promoted, whether physical, mental, spiritual, environmental or workplace. But meaningful conversations about, and approaches to improve, sexual wellbeing have been seriously left out of the equation.

On the one hand we live in a sex-saturated world: bombarded with hyper-sexualized images and impossible ideals...and a strong message that you, too, should (and can) be having a lot of great sex (or something is wrong with you, so try this pill). On the other hand, since the dawn of Western Civilization, a powerful cultural puritanism has made sex all about shame (policing not just LGBT populations, but anyone whose sexuality falls outside an undefined orthodoxy). In this sexually schizo culture, there has been little attention paid to helping people respect, explore and define their own sexual wellbeing (with or without a partner); little sexual literacy on how real bodies and sexual “parts” work (across a person’s lifespan); and very few places where people can go to heal sexual issues or proactively embrace and improve their own sexual health and happiness.

THE TREND

Well, now some “adult steps” are finally being taken. With LGBT rights and a new wave of feminism bringing more evolved concepts of gender and sexual identities to the global mainstream—and given the fact that in a world obsessed with “total wellness” such a crucial component couldn’t remain in the closet forever—new sophisticated and more serious sexual (continues on page 18)

FUELING THE TREND

Landmark Year for LGBT Rights Cracks Open Wide Gender Identity and Sexuality Questions

2015 was the pivotal year for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. Ireland (where homosexuality was only decriminalized in 1993) became the first nation to legalize same-sex marriage by an overwhelming popular vote; the U.S. Supreme Court guaranteed every American the right to marry the person they love. If 21 nations (in the Americas and Europe, and South Africa) have now legalized same-sex marriage, the world (from China to Cuba) lit up social media in support, “rainbowing” their profile pix and hash-tagging “Love Wins.” And the transgendered revolution was televised, as the world was transfixed by the Caitlyn Jenner story.

The ways that fixed notions of gender identity and sexual stereotypes are being reformed is happening fast: from gender-neutral restrooms and dorms at colleges, to consumers demanding that every company/product support and reflect the gender spectrum realities, even new campaigns for ungendered honorifics like “Mx” (bent on replacing the old Ms. And Mr.). While the issue of LGBT civil rights (to marriage, work equality, etc.) is really a different issue than sexual wellbeing, the unprecedented focus on the former has opened up a whole new set of conversations about the complexities of gender and sexuality for all. More women and men, straight and LGBT, find that the millennia-old scripts don’t work, and agree that everyone has the right to personally define what it means to be “happily coupled” (or happily uncoupled).

A New Wave of Feminism

We live in a world where the porn industry is largely accepted, but female sexuality still shocks, and it often seems people are more comfortable with transgendered than “conventional women’s” bodies. But a new wave of feminism (with a global, mainstream voice via social media/blogs and celebrities) is now taking a more in-your-face attitude towards everything from female body image to how female orgasms actually transpire. You see it in brash “regular woman” superstar comedienne like Amy Schumer, whose humor skewers everything from

women’s underwear to unsatisfying heterosexual sex—to so many women celebs getting vocal about equal pay. If TV commercials have long represented menstrual blood as a clean, blue liquid, now girls/women are doing a little reality check by #LiveTweetingTheirPeriods. Recent trends lists argue that “2016 will be the year of underarm hair,” as women are dying them in technicolor hues and posting pix on the Instagrams. The new atmosphere: it’s time to get over the suffocating images of idealized, impossibly sexualized female bodies, and start getting real about them. Women want new, honest conversations; reality-based sex education; and tools to achieve personal models of sexual wellbeing—and wellness retreats, classes, online media and hospitals are starting to fill this void.

Younger Generations’ Open Mindset

Research shows that millennials and Gen Z have significantly different views on gender identity and sexuality. For instance, a recent survey¹ of teens found that more than four in five revealed that they don’t care about a person’s sexual orientation.; they are exploring their sexuality more than in the past; and that gender does not define a person the way it once did. Other research² reveals that eight percent of millennials claim an identity on the LGBT spectrum, more than twice the population average. These consumers of the future are more interested in sexual wellness generally, and products and experiences revolving around more stereotypical gender and sexual identities won’t fly with them.

At the “Let’s Talk about Sex” event at **Canyon Ranch Lenox**, couples learn how to enhance or reinvigorate their sexuality with advice from experts.



Canyon Ranch Resort & Spa (Massachusetts)

(continued from page 16) wellness programming is beginning to happen at spas and wellness retreats, hospitals and fitness studios. And this sexual wellbeing trend takes wildly diverse forms: from new high-tech sexual fitness trackers and sex toys, to some out there “touch” therapies, to “sex-forward” hotels, to a new “Adult Sex Ed” served up online and in-person. Certainly not every development covered here will fit everyone’s lifestyle, or ideal of sexual wellbeing, but we vowed to check shame at the door.

Since the spa industry began, “sex” has been a feared concept/word (especially in Asia), given the long association between spas and “massage parlors” (and prostitution). So, for decades, spas, which are devoted to human touch and healing and often offer safe, personal and romantic sanctuaries and specialize in wellness coaching of all kinds, have bent over backwards to dissociate “what they do” from sex and the explicitly sensual, and have been intensely (if understandably) light on sexual wellness programs. When destination spas took baby steps years ago, they typically centered on couples’ therapy (how to improve communication, etc.). But the focus is now turning to more personal, proactive education, exploration and empowerment: like women’s-only retreats, with practitioners from sex therapists to pelvic floor health experts, that take a no-holds-barred dive into every aspect of sexual happiness.

In retreats, hospitals, fitness studios, and with new at-home technology, there is a ramped-up focus

on a woman’s pelvic floor health and exercises that strengthen the (Kegel) muscles that support the abdominal and sexual organs from underneath—muscles that most of us don’t know about. (They not only prevent the leakage/incontinence that comes with aging, childbirth and sedentary lives, but these are the muscles that play a major role in sexual response and orgasm.)

Also on the fitness front: pole dancing and burlesque classes trending towards a place that would appeal to far more of us (beyond the “Real Housewives of Sexyville”), with more sophisticated, reflective workshops in true wellness (not selfie stick) environments.

Impressive things are happening on the hospital front as well, with more locations incorporating wellness and spa approaches (like acupuncture, physical therapy, massage and Pilates) in conjunction with programs led by doctors and sex therapists that address comprehensive sexual wellbeing and pelvic floor health issues. (The research estimates range from 30-50% sexual dysfunction rates for men and women.) And there’s no more impressive example than the new WOMANOLOGY®+ RESTORE HIM® clinics at Southern California’s Hoag Memorial Hospitals (more later...), which are true one-stop, sexual and pelvic health, integrative “shops.”

As Robin Christenson, founder of WOMANOLOGY + RESTORE HIM, puts it, “I’ve seen so many people who have consulted scores of doctors—for everything



Shh Retreats (UK and Spain). Photo by Martin Hill

Shh Retreats, held in gorgeous country estates in the UK and Ibiza, Spain (and reportedly coming soon to the U.S.), are women's-only retreats, led by a team of practitioners (from sex therapists to pelvic floor health specialists) that take a no-holds-barred dive into improving women's libido and sexual pleasure.

from pain during intercourse to an inability to have sex—only to be told it's all in their heads. Sexual wellness has been so taboo, most people don't even know it's something that can be improved, much less that many medical and integrative approaches are so effective. Sexual and pelvic health programs are a real growth area at hospitals. And the future is to ensure these programs are delivered in dedicated, calm, spa-like centers that make people feel totally comfortable (not weird or ashamed), with multiple evidence-based, integrative therapies that can treat the complexities of individual sexual wellness issues—because one size most certainly does not fit all."

Evelyn Resh, sexuality counselor and midwife, and former Director of Sexual Health at Miraval (Tucson, Arizona) and Canyon Ranch (Lenox, Massachusetts), and currently on staff at latter as a sexual health counselor, noted, "There is so much noisy sensationalism around sex, but an incredible amount of work still needs to be done to help people achieve basic sexual literacy. And there are so many questions to be asked, like what is 'sexual health' and for whom? What about people that have just had cancer/chemo, who are recently widowed or have a sick partner, or who are very happily, companionably partnered, but sex isn't part of their relationship? No one talks about their issues. True 'sexual wellness' needs to span approaches for those who want more and better sex, as well as those that have decided it doesn't fit into

their life at the moment."

"Paradigms need to be shaken up: like the dominant approach in the mental health community which sees a sexual disconnect in a couple as a symptom of an underlying relational disconnect, when, in fact, the relationship can be doing great and the sexual struggles need to be addressed on their own. We need to help people—young, old, gay and straight—get into their bodies, while being sensitive about what they're actually ready to do, and their belief systems."

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

SHH RETREATS

Shh Retreats (stands for Sensual, Healing, Harmony) are held in beautiful estate houses in the English countryside and Ibiza, Spain, where a team of practitioners (from sex therapists to Somatic Experience specialists) immerse women in a crash course on improving their libido and pleasure, using everything from acupuncture, transformational breathing, Emotional Freedom Technique, and everything-is-on-the-table group therapy. It's totally discreet: the venues are not disclosed and therapists only know guests by their first name. Shh is so successful they're doubling their retreats in 2016 (to a dozen, and the website reports they're coming to the U.S. soon!)

DESTINATION SPAS: FROM COUPLES THERAPY TO PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT

Despite the uncomfortable relationship between “spas” and “sex,” for years pioneering destination spas have offered some sexual wellness programming, typically focused on things like “getting the passion back with your partner” (i.e., better communication and intimacy for couples). But the focus is shifting towards bolder personal exploration. For instance, Canyon Ranch’s (Tucson, Arizona) February retreat, “Women, Sensuality & Health,” explores things like helping women foster more personal pleasure, while April’s (Lenox, Massachusetts) “Let’s Talk About Sex” is about jumpstarting personal sexuality, presenting sensitive info in un-puritanical language. In 2015 Canyon Ranch even held a “Sensuality and the Art of the Tease” retreat with a famed burlesque icon, with seductive sessions like mastering the “Burlesque Strut” and FitStrip classes.

HOSPITALS OUT IN FRONT

Many more hospitals are blending alternative and clinical approaches to address sexual and pelvic floor health for men and women: for instance, Mayo Clinic and Stanford University Hospital have excellent pelvic/sexual health programs for men, and Loyola University Chicago is an overall leader. But the way-out-in-front pioneer is Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian’s WOMANOLOGY and RESTORE HIM clinics (founded

by physical therapist Robin Christenson as “true” wellness centers, and acquired by Hoag in 2014). This groundbreaking collaborative concept, played out in a welcoming, spa-like setting, means physical therapists, psychologists/sex therapists, dieticians, acupuncturists, Pilates instructors, massage therapists, guided imagery therapists, and yoga and meditation instructors all team up to tackle every aspect of sexual and pelvic floor health—both the mind and body—across a person’s lifespan. (And most may be covered by insurance.)

From helping college girls with vaginal or chronic pelvic pain (from endometriosis or interstitial Cystitis); to fertility issues and the pregnancy years (from less traumatic birthing techniques to post-natal sexual issues); to the host of pelvic floor disorders (like sexual challenges or incontinence) that come with aging and menopause; to male sexual health and erectile issues; to even helping people undergoing gender reassignment with “gender conformation” therapies. Psychologists and sex therapists dish out all kinds of tools and anatomy lessons: from dealing with past sexual trauma, to individual or with-partner Sex Ed on things like “pleasure zones” (with a homework approach).

Christenson notes, “that people are just so relieved to not be alone. Because if knowledge is power, it’s intensely so when it comes to sexual health.” And this



Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian’s (California)

Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian’s WOMANOLOGY + RESTORE HIM clinics offer approaches to address sexual and pelvic floor health for men and women.



City Pole (Tribeca, NYC)

Sensual fitness classes like pole dancing are trending towards a classier “true wellness” vibe...like at the new **City Pole**.

blueprint for what integrative sexual wellness will look like in the future is on the march: A WOMANOLOGY + RESTORE HIM clinic was recently opened at Hoag Health Center-Newport Beach, to be followed by a location in Irvine later in 2016.

WELLNESS RETREATS ADD SEXUAL EMPOWERMENT

More wellness-focused retreats are adding sexual empowerment programming. One example: Campowerment, a women’s sleepaway camp (Malibu, California & Poconos, Pennsylvania) with their amazing array of wellness, fitness and female bonding experiences, offers “Get Your Sexy Back” classes (with pole dancing), “Passion Parties” introducing women to vibrators and sex toys, and has OB-GYNs and physical therapists on their expert roster, delivering education on everything from sex drive to pelvic floor health.

FITNESS: FROM “YOGA FOR SEX” TO CLASSIER BURLESQUE & POLE DANCING CLASSES

The Internet explodes with articles like “Yoga for Better Sex”—and while it’s certainly sexy clickbait, it’s also true. Studies³ indicate yoga improves all aspects of sex: arousal, performance, orgasm and ejaculatory control. Ancient yoga scripts taught poses to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, crucial for (satisfying) orgasm. And yogi Lauren Imparato, founder of I.Am.You studio (New York City) notes that forms of yoga that refer to the root lock Mula Bandha

“are the original Kegel exercise.” (Pilates targeting the pelvic floor muscles also has similar benefits.) If yoga has been purified as pure fitness, there has actually been a long, controversial sex-yoga connection since the 19th century.⁴ New studios are bringing that connection to the fore, like 305 Fitness (New York City), which is launching “Yoga 4 Better Sex” in February, all about opening up body parts that make you better in bed, and with the same sexy energy that 305 classes are known for. And if not sexual, a kind of “body liberation” yoga is on the rise, from more naked yoga, to new breeds like “Free the Nipple” (topless for women) yoga classes coming to the cool Astroetic Studios (Los Angeles), complete with trendy sound bath meditation.

Also on the fitness front: pole dancing and burlesque classes trending toward a classier “wellness vibe.” Examples: the new City Pole (Manhattan) where pole-dancing is part of wider confidence-building, and there’s even spaces for personal meditation—or super-trainer Shay Kostabi’s burlesque strength class at the International Dance Academy (Hollywood)—or at Studio Chic (Ontario, Canada), where pole-dancing and burlesque-based “Hot in Heels” classes break down sexist myths about stripping. And if sensual fitness is rising, we wonder why there aren’t more Greek Bazouki or Middle Eastern belly dancing offerings, given that these are ancient traditions with the most sophisticated sensuality, that also work the core so intensely.

COUPLES APPROACHES CHANGING

There are a zillion spas and retreats all about the romantic, intimacy-inducing couples experience: the aphrodisiacal chocolates, the rose petals strewn in the private hot tub. But you can feel reinvention underway. The gorgeous, award-winning spa resort, Borgo Egnazia (Puglia, Italy), rewrites the ubiquitous side-by-side couples massage with its Paraveis treatment (in a private garden on heated beds), with a ritual involving couples lying head to head, with their hands and legs linked between them and the two massage therapists—and also uses Italian folk dance and sword fights to improve intimacy. And if many sensuality retreats use an ellipsis to imply the sex that is the obvious goal, some are now getting beyond frank. Like the Orgasmic Enlightenment Retreats (Ubud, Bali and Xinalani Resort, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in 2016), more than up front that you will be immersed in new sex skills (like vaginal weight lifting) and sex toys, and assigned erotic sex dates with yourself or your partner—along with yoga, meditation and lots of champagne and truffles.

THE SEX-FORWARD HOTEL

Hotel historians⁵ argue that sex is as conflicted a concept for hotels as it is for spas: there is a forbidding Bible in every room, but hotels have always been “about” sex, with their vast, centerpiece beds. Now more sex-positive hotels seem to have put the conflict behind them with unapologetic amenities.⁶ At the SLS Las Vegas the “Intimacy Kit” features condoms,

lubricants and a vibrator. At Banyan Tree Mayakoba (Riviera Maya, Mexico) there’s a “romance consultant” that brings you what you desire. At Toronto’s the Drake the “Pleasure Menu” spans vibrators, sensual oils, erotic movies, blindfolds, velvet restraints and a 24-carat dildo.

OUT THERE AND WAY OUT THERE: FROM CUDDLE PARTIES TO ORGASMIC MEDITATION

Sociologists agree that a “Loneliness Epidemic” is engulfing the human population, and in our digitally connected (and sexting), but increasingly touch-starved world, some “out there” new touch therapies are emerging. (The medical research concurs that touch is critical to human health, from the moment we’re born until we die.) “Cuddle parties” are on the rise, where (fully clothed) people gather (in a non-sexual, but intimate way) to hold and massage each other, nuzzle and cuddle. The official organization, Cuddle Party, now trains facilitators in 17 countries, and professional “cuddlers” also offer one-on-one sessions. For instance at Wamo (Berlin, Germany) 40 euros buys a four-hour touch party.

And for the “way out there” files, orgasmic meditation (or OM) has been making headlines for years (it was made for headlines), but is now expanding globally. At inhibition-shattering OM centers, women (lying in blanket “nests”) have their clitoris stroked by an OM partner for 15 minutes “in a non-sexual way,” with the goal of expanding the concept of sex, and



Canyon Ranch Resort & Spa (Massachusetts)

Pioneering destination spas are turning to more personal sexual wellbeing education and exploration.



I.Am.You studio (NYC)

Studies indicate yoga improves all aspects of sex: arousal, performance and orgasm. Yogi Lauren Imparato, founder of **I.Am.You studio**, notes that Mula Bandha forms of yoga are “the original Kegel exercise.”

creating a more therapeutic, mindful practice around female orgasm. The leader is One Taste (“Powered by Orgasms”) and there are over 10,000 practitioners globally, and 30 dedicated centers in the U.S., Canada and UK. And this “wellness lifestyle” company also offers private coaching and OM yoga and meditation retreats. One Taste has also begun TurnON events, revolving only around honest conversation and game-playing, giving people a far more accessible OM intro, without having to remove any clothes.

KEGEL EXERCISE & SEX TRACKING APPS

Strengthening the overlooked, sexual-pleasure-supporting pelvic floor muscles is being reinvented by a proliferation of “smart” gadgets. (And note: it’s not just aging and childbirth that lead to pelvic floor disorders, a study⁷ shows one in three female triathletes suffer from incontinence and pelvic-organ prolapse, and lots of fitness bouncing, like CrossFit, can take a similar toll.) The problem is that most women who try Kegel exercises at home fail. Now there’s hi-tech help from Bluetooth-enabled, egg-shaped Elvie, that tracks the efficacy of Kegel exercises (via motion sensors) and then connects to a smartphone app to provide biofeedback, as well as gamifying the exercises: you keep a little ball bouncing if you’re doing them right. And debuting last week is OhMiBod’s Lovelife Krush, that features smart Kegel exercising (with haptic sensors that give you vibration feedback “down there”)—but also connects to their TASL (the art and science of love) app, that can track your Kegel workouts or sex life, like giving

you reminders to be intimate with your partner. The GO PLAY feature is the new pleasure twist: when you reach Kegel training goals you receive vibrational “rewards,” and it also lets people connect with their partners, like sending them challenges to spice up your love life. More “sexual health tracking” apps will appear, joining the avalanche of wellness gadgets that track steps taken or sleep.

HI-TECH SEX TOYS

The worldwide “sex toy” industry is a \$15 billion market, and they’re evolving to be extremely high-tech, safe and suave.⁸ The sexual pleasure elves of “Silicon Valley” are busy, and if you can imagine it, it’s likely being engineered. We-Vibe devices (like so many now) connect to your smartphone, so vibrations can be controlled there, and they allow a remote partner to control the experience (as well as videolinks so you can see each other). And WeVibe is heavy in development on the world’s first couple’s vibrator, which will make penetration and vibrational clitoral stimulation simultaneous. From the UK there’s the tiny Fiera Arouser for Her (debuting last week), a suction-based oral sex stimulator for women. Giving new meaning to curling up with a sexy book is France’s E.Sensory “Little Bird,” which connects reading erotic e-books with a responsive app-based vibrator. You shake, touch or simply breathe on the screen when the reading gets steamy, and “Little Bird” does its vibrational job. Sex toys will only get more immersive, creative and partner-connected going forward.

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THE NEW ADULT SEX ED

For many, "Sex Ed" was that (non-plain-speak) high school class they dreaded. But with so little sexual literacy, there's a new wave of adult sex education and coaching—much thanks to the Internet, which makes learning about sexual unspeakables anonymous. There are endless blog and video examples, like 26-year-old YouTube sensation (roughly 1.5 million subscribers), Laci Green, whose "Sex+" channel addresses topics like "How do lesbians have sex?" or "Dirty vaginas." Or actress Jessica Biel and WomanCare Global founder, Sandra Pelletier's, just-launched, witty new Sex Ed video series at WomanCareGlobal.org. And new breeds of in-person sex-life coaching (beyond formal sex therapists) are rising. Like "Sex Life Coaching" by NYC-based Eric Amaranth, who leads book club-like forums for women friends where they can ask any blush-inducing question, and learn to have more orgasms (sex toys are introduced). Amaranth also offers sex coaching all over the world via Skype or phone, etc.

LGBT TRAVEL IS CHANGING TOURISM

The global LGBT travel segment is growing like wildfire (10% annually, or twice as fast as tourism overall⁹), and is now worth \$200-billion-plus a year.¹⁰ And most travel brands and destinations are waking up and taking action. As Evelyn Resh notes, "After 2015's

same-sex marriage rights victories in Ireland and the U.S., travel companies lit up the Internet with support for gay and lesbian couples. And to court that vast travel and spa market (from gay wedding parties to family travel) businesses need to retool their messages and marketing to speak to LGBT travelers in all their diversity: there's a big difference between gay men coming with their children and a gay female couple coming alone, and the 'single brochure' strategy isn't enough. And thoughtful language is powerful medicine, for instance, changing "husband" and "wife" to "spouse" or "partner" in all you do and say."

The ways that tourism boards, hotels, cruises, spas, tour companies and destination wedding properties are making moves to engage this lucrative, growing market—whether through dedicated LGBT offerings, or just making the marketing and guest experience welcoming—is impossible to chronicle here. Brands like Hilton, Kimpton, W, Hyatt, and especially Marriott, have worked hard to reach LGBT travelers, the latter with its pioneering #lovetravels campaign, a photo/video series profiling same-sex and transgendered individuals at their properties. Tourism boards from South Africa to Spain to Scotland are courting LGBT travelers—and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida has even recently launched a dedicated transgendered campaign. And if gay-focused travel offerings traditionally centered on (older) gay men, you're seeing more lesbian-

owned-and-focused wellness travel offerings, like Pink Iceland, with its nature/adventure tours and weddings. When Anteros Cruises (yachting from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean) launches next year it will be the first cruise line pitched to all LGBT people (and their families/friends). As more markets recognize the legal rights of LGBT people, this traveling demo will only grow. And opening up travel experiences to all these diverse identities is very much a form of “wellness travel” itself.

ALTERNATIVE FERTILITY CENTERS RISE

One goal of some sex is reproduction, and in many developed nations, where women are choosing to have children later in life (and they’re suffering increased stress), they’re experiencing serious fertility challenges. (Studies show profound disconnects between when women believe they can conceive babies and what their bodies are actually capable of.¹¹) So the trend of women turning to wellness approaches (like hormone-balancing acupuncture and stress-reducing guided imagery and massage) alone, or along with IVF, will keep rising, as evidence mounts for their efficacy. There are, of course, thousands of acupuncturists, spas and wellness retreats all focused on fertility enhancement. A standout “day” all-wellness fertility center: YinOva Center (New York City), which uses acupuncture, herbs and nutrition to naturally optimize conception (or in tandem with medical

interventions). A standout “stay” integrative fertility clinic: Barbados Fertility Centre, which combines the most cutting-edge reproductive medical procedures with lots of “wellness” (acupuncture, massage and reflexology). And which is notable for carefully tracking its results: with significantly higher IVF conception rates than the U.S. and UK average (where most of their patients come from), and with the wellness component (i.e., acupuncture and massage) making a five to 10 percent difference in conception rates... which is huge.

THE FUTURE

This trend was initially identified as largely predictive. We saw shifts happening at the cultural level; at the wellness retreat, spa and fitness level; and at the hospital level. But in researching we were surprised to see so much happening on so many fronts. The trend still remains largely predictive, because centuries of shame around sex aren’t disappearing anytime soon. But also because there are still far too few places where people can improve their sexual literacy, address sexual health issues, and proactively embrace their own sexual happiness—with seriousness and sophistication.

With so many pieces to the sexual wellbeing puzzle the opportunities are great. And while the examples cited are overwhelmingly Western, because of the Internet,



Thousands of acupuncturists, spas and wellness retreats focus on boosting fertility. A global standout: **Barbados Fertility Centre**, combining cutting-edge medicine with lots of evidence-based wellness, like acupuncture and massage.

Barbados Fertility Centre

new conversations and markets around “sexual wellness” will keep opening up globally—even where conversations about sex are most taboo. When you have a conversation with a sexual wellness expert like Robin Christenson or Evelyn Resh, where every blush-worthy question is answered with professionalism and calm, you want to talk forever. And the wellness centers, spas, medical establishments, coaches and therapists, and alternative practitioners that can address “more sexual wellbeing” with professionalism will thrive.

THE VIRTUAL REALITY THREAT

A serious threat to human sexual wellbeing is the march of virtual reality (VR) technology into the bedroom, which will drive a serious wedge between sex and human intimacy. The advances in virtual reality, artificial intelligence and robotics are moving at lightning speed, and advanced labs like Hiroshi Ishiguro Laboratories (Japan) or Hanson Robotics (U.S.) are now creating incredibly human-like robots (they look, move, feel and talk like people). This technology, of course, is being busily exploited to create human-like sexbots and immersive, virtual-

reality-based sex experiences. The future is nearly here: the company Abyss has created the robotic sex doll, RealDoll—while companies like eJaculator (U.S. & China) are reinventing adult “movies” via virtual reality. The race is on, and an excellent overview¹² of this hotly debated development argues that, “people will be having sex with robots in the next five years.” Proponents of the sexbots argue that they will benefit millions of lonely people and could help stamp out prostitution and rape. Those who have major ethical issues (many academics—there is even an initiative, CampaignAgainstSexRobots.com), argue that they will destroy the capacity for human empathy and reify (sexist) ideas of sex/gender—and that while personal pleasure doesn’t have to be relational, true “sex” does.

Sexbots are the newest weapons in what now feels like a war against human connection. The digital era already has us spending all of our time in front of screens, not faces—and with forces like a radically aging global population, the Loneliness Epidemic will only sharpen. Some will put their money on virtual sex (and make more), but we’ll put ours on those industries and practitioners that create more human connection... and true, human sexual wellbeing. Going forward, we will certainly need them more.

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- 1 The Innovation Group, a unit of J. Walter Thompson Intelligence, The Gen Z Report, 5/2015.
- 2 The Intelligence Group, Fall 2013 report.
- 3 Journal of Sexual Medicine, 2009–2010.
- 4 See: Well+Good, “Sex and Yoga: A Controversial Connection that Continues Today,” 8.18.15.
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- 12 See: *The Guardian*, “Sex, Love and Robots: Is This the End of Intimacy?” 12/13/15

A serious, almost-here threat to human sexual wellbeing is the march of virtual reality, artificial intelligence and robots (who suddenly look, move, feel and talk like people) into the bedroom, which will drive a new wedge between sex and human intimacy.



3

Temazcal

[temas'kal]

Temazcal's restorative properties and cultural significance have survived several empires, including a failed ban by invading Spaniards who decried it as pagan. Today, Temazcal is experiencing a rise in popularity, riding a wave of global interest in native, authentic wellness offerings.



Temazcal

[temas'kal]



Global Wellness Summit Presentation

The Temazcalero or Mexican Shaman is the physical and spiritual guide that performs the ritual and looks over the participants, helping them to reach a personal and profound experience.

Many return home from luxury spa treatments describing themselves as revitalized or reinvigorated, but for those who experience the ancient Mexican practice of Temazcal another word often comes to mind: reborn. Dating back to Mayan and Aztec cultures, Temazcal roughly translates to “house of steam,” yet these simple adobe huts are far more than just primitive saunas. Temazcal is as much a ritual as it is a treatment, with a trained healer (or “Temazcalera”) guiding guests through a process that seeks to cleanse their bodies, minds and spirits.

Methods and techniques are passed down from generation to generation like a family recipe, ensuring that each Temazcal session is a unique experience, but most share the same basic components: A wood fire near or adjacent to the Temazcal heats volcanic stones, which are then placed in the dome’s center. The Temazcal soon rises to a sweltering heat, much like a sauna, and water poured upon the stones fills the dome with steam. As the pores open and circulation improves, the Temazcalera leads a small group of two or three participants through a ritual aimed to connect them with powerful forces of the physical and spiritual world. Ancient prayers and chants are recited, while incense, aromatic herbs like wormwood and epazote, or even the Mesoamerican tree resin copal, are added to the hot stones. The process typically lasts anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours, but participants claim to lose track of time as they slip into a harmonious, meditative state. Modern Temazcal sessions are often interspersed with cool down periods with water or herbal tea, while more traditional sessions might choose not to interrupt the process. At the ritual’s end, the guide ushers the guests out of

FUELING THE TREND

A Reverence for Local Traditions

The resurgence of Temazcal can be linked to the growing demand for authenticity amongst worldly wellness seekers. According to the *2015 State of Wellness Travel Report* by Spafinder Wellness, travel agents list a desire amongst travelers to be immersed in local, indigenous culture as the number one luxury travel trend worldwide. While steam rooms and thermal bathing exist in many societies—Finnish sauna, Russian banya, Native American sweat lodges, Turkish hammam, Japanese onsen, etc.—each offers a distinct window into a rich cultural tradition, and Temazcal is no different, with its roots deep in pre-Colombian civilizations and beliefs.

Pedro Lara, general manager of the Viceroy Riviera Maya, says, “Guests today are increasingly interested in all aspects of the Maya culture. They are eager to try new experiences that highlight ancient values, authentic cuisine, and indigenous wellness treatments, so we are continually seeking ways to enrich their stay with cultural opportunities.”

For wellness travelers, Temazcal is, in effect, both old and new, a cleansing practice they may have never encountered before that is also steeped in thousands of years of history.

Spiritual Health Valued alongside Physical Health

For many, a lifestyle of wellness must do more than care for the body; it must also nurture the spirit. From boardrooms to schoolrooms, mindfulness and meditative practices are gaining widespread acceptance, reflecting a communal yearning for meaning and interconnectedness in our daily lives.

Travel agents polled for the *2015 State of Wellness Travel Report* ranked spiritual healing as “important” for their average client, on a scale of one to ten only two points behind top-ranked beach and pool access. As the wellness-inclined increasingly look to the wisdom of the ancients to nourish their mind, body, and soul, Temazcal serves as a prime example of our blossoming interest in “indigenous spirituality,” an experience that combines a culture’s unique spiritual perspectives with universally acknowledged healing techniques. “A shaman guides the journey and brings deep-seated ideas, memories, desires that are often hidden during the normal ‘awake’ state to the surface,” says Bonnie Baker, managing partner and co-founder of Satteva Spa and Wellness Concepts. . “The ritual of the Temazcal is as much about raising conscious awareness and creating an internal connection as it is a detoxification.”

Mexico’s Booming Wellness Tourism

Mexico is one of the fastest growing wellness tourism destinations in the world, ranking eleventh worldwide in 2014.¹ Its wellness tourism market is valued at \$10.5 billion, more than four times larger than the next biggest player in Latin America, a region that itself is second only to the Middle East in global growth rate.² Mexico’s tourism and hospitality industries have been quick to recognize the opportunity to develop travel destinations that combine the country’s natural beauty with its rich cultural heritage. And since Temazcal’s time-honored traditions have been well preserved, the country is already full of operating Temazcales and trained Temazcaleros, making this ritual of rebirth a perfect platform for Mexico’s own rebirth as a tourism destination.



Temazcal dates back to Mayan and Aztec cultures. The Teotihuacan Pyramids were built by the Aztecs, a formidable society whose influence extended through many regions and cultures.



Viceroy Riviera Maya



A traditional Temazcal is made with pure adobe or brick and adobe. During the ritual the entrance is normally covered with a manta or sarape. (traditional blanket). The **Spa Viceroy Riviera Maya's** Mayan-inspired spa also offers features ancient fertility rituals.

the intimate Temazcal and into the refreshing waters of a bath, river, or ocean, from which they emerge purified, cleansed, healed.

It is a testament to both Temazcal's restorative properties and cultural significance that it has survived the rise and fall of several empires, including a failed ban by the invading Spaniards who decried it as pagan. Today, Temazcal is experiencing a surge in popularity, riding a wave of global interest in native, authentic wellness offerings. Many are discovering that the Mayan and Aztec people have much to teach us about wellness, with Temazcal only one example of Mexico's vibrant and diverse culture. Temazcal sessions are offered throughout the country, from local villages to high-end resorts, and wellness-inclined travelers can weave Temazcal into their itinerary just as it's been woven into the lives of indigenous people for centuries.

THE TREND

A LEGACY OF WELLNESS

You can still find ancient Temazcales dotting Mayan, Náhuatl, Tolteca and Olmeca archaeological sites, scattered across such regions as San Miguel de Alende, Puerto Vallarta, and Tepoztlan. These earlier cultures may not have understood the precise science behind sauna and steam's health benefits, but they were

certainly aware of the benefits themselves, and those with skin conditions, fevers, muscle pain, mental unrest and even broken bones were treated within the Temazcal. Long before Western medicine saw the value in heat and humidity's effects upon the skin, circulation, organ function, and the lymphatic system, Temazcal had already wedded healing to philosophy and faith. And this union of medicine, restorative therapy, and spiritual harmony has survived largely unchanged to the present day, allowing wellness travelers to inhabit (and benefit from) a small sliver of a lost civilization's culture.

Themes of birth and rebirth have also been central to Temazcal since its inception. In ancient Mesoamerica Temazcal served a dual purpose, hosting both the curative ceremonies we see today as well as childbirth. The hut itself is intentionally shaped to resemble a woman's womb, with the entryway a birthing canal. And Temazcalteci, the Aztec goddess of steam baths and medicine, was an aspect of Toci, the Earth Mother or "Mother of the Gods," with Temazcal linking participants to the world's feminine spirit. Fernanda Montiel, a practicing Temazcalera, explains, "It's a symbolic representation: the first ray of sun light in the morning has a love relationship with the mother earth, fertilizing it, then a great belly grows, the Temazcal, representing the mother's belly. When we go inside it, we are transported back to our

cellular form, like babies inside a mother's belly. A conscious rebirth, making today an opportunity for change." It isn't a coincidence that one enters and exits the Temazcal on hands and knees, in a gesture of reverence for the sacred space as well as a symbol of childlike rebirth.

CONTEMPORARY TEMAZCAL IN THE MAYA RIVIERA

At luxury spas and resorts throughout Mexico, contemporary Temazcal is becoming as ubiquitous a service as massage treatments or facial scrubs. Many of these locales are nestled into the Mayan coast, where fortunate guests, upon leaving the Temazcal, complete the ritual by submerging themselves in the Caribbean.

The recently opened El Dorado Royale in the heart of the Maya Riviera, for example, offers an elegantly described Temazcal experience: "Under the guidance of a Mayan Shaman, the womb of Mother Earth opens up through chanting, sweat invocation, the steam of herbs and the power of the elements. Earth, wind and fire come together to purify body, mind and spirit and provide an opportunity for rebirth, in one of the world's oldest rituals."

The Rosewood Mayakoba, another colossal resort tucked between the jungle of the Yucatan and

the warm waters of the Caribbean, is frequented by celebrities looking to unwind with traditional Mayan treatments. The journey begins with a private consultation with a shaman who determines the objective of the guest's visit and then composes an appropriate "prescription." And their medicine always goes down easy, such as a Temazcal session or a dip in a "cenote" natural limestone spring.

The Viceroy, created as an "ode to the beauty of Mexico, offering rejuvenating treatments once savored by Mayan royalty," does not disappoint in its ability to marry indigenous therapies with the contemporary allure of a luxury hideaway. For example, its resident shaman blesses every guest upon arrival with a Mayan cleansing ceremony to dispel negative energy. They describe their Temazcal as one of the most powerful and intensive detox experiences of any resort, and a truly transformative encounter.

Of course these are just a few of the many Temazcal options in the Maya Riviera. Belmond Maroma Resort & Spa has been offering traditional Temazcal for more than ten years. They perform their ritual at dusk, adding a nourishing aloe vera rubdown to complement the customary array of meditation, chants, and herb-infused steam. Demonstrating the popularity and acceptance of temazcal at resorts in Mexico, the adults-only Blue Diamond Riviera Maya



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Mission del Sol Resort & Spa

Modern Temazcals may have special seating areas but traditional seating is on the earth floor on the Petate (a mat woven from the fibers of the palm), with the fire pit in the center.

lists Temazcal between its black and white pearl facial scrub and chocolate body wrap. And for those looking for a less intimate experience, the Hard Rock Hotel's shaman-led Temazcal rituals welcome up to 12 people at a time.

Exclusive Temazcal sessions, unaffiliated with a particular spa or resort, are also available. Cancun Temazcal ferries participants from Cancun to the nearby jungle and guides them through a Temazcal ritual that seeks to balance the ancient with the accessible. Their Temazcaleros are clothed in ancient Mayan garb, and each session ends with a facial mud mask in hammocks while being fed natural snacks. AquaSafariMexico offers Temazcal alongside snorkeling trips and ruin hikes, billing it as a unique encounter for the spiritually and culturally adventurous, and their session includes a visit to a Mayan home and a local Mayan dinner.

Each of these options promises a cathartic experience that simultaneously centers you completely in the present while connecting you with the sacred traditions of the past. As Diana Mestre, Temazcal expert and owner of Mestre & Mestre Spa Consulting, says, "The beauty of the modern Temazcal is that it combines ancient indigenous philosophy, rituals, medicines, herbalism principles, healing methods, with modern concepts and techniques that create a one-of-a-kind healing space that can't be found anywhere else."

THE FUTURE

As more and more resorts in the Americas begin including Temazcal and other unique Mayan and Aztec rituals into their properties, awareness and use of Temazcales will naturally grow. It's only a matter of time before some form of Temazcal goes global, joining such wellness options as the Turkish hammam, which can now be found at many spas.

While the length, isolation, and intense heat of Temazcal sessions might make it a more ambitious therapy than some casual spa goers are used to, the physical, emotional, and spiritual rewards seem to far outweigh the cost. If anything, the same people who relish the challenge of hot yoga and master cleanses may see Temazcal as the latest trial in their quest toward purification, while others who seek spiritual fulfillment and cultural immersion may see it as a window into a lost, mystical era. Regardless, Temazcal has remained alive and relevant in the jungles and highlands of Mexico for thousands of years, and as it steps onto the world stage we predict it will more than survive, it will flourish.

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- 1 <http://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/global-wellness-summit-announces-mexico-city-as-host-city-for-ninth-annual-event>
- 2 <http://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/latin-american-wellness-tourism-market-to-nearly-double-from-2012-to-2017>

4



Parenting Well

Serious Spa & Wellness for Kids

Empowered parents are turning to the same spa and wellness therapies and techniques they use to improve their own lives in order to better their children's.



Parenting Well

Serious Spa & Wellness for Kids



David Lynch Foundation

Students practice Transcendental Meditation as part of the **David Lynch Foundation's** Quiet Time program.

Parents are learning that to raise healthy children in the 21st century means more than just teaching them to eat their vegetables or look both ways before crossing the street. The poor diets, technological obsessions, and ubiquitous stressors that plague adult life offer no immunity to the young. Playtime is being threatened by busy schedules; recess is becoming endangered because of high-pressure testing; and childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes (once a disease for our parents and grandparents) are global epidemics. If anything, children are especially vulnerable to these factors, and any harm caused in the midst of their development can reverberate through the rest of their lives.

Tuned-in parents, armed with more options and resources than ever before, are looking to the same spa and wellness therapies and techniques they've relied upon to improve their own lives to now nurture their children's. In addition, there has been a realization that making long-term lifestyle changes is exceedingly difficult, and it would be much easier if the need for these changes had never developed. Thus, parents are increasingly aware that they can spare their children the hardship of making changes later in their lives by instilling healthy habits at an early age.

And many wellness practitioners have, in turn, come to recognize children's wellness as a literal growth industry. Whether the ailment is acute or chronic, the condition physical or emotional, the child pre-K or pre-med, wellness practices help ensure that the kids are all right—and we forecast that serious treatments and programs, from healthy cooking classes to yoga and meditation, designed with children in mind will be the biggest growth factor in the spa and wellness industry for years to come.

FUELING THE TREND

Modern Threats to a Child's Development

Our children might be living in the most health conscious period in history, but, sadly, that doesn't guarantee they're healthy. Rates of childhood obesity have more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years in the US, reaching 18 percent for children 6-11 and 21 percent for children 12-19.¹ While the U.S. leads the pack, the issue is global, with the OECD reporting one in five children in developed nations as overweight or obese,² and the WHO estimating 42 million obese children under the age of five worldwide.³ And type 2 diabetes, a disease once largely reserved for adults and caused by poor lifestyle habits, is rapidly overtaking type 1 diabetes as the most common form in children.⁴

Screen Addiction

Children are not immune to forces that have driven many adults toward healthy lifestyles and spa and wellness therapies. They too are living in an electronic-gadget-obsessed world, crouching over devices, as they're fed information and images at incredible speed. Children spend more time than ever hunched over glowing screens—an average of three hours a day according to a recent UK survey—and nearly half of parents claim their children are addicted to smartphones and tablets.⁵ This obsession, paired with a generally sedentary lifestyle, can lead to myriad health concerns. For example, doctors are reporting an alarming increase in "tech neck" in children, a backwards curve in their neck and spine caused by staring down at screens for extended periods. This strain can result in headaches and a hunched back in

the short term, and mood disorders and permanent spinal damage in the long term.⁶

Stress & Anxiety

Even more fragile than a child's physical health is his or her mental health, and anxiety, stress, and depression are on the rise amongst our youth. In a 2013 survey by the American College Health Association of 100,000 students, 51 percent reported feeling overwhelming anxiety, 60 percent felt very sad, and 84 percent felt overwhelmed by their responsibilities.⁷ This issue is well reported amongst older children and students, but still prevalent amongst younger generations. Some estimates suggest that as many as four in ten children have trouble sleeping at night due to stress.⁸ Other common symptoms in children are headaches, stomachaches, irritability, and behavior problems. While the causes may be complex—pressure to succeed, traumatic home lives, the overuse of technology, poor diet and exercise, etc.—the effects are simple: unhappy, unhealthy children. While this data is based on U.S. studies, it is fair to assume that global studies would show similar results.

Distribution and Availability of Organic Goods

The effects of agricultural pesticides and the pervasive use of antibiotics in the meat, poultry and dairy industries have parents worldwide very concerned about the kinds of food and drink their children consume, thereby adding to the ever increasing demands for organic and locally sourced foods. As many parents want foods to be labeled and meat and poultry animals be humanely treated, the global food retail industry has responded—mega-retailers like Costco, Walmart, Tesco and Loblaws now sell



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MetroBeat, Minneapolis

Parents are enrolling their children in classes that teach the benefits of stretching and building strong bodies.

organic foods, grass fed beef and cage-free eggs. Farmers markets have become more prevalent, and not just in high-income neighborhoods. All of this has lead to an increase in accessibility to organic meats, dairy and produce.⁹ And, according to an October 2015 article on Ecowatch.com, in Europe....“a total of 19 European Union countries have ‘opted out’ of growing genetically-modified (GMOs) crops within all or part of their territories.”

Empowered Parents Turn to Alternative Approaches

For much of recent history in Western cultures, an appointment with a doctor and a trip to the hospital were a parent's only source of expertise and treatment when it came to his or her child's health. But many of today's parents—a mix of younger Gen-Xers and older millennials—were some of the earliest adopters of the Internet and social media, and now use these tools to find advice, amass resources, and even develop a sense of community. A Pew Research Report, conducted in the U.S., shows that 74 percent of parents who use social media get support from friends and peers, and 71 percent provide answers to posted questions. Over a third ask parenting questions via social media, and two thirds use social media to find parenting information and advice.¹⁰ These parents are empowered, open to solutions that might lie outside a doctor's office, and deeply invested in their children's happiness and success (while also cautious of the risks of overextending their efforts and becoming “helicopter parents”).

Many parents, having sought out more holistic practices and remedies for their own health and

comfort, are both familiar with these alternative approaches and willing to introduce them into their children's lives. A doctor's clinical office can hardly compete with the welcoming atmosphere of an acupuncturist's or massage therapist's facility. And non-toxic, natural remedies and noninvasive techniques such as mindfulness and meditation tend to carry a much lower risk than medications and surgeries. Just as importantly, because most holistic practitioners encourage patients to take an active role in their treatment, healing becomes a more collaborative process.¹¹ This approach is especially vital when treating children; parents and children become partners with the practitioners, and an informed, comfortable child is sure to be more receptive to treatment.

Popularity of Authentic, Indigenous Wellness Modalities

In Spafinder Wellness 365's eighth annual *2015 State of Wellness Travel Report*, travel agents in the U.S. and Europe rated spiritual healing, alternative healing and alternative medical services above traditional medical services, when asked, “What Wellness Elements are Most Important to Travelers?” Respondents also said the top three trends in luxury travel include travelers increasingly seeking destinations with healthy body/mind offerings. This snapshot offers insight into a new breed of travelers and wellness consumers: people (including parents) who are looking for wellness options that have served people in other cultures for generations. Consider the recent demand for Ayurvedic medicine and the decades old popularity of Asian acupuncture and herbal medicines in the West.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

MINDFULNESS AFTER MATH CLASS

A popular new term in child rearing is self-regulation, a strategy by which children are taught to control and guide their own thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. Many wellness-inclined adults see an obvious parallel to an idea they've been practicing for years: mindfulness. Programs such as the U.K.'s Mindfulness in Schools Project and Amsterdam's Centrum voor Mindfulness are partnering with parents, educators and youth organizations to bring the practice of mindfulness to thousands of children and families. Mindfulness and meditation help students to not only handle stress, but also to develop their socio-emotional skills.¹² And schools become de facto wellness providers for lower income students who may not have access to therapy and quality health care.¹³

Oakland-based Mindful Schools trains adults online in a curriculum geared specifically to teaching mindfulness to K-12 youth, and since 2007 the organization has reached over 300,000 children in over 60 countries. The David Lynch Foundation implemented its first Quiet Time school meditation program in Los Angeles in 2010 with stellar results: "Youth who meditated at Quiet Time schools showed

improvements in interpersonal relations, quality of sleep, and self-esteem; and significant reductions in depressive symptoms and anxiety."¹⁴ Across the board, these programs have reduced school violence, improved students' attitudes, and increased academic scores.

And at the 2015 Global Wellness Summit, delegates saw a wellness-focused school in action when second graders from Mexico's innovative Instituto Thomas Jefferson took the stage to teach wellness executives lessons in empathy, optimism, anger management, goal setting and gratitude. As the school's head of educational development, Esther Oldak, explained: "As CEOs, we forget the basics. We're so caught up with success that we don't realize that someone who isn't happy cannot be truly successful. Children can teach you how to enjoy the path to success and be happy." This was the first time that children appeared on the Summit stage in its nine-year history. (The video can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTrglX80u4g>)

KIDS TAKE TO THE MAT

This past July, India's Minister of Human Resource Development, Smriti Irani, announced that yoga would be mandatory for all upper primary and secondary students.¹⁵ For the millions of global adherents singing



Six Senses' children's club, The Den, offers music mediation class, yoga, and tai chi along with organic gardening, beach play, dance, and snorkeling.

Yoga programs designed for children are offered in schools, community centers and wellness travel resorts around the globe.



Six Senses, Laamu Atoll, Maldives

yoga's praises, this decision couldn't have come soon enough. The benefits of yoga are well documented, and as the dozens of famous child yogis on Instagram can attest, you're never too young to start.

Yoga studios and retreats are getting in on the action, with family packages and lessons on integrating yoga into a child's daily routine. Karma Kids Yoga bills itself as New York City's only studio dedicated exclusively to kids and families, while Yogaloom in London offer kids classes at its studio, as well as child-friendly retreats in both England and Greece.

The Ashram de Yoga Sivananda in the Loire Valley has 'Yoga for the Family' with special yoga classes, games, and activities, and the Viveka Yoga Retreat Centre nestled in the woodlands of southern France provides family yoga holidays with crafts, nature activities, and child-inspired workshops to round out the day. Shining Bay Yoga Retreat, on the remote coast of Nova Scotia, even features a yoga package designed specifically for girls between the ages of nine and 16.

Yoga offers children calm, focus, and fitness, but beyond its general wellness benefits are its merits as serious therapy. Since 2011, the Children's Hospital in Colorado has run a highly regarded yoga therapy program for children with a wide variety of physical, developmental, emotional and psychological issues.¹⁶ Louise Goldberg, author of *Yoga Therapy for Children with Autism and Special Needs*, has been teaching

exceptional children for almost 30 years. "Yoga therapy affords children an opportunity to play and learn in an environment that embraces their uniqueness and supports their strengths," she writes. "It's a therapy that meets children wherever they are."¹⁷

"Yoga therapy affords children an opportunity to play and learn in an environment that embraces their uniqueness and supports their strengths. It's a therapy that meets children wherever they are."

- Louise Goldberg, author of *Yoga Therapy for Children with Autism and Special Needs*

BODY WORK INSTEAD OF HOMEWORK

The Gyrotonic® and Gyrokinesis Method®, developed by Juliu Horvath, an ethnic Hungarian, professional dancer from Romania, is taught in 3,500 studios around the world. Horvath's methods focus on continuous, flowing movements in conjunction with specific breathing techniques. Proponents of these harmonious, full-body workouts claim they do wonders for mobility, circulation, balance, and coordination in adults—there's a reason it was once billed as "yoga for dancers"—and now more children are reaping its rewards.

Kate Russel, who is based at the 1617Lab in Santa Monica, has seen great success with clients who are children. "I worked with an eight-year-old girl who had a stroke and was experiencing lingering spasticity (stiffness) in one arm. The Gyrotonic® and Gyrokinesis Method® is unique because it has strong neurological benefits, which is particularly good for stroke recovery, and it was exciting to see her regain the use of her arm." Russel notes that as a child's physical prowess returns, so does her self-confidence and sense of play.

She also points out that young athletes and dancers' bodies are often stressed because the trend towards early specialization in a sport and intensive training damages young bodies—a big topic of discussion in the fitness industry right now.

In-Spiraling (Los Angeles) director and neuromuscular healer Jessie Rice and his team also treat children with digestive or sleeping problems, often related to emotional anxiety or academic stress. Rice says one of his chief challenges is the aforementioned tech-neck and other technology-based ills: "Looking down at iPads and phones creates a strain in their necks and affects their spines, sometimes even causing a hump. I even had a client who was texting while I was working with her." Rice added that he has treated toddlers and that many children "mimic" the same posture as their parents, which too often results in life long pain and disability.

Other wellness practitioners emphasize that you can never be too young to take care of your body, literally. Experts in Mayan abdominal massage help expectant mothers ease birth and reduce strain on the baby. Sonia Rochel's "baby spa" gently immerses and washes newborns, supposedly simulating their time in the womb, and a video of her technique in action has gone viral with more than 24 million views. And Paule-Dominique, a family-focused massage therapist from Voila La Familia in San Francisco, is particularly passionate about infant massage. Paule-Dominique teaches parents techniques that soothe and reassure their newborns, support parent-child bonding, and foster their infant's emotional and cognitive development.

A FAMILY VACATION FOR THE WELLNESS INCLINED

Resorts and hotels are starting to recognize that wellness is a family affair, and many seek to diversify their programs and activities to ensure that both parents and children get the most out of their stay. Some focus on teaching children the benefits of good health and self-care, with yoga sessions, cooking classes, and spa treatments. Others take advantage of their often pristine, natural settings by encouraging children to learn about the local culture and native habitats.



At **Voila La Familia** in San Francisco, parents learn techniques that soothe and reassure their newborns, and foster their infant's emotional and cognitive development.

Cradled within the gorgeous blue waters of the Laamu Atoll in Maldives, Six Senses' children's club The Den offers music mediation class, yoga, and tai chi along with organic gardening, beach play, dance, and snorkeling. The chef designs custom Children's Wellness Menus full of healthy versions of kids' favorites, and families staying in a Beach Villa have glass-bottomed bath tubs and their own private beach garden—perfect for exploring the ecosystem while still having fun.

Ritz-Carlton's newly opened Reserve destination in Ubud, Bali includes Green Camp at Mandapa, with opportunities for kids to explore, play, and create while learning about Balinese culture and its native environment. The Kid's Hut features yoga classes, traditional Balinese games and crafts, chocolate making workshops, native plant study, and even nightly constellation walks through the rice fields.

After an 18-year hiatus, Family Week (usually the first week of August) has returned to "Rancho La Puerta,"

or 'The Ranch' as it's affectionately called by visitors. During Family Week, Rancho La Puerta encourages families to get to know the kids and grandkids of other longtime ranch-goers. Family hikes, cooking classes, cultural music and arts programs, and yoga sessions all contribute to what feels like an intergenerational summer camp.

At Plum Village in southern France, a monastery and the home of famed spiritual leader Thich Nhat Hanh, family wellness takes on a more serene hue. Their summer retreat offers classes in mindfulness, among other activities. Younger ones learn mindful outdoor play and meditation while teens learn how to use mindfulness to strengthen their communication and relationship skills.

And, as mentioned above in "Kids Take to the Mat," yoga holidays are not just for the super-flexible and carefree yogini anymore. Many yoga retreats are now offering family packages that teach parents how to integrate yoga into their child's daily routine.



Photos Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas

Resorts and hotels are starting to recognize that wellness is a family affair. Some focus on teaching children the benefits of good health and self-care, with yoga sessions, cooking classes, and spa treatments. Others take advantage of their pristine, natural settings by encouraging children to learn about the local culture and native habitats.



The pervasive use of pesticides on produce and antibiotics in meat, poultry, and dairy, coupled with the marketing of a unhealthy food, has left parents deeply concerned about what their children eat and drink. Their is an increasing global demand for organic and locally sourced food.

HEALTHY PLATES, NOT CLEAN PLATES

The pervasive use of pesticides on produce and antibiotics in meat, poultry, and dairy, coupled with the marketing of a cultural avalanche of high sodium, high sugar, and high fat junk food, has left parents deeply concerned about what the children eat and drink. Millions of people, many parents among them, clamor for grass-fed beef, cage-free eggs, and readily available organic and locally sourced food, and the food industry has moved to satisfy that demand.

The organic focus at grocery stores like Whole Foods is fast becoming the norm instead of the exception; as mentioned, major grocery retailers like Waitrose and Tesco in the UK, Loblaws and Sobeys in Canada and Costco and Walmart in the U.S. have developed extensive organic sections. Overall organic food sales in the U.S. increased from approximately \$11 billion in 2004 to \$27 billion in 2012.²⁰ Farmers markets have also become more prevalent, and over 5,000 farmers markets across the U.S. accept benefits from the government's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program.²¹

School systems all over the globe are working to institute healthier menus for children. Japan stands as a model of success, having designed a healthy

school lunch program 40 years ago that's gone largely unchanged since. Japan's school lunches are made from scratch with locally grown ingredients. They're never frozen and rarely fried, and you won't see vending machines or dessert (other than fruit and yogurt) in their cafeterias.²² All of which seems like the obvious choice, but schools in many countries are only now looking to systems like Japan's for inspiration, rather than classifying ketchup as a vegetable.

THE FUTURE

In the Maasi culture, a typical communal greeting and response goes, "And how are the children?" "All the children are well." That the health and well-being of a community is determined by the health of its children is a concept the world is slowly but surely beginning to embrace. As wellness attitudes, strategies, and techniques trickle down the family tree, bettering the lives of children, just as they have for their parents, we expect interest in spa and wellness treatments and programs geared to children to blossom. Yoga will find its way into gym classes, mindfulness will become an integral component of playtime, and family vacations will eschew buffets and roller coasters for local cooking classes and nature hikes. Massage therapy will become the go-to treatment for children of all ages who suffer from injury, sleeplessness or pain.



At the **2015 Global Wellness Summit**, delegates saw a wellness-focused school in action when second graders from Mexico's innovative **Instituto Thomas Jefferson** took the stage to teach wellness executives lessons in empathy, optimism, anger management, goal setting and gratitude.

Global Wellness Summit

Ayurvedic medicine and acupuncture will become parents' first choice for their children—and antibiotics and surgery the last.

It's likely that wellness-inclined toys, video games, and kids apps will proliferate. Savvy wellness clothing and accessory company Lulu Lemon has launched ivivva, a clothing line for active girls designed to help them feel..."grateful, refreshed and ready to tackle the day." And Namaste Kid offers kid-sized yoga mats, clothing and DVDs.

By discussing the various ways in which children are already part of the wellness culture and that more and more businesses are tailoring programs to families and children, we can easily see what kind of impact this will have on the industry. Children who are raised within a lifestyle that values fitness, healthy eating, and self-care are already developing the habit of seeking strategies that contribute to their physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

But improving children's wellbeing isn't just an industry—it's an obligation. We cannot build a well world without ensuring the health and happiness of our society's youngest, most innocent, and most impressionable members. If, as they say, children are our future, then the future of wellness lies in children—and the spas and wellness facilities that

design programs and treatments with children in mind will drive growth in the spa and wellness industry for years to come.

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5

The Adrenaline & Zen Cocktail

Resetting the Mind & Body

The spa and wellness industry is turning to medical evidence to create more “craft cocktails” like adrenaline and zen experiences, that take people to the places they most want and need to go.



The Adrenaline & Zen Cocktail

Resetting the Mind & Body



Kent Mountain Adventure Center, Estes Park, Colorado, U.S.

The most extreme wilderness experience may be cliff camping.

Whether people or properties know the medical “whys” behind it, the one-two punch of adrenaline rushes, followed by massage and meditation, etc., is a **uniquely potent mind-body cocktail**: resetting and quieting the brain, while taking people to a place of the most deep, blissed-out, rubbery relaxation.

When wellness travel’s evolution is discussed, it’s often represented as a series of consecutive “waves,” with the first wave all about Zen-like spa pampering, stress reduction and yoga, and the ascendant wave about out-in-nature and high adventure experiences. But it’s not a case of the more extreme adventure trend replacing the Zen trend: more high-adrenaline “rush” experiences—from canyoning, to cliff camping, to circus schools—are now being paired with deep relaxation (i.e., massage or meditation) like never before.

Yes, we’ve had adventure spas that married “soft adventure” like hiking or cycling with spa—and the après ski concept—for decades. But now we’re not only seeing a dizzying proliferation of more heart-thumping, high-octane adventure experiences, we’re seeing them increasingly topped off with “après-adrenaline” relaxation, at more resorts, wellness retreats and luxe tour packages.

Ours, after all, is an extreme, X Games, Patagonia-wearing, GoPro-and-Instagram-that-crazy-thing-you-did, world. A world where what now counts as “soft” adventure, like ziplining or white water tubing, would have seemed pretty “hard” to most of us just a few years ago. (So many resorts now offer ziplining, it feels like cables will soon crisscross the entire globe). And a world where the “hardest” adventure is now nothing short of insane: like wingsuit flying (people freefalling off cliffs in flying



Campowerment, Malibu and Pennsylvania, U.S.

Campowerment is one of the new “adult sleepaway” camps, where women face challenges like high ropes courses, ziplines and Tarzan swinging). It’s all about the blend of adrenaline (from team war games to wild drumming workshops) and de-stressing with massage, meditation and yoga.

squirrel suits) or barefoot free climbing (scaling sheer faces of massive mountains with no equipment to aid your ascent).

As the world’s stress ratchets up, people, seemingly paradoxically, are rabidly seeking *more* voluntary stress and *more* intense physical and mental challenges—followed by doses of spa relaxation. Properties and tours are responding by pioneering and packaging rush and relaxation, adrenaline and spa, thrills and chilling, in unprecedented ways. But it’s not just that massage, meditation or hot springs soaking is a natural reward, or way to heal an aching body, after a day of flying trapeze classes or bobsledding on an Olympic track at 55 miles per hour.

Because whether people or properties know the medical “whys” behind it, the one-two punch of adrenaline rushes, followed by massage and meditation, etc., is a uniquely potent mind-body cocktail: resetting and quieting the brain, while taking people to a place of the most deep, blissed-out, rubbery relaxation. Which is why the new high-adrenaline and relaxation combinations are less a paradox... *than a destination*.

THE RUSH + RELAXATION MIND-BODY COCKTAIL EXPLAINED

To understand why increasingly stressed-out people are now seeking more extreme, stressful challenges and adventure (followed by relaxation therapies), we

need to understand the medical science behind why this combination is such a unique mind clearing and stress-reducing cocktail. So we asked Dr. Kenneth Pelletier, Clinical Professor of Medicine, Universities of California, San Francisco and Arizona to describe just what happens to the mind and body.

THE ADRENALINE EFFECT

Dr. Pelletier first explained that stress can be “good” or “bad,” and that when a person voluntarily chooses to do something stressful like bungee-jumping (that happens infrequently), it’s Type 1 (or beneficial) stress, defined as “immediate, identifiable, and resolvable.” - vs. “bad” Type 2 stress, such as financial worries, that is none of those things. When we experience Type 1 stress that is exciting or threatening, it instantly snaps us out of our worrying heads, and requires total focus. And the ensuing adrenaline rush is one profound physiological response. It increases blood flow, heart rate and respiration, and shunts blood away from the brain to the muscles, so that the brain is quieted. It triggers the release of endorphin, serotonin and dopamine (in preparation for pain), so we experience euphoria. Alpha-wave activity is generated in the brain, associated with relaxation and the clearing of unwanted thoughts (what meditators experience). It results in a hyperactive metabolic response, to fuel the body for the fight-or-flight challenge, including the rapid breakdown of sugars and fats. The upshot: that intoxicating “runner’s high” and dramatically heightened senses...from vision to touch.

FUELING THE TREND

Extreme Is the Zeitgeist

High-adrenaline experiences are trending in wellness travel because “extreme” seems to be our cultural zeitgeist. With skyrocketing global stress, screen-time and urbanization (five in eight people will live in cities by 2030), everything from architecture to dining, to spa is going more extreme. You see it in the new theatrical, in-nature dining trends like the restaurant Raw:Almond recently built over a frozen river in Winnipeg, Canada. In architecture: new, vertiginous glass bridges and self-observation decks like the “Skypool” planned for London’s Embassy Gardens, an all-glass pool suspended between two high-rises, for that terrifying/relaxing mid-air plunge. In fitness: grueling workouts like Skinny Rebel (London’s Conrad St. James hotel), which uses altitude/oxygen masks to raise heartbeats to 199 beats/minute. In trending wellness treatments: like cryotherapy, where time in a minus-250-degree ice chamber drives an extraordinary adrenaline rush (followed by that sense of calm).

Endless Innovation of Experiences

Nowhere is the “extreme zeitgeist” more evident than where “leisure” sports are heading: the hair-raising is seriously on the rise. This relentless innovating of adventure sports is transforming travel, which is increasingly all about personal transformation. Paragliding, sky-diving, indoor sky-diving (powered by a wind tunnel), cliff diving, flyboarding (a jetpack that fires people skyward out of the sea), free diving (diving with no oxygen supply)—you name it—are all in demand. You can hit the UK for zorbing (hurtling downhill in a transparent orb); go cage diving with sharks in a Cancun or South Africa; or go buggy rolling (wearing body armor covered in dozens of little wheels, rushing headfirst down a steep slope) at the French Alps resort of La Plagne. Even the most extreme activities can be found at resorts: for instance, you can learn ice climbing, and hang 72 feet in the air on sheer ice, at the Paradiski Resort in the French Alps (and then hit the spa).

Younger Travelers & “Peter Pan” Baby Boomers

Adventure travel is the fastest-growing wellness tourism segment: the most recent, global research¹

shows 65 percent annual growth, and a market of \$263 billion. And younger travelers are definitely the force, especially with “harder” adventure sports. A recent Spafinder Wellness 365™ survey² gauging what kind of properties wellness travelers seek most, found (after bracketing pools and beaches) that outdoor adventure properties (hiking, surfing, etc.) ranked tops for those under 50, while luxury spa resorts (with a pampering focus) ranked #1 for the over-50. But new research³ also indicates that “soft” adventure travel by refuse-to-age Baby Boomers is growing fastest: the average adventure traveler is now aged 48, and 18 percent are over 61.

Wealthy Adrenaline Seekers:

The cliché about the rich is that they only seek golf and spas, but if today’s luxury tour offerings are any indication, they’re some of the most intense adrenaline (and, yes, spa) seekers out there. Examples are endless: from a \$20K Skydiving Nepal journey that includes an extreme trek on Everest to a \$500,000+ Eynos Expeditions yacht expedition to Antarctica, with extreme hiking and kite surfing (and onboard massages and spa pools). Or consider Health and Fitness Travels’ (UK) \$230,000, year-long, part-adventure, part-de-stressing journey across 20 countries that whisks burned-out execs to paragliding in Oman, ziplining in Costa Rica, helicoptering over Australia’s Twelve Apostles, and a private safari through South Africa—but also includes cortisol-dropping tai chi atop Vietnamese mountains and spa therapies delivered throughout. The average adventure traveler, of course, spends a far more modest \$3,000/trip,⁴ but that’s significantly more than the average wellness-seeking traveler at less than \$2,000.⁵ Across every demo more extreme adventure is going mainstream.

A Go Pro, Selfie World

The Selfie Age (humans now take one trillion photos a year) has spawned travelers that value posting their trip on social media as much as the experience itself. And what’s more brag-worthy than wild adventures in exotic locales? Since the explosion of GoPros (cameras strapped to handlebars, helmets, surfboards or scuba and skydiving suits) thrill-seekers are posting millions of their daredevil highlight reels—and it’s further driving the adrenaline travel trend.

POST-ADRENALINE SPA EFFECT

After an adrenaline burst, the parasympathetic nervous system rebounds and vital signs that were pushed high plummet much lower than normal: less oxygen is consumed, adrenaline is under-produced to recover, brain waves slow, blood pressure drops and the stress hormone cortisol troughs. And when that relaxation interval is extended with experiences like massage, meditation or thermal bathing, you're intensely deepening that state of parasympathetic dominance. Studies⁶ show massage results in significant decreases in stress hormones like AVP and cortisol. Research on meditation⁷ reveals it also decreases cortisol, and slows activation of the amygdala, the brain's stress response driver. The medical evidence⁸ on thermal bathing indicates it lowers blood pressure and cortisol.

So while the post-adrenaline state, and relaxation techniques like massage or meditation, have powerful brain and body calming effects individually, when put together a person may ask, "Is it possible to feel this relaxed and at one with the world?" As Dr. Pelletier puts it, "We're talking about a true chemically-altered state: a synesthesia, or union of the senses." And it's the profound impact this cocktail has on people's minds and bodies that's driving the trend, and will continue to.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

ADRENALINE AND ZEN PROPERTY EXAMPLES

Countless wellness retreats, spa resorts and adventure tours are now pairing high-adrenaline and deep relaxation experiences, whether extreme hiking and meditation or surfing and massage. (Note: for the ways surfing is being married to comprehensive wellness, see the "Surf's Up" trend, a key sub-story in this rush + relaxation trend.)

Amy McDonald (CEO, Under A Tree Consulting), who develops innovative programs and treatments for global spa/wellness properties, describes the major programming shifts now underway: "The traditional spa resort experience, which was typically delivered by a therapist in a treatment room, is now being completely turned upside down. The focus now is on out-of-the-box outdoor fitness and adventure experiences and events (because life-changing shifts happen there). And traditional spa plays more of a support and recovery role."

Below are just a taste of examples and the trend's directions: from new properties striking the perfect balance between more extreme adventure and spa relaxation to established "mellow wellness" brands/



Six Senses Douro Valley, Portugal

As the world's stress ratchets up, people are seeking more voluntary stress and more intense physical and mental challenges—followed by doses of spa relaxation. Spas, hotels and resorts are responding by pioneering and packaging rush and relaxation, adrenaline and spa, thrills and chilling, in unprecedented ways.



Rio Perdido, Costa Rica

Rio Perdido is an excellent example of new “Adrenaline and Zen” properties that blend big thrills and spa chilling. The mod-design, high adventure and hot springs/spa playground is set on 600 acres of unspoiled nature in Costa Rica, a nation where rush and relaxation is its tourism brand.

properties adding more high adventure to more retreats using high-adrenaline challenges as a symbol of overcoming fears and jumpstarting lifestyle change to adrenaline and spa combos getting integrated into corporate meetings. We live in an era where the spa director is being joined by a “director of adrenaline,” like at The Woodmark Hotel & Still Spa in Kirkland, Washington.

NATIONS WHERE RUSH + RELAXATION IS THE TOURISM BRAND

For many nations rich in raw nature, whether a Costa Rica, Chile, New Zealand, Slovenia or Botswana, the rush and relaxation “package” IS the tourism brand, and what is fueling their extraordinary growth. (Have you *gone* to Costa Rica without ziplining? To New Zealand without bungee jumping?) A perfect example of new properties that blend big thrills and spa chilling is the sublime, mod-design, high adventure and hot springs/spa playground set on 600 acres of unspoiled nature that is Rio Perdido (Bagaces, Costa Rica). At Rio Perdido you get lost in “adrenaline and spa” (in 2015 they even ran a package by that name): from their Canyon Adventure that takes ubiquitous ziplining to better places (like their Tarzan Swing and Human Pendulum) to white water tubing to miles of mountain biking tracks with heart-stopping plunges.

Post-adrenaline you loll in 30 natural hot springs pools (slathering yourself in volcanic mud) and hit the lovely spa (with treatments in pods by the hot springs rivers soon to come). Another Costa Rica property being master-planned for that perfect blend of rush and relaxation: the 750-acre Terra Paradise Eco-Adventure Resort coming in 2016: with 20 adventure activities, like one of the world’s longest ziplines, bungee-jumping, vertical sling shot, high ropes courses, electric buggy racing, waterfall rappelling and obstacle adventures...all married to a spa and meditation and yoga park, perched in the rainforest treetops.

BRANDED ADRENALINE

Cirque du Soleil, which transformed circus arts into a vast global entertainment company thirty years ago (now selling 50 million+ tickets/year to its high-adrenaline spectacles in 50 countries), is now leaping beyond the stage to get people *doing* its acrobatic arts at resorts and destinations. The new CREATIVE by Cirque du Soleil program at Club Med Punta Cana (Dominican Republic) immerses guests/families in over 30 activities, like high bungee, flying trapeze (soaring 108-feet), aerial silk, tightrope, trampoline and juggling, under the instruction of Cirque du Soleil staff. And you can later unwind at the just upgraded

spa and new Zen Oasis retreat. And when Cirque du Soleil (in partnership with large hotel/resort developer, Grupo Vidanta) redefines the idea of a theme park when they open one in Nuevo Vallarta Mexico in 2018, not only will there be Cirque du Soleil-themed rides, a waterpark and outdoor show, their artists will get people doing acrobatic arts and spa/relaxation components will also be integrated. (Reports are that more Cirque du Soleil immersive experiences will also hit more spa resorts.) And it's likely that other high-adrenaline adventure and entertainment companies will ultimately make similar moves.

SYMBOLIC "LEAPS"

Famed spa resort Miraval (Tucson, Arizona) pioneered using high-adrenaline challenges as symbolic, psychological "leaps of faith": as a way of overcoming fears, letting go of bad "baggage" and jumping into a healthier future. And Miraval's lifestyle transformation program now offers various extreme challenges like "Desert Tightrope" and "Quantum Leap" (jumping off a 35-foot pole), all private sessions led by adventure specialists. And at other destination spas like Canyon Ranch (Tucson, Arizona, Lennox, Massachusetts; and coming to Kaplankaya, Turkey in 2016) or Travaasa (Austin, Texas), personally symbolic uses of aerial adventures (whether high ropes courses or ziplines) are also a star offering. But now many more, and very different, destinations are getting into the high-adrenaline symbolism (plus spa relaxation). Just one

example: Campowerment (Malibu, California and Poconos, Pennsylvania), one of the trendy, new "adult sleepaway" camps, where women face challenges like high ropes courses, ziplines and Tarzan swinging way out over the ocean (as other women cheer support). It's all about the blend of adrenaline (from team war games to wild drumming workshops) and de-stressing: with massage, meditation and yoga.

SUPER-EXTREME + SPA

If you can imagine an intense, high-adrenaline experience, it's likely happening at a spa resort somewhere. There may be no more extreme wilderness experience than cliff camping, where you sleep on a little fabric and metal ledge, hooked on to sheer rock, hundreds of feet up in the air. The Stanley Hotel (Estes Park, Colorado), already adrenaline inducing as the setting of epic horror film, *The Shining*, is the future site of a \$30 million wellness center being developed with the Estes Park Medical Center, reported⁹ that they're considering a package (through a partnership with Kent Mountain Adventure Center) that would "meld (the) hotel's signature pampering with (this) substantial dose of adrenaline." This white knuckle, bucket list adventure would be followed by a spa night back at the resort.

At Hôtel Sacacomie (Quebec, Canada) you can try James-Bondesque "ice driving," and take a Porsche (with studded tires) out for a 150 mph "spin" across



Club Med Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

The new **CREACTIVE** by Cirque du Soleil program at **Club Med Punta Cana** immerses guests in over 30 activities, like high bungee, flying trapeze (soaring 108-feet), aerial silk, tightrope, trampoline and juggling. Thrill-seekers later unwind at the spa and new Zen Oasis retreat.

a frozen lake (along with dog-sledding and snow tubing) and then hit the toasty Geos Les Bains spa with underground saunas and steam baths. Mandarin Oriental Singapore recently offered a “Fuel the Adrenaline” package pairing indoor skydiving (at iFly Singapore, the world’s largest wind tunnel) with follow-up his/hers spa treatments. At the new Nanuku Resort & Spa (Veti Levu Island, Fiji) shark feeding, big wave surfing, sand-boarding down the dunes, ziplining and cave safaris are wedded to spa relaxation. At Castello di Casole (near Tuscany, Italy), their new “Ferrari Red Passion” package lets guests race around the hills (or on a pro racetrack) in a Ferrari, and then packs them off to the unique spa. At spa/dude ranch The Resort at Paws Up (Montana), guests stay in luxe tented cabins in remote wilderness. Adventures like rappelling down 167-foot rock faces or dog-sledding with Iditarod champions are capped with “Après Adventure” massages at “Spa Town,” a

colony of out-in-nature treatment tents. Sweden’s famously gorgeous and mind-blowing Icehotel (Jukkasjärvi, Lapland) carved each fall out of 4,000 tons of adrenaline-inducing ice (down to hand-cut chandeliers, along with five-degree snow rooms). Offerings combine adventures like dogsledding, ice plunges and an Arctic wilderness survival course with Swedish sauna rituals.

ZEN BRANDS ADD ADRENALINE

Properties deeply branded around Zen-like wellness are incorporating more high-adrenaline experiences. Just one example: the new Six Senses Douro Valley (Portugal) with its high-flying tree climbing challenge (with helmets, harnesses, and support from tree-climbing specialists) and canyoning adventure involving rappelling and ziplining down the wild River Cabrum Falls. It’s a Six Senses property so stress-reducing spa/wellness therapies are a given.



Hôtel Sacacomie, Quebec, Canada

At **Hôtel Sacacomie** guests can try James-Bondesque “ice driving,” and take a Porsche (with studded tires) out for a 150 mph “spin” across a frozen lake (along with dog-sledding and snow tubing) and then hit the toasty **Geos Les Bains** spa with underground saunas and steam baths.

The new **Six Senses Douro Valley** offers a high-flying tree climbing challenge and canyoning adventures, involving rappelling and ziplining down the wild River Cabrum Falls. It's a Six Senses property so stress-reducing spa/wellness therapies are a given.



Adrenaline + Meditation: While most après-adrenaline experiences revolve around body treatments, as meditation goes major and mainstream, brain-stress-center-resetting mindfulness training will be used post-adventure to deepen the relaxation experience. One interesting new example: yoga guru David Romanelli will roll out a series of "MeditateON..." retreats in extraordinary places in 2016, with a different experiential/adventure focus married to meditation. For instance, the planned "MeditateON Mother Nature" retreat at Clark National Park in Alaska (one of the wildest places on the planet) will immerse people in high-adrenaline hiking, kayaking and rafting, while the "MeditateON Flow" retreat will revolve around surfing in Costa Rica punctuated by meditation sessions. To prepare for the mind resetting, and to extend it post-trip, people will practice meditation online through Romanelli's tools three days before the retreat, and three days after.

Adrenaline-Crazed Asia: The most stressed, vacation-starved nations (like the U.S. or Asian countries) crave the extreme adventure and relaxation cocktail most. For instance, the Chinese are mad for everything from bungee jumping to rock climbing. And you will read reports,¹⁰ like that from Queenstown, New Zealand's top skydiving company, about how two-thirds of their business comes from Chinese tourists—and how extreme adventure is a key factor in the 60 percent annual growth in Chinese outbound tourism to New Zealand.

New properties on the horizon in China illustrate the idea of "high-adrenaline architecture" (and are some of the most talked about hotel designs in the last decade) as they pack a lot of high-adventure sports and spa within. The Shimao Wonderland Intercontinental (Songjiang, just outside Shanghai, opening 2017), is an eye-popping "cave hotel" embedded into the towering cliffs of an old quarry, with underwater floors that feature water sports, and extreme sports like bungee jumping taking place on a structure cantilevered over the quarry, along with a spa. The jaw dropping Dawang Mountain Resort (Changsha, Hunan Province) stretches dramatically over a cliff face/quarry with a 200-foot waterfall, with a high-adventure "ice and snow world" (complete with indoor ski slope) and water park, matched to a comprehensive spa.

THE HIGH-ADRENALINE MEETING

More high-adrenaline experiences are coming to the corporate/meetings biz, to get employees out of their comfort zones, and drive team building, creativity and fearlessness. For instance, Cirque du Soleil's new SPARK sessions take the meeting in radical new directions: with Cirque performers designing creative challenges in acrobatics and the arts for employees (often played out in their spectacular performance spaces), and with employees even experiencing simulated Cirque du Soleil "auditions" with choreography and costumes. And more spa resorts are creating "adrenaline and zen" meetings experiences, like Salamander Resort & Spa



Canyon Ranch, U.S.

Spas like **Canyon Ranch** are using high-adrenaline challenges as a way of overcoming fears, letting go of bad “baggage” and jumping into a healthier future. The most stressed, vacation-starved nations (like the U.S. or Asian countries) crave the extreme adventure and relaxation cocktail most.

(Middleburg, Virginia) with team-building adventures like rope bridges and rope rescue, rappelling, ziplining, survival courses and symbolic challenges like “water over the bridge.”

THE FUTURE

The medical evidence shows us why the stressed seek more stressful adventure—and why the “contrast therapy” of adrenaline rushes followed by spa relaxation are no paradox. Taken together they quiet the brain and relax the body in the most powerful way.

The world will only become more stressful, so high-adrenaline (and relaxation) experiences will only proliferate and get more firmly paired. If we live in a world where people hurl themselves downhill in plastic “hamster balls” it seems that if you can imagine it, they will build it, and if they build it, more will come. The future for both “soft” and more extreme adventure seems near limitless. And for the most extreme varietals, like wingsuit flying and barefoot free climbing, the only limit seems to be injury or death—not generally considered a component of wellness travel. Now, no spa/wellness retreat formally offers such dangerous experiences, which require hundreds of hours of training. But as higher-adrenaline adventure travel goes mainstream, skilled guides and the safest, highest-tech equipment will be paramount, and properties that can invest in these resources will be the most sought after.

NEW PAIRINGS – MORE “AWE” & “SPA”

The wellness industry needs to (and will) turn to the medical evidence to create more “craft cocktails” like adrenalin and zen experiences, that take people to the places they most want/need to go. It’s the medical evidence that allows one to “reverse engineer” the therapeutic journeys that will impact people’s minds and bodies most positively.

We will see more people seeking “awe” in travel (and more pairings of awe-inducing experiences with spa relaxation services). Awe is an emotional/brain response to something physically or conceptually vast that takes us out of our narrow heads, and challenges our place in, and way of seeing, the world: whether vast, natural beauty; a sacred/spiritual experience; or live performances and art. While what’s awe-inspiring can be subjective, stressed adults need far more of it (it’s been the province of children, with their perpetual state of wonder). The growing medical evidence shows that awe resets the stressed brain by quieting the frontal lobes, generating deep relaxation alpha (and even theta) brain wave flow, and synching the left and right brain, which is considered the path to ecstasy. What’s interesting is that the states of awe and adrenaline rushes takes people to the same place of deep relaxation via different routes—and both can be deepened through experiences like massage or meditation.

People will increasingly seek awe in nature’s most spectacular wonders: from viewing the

aurora borealis (sleeping in glass igloos at Hotel Kakslauttanen in Finland), or standing amid the rush of thousands of wildebeest or monarch butterflies as they migrate in a Tanzania or Mexico. More awe-inspiring entertainment and musical spectacles will be integrated into spa resort experiences, like the Cirque du Soleil JOYÀ theatre in Riviera Maya, Mexico. More awe-inducing multimedia and multisensory experiences will be rolled into spa and wellness: whether Louie Schwartzberg's films, Visual Healing by Moving Art, which re-invent the "nature film" by immersing people (whether at a spa, a spin class, or a hospital) in the vast network of nature, shifting consciousness to awe, empathy and gratitude—or at the brand-new The Well (near Oslo, Norway), the world's largest, amphitheater-style sauna looking out over the Arctic Sea, with cutting-edge light and media experiences like its glass Nordic Laconium or Ambilight Cinema Sauna, using shifting lights and nature videos. More multisensory, mind-resetting pods like the Somadome (at spas like Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, California or The Surrey, New York City) will bathe people in color, sound and rhythms for awesome inner journeys.

VIRTUAL REALITY & HAPTIC TECHNOLOGY

High adrenaline, awe inducing, and even massage, experiences will be rewritten by virtual reality (VR) and haptic technologies. Virtual reality is widely acknowledged as the next big thing in entertainment, travel marketing/experiences and even health and wellness. And the future has arrived. Travel marketers are jumping aggressively into VR,¹¹ allowing people to ride scary rollercoasters or bliss out paddle boarding at destinations. And with the release of the Oculus Rift goggles in the next couple months, virtual reality headsets will take a big step forward.

You can see how VR will reimagine the highest-adrenaline experiences (and become physically risk-free), as the first exclusive Oculus Rift title is 'The Climb,' where you helicopter into a soaring mountain range, and then free-climb a deadly cliff face unaided, using disembodied VR hands and head movements to negotiate each vertiginous move—even chalking your hands to help grab rock. Users have reported a very real rush (even getting shaky and sweaty).

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High adrenaline, awe inducing, and even massage, experiences will be rewritten by virtual reality (VR) and haptic technologies, allowing people to ride scary rollercoasters or bliss out paddle boarding at travel destinations. The future has arrived, and travel marketers are jumping aggressively into VR.



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Well-Fests

Festivals Shift from Wasted to Wellness

Wellness festivals, modeled after multi-day music festivals like Coachella, put health center stage. And music festivals are getting on the the wellness bandwagon, offering spa treatments, yoga classes and organic food.



Well-Fests

Festivals Shift from Wasted to Wellness



Furthure Future, Las Vegas

At last year's inaugural **Furthure Future** festival the amenities included a members-only spa, fine dining, and mini-TED talks on hacking your own consciousness.

From Bonnaroo to Burning Man, Carnival to Coachella, the thriving festival circuit promises to fill any enthusiast's calendar, with the only limiting factor being lack of funds or perhaps lack of sleep. Last year 32 million people attended a music festival in the U.S. alone—that's more than the population of Texas.¹ But as the industry expands, a growing number of festivals are celebrating wellness in addition to, or even in lieu of, music, art, and debauchery.

Of course many of the general principles of wellness have long been present amongst festivalgoers, who at least ostensibly endorse mindfulness, holistic therapies, environmental awareness, and dedication toward one's spiritual, social, and emotional well-being. Wellness stepping into the spotlight seems a natural extension of much of festival culture. After all, yoga was expanding minds long before Woodstock. But while wellness events have embraced the massive, celebratory nature of other festivals, they also allow attendees to return home rejuvenated, instead of exhausted.

The single defining attribute of wellness festivals, however, is their lack of definition. The diversity and sheer number of wellness events cropping up ensure there's something for everyone. Whether it's an afternoon gathering or a weekend-long experience, a chance to unplug or to get connected, a trip dedicated exclusively to your physical and mental health or a brief stop at the meditation and massage tent between dance parties, the healthy festivals movement welcomes all comers.



The Big Quiet, photo by Evan Novis

The Big Quiet, a brief group meditation session held in New York's Central Park, drew a crowd of over 1,000 in its first year. Five minutes of instruction were followed by 15 of stunning quiet, and then—more than an hour of dancing to soul and afro-Cuban beats.

FUELING THE TREND

Together, Alone

Paradoxically, the most digitally interconnected period in history also seems to be the loneliest. Over two billion active social media accounts exist as of January 2015, with 300 million people passing around their photos on Instagram, 284 million sharing idle thoughts on Twitter, and more than a billion documenting their lives on Facebook.² At the same time, a Mental Health Foundation survey found rates of loneliness to be widespread and increasing, with people reporting fewer fulfilling personal interactions and only 22 percent of respondents saying they never feel lonely.³ Festivals offer a chance for direct, person-to-person contact while also satisfying the same desire to see and be seen that fuels social media. They are, in essence, Facebook live: massive gatherings that encourage both personal interactions and collective culture.

Alleviating Record Levels of Stress

Festivals, and vacations in general, are already a chance to get away from the pressures and anxiety of day-to-day life. Over the past few decades, however, reported levels of stress have increased across virtually every demographic.⁴ With stress a major factor for a whole host of ailments, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiac arrest,⁵ a vacation has to be more than just time off. Festivals are a form of wellness travel that caters specifically to nurturing

the bodies, minds, and spirits of attendees, sending them home refreshed, not to mention equipped with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to keep stress at bay as they dive back into daily life. Wellness festivals emphasize good times as much as good health, with attendees eager to enjoy themselves and each other's company, reaping the stress-reducing benefits of, for example, both yoga and socialization.

The Era of the Millennial

With each passing year millennials make up a larger percentage of our consumer base—they're even on track to overshadow Baby Boomers⁶—and their attributes and interests exacerbate all of the trends listed above. Eighteen to 34 year olds are our most digitally interconnected generation, but perhaps more surprisingly, they also report higher levels of loneliness⁷ and stress⁸ than any other age group. One in five millennials in the U.S. attended a music festival last year,⁹ and according to the European Festival Market Report the average festivalgoer is 26¹⁰. Polling indicates that millennials also put greater emphasis than non-millennials on ideas like meditation, massage, eating right, and exercise when asked about maintaining a healthy lifestyle^{11 12}. Simply put, millennials enthusiastically endorse both wellness-centric living and large-scale festivals—it only makes sense that they'd support bringing the two together.



Festival No. 6, photos by FANATIC

In the UK, **Festival No 6** celebrates every facet of dance music, from parties in the woods to big tent headliners, along with healthy food, arts and culture.

THE TREND

As Lynn Zinser of The New York Times puts it, wellness “can be a rather fungible idea,”¹³ and nowhere is this more evident than at The Wanderlust Festival. Wanderlust is a heavyweight of the wellness circuit, having expanded from a single event in Squaw Valley in 2009 to a whole suite of festivals scattered across the US, Canada, Chile, Australia, and New Zealand. It bills itself as an “all-out celebration of mindful living,”¹⁴ which is, in a nutshell, the appeal of festivals as a form of wellness tourism: the chance to not just focus upon your physical and mental health, but revel in it, all while surrounded by likeminded peers. Attendees run the gamut from families to college kids, from experienced yogis to first timers, but Wanderlust organizers insist that by the end of the festival they’ll all be a single community.

A day at a wellness festival like Wanderlust might begin with a breakfast of organic granola and cold-pressed juice, followed by an outdoor yoga class. After that you could stroll through the booths of local vendors, sampling arts, crafts, snacks, and any of a thousand other wellness-related products. Next up is a lecture on healthy living from a panel of experts, and then perhaps a guided nature hike or paddle board class or, if you’re feeling really adventurous, a hula hooping session. Grab dinner from one of the many local, sustainable restaurants and, to finish things off with a bang, join your fellow attendees at a feverish concert of music from around the world before collapsing into

your sleeping bag or four-poster bed, depending on your accommodations. After a day that busy, both will feel equally refreshing. Throughout your time at the festival you’ll be surrounded by thousands of people of all ages (albeit predominantly twentysomethings), unified in their enthusiasm for wellness as both a lifestyle and state of mind.

Wanderlust, although modeled after multi-day music festivals like Coachella, still puts health center stage, but many other festivals such as Symbiosis and Latitude have integrated wellness activities as a revitalizing complement to their music and dance. Areas offering yoga, tai chi, massage, or just a few minutes of peace and quiet have become ubiquitous, with names like Healing Fields, Slow Motion, Sanctuary, and World of Wellbeing.

This wide spectrum of wellness festivals caters to both “the sensibiles and the cannibals,”¹⁵ those who seek to better their bodies and minds through more traditional means, and those who have no problem pairing yoga classes and wellness workshops with raucous parties and experimentation. For example, the California festival Lightning in a Bottle partners with the organizations DanceSafe and the Zendo Project to provide judgment-free drug education and treatment areas, as well as mental health services for people on psychedelic drugs.¹⁶ South Africa’s SpiritFest, on the other hand, believes that a day full of yoga, music, and dance doesn’t have to end with a rave full of dilated pupils and clouds of marijuana

smoke. SpiritFest actively promotes itself as a drug, alcohol, smoke, and attitude free event. Their late night DJ dance parties wrap up at 10:00 p.m., ensuring that attendees will rise bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for their sunrise yoga and meditation sessions.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

TO UNPLUG OR NOT TO UNPLUG?

The something-for-everyone nature of wellness festivals extends beyond one's preference for partying. Many can't seem to unwind without turning off their phone, while others can't relax without checking it every thirty seconds. Most festivals encourage human interaction while also running robust social media pages and proudly trumpeting the popularity of their hashtags, but the UK's Innocent Unplugged has charted a different course, issuing an outright ban on technology. Those looking to flout the ban and sneak a quick text will find that the idyllic countryside has plenty of stunning views, but no cell or wifi signals. In fact, the festival has no traditional electricity whatsoever. Instead pedal bikes and a human-sized hamster wheel provide the only power, and attendees are encouraged to take a spin on either to help generate the bare minimum electricity needed to keep the festivities going.

For those who would rather stay on the grid, the week-long yoga I.G. Getaway doesn't just actively

encourage social media participation, its selling point is the chance to interact with yoga's social media celebrities. These Instagram yogis may not always appear to be the most traditional of practitioners, but thanks in part to their photos of remarkable poses in equally remarkable settings they've amassed millions of followers. And it's only fitting that a festival built around both yoga and digital celebrity would be hosted in Los Angeles.

THE WIDENING UMBRELLA OF WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

The same creative one-upmanship that's responsible for kaleidoscopic sculptures at Burning Man and raising the dead via holograms at Coachella is also present amongst wellness-inclined festival organizers. In just the UK, Festival No 6 features Tibetan singing bowl sessions, WOMAD (World of Music and Dance) offers gong baths and didgeridoo healing, Wilderness has glitter showers, Glastonbury provides hand-fasting, and the wishfully named Bestival has llama hugging and euphoric acrobatics. Yoga alone, a stalwart of nearly every festival, comes in dozens of varieties, including aerial yoga, hula hoop yoga, acro-yoga, rave yoga, paddleboard yoga, and laughter yoga.¹⁷ For those curious, laughter yoga revolves around the idea that prolonged, self-induced laughter provides the same psychological benefits as spontaneous laughter.¹⁸



A day at a wellness festival like **Wanderlust** might include an outdoor yoga or meditation class, a lecture on healthy living from a panel of experts, and then a guided nature hike or paddle board class.



Wanderlust Festivals

Wellness festivals, where thousands of people of all ages unite in their enthusiasm for wellness as both a lifestyle and state of mind, are becoming a unique genre of wellness travel.

TRADITIONAL AND SPIRITUAL YOGA

It's worth remembering that those who long for more traditional, but no less immersive, yoga experience still have plenty of options. The International Yoga Festival in Rishikesh, India, for example, offers a week of yoga classes, sessions, and lectures, with thousands of attendees from over 60 countries. You won't find many of its renowned yogis on Instagram, but you will find spiritual masters who have dedicated their lives to both the physical and metaphysical aspects of yoga. Many Western yoga practitioners focus exclusively on yoga as an exercise, but in India yoga's connection to the teachings of the Vedanta and other holy scriptures is alive and well, as demonstrated by the International Yoga Festival's long roster of swamis and yogacharyas.

LUXURY FESTIVALS

For some the idea of a wellness festival calls to mind images of unwashed hippies lounging amidst muddy tents, but many of these contemporary festivals offer upscale options that would fit in at any boutique. Of course they don't always come cheap; hippie ideals of free love might live on, but not free admission. At last year's inaugural Further Future festival, a three-day music and wellness event in Las Vegas, the cheapest entry ticket was \$275, with accommodations climbing over \$3,000 for a luxury suite. The festival's amenities include a members-only spa, fine dining, and mini-TED talks on hacking your own consciousness. But for every Further Future there's a Desert Hearts, a festival

held on the Los Coyotes reservation that offers no VIP passes or pre-paid luxury accommodations—just a campsite, 100 hours of house and techno music, and a busy schedule of classes in their yoga and healing sanctuary.

SINGLE DAY WELLNESS EVENTS

Many of us simply have too many responsibilities or too little time to spend several days at a wellness festival, but plenty of events last only a single day or, in the case of New York's The Big Quiet, just twenty minutes. Hosted by the organization Medi Club, The Big Quiet was a brief group meditation session in Central Park that drew a crowd of over 1,000. Five minutes of instruction were followed by 15 of stunning quiet, and then—in case you thought it had strayed too far from a celebration—more than an hour of joyous dancing to soul and afro-Cuban beats. Jesse Israel, co-creator of The Big Quiet, stated that people, “came to the event not to see one person or one speaker or a movie or a band, but to share one moment together. It's the idea of the audience becoming the focus of an experience.”¹⁹ Medi Club continues to offer large scale meditation sessions, with attendees of all ages eager to quiet their minds and recharge in a communal setting. Similarly, the White Tour, a traveling yoga event, drew 2,000 people for a massive yoga session at Fort York in Toronto. At previous stops on the tour, 1,500 gathered at the base of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, 6,500 in Montreal's Old Port, and a staggering 10,000 in Central Park.

BRANDING OPPORTUNITIES

Wellness is a \$3.4 trillion dollar, global industry,²⁰ and wellness events are increasingly seen by companies as an ideal opportunity to showcase their brands on an enormous, at times literal stage. While smaller businesses vie for vendor space on festival grounds, and larger ones like Lululemon (at Wanderlust) and KIND Snacks (at Lightning in a Bottle) go the more traditional sponsorship routes, other companies simply create their own festival from scratch. For example, Weight Watchers' MeFest, scheduled for October 29th in Minneapolis, offers free music, food, lessons, and hands-on experiences to feed your mind, body, and soul. And the aforementioned White Tour is entirely the product of sportswear company Lole. Even shopping malls and hotels are getting in on the action. The Americana at Brand, a shopping center in California, is just one example, having recently hosted a Wellness Expo and Family Festival that offers interactive fitness stations for kids and adults as well as Q&A sessions with fitness specialists. In essence, it takes little more than a few healthy vendors and guest speakers to turn a day at the mall into a wellness-branded event.

THE FUTURE

The growing number of wellness events, with their impressive diversity matched only by their equally impressive audiences, indicates that wellness festivals are becoming every bit as mainstream as more traditional concerts and shows. We expect it's only a matter of time until travel agencies and websites include services and sections dedicated exclusively to wellness. A "Wellness Events" tab won't look out of place on Trip Advisor's drop down menu of attractions, snug between Walking Tours and Wine Tastings. Fest300, a website offering a curated list of the world's best festivals in an attempt to help people sort through the ever-expanding circuit, already considers Health & Wellness a category alongside Music, Food, and Religious. As more festivalgoers integrate their health into their celebrations, and as more health-conscious individuals pursue their own wellness in public settings, we predict that these two groups will in essence meet in the middle, discovering that wellness both fosters and thrives in community.

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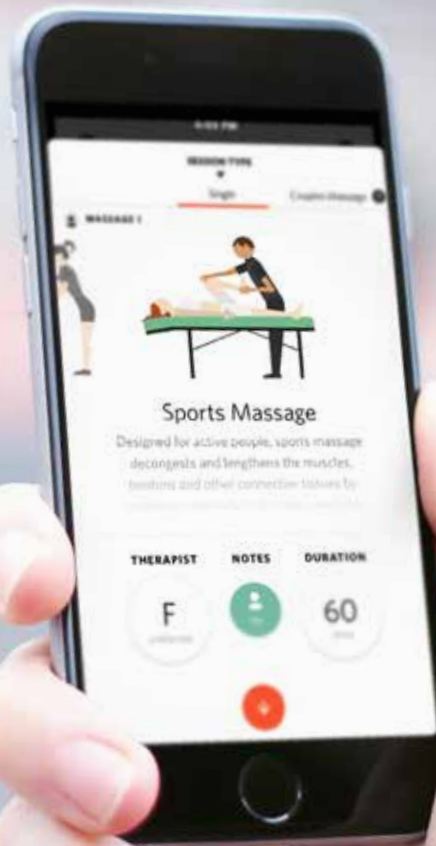
The **International Yoga Festival** offers a week of yoga classes, sessions, and lectures, with thousands of attendees from over 60 countries.

7



On-Demand Uber-izing Spa & Wellness

Want an after-hours massage in the comfort of your own home? There's an app for that. Need a last minute manicure, blowout or even a session with a personal trainer? You guessed it. More than ever before, your health and happiness are just a click away.



Zeel, the largest Massage On Demand® company, is in seven major U.S. metro areas.

On-Demand

Uber-izing Spa & Wellness



Zeel

Zeel offers over 5,000 vetted massage therapists.

The thriving spa industry has wrapped its strong, soothing arms around the idea of **on-demand services**: consumers gain more choice and convenience, therapists gain more bookings, and small businesses and startups gain a new avenue to break into the industry.

With a smartphone in every pocket and more apps than stars in the sky, the world isn't just at your fingertips—it's racing toward your front door. GrubHub wants to bring your dinner, Instacart your groceries, Drizly your booze, and Postmates is happy to fetch you everything in between. Long gone are the days when only Chinese food delivered.

The beauty and wellness industries are not about to be left behind, and app-driven on-demand options are cropping up left and right, offering people access to healthy options wherever, whenever, and however they want. Wellness clients can make appointments for home visits when it's convenient for them and receive services promptly, sometimes even within the hour. Private meditation and yoga sessions, after-practice sports massage, house calls from an MD, or even a manicure for a bed-bound patient are all just a click away.

On-demand options can't necessarily match the luxurious pampering or depth of services offered by more traditional facilities, but the appeal of an affordable, fully accredited, and well-reviewed therapist or practitioner coming to your home, office, hotel, or even hospital at the hour of your choosing is hard to deny. It's no surprise that beauty and wellness on-demand is in high demand.

FUELING THE TREND

Demand for Immediacy and Expanded Hours

The steam room, the cucumber water, the hot mugwort bath: most devoted spa goers take great pleasure in the luxurious amenities of a top rate spa. But sometimes a busy schedule only leaves an hour between work and a night on the town to get rested and beautiful, or a sudden backache on the commute home demands prompt attention outside the 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. hours of most facilities. Customers are increasingly willing to forgo the experience of a spa – or at least periodically complement it – in exchange for the convenience and flexibility of wellness on-demand.

Samer Hamadeh, founder of leading massage-on-demand app Zeel, says the immediacy of these services helps both consumers and therapists. He explains, “We are literally taking a whole period of the day that was previously unavailable for people in need of massages and making it open for booking, in the most convenient possible way.” On Zeel, for example, customers can book massages for start times as early as 8:00 a.m. and as late as 10:30 p.m., seven days a week, with 21 percent of Zeel’s orders occurring after 9:00 p.m. Soothe, a newer player in the blossoming massage on-demand industry, offers massages as late as midnight and, like Zeel, on all major holidays. And massage is just one segment of a wide spectrum of beauty and wellness apps now providing after hours, at-home services.

More Consumers Rely on App-Driven Service

The runaway success of the ride-sharing app Uber in particular has done much for public acceptance of app-based, on-demand services, with its model so culturally pervasive that, according to Fortune Magazine, start-ups seeking venture capital commonly refer to themselves as, “the Uber of our market.”¹ And with good reason: a leaked internal Uber document projected explosive growth from \$688 million in 2013 to \$10.84 billion this year. Uber bookings have grown by nearly 38 times in just four years, with \$7 billion raised from private investors and an imputed market value of more than \$50 billion.²

Uber might be one of the most visible examples, but in only the last few years a suite of new apps has allowed customers to choose from trusted local services, connect securely with major institutions like banks, and buy every variety of good under the sun with safety and ease. According to *The Fiscal Times*, mobile app usage jumped by 74 percent in 2014, while app usage specifically for lifestyle and shopping increased by a staggering 174 percent.³ The Internet in general has also changed life for millions of homebound people, from those who have mobility issues to moms with young children who can’t get out of the house but can shop and enjoy the latest movies online. Now on-demand wellness and beauty services give people access to services they could not easily enjoy – and the response is overwhelmingly positive.

Customers Are Stressed, and Stressed for Time

The prevalence of stress in the workplace is well documented in the health and wellness community. Six out of ten workers in major global economies claim to experience increased workplace stress,⁴ with over half of the global workforce stating that they are closer to burning out than they were just five years ago.⁵

What sets wellness on-demand apart, however, is that the very factors that contribute to rising levels of stress also paradoxically make it more difficult for people to pursue traditional forms of wellness to alleviate that stress. In short, if you’re overworked and overbooked it’s unlikely you’ll have the time to schedule a stress-reducing trip to the spa or session with your personal trainer. On-demand services exist specifically to circumvent these constraints and squeeze a little personal time out of even the most crowded calendar.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

MASSAGE LEADS THE WAY

The global spa industry has seen recent, powerful growth, expanding from a \$60.3 billion market of 71,672 spas in 2007 to a \$94 billion industry of 105,591 spas by 2013. The U.S., the global leader, is now a \$16.25 billion industry with 22,852 spas.⁶ And this thriving industry has wrapped its strong, soothing arms around the idea of on-demand services, with results that appear to have benefited everyone involved. Consumers gain more choice and convenience, therapists gain more bookings, and small businesses and startups gain a new avenue to break into the industry without the massive overhead of running a brick-and-mortar facility.

The success of the aforementioned app Zeel and other early on-demand providers has excited not just therapists and consumers, but also venture groups and angel investors. Zeel boasts a roster of over 5,000 vetted therapists and more than 500 company contracts in New York, Boston, Chicago,

LA, San Francisco, and Miami, among others. And Soothe recently acquired the smaller massage on-demand app Unwind Me and now operates in 13 cities with over 1,700 therapists.

On-demand massage services have become a truly global phenomenon. For example, the UK's Urban Massage books massage therapists in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The services marketplace Vaniday, which offers massage therapists, hairdressers, beauticians, makeup artists, and even tattoo artists, recently launched in Brazil, the world's third largest beauty and personal care market.⁷ And China's own NANA Panda and Diandao are other new additions to the massage on-demand scene, servicing various Chinese mega cities.

This meteoric growth is driven as much by technology as demand, with massage on-demand services taking a page from Uber, Airbnb, and Instacart's book. Online reviews and increased transparency build trust with consumers. Better booking software allows for smoother, more secure transactions. New booking and compensation models foster competitive pricing



Urban Massage, UK

The meteoric growth of on-demand spa and wellness services is driven as much by technology as demand. The UK's **Urban Massage** books massage therapists in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.

The popular beauty app **StyleBee** books home visits by professional stylists, with each appointment determined by proximity and user profile information.



for consumers and higher earnings for therapists. And with every year the public is more and more comfortable with the design and operation of smartphone-based services, making the whole process as seamless as possible.

Differences exist amongst these apps in how their services are implemented. Some, like Refresh Body, give you complete freedom to choose your favorite therapist or instructor, while others like Zeel and Soothe choose the instructor for your first booking. After you have seen him or her once, you can prioritize your therapist. Although Refresh Body, Soothe, and Zeel's specialists bring all the necessary supplies, making your only job to answer the door, other apps remind customers via text to have a sheet set prepared as well as a place cleared for the table. But, regardless of their distinctions, all of these on-demand services (for both massage and general beauty and wellness) make consumers' piece of mind a priority. Therapists and practitioners are screened, licensed, background-checked, and fully vetted, and customers can usually see detailed reviews as well as select their preferred gender. Zeel additionally works to keep their therapists safe and comfortable verifying a client's identification, the only on-demand wellness company to do so to date. With safety baked into the process, a home visit from a massage therapist booked on your phone is increasingly seen as a welcome alternative rather than a risky proposition.

A BLOW OUT IN YOUR BEDROOM

Beauty on-demand apps have stepped into the spotlight as well, with approaches as varied as the styles they offer. The popular beauty app StyleBee, for example, books home visits by professional stylists, with each appointment determined by proximity and user profile information. The service Glamsquad, on the other hand, asks users to choose the hairstyle or makeup look they want before booking an appointment, and Glamsquad then assigns an appropriate beauty professional to arrive in as little as 90 minutes. Vênsette is attempting to brand itself as the upscale alternative to its competitors, servicing major events by luxury brands as well as individual appointments for everyday consumers, all with "hand selected and trained" stylists who arrive in uniform.

The freshly funded Chinese app Meirong Zongjian, which roughly translates to Beauty Director in English, books beauticians on-demand who arrive exclusively equipped with high-end French cosmetics. Singapore's Vanitee brings in over 70 bookings every hour, having grown eight times in bookings in just its first three months. And finally there's PRIV, operating in both the U.S. and UK, which takes a much broader approach to beauty services and allows users to schedule appointments for haircuts, blow outs, manicures, massage, workouts, and spray tans.

NAIL CARE BEYOND THE SALON

The on-demand manicure service Manicube launched three years ago and was recently acquired by Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa, which has 29 day and resort spa locations across the U.S. According to Todd Walter, CEO of Red Door Spa Holdings, the companies are working together on, "... creating a new model and standard for the industry, employing top trained and licensed technicians to service consumers at their convenience, when and where they work, or at the spa."⁸ Unlike other on-demand beauty services that come to homes, Manicube specializes in bringing no-hassle manicures and pedicures to the workplace—and also offers barbering services. In the time it takes for others to step out for a smoke break or wolf down lunch at their desk, you can receive a thorough, lovingly administered manicure or enjoy a quick trim by a vetted barber without ever leaving the office.

GlossPod operates in London and Paris, dispatching their professionally trained "nail therapists" to homes, offices, and hotel rooms, and if your manicure chips within 24 hours they'll return to fix it for free. The service ManiCare specializes in provided manicures to those whose ailments are a little more severe than a busy schedule or rough cuticles. Their treatment costs considerably more than a salon visit, but is well worth it for someone bedridden due to injury or illness and

in need of a beauty pick-me-up. Founder Kate Arian actually inspired to create ManiCare while in recovery for her own double lung transplant.

THE HOME GYM, REDEFINED

With on-demand fitness apps and services offering in-home, personalized workouts, customers who might otherwise shirk the gym are quickly losing their excuses for not breaking a sweat. Handstand, Vint, and TRN are some of the leaders in the arena of fitness on-demand, and all promise to deliver top notch fitness professionals to your doorstep at competitive prices. Bi-coastal Provita specializes in home visits from yoga instructors, allowing customers to choose from nine categories, including Ashtanga, Bikram, vinyasa, and pre/postnatal.

Veluxe straddles the line between fitness and beauty, providing yoga and personal training on their list of services right alongside blowouts and updos. Even sports celebrities are getting in on the action, with tennis star Ana Ivanovic having recently launched the on-demand fitness app Trainers4Me to connect customers with personal trainers anywhere in the world. All of these apps provide customers with the opportunity for a guided, professional workout far from the noise and crowds that turn many off a trip to the gym.



Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa



Manicube

The on-demand manicure service **Manicube**, which was acquired in 2015 by famed **Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa**, specializes in bringing the spa experience to the workplace.



Doctor on Demand, backed by British mogul Richard Branson and co-founded by Dr. Phil's son Jay McGraw, provides at-home services in more than 46 states in the U.S.



Doctor on Demand, U.S.

HOUSE CALLS AND VIRTUAL VISITS

Before World War II, about forty percent of all doctors' visits were house calls. Today the rate has plummeted to less than one percent.⁹ Thanks to the growing popularity of on-demand medical services, however, expect that number to rebound. The high overhead for medical offices, the ever-increasing fees of a hospital visit, and an aging population that would prefer not to leave their homes while ill all contribute to the growth of on-demand services. Home visits allow for more time, attention, and individualized care for patients as well as a new potential career path for doctors, nurses, and health professionals: a win-win all around as long as the quality of care stays high and costs stay low.

Heal, one of the more popular apps for medical services on-demand, charges a \$99 flat fee to send a doctor to your door anytime between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., no matter the length of the visit. Pager, available in New York City, charges \$50 for the first visit, \$200 for subsequent visits, and \$100 for a physical. Both services, and others like them, make sure their doctors arrive fully equipped to diagnose ailments, treat injuries, and write (and even fill) prescriptions.

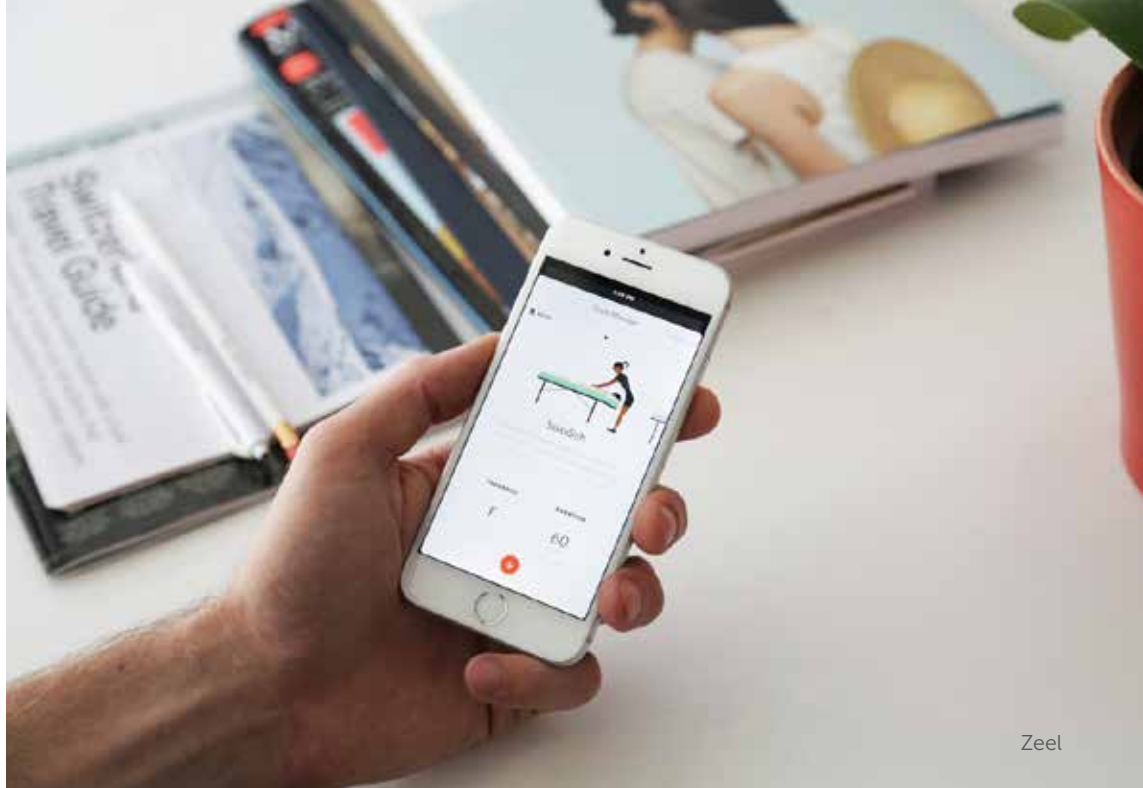
Other services and apps—like Doctor on Demand, Teladoc, MDLive, and American Well—eschew house

calls for virtual consultations on your phone, tablet, or computer. Doctor on Demand, backed by British mogul Richard Branson and co-founded by Dr. Phil's son Jay McGraw, has already recruited more than 1,400 doctors in 46 states. And it's no surprise that in a field as specialized as medicine there are equally specialized teleconferencing options, like Spruce for dermatologists or Maven, which caters exclusively to women.

THE FUTURE

On-demand services for beauty and wellness are a rising tide, lifting all boats. They offer convenience and immediacy for customers, new low-overhead business prospects for entrepreneurs, and the chance for therapists and practitioners to enjoy greater flexibility while also pocketing a higher percentage of their service costs than they would at a spa or salon. These services also seem to be growing alongside traditional spas and salons, with total industry revenue up 5.4 percent in 2014 over 2013, and spa visits hitting a record high of 176 million in 2014.¹⁰ Most people will continue to prefer the luxury and community of a spa or fitness studio, but in a world where every kind of wellness is growing there's room for both on location and at home markets to flourish.

At-home fitness, wellness, and beauty services have long been the province of celebrities, and it's obvious why affordable, easy-to-order versions would be so appealing to the mass market. There are also excellent opportunities for existing spas and wellness providers to partner with on-demand services and expand their offerings.



Zeel

A trend like this, with all winners and few if any losers, is bound to keep growing. These kinds of at-home fitness, wellness, and beauty services have long been the province of celebrities, and it's obvious why affordable, easy-to-order versions would be so appealing to the mass market. The opportunity is also present for existing spas and wellness providers to partner with these on-demand services and expand their offerings, especially for customers passionate about wellness experiences who simply want more. Some spas are already using Uber to supply therapists during hours when they have a practitioner available but not a room. And Zeel recently launched Zeel Concierge, a service that helps hotels and spas book appointments that would otherwise go unfilled due to lack of staffing or last minute requests. Using Zeel Concierge, hotel concierges and spa staff can book appointments at their facilities or hotel rooms using Zeel massage therapists, with Zeel handling availability and payment.

According to Zeel's Hamadeh, another promising area for growth is subscription-based models, such as the company's Zeelot program, which is designed to bring down the cost and raise the value of each massage. And expect to see fitness, beauty and medical services also experiencing similar subscription-led boosts in revenue. New wellness and beauty services are also likely to enter the arena, from on-demand spiritual advisors and acupuncturists to nutritionists

and detox gurus. And more workplaces will seek to take advantage of services like Manicube, improving morale with subsidized, office-wide opportunities to book massage services and workouts. It's estimated that there are well over 100 of these on-demand spa, fitness, beauty, and medicine apps, and as with any startup movement we can also expect consolidation in the future, with those providing the highest quality, most reliable services bound to absorb the competition.

An abundance of stress and a paucity of time are the realities of life in 2015. But people are, above all else, inventive creatures, and the flourishing market of beauty and wellness on demand demonstrates that we intend to feel great and look great no matter the constraints.

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8

Skin Care Gets Seoul-ful

The Korean Beauty Explosion 2.0

Leading Korean companies launch 20 to 30 products per month. Compare that to Western brands, which release ten to 30 per year.



Seoul Retail District

Skin Care Gets Seoul-ful

The Korean Beauty Explosion 2.0



Peach & Lilly, New York

Two life-size cardboard cutouts of fresh-faced and stylishly coiffed South Korean boy band stars welcome guests at the entrance of Nature Republic's downtown Los Angeles store. But Nature Republic is not a music shop, or even a clothing brand. It's a major South Korean skin care and cosmetics line, one of many that is grabbing the attention of global style-watchers because of its quality, affordability, and colorful pop sensibility.

"The Korean beauty industry is driven by some of the most **demanding and knowledgeable beauty consumers** in the world... there is no sign of (interest) fading away."

- Alice Yoon, Peach & Lilly founder

Korean Beauty was a hot trend in 2015 but it's far more than a fad, and in the coming year you'll hear more buzz on these premium, affordable skin-care products—and also more attention paid to the Korean approach to skin care: a multi-step hydrating regimen that rejects today's need for speed in favor of a deliberate and healthy ritual in one's busy day.

In 2016, also expect to see more skin care and cosmetic products marketed to men outside of Korea.

According to a widely-quoted *Euromonitor* study, South Koreans are the biggest spenders on skincare products specifically designed for men. And in an article published in October on *CNN Money*, "Alex Taek-Gwang Lee, a cultural analyst at Kyunghee University, said that men are using more cosmetics because in South Korea, appearance is everything."¹ That sounds a lot like men in other parts of the world—men we predict will follow in the footsteps of women who are making Korean beauty part of their daily routine.

FUELING THE TREND

High Demand = High Revenues

Perfect, youthful skin is a never-ending pursuit and way of life for many Koreans, as is beauty, in general. (It's estimated that per capita, South Korea has the highest rate of plastic surgery in the world.) Meanwhile, South Korean women use, on average, up to 15 beauty products a day.² And according to *Euromonitor*, in 2012, South Korean men spent U.S. \$565, 21 percent of global sales for men's skin care.³ This means men and women are constantly on the lookout for more items to buy, sample, and incorporate into their sometimes-lengthy daily routines. The South Korean beauty industry supplies that demand by churning out a staggering amount of product. How much? Leading companies launch 20 to 30 products per month. Compare that to Western brands, which release ten to 30 per year.

Innovation

High demand, combined with online-savvy consumers who let products live or die by voluminous online reviews, beauty blog posts, amateur videos, and TV beauty shows, means South Korean beauty brands spend an enormous sum on research and development. AmorePacific, for example, one of the biggest of the over 700 South Korean companies, spends U.S. \$100 million a year investigating, testing, and creating new beauty care.⁴ These R&D teams keep a keen eye on their customers' responses, making their products some of the most innovative in the world.

Affordability and Accessibility

Since healthy-looking skin is considered a right in Korea, not a luxury, prices are set with economically diverse consumers in mind. And thanks to the proliferation of online Korean skin care import sites like peachandlily.com, Soko Glam, Memebox and Momomango, consumers outside of Korea have easier access to high-quality, affordable Korean-made products than ever before. In addition, Western brick and mortar stores—along with their accompanying retail web sites—are increasingly getting in on the act too. Korean skin care is now gracing the shelves of the global beauty chain Sephora, discount retailer Target and the trendy-youth and multinational behemoth Urban Outfitters. Peach & Lilly, the company that

distributes Korean beauty products to these retailers, recently partnered with Macy's to open its first brick and mortar store, and they are exploring expansion opportunities for 2016. The store is unique because products are not organized by brand but by steps of the Korean beauty ritual and by benefits: the focus is as much on education as it is on retailing products.

K-Popmania

Never underestimate the power of popular entertainment to drive consumers' choices. Infectious Korean pop music (aka K-pop) and Korean dramas have gained a big following outside of South Korea. Many music and drama stars—with their perfect, glowing skin—endorse beauty products, which draws Western K-pop fans to companies they would have not known about otherwise.

To better understand the K-pop phenomenon outside of South Korea, you only need to look at the growth of KCON, a convention that unites fans and celebrates Hallyu, the South Korean pop culture wave. In its first year the convention was held in Los Angeles and attracted a crowd of over 10,000 people; L.A.'s now three-day event saw a crowd of 58,000 in 2015.

Along with musical performances and fan "hi-fives" (essentially meet and greets, but with less conversation) with their favorite stars, enthusiasts visit demos of South Korean skin care. FuseTV reported that at the August 2015 East Coast event, "Women didn't outnumber men the way you'd normally see at a pop music convention, teens were out in full force, but not the majority, and all racial demographics were represented."

Pop Packaging

It's not surprising that the youth-generated energy of Korean pop culture would find its way into the packaging for beauty care as well. While not all South Korean jars, tubes, and little boxes go out of their way to grab our attention, a lot of it is stylishly designed or bursting with very playful color. Take, for example, South Korean brand Tony Moly's Pocket Bunny Moist Mist, a hydrating face mist infused with fruit extract, packaged in a pink cartoon bunny (Think Sanrio's Miffy). While Korean kids are coached into cultivating good skin habits from an early age, these products are not just designed for children; adults love cute and adorable packaging too.

THE TREND: IT BEGAN WITH A SERIOUS SCRUB...

Korean spa and beauty treatments at spas catering to people seeking popular body scrubs, affordable facials and massage, along with after-hour locations serving the late night party crowd, have been popular for some time. Urbanites in Western cities that have a major Korean population have become hip to the relatively affordable pampering benefits of these Korean spas (or jimjilbang). There is no luxe spa hand-holding here. Visitors have to leave their body shame in the parking lot (Korean spas are traditionally a nude environment), figure out which to hit first, the hot or cold plunge, wonder just what a jade sauna is (pretty and calming, but also calcium- and magnesium-rich), and submit to one of the best exfoliation treatments a human being can seemingly have: for women, a strong, generally older, no-nonsense Korean woman wearing black bra and underpants forcefully scrubbing your body's dead skin off with an exfoliating glove. For even the most worldly spa-jaded visitors, the amount of dead skin (that you may be shown in a pile) after the vigorous—and not necessarily pain-free—scouring can come as a shock. “All of that came off of just me?” one wonders, a bit horrified, while lying naked on the vinyl treatment table. Don't even think about being comforted.

And it's in these spas that many non-Koreans become aware of how different the approach to beautifying is in this culture. It's not necessarily luxurious; the point isn't about making you feel like a pampered princess or prince. It's labor-intensive. It's ritualistic. It can be serious.

...AND CONTINUES WITH THE KOREAN SKIN-CARE RITUAL

The Korean sheet mask that has been received much attention this year is only one step in what is commonly referred to as the “10-Step” Skincare Routine, which is certainly not a hard and fast rule. “Korean women don't think, ‘Oh, I have to do my 10 step regimen,’ ” says peachandlily.com founder Alice Yoon. “Instead, what they think is that flawless, radiant skin that is very healthy is a sign of true beauty. It goes back historically for centuries, where the noble class never went outside in the sun and had porcelain-like skin—healthy skin.

It boils down first and foremost to achieving healthy skin from the inside out. It's not about symptomatically getting rid of acne or fine lines, it's about how your skin health is really doing—your skin's inner environment.”⁵

Whether you follow ten, 12, or even four steps, Yoon emphasizes, “it's all about optimizing the absorption



Many natural ingredients used in South Korean products are unusual to Western consumers (i.e. snail and starfish extracts and bee venom). Products that are fermented convert carbohydrates/sugars to skin-loving enzymes and amino acids, according to Christine Chang and Sarah Lee, co-founders of **Glow Recipe**, a Korean beauty site.

of products.⁶ The issue of 10 to 12 steps is related to the idea of 15 products, etc.

If you've been overwhelmed by terms like "serum," "BB cushion," and "sheet mask," have no fear. There is a lot to learn—and to be inspired by—when it comes to Korean skincare.

THE SHEET MASK WALL

It doesn't matter if you're at a small Korean spa or a giant Jimjilbang-plex, you will inevitably see people relaxing in these destinations' lounge areas wearing the ubiquitous sheet masks. These are catching on among Westerners too, including men, and there are an infinite variety of them. Plus they're usually inexpensive. Walk into a Korean skin care shop, for example, and there will often be an entire wall of masks—"Buy 10, get 10 free" Nature Republic offers—in their colorful thin packages, often promoting a key natural ingredient. But what are they, really?

Masks are cotton, fiber, or sea kelp sheets soaked in a "serum," which is a concentration of ingredients that deals with a specific skin issue. ("Essences," another term to become familiar with if you want to give a Korean skin care regimen a whirl, are essentially the same.) Manufacturers typically suggest the mask be

worn for 20 minutes but many devotees keep them on all night while sleeping.

Even the Ministry of Korean Culture's site, KOREA.net seems overwhelmed by the sheer volume and variety of masks: "It is almost impossible to mention all the different kinds of facial masks available in the market."⁷

WHEN A MASK REALLY IS A MASK

Even with all these options, leave it to the trendsetters in product design to take the basic sheet mask to a whole new level. In the coming year look for more masks that are still made from the same hydrating and nourishing properties of simple ones but are designed to look like animals. Korean brands like Berrisom have created tiger, raccoon, dog, sheep, monkey, cat, and panda masks. (These are popular in Japan as well, where one can make you look like Hello Kitty or even members of the rock band KISS.)⁸

LIKE A FINE WINE—FERMENTATION

Diane Park, beauty analyst at global market research firm Mintel, emphasizes how Korean skincare, overall, uses natural ingredients that adhere to hanbang, traditional Korean medicine using herbal ingredients such as green tea, bamboo, and ginseng.¹⁰

THE KOREAN SKIN-CARE RITUAL



Steps One & Two

Cleansing with **oil-based cleanser** to remove makeup.

Follow by cleansing with **foaming cleanser**.



Steps Three & Four

An **exfoliating scrub** is recommended three to four days a week, such as SkinFood's Black Sugar Scrub.

Next comes an **alcohol-free toner** that gets skin ready to absorb subsequent steps.



Steps Five & Six

A **sheet mask** can be applied a few days a week, as you wish.

A specific problem can be targeted even further with a **serum** and/or **essence**.



Step Seven, Eight & Nine

Eye cream gets applied, then **moisturizer**, and **sunscreen**.⁹



South Korean girl group SISTAR performs at the 21st High1 Seoul Music Awards. Credit: Chung Sung-Jun

Never underestimate the power of popular entertainment to drive consumers' choices. Infectious **Korean pop music (aka K-pop)** has gained a big global following, and many stars endorse beauty products, which draws Western K-pop fans to companies they would have not known about otherwise.

But as the variety of sheet masks proves, there are many natural ingredients used in South Korean products that are new and unusual to Western consumers (snail and starfish extracts and bee venom, to name only a few), and now even using fermented ingredients (an extension of Korean cuisine) is a fast-growing beauty trend. "Fermentation is a process where carbohydrates and sugars are converted to skin-loving enzymes and amino acids, via the metabolic activity of 'good' microorganisms, like lactobacillus," say Christine Chang and Sarah Lee, cofounders of Glow Recipe, a Korean beauty site that emphasizes all-natural ingredients. "Unlike traditional cosmetic processes that utilize high temperatures to blend ingredients and actives, fermented skincare is slowly processed over a period of time that can lead up to several weeks, in a pristine, oxygen-free environment." Bad bacteria and toxins can't survive during the fermentation process, which makes for nutrient-rich, easily absorbed products. In the coming year, look for more fermented ingredients—including fruits, plants, herbs, and yeast—in your masks, serums, and lotions.^{11 12}

BUT LOOK!—COSMETICS THAT SAVE TIME

While 10-step skin ritual has become one of South Korea's most famed self-care exports, other countries are catching on to the multifaceted, time-saving products they've brought to the market as well.

Not only do BB and CC cushions represent South Korean beauty innovation, but they also exemplify the industry's marketing prowess: the products are not that different, yet create a whole new category for skin care mavens to ponder and purchase. BB cushions take BB cream (short for "blemish balm," which combines a foundation, moisturizer, and sunblock) and sets it in a compact with an applicator puff. CC cushions include CC cream, which stands for "color correcting." Knowing a good thing, Clinique, NARS, L'Oreal, Estee Lauder, Chanel now have their own BB and CCs.

MORE THAN BEAUTY: WELLNESS & FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Korean spa imports go beyond beauty products, as hundreds of thousands of consumers in the U.S. and Europe have discovered. Jimjilbangs (spas) in South Korea can be like malls and they combine spa and beauty with fun for the whole family—complete with food courts and karaoke. Some of that has been brought to their Western-city counterparts. Take, for instance, Wi Spa in Los Angeles, which is open 24 hours and includes a play area for kids and full-service restaurant (as many do). Or Chicago's King Spa and Sauna, which calls itself a waterpark, and, in addition to traditional spa services and sauna and steam rooms, features a large, multifaceted indoor pool, complete with sophisticated water jet technology, as well as a kiddie pool with a 30-foot waterslide.



Affordable spa and beauty treatments at Korean spas (or jimjilbang) are popular with urbanites in Western cities. Revenues at **Spa Castle** in the U.S., sometimes described as the Disneyland of spas, were estimated to be more than \$20 million annually in recent years. Many non-Koreans first experience Korean beauty approaches at a jimjilbang.

Revenues at Spa Castle's Queens, NY location, (This Korean mega-spa chain is sometimes described as the Disneyland of spas.) were estimated to be more than \$20 million annually in recent years and the company expects its Texas location to generate \$14 million in 2015. Spa Castle owner Steve Chon has ambitious plans to build a Spa Castle in every state.¹³

LOOKING FORWARD

According to Dr. Craig Kaffert, MD, president of Amarte Skincare, Korean culture dates back to 8,000 BCE, and "... interest in skincare interest has been documented since the earliest Korean writings (700 BCE)."¹⁴ While it is surprising that it has taken the West so long to discover the benefits of Korean beauty products, today the trend is firmly entrenched, and an industry that used to look toward European countries as the great innovators in skin care, is now—finally—turning to South Korea.

As Alice Yoon notes, "The Korean beauty industry is driven by some of the most demanding and knowledgeable beauty consumers in the world who will continue to propel the industry forward." She expects to see beauty innovations coming out of Korea for a long time to come—and notes the numerous emails she receives from retailers interested in the product show there is no sign of demand fading away.

Because of its huge market, large sums spent on research and development and a rich history of innovation, we agree that South Koreans are the ones to watch for the most exciting new trends in beauty—for both men and women—and we can't wait to see what is on the shelves in 2016.

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Healthy Cruising

The Ship of Excess Has Set Sail

Today's "floating hotels" are providing some of the largest, most impressive, comprehensive spa and wellness programming and facilities available in the world.



Rendering credit: Regent Seven Seas Cruises

Healthy Cruising

The Ship of Excess Has Set Sail



Expect a tsunami of innovation that will eventually render the “booze and buffet” cruises of today into the “juice and transform” cruises of tomorrow.

Cruise ship spas came on board in the early '80s with operators like Cunard that brought the iconic Golden Door spa in Escondido, California, aboard its flagship, the QE2, to provide fitness, spa services, and programming, and the innovative company Steiner Leisure Limited heading up hair and beauty services. It was an experiment at first—evidenced by the fact that the spa was located in the bowels of the ship until management could see if passengers would trade in some of the indulgences—like midnight buffets—and partake in healthier activities. Indeed, the answer was a resounding and instant yes! Over the years, spas became bigger and more popular, with broader programming, until every ship at sea now has spa services, and the spa and fitness areas often reside in the ship's prime real estate: front and center with beautiful views.

Just as traditional spas on land became much more than mere pamper-palaces, so, too, did the emphasis at sea change. Consumer demand for healthier travel is now steering the way for a different, complete wellness-focused approach. Wellness businesses are “boarding ship,” expanding at sea to allow travelers to de-stress and keep healthy while they set sail and even once they dock—and the competition is keen.

No longer do rudimentary spas and salons, where passengers can get a quick massage or hairstyle, satisfy travelers. Today's “floating hotels” are providing some of the largest, most impressive, comprehensive spa and wellness programming and facilities available in the world, ranging from full floors to full boats, making for a truly healthy cruise vacation amid the high seas. Spa menus are evolving as well:

FUELING THE TREND

The Ship of Excess Has Sailed as Consumers Demand for Wellness Travel Increases

The time of overindulgence on cruises is passé. More and more consumers are looking to stay well when traveling, whether for business or play—wellness travel is a \$494 billion industry comprised of 586.5 million wellness trips taken by consumers across 211 countries¹—prompting this once indulgent travel experience to undergo a healthy makeover.

Consumer Rise In Cruise Traveling

More people are choosing cruises as their preferred form of travel. For example, the compound annual growth rate in passengers for the global cruise industry is 6.55 percent from 1990 through 2019, driven by “larger capacity new builds and ship diversification, more local ports, more destinations, and new on-board/on-shore activities that match demands of consumers.”² As well, 21 million guests traveled by cruise lines globally in 2013,³ and online site Cruise Critic notes five million visitors come to its site every month to research information on planning cruises. An aging population is likely another major reason.

The Asian cruise tourism market, in particular, has seen double-digit growth over the last three years⁴, with reports stating industry market sizes in China increased by more than 58 percent between 2009 and 2014.⁵ Australia is also seeing a boom: more than one million people took a cruise in Australia in 2014, an increase of over 20 percent versus 2013⁶.

The Marketplace Is Repositioning Around Wellness

The spa and wellness mentality has gone outside the four walls of the traditional spas/salons/fitness areas (think EVEN® Hotels’ comprehensive wellness experience or Delos’ Stay Well room concept), and the same model is happening with cruises. It’s not enough to have a mere spa and salon at sea—to stay competitive, ships boast not only these types of facilities, but enhancements like Zen-like guest rooms, healthful cuisine, and wellness programming both onboard and off.

Brand Expansion

Leading industry wellness brands such as Canyon Ranch and others are also branching out from the

competition by establishing themselves in different arenas to capture guests’ attention.

Several Vessels Are On Deck

Cruise lines of all sizes are expanding; 55 new vessels are expected to enter service through 2020, totaling \$25-plus billion in ocean ship investment.⁷ As well, new lanes will open, including a new path linking the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans at the Panama Canal, scheduled for 2016.

River Cruising Continues to Rise

The recent boom in river cruising isn’t slowing down, proven by the planned 27 river cruisers scheduled to enter service in 2015⁸ (led by Viking Cruises, which will debut 10 new Viking Longships in 2015). What comes with these river cruises are smaller, more intimate ships, entry to new exotic destinations (the Chobe River in Africa, the Irrawaddy in Myanmar, etc.), lengthier amount of time at each port—and a growing clientele that seeks to embrace a more authentic wellness travel experience. In fact, travelers seeking immersion in more local, indigenous cultural experiences and destinations is among the three top trends in luxury travel.⁹ This authenticity can take place either in port or onboard; for example, Viking Cruises, in partnership with Raison d’Etre’s spa and wellness brand LivNordic, offers Nordic-influenced traditions like a sauna, cold pool, and even a snow grotto at sea (complete with snowflakes) on its Viking Star ship.

Increased Additions of Special Interests On/off Cruise Ships Build a Broader Traveler Demographic

Millennials and solo travelers are attracted to adventure (Royal Caribbean’s Harmony of the Seas comes to mind, as it targets younger cruise-goers with exciting elements such as rock climbing, zip lining, and multi-story water slides), as well as immersive, indigenous, culturally engaging experiences—and many cruise lines, particularly river cruises, are taking note. A true sense of authenticity is now playing a major role in many guest experiences, as carriers aim to immerse travelers in the local cultural, culinary, and historical aspects of each destination. Think regional cooking lessons, tastings, lectures, etc. taking place on board, and museum visits, lessons at local schools, philanthropic endeavors, and more while docked.



Rendering credit: Regent Seven Seas Cruises

Cruise ships are tapping into luxury wellness. Examples include a lavish **Canyon Ranch SpaClub** aboard the equally luxurious **Seven Seas Explorer**, set to sail its maiden voyage July 2016.

Seafarers can now return home looking well-rested not only from massage or facials but from high-tech medical spa services, from Botox and dermal fillers to teeth whitening and acupuncture to Ionithermie.

Cruise lines are also connecting travelers with indigenous wellness and adventure activities on shore, such as trekking through the Amazon rainforest or visiting a family farm. From yoga sessions on deck to medical beauty treatments to cooking classes featuring healthy cuisine, wellness travel aboard cruise ships—and destination immersion on shore—are fast becoming major trends with true staying power.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

LUXURY WELLNESS

Steiner Leisure Limited deserves credit for moving the spa and wellness world at sea forward. In 1960, Steiner was awarded its first cruise contract to operate its salon onboard the Andes (the Queen Elizabeth and other transatlantic liners shortly followed); by the '90s, Steiner boasted 50 salons and spas on cruise ships, and the brand created the first spa afloat to feature amenities such as a functional thalassotherapy pool, inhalation chambers, hydrotherapy treatments, and pre-bookable spa programs. Today, the Onboard Spa by Steiner, the maritime division of Steiner, operates onboard 18 cruise lines, with over 150 luxury cruise ships, worldwide, providing health-focused fitness and seminar programs; spa services that range from

advanced technology facials to Traditional Chinese Medicine, medi-spa services (injectables, dermal fillers, and firming treatments), and hair and nail services.

When travel agents were asked which types of wellness travel properties were most appealing to their average client, they reported that a **“health” cruise (with spa, fitness, yoga, etc.) was ranked in the top 10**, along with categories like luxury spa resort, beach-focused property, and authentic yoga retreat.

- Spafinder Wellness 365's
2015 State of Wellness Travel

Cruise ships are tapping into luxury wellness, led by prestigious Canyon Ranch, which has reimagined wellness travel via its alliance with Celebrity Cruises to feature Canyon Ranch SpaClub at Sea facilities aboard 10 Celebrity ships. The collaboration gives cruise-goers access to classes led by Canyon Ranch-trained fitness experts; a selection of spa and salon treatments, including medi-spa facials, Asian therapies, and Canyon Ranch Healthy Feet® services; wellness programs (private nutritional consults, acupuncture, chiropractic therapy) on select ships; lectures, workshops, cooking demos; and spa-themed “AquaClass” accommodations (AquaClass passengers can also take advantage of an exclusive dining room and aquathermal lounge).



Norwegian Cruise Line

Additionally, travelers will find a lavish Canyon Ranch SpaClub aboard the equally luxurious Regent Seven Seas Explorer, which will sail its maiden voyage July 2016. Spa-goers will enjoy exclusive treatments developed by Canyon Ranch in collaboration with Red Flower; the menu of offerings—which draw inspiration from the seven seas of the modern world, with names like Red Flower Japan: A Revitalizing Ritual of the North Pacific and Red Flower North Atlantic Journey—is expected to expand across the fleet. Adding to the allure: hot and cold experiences, an infinity-edge plunge pool, chroma-therapeutic shower, private outdoor deck, full-service salon, and circular staircase that leads to the fully equipped fitness center.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises' 3,875-square-foot suite will make its debut July 2016, impressing even the most discerning travelers with a personal spa retreat.

The inaugural Liv Nordic, created by Raison d'Etre, debuted mid-2015 aboard the Viking Star cruise ship; two more spas are under contract to open on Viking Ocean Cruises ships in 2016 and 2017. The spa is well-appointed; accoutrements encompass eight treatment rooms, including a dual suite with whirlpool; a hair and nail salon; and changing areas with saunas and plunge pools—but arguably the centerpiece is its wet zone. The area captures Nordic health traditions, particularly hot-and-cold rituals, as guests are encouraged to steps such as warming up in the sauna as a precursor to rolling in the 14° F snow grotto (yes, real snow is included). There is also a thermal pool, plunge pools, hot tub, and steam room.

Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines now features a spa suites program, with amenities such as designated spa suites, a spa concierge, mini bars stocked with healthy snacks, and custom fitness programs.

The Norwegian Escape, Norwegian Cruise Line's newest ship, boasts a Mandara Spa, complete with a thalassotherapy pool, sanarium, steam room, salt room, 24 treatment rooms, beauty salon, barbershop, and even a snow room.

The **Norwegian Escape** boasts a **Mandara Spa**, complete with steam, salt, and snow rooms—just some of its many wellness amenities.

Sophisticated, healthy-minded travelers now demand several wellness travel components at the destinations they visit, including voluntourism. **Carnival Corp.’s** charity-conscious **Fathom** brand fuses travel with social responsibility.



Fathom, Carnival Corporation

What’s more, several ships now offer spa admittance as part of the package: For example, Celebrity’s Millennium class ships provide travelers entry to their saltwater thalassotherapy pools, while guests of Costa’s ships can use the Turkish steam room, sauna, and Jacuzzi at no extra charge. The aforementioned Viking Star thermal suite—with its saltwater thermal pool, sauna, snow grotto, and Jacuzzi—is open to cruise guests.

VOLUNTOURISM

Also coming onboard: voluntourism. Reports suggest a new breed of traveler is emerging, one who ranks voluntourism, i.e., properties/tours that do good in local communities, higher than either weight loss or detox programs. Sophisticated, healthy-minded travelers now demand several wellness travel components at the properties and destinations they visit—and this includes voluntourism programming.¹⁰ This type of traveler is often focused on experiences beyond their own personal wellbeing to include others and wellness of the planet.

Opportunities are driven by cruises like Carnival Corp.’s charity-conscious Fathom brand. Fusing travel with social responsibility, the 700-passenger ship, set for its first voyage April 2016, sails volunteer cruises year round from Miami to Amber Cove in the Dominican Republic, affording ship passengers the opportunity to disembark and serve local communities. Activities scheduled for its trip to the Dominican Republic include helping teach English to children and distributing water filters to areas devoid of clean water.

Crystal Cruises is another; the fleet’s You Care, We Care program, offered during Crystal Serenity and Crystal Symphony sailings, features complimentary on-shore volunteer activities, inviting passengers to work with underprivileged children in the U.S., Fiji, or Costa Rica; aid animals in Germany, Norway, and Spain; and more.

FITNESS, ADVENTURE & INDIGENOUS PURSUITS

On the fitness front, active travel company Butterfield & Robinson has scheduled a new river cruise biking program along the Danube; scheduled for 2016, the eight-day biking trip takes place aboard Uniworld’s River Beatrice and leads participants from Passau, Germany, to Budapest.

CroisiEurope river cruise line is another capitalizing on cycling, with biking programs on its Bordeaux and Provence sailings; plans are to expand to Loire cruises in 2016.

AmaWaterways and Backroads have collaborated to combine fitness pursuits (hiking, biking, walking) with river cruising.

The Norwegian Escape keeps exercise enthusiasts entertained with its extensive, three-level ropes course—situated on the top deck, it has 99 elements, one of them a balance beam that stretches out over the side of the ship.

Others: Uniworld Rivers Cruises programs allow travelers to maintain their workout routines with luxuries like a personal trainer, yoga classes, and healthy menus; Royal Caribbean’s inaugural

Zumba cruise, with daily classes led by 130 Zumba instructors, slated for early 2016; and Royal Caribbean International's The Anthem of the Seas and Quantum of the Seas, which boast the Ripcord by iFly skydiving simulator, the first skydiving experience at sea.

Eco-travel Un-Cruise Adventures promotes small group travel and experiences rooted in adventure and appreciation of local cultures, with activities that vary from skiff rides to kayaking to wilderness jaunts.

CULINARY EXPERIENCES

Foodies are well-served on Azamara Club Cruises, which offer a "Cruise Global, Eat Local" guide on select voyages in Asia and Europe. The concept offers curated recommendations to locally owned, locally sourced, and locally popular restaurants around the world.

Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Constellation ship features Blu Restaurant; available to AquaClass guests, this exclusive spa-inspired restaurant caters to wellness enthusiasts with healthy "clean cuisine."

Oceania Cruises' Riviera's Atlantic Horizons and Marina's Passage of the Explorers and Southern Seas voyages recently promoted a two-day Culinary Boot Camp at Sea, a cooking immersion program that accentuates in-depth, intense, and personalized instruction. Oceania Cruises' Marina ship will also feature the Jacques Pépin Cruise, hosted by master

chef Jacques Pépin (who also happens to be the executive culinary director for Oceania Cruises).

August 2016 marks the month of an 11-day all-inclusive, inaugural Balance Food, Wine, and Wellness river cruise chartered and hosted by Balance founder and media personality Deborah Hutton, along with life coach Lyndall Mitchell and wine connoisseur Nick Stock, aboard the Avalon Waterways, Poetry II. As passengers sail from Paris to the French Riviera at Cote d'Azur, they'll enjoy personalized programming and tours of Burgundy and Provence.

MIND-BODY EXPERIENCES

Viking Cruises stimulates the mind by incorporating expert-led lectures on historic and cultural context depending on the destination sailed.

Celebrity Cruises has teamed up with Randi Zuckerberg, a New York Times best-selling author and founder/CEO of Zuckerberg Media, to offer travelers an exclusive Take Care of YourSelfie program to help better balance technology with life. The program includes five spa and fitness experiences, available at the Canyon Ranch SpaClub, and seven shore excursions across the globe.

Others: MSC Cruises a week-long Caribbean cruise devoted to holistic living; Crystal Cruises line plans to introduce a designated Mind-Body-Spirit cruise in 2016.



Foodies are well-served on select cruises, as ships dish up everything from local eating guides to culinary centers to cooking immersion programs. **Oceania Cruises'** two-day Culinary Boot Camp at Sea accentuates in-depth, intense, and personalized instruction.



Harmony of the Seas, Royal Caribbean

Royal Caribbean's Harmony of the Seas targets younger cruise-goers with exciting elements such as rock climbing, zip lining, and multistory water slides.

CRUISING FORWARD

Wellness cruises will continue to set sail in strong fashion, prompted by cruise, spa, fitness, culinary, and other brands jumping on board upon realizing clientele demand for more and more wellness options. Much like the hotel industry has segmented its offerings to include budget, upscale, and luxury hotels, we predict wellness cruises will become their own category within wellness travel, as healthy beach travel, healthy business travel, etc., have already been established.

It wouldn't be surprising to see cruise ships that are strictly about becoming healthier on a cruise; ones that not only emphasize a healthy vacation but offer medical tests and provide the opportunities to become educated about topics like epigenesis and more. And, as some countries gain momentum and move forward with medical advancements such as stem cell therapy, we would not doubt if cruise ships would become places of medical tourism, as well as wellness tourism.

It should be noted, however, that ships are under various jurisdictions depending on where they are in relationship to specific countries and their shores (for example, while a ship may not open its casino when docked in many countries, once it reaches international waters, it is able to do so). This is true as well for medical licensing requirements and the terminology used when describing licensing for medical practitioners onboard a cruise ship. It is entirely possible that you might be receiving Botox or fillers from a doctor from a third-world country while paying prices charged in New York.

We also expect to see continuing reinvention of today's cruise ship design and programming, fueled by increasing consumer demand for all things well, including some unique brand expansions of consumer-packaged goods and service-related brands. For example, it would not be surprising to see weight-loss companies such as Weight Watchers or Jenny Craig, or major outdoor lifestyle brands such as REI, Patagonia, or the rapidly expanding VF Corporation (owner of Timberland®, Lee®, The North Face®, Vans®, and Kipling® brands) consider what the value-proposition may be with health-conscious consumers captivated at sea.

In addition, we believe that the world's oceans—while home to today's largest cruise-liners—continue to be one of Mother Nature's greatest havens for those seeking retreat and reprieve. We therefore predict a tsunami of innovation within and outside the confines of our wellness world that will eventually render the "booze and buffet" cruises of today into the "juice and transform" cruises of tomorrow.

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- 1 Global Spa & Wellness Economy Monitor report, September 2014.
- 2 Cruise Market Watch
- 3 Cruise Forward information hub
- 4 Agility Research
- 5 Euromonitor
- 6 Cruise Lines International Association
- 7 Cruise Lines International Association
- 8 Cruise Lines International Association
- 9 Spafinder Wellness 365's 2015 State of Wellness Travel
- 10 Spafinder Wellness 365's 2015 State of Wellness Travel

10



Workplace Wellness Grows Up

We are moving into a "culture of wellness" and, at more advanced companies, a "culture of purpose." And companies are beginning to see positive results.



Workplace Wellness Grows Up



The shift to a culture of wellness is having a major impact on everyone who is in the workforce as well as on those who work in the field of spa and wellness.

Creating a healthier work environment is far from a novel concept, its roots in Western corporate culture reaching back as far as Boeing's pacesetting non-smoking-workplace policies of the 1980s, and the early-1970s craze for executive gyms and mandated annual physical fitness tests for upper management employees. This new mindset, pioneering in its time, was well summed up by Boeing's then-president Malcolm Stamper, declaring that it is a company's responsibility "to provide the cleanest, safest and most healthful environment possible for its employees." Meanwhile, the U.S. Government in 1976 established the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, which set benchmarks for improving worker and citizen health with its Citizen 2000 and Citizen 2020 initiatives, establishing the potential for a culture of workplace wellness that is already with us in many places, but unevenly distributed (even today, these are still first-world issues). And it will take more than an ergonomic chair and an open-plan workspace to have a significant impact on worker wellness, though these are a perfectly good start.

THE TREND

But workplace wellness is finally growing up, and it is beginning to look more fresh, inviting and—from the point of view of all concerned—worthwhile. This is why workplace wellness is such an important trend to watch.

While the idea of yoga classes at the office, lunch and learn education classes, or subsidized gym memberships is becoming more commonplace, with it comes the



The Average Fortune
500 Company Spends

80%

Of After-tax Profits
On Employee
Medical Costs

"Unwellness" at work
costs the U.S. alone
\$2.2 trillion each year.

recognition that these "cosmetic" attempts haven't really moved the needle on worker's wellness.

In this new phase, we are moving into a "culture of wellness" and, at more advanced companies, a "culture of purpose." And efforts to create a culture of wellness and align workers with their *purpose* are beginning to show the results everyone is seeking: healthier and happier workers, lower healthcare costs, higher productivity, less absenteeism and less turnover.

As Dr. Ken Pelletier, a long time pioneer in workplace wellness, sums up this shift by saying, "We are moving from a goal of increased ROI (return on investment) to one of pursuing ROV (return on value)."

This shift is having a major impact on everyone who is in the workforce as well as on those who work in the field of spa and wellness. And these developments are creating more options for workers and new opportunities for wellness practitioners and educators, as well as establishments that deliver wellness services.

GROWING PAINS

The major challenge is creating a *culture* of wellness within the worksite—coupled with recognition by senior management that integration and an organic sense of holistic wellness are an essential part of a successful and productive work environment. A widely held sense that healthier employees might have a positive impact upon productivity and company success has taken a long time to metastasize into

an all-encompassing set of policies and programs that fuse company welfare to employee wellness. Often, wellness campaigns have centered upon annual checkups or smoking cessation programs for employees in isolation, without making them part of a thoroughgoing emphasis on worker health, satisfaction and productivity. This to some extent has removed workplace wellness from the company culture—as well as making it seem mildly coercive, on a par with compulsory factory-floor calisthenics, with the result that, at best, their effectiveness is blunted and limited, or at worst, they are seen cynically as intrusive corporate overreach.

Today, we are increasingly seeing activities promoting wellness that once took place in the domestic, off-duty sphere—gym visits, walks, yoga, meditation, spa treatments, even gripe sessions and venting spaces—are being integrated into the workplace environment. Meanwhile the resources of the company can be used to lessen other kinds of stress: companies can aid money-worried employees with intelligent financial counseling, thus unburdening their minds at work and increasing their productivity. Company health benefit programs can be sculpted to the needs of individuals and their families, and even benefits like pet health insurance can ease the mind of an animal-loving employee. A more flexible approach to paid time off, maternity (and increasingly, paternity) leave, and on-site childcare facilities can pay off in greater employee contentment, leading to increased productivity. (Continues on page 89.)

FUELING THE TREND

The Current Approach Isn't Working

Expensive workplace wellness initiatives that have underperformed need reconfiguring as part of a wholesale, rather than piecemeal, approach to worker wellness. Many programs developed by human resources departments are "siloed" in isolation from one another, limited in their reach and thus limited in their effectiveness, and more reactive than proactive. (Think weight loss programs rather than healthy food served onsite.) And these programs have yet to make a significant dent in employee engagement. A new survey of U.S. employees conducted by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) and Everyday Health reveals that 87 percent of employees feel disengaged at work. And while more than one half have access to a wellness program, only three out of 10 actually use it, and only one in 10 think it actually improves their health. Currently, the average Fortune 500 company spends an eye-watering 80 percent of its after-tax profits on employee medical costs—and "unwellness" at work costs the U.S. alone \$2.2 trillion each year.

Global Recognition of the Importance of Wellness

The 2014 Gallup-Healthways Global Wellbeing Index measured individuals' perceptions of their own wellbeing based on five elements: purpose, social, financial, community and physical. The results were then categorized as striving, struggling or suffering for each element. Not surprisingly, the Americas

reported the highest levels of wellbeing in three or more categories and Sub-Saharan North Africa and the Middle East/North Africa the lowest, both regions where economic growth has failed to keep up with population growth. One sobering statistic: only 17 percent of the world's population is thriving in three or more categories.

Perceptions of wellbeing are influenced in part by wealth and education, along with stable social structures, such as marriage or domestic partnerships. One of the study's conclusions was that employers should move beyond a physical wellness focus to one that "includes all facets of an individual's wellbeing," and add programs like healthy food options and retirement counseling. The authors of the report also encouraged company leaders to embrace wellbeing habits and participate in wellness programs. Because this was a worldwide study, and to date most worker/workplace wellness programs take place in first world countries, there is hope that a global conversation will begin and wellness will become a reality in more parts of the world.

Need to Attract and Retain

In a hyper-competitive business environment, workers with the right talents and skills, and particularly the incoming, highly health-conscious Millennial generation, have options and will be prepared to exercise them. Companies stuck on the treadmill of old workplace practices will find fewer and fewer

Wellbeing Across The World and By Region (Thriving %)

	Three of More Elements	Purpose Wellbeing	Social Wellbeing	Financial Wellbeing	Community Wellbeing	Physical Wellbeing
World	17%	18%	23%	25%	26%	24%
Americas	33%	37%	43%	29%	37%	36%
Asia	14%	13%	19%	25%	25%	23%
Europe	21%	22%	27%	37%	28%	22%
Former Soviet Union	14%	18%	25%	24%	19%	15%
Middle East & North Africa	13%	13%	18%	24%	22%	21%
Sub-Saharan Africa	9%	15%	16%	9%	18%	20%

Source: Gallup-Healthways Global Wellbeing Index

employees prepared to submit to an unhealthy work culture. In contrast, those employers that are prepared to address commonplace workplace wellness needs in an across-the-board, integrated manner, have one more arrow in their quiver to offer the undecided interviewee—and retain a high performing employee.

Facts That Speak for Themselves

The research from the GWI also estimates that investment in workplace wellness (now \$40 billion globally) will “explode in the next five to 10 years.” (Today, the GWI estimates that only nine percent of the 3.2 billion workers worldwide have access to workplace wellness initiatives, with the U.S. way out in front at 52 percent.) At this early stage, integrated workplace wellness is still very much a first world, corporate phenomenon waiting to “trickle down”.

Some research has shown that a dollar investment in coherently-strategized worker wellness pays back a dividend in increased productivity, and as health-insurance costs have skyrocketed in recent decades, alongside a drop in overall levels of employee wellness, managers have begun to pay greater attention to a much broader array of direct and indirect impacts on worker welfare. A wide range of issues are being addressed, from stress-management and confronting rising obesity rates among a sedentary workforce, to flexible working hours and a healthier workspace, to less remarked-upon phenomena as money-management advice for stressed employees and generous family leave for both parents of newborns.

Stress

An increased understanding of the role that stress plays in both the workplace and the home (and between these two domains) has encouraged greater interest in on-site stress-reduction options such as yoga, meditation, simple “quiet time” spaces and mindfulness. Stress also migrates from home to office and vice versa, and programs that seek to mitigate this have concentrated on ancillary issues such as financial planning and security, a liberalized approach to paid time off (PTO), telecommuting, and family policies concerning more generous and flexible maternity leave and in-office childcare.

In a 2014 study of North America workers conducted by Spafinder Wellness 365 Research, employees

reported on the top obstacles to their work productivity, which were: overall fatigue (55%); job stress (52 percent); not enough time in a day to accomplish tasks (47 percent); poor sleep (45 percent); financial worries (36 percent); family stress (29 percent); management doesn’t understand workload/stress levels (23 percent); and recurring aches/pains/medical ailments (21 percent). While fatigue and job stress were the top productivity killers for employees with and without a corporate wellness program, the “without” were more likely to cite fatigue (61 percent vs. 52 percent) and job stress (60 percent vs. 55 percent).

Economic and Social Forces

Globalization has brought with it a variety of trends that affect workplace wellness: rising economic insecurity and the stress associated with it, combined with shrinking benefits and low workforce engagement; a 24/7 work culture inherited from the boomer generation that does not sit well with the more health-oriented Millennial generation now taking its place in the workforce; the various and sometimes contradictory demands made by different generations of employees. The still-rising presence of women in the workforce is also a significant factor, further highlighting the need to address work-family balance, maternity health, childcare and gender roles in the workplace. Increasingly unhealthy lifestyles (often arising from the sedentary nature of office work) lead to increased, often unsustainable healthcare costs and the resultant need to tackle health issues head-on; and a better educated, more affluent and demanding young workforce whose rising expectations—and unwillingness to remain in one job for too long—are steadily fuelling innovations in workplace wellness.

A growing understanding of what employees want is being provided by forward-thinking wellness providers like Virgin Pulse and Wisdom Works, leading to advancements in the science behind changing unhealthful behaviors and habit

Companies have realized as well that they can hardly preach the virtues of wellness if they are demanding an unhealthful 12-hour workday from their employees.



70%

Of U.S. Offices
Now Have No or
Low Partitions

The old culture of sought-after corner offices has been giving way to an open-office floor plan.



(Continued from page 86.) However, you can't make beautiful music if all your notes are in the wrong order, and the need now is for the discrete and diverse policies already in existence to be unified into a single field-theory of worker wellness, codified and systematized where possible, or shaped to the needs of the individual employee, according to his or her particular needs. Either way, workers don't necessarily have to join a specific program if wellness is seamlessly stitched into the everyday work environment.

ASPECTS OF THE TREND

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT IS KEY

The old culture of sought-after corner offices, resentment-inducing closed doors and hierarchical office-apportionment has for a long time now been giving way to an open-plan, cubicle or partition-based approach to office design, enabling employees to feel part of a team whose members can look each other in the eye as they collaborate. *The Washington Post* has reported that about 70 percent of U.S. offices now have no or low partitions. Like many work trends, this one started in Silicon Valley, with Google, Yahoo, eBay, and others leading the charge. Facebook's Frank Gehry-designed workplace may be the state-of-the-art in this area, a 430,000 square foot open space that can house 2,800 employees. Those who find they need relief from co-workers can find it in the nine-

acre garden on the roof of the building.

Efforts are also needed to mitigate the ill effects of the work environment, guaranteeing worker health and safety above all, avoidance of "sick building syndrome," the prioritization of safety and the minimization of occupational hazards.

HEALTHY CHOICES = HEALTHIER EMPLOYEES

Tech giants like Google, Facebook, and Twitter are also leading the charge when it comes to feeding their employees as many as three square—and healthy—meals a day. But smaller companies like Yammer, StumbleUpon, DOMO, and Zynga also have free cafeterias or catering. Deloitte's office building in Amsterdam, known as "The Edge"—dubbed "the smartest building in the world" by *Bloomberg Business*—takes it a step further: you can use an app to order a dinner recipe, and a bag of fresh ingredients will be ready for you when you leave for home.

WELLNESS HOW YOU WANT IT

The 2014 Spafinder Wellness study also found that if businesses want to get workers engaged with, and stick to, new, healthy behaviors, they need to provide them with access to a broader range of fitness/wellness activities that go beyond a traditional gym membership.

The survey found roughly nine in 10 employees who tried a new fitness/wellness activity felt inspired to continue it on a consistent basis (86 percent), plus, try other healthy classes/activities (93 percent). Over 90% returned to the new activity, with 33 percent continuing it regularly and of those that made it a regular health regime, 85 percent said it made them feel better physically; 72 percent indicated it made them mentally healthier/less stressed; and 38 percent said they were more productive and happier at work.

However, the survey also found corporate wellness programs are not doing enough to encourage employees to experiment with new classes/activities. Employees in corporate wellness programs were only modestly more likely (64 percent) to have ever been gifted/given free fitness or wellness activities than employees in companies without one (56 percent).

THE END OF HIERARCHIES

The Nevada-based online footwear-fashion company Zappos recently eliminated job titles and traditional manager roles, shifting instead to “holacracy.” The move required employees to adopt an entire new vocabulary and paradigm of work (codified in the company’s “holocracy constitution”). Hierarchies are giving way to the self-organizing teams working in unison towards a common goal.

THE PRIVATIZED COMMUTE

The daily commute—the ungoverned zone between work and home—can offer up its own smorgasbord of horrors and anxieties: delays, discomfort, bad weather, the whole “hell is other people” syndrome. All of these contribute as heavily to worker stress in one hour as a badly designed office can do in eight. To offset this phenomenon, companies—again led by Silicon Valley—have stepped in with their own transportation solutions. Private buses decked out in company colors and logos can be seen ferrying employees around town and to and from (and within) the company campus.

NON-STANDARD WORKING HOURS

The conventional eight-hour day is slowly dying as telecommuting from home or the road becomes more widespread. Workfront’s annual State of Enterprise Work report found that 82 percent of office workers log into work outside of standard business hours during a typical work week; more than half (52 percent) log in every day. Weekends tell the same story, with 72 percent checking work or work email on some weekends and 39 percent logging in every weekend. Forward-thinking companies are beginning to address the problems associated with this growing work/life imbalance: more stressed employees, less productivity and more sick days.



More companies realize that worker health and a 12-hour workday are irreconcilable. Workaholicism, overwork and their milder variants, are problems that can be dealt with through approaches like mandated vacation time and encouraging employees to “unplug” from work once office hours are over.



More companies around the world see the wisdom of time-off concepts offered in Europe (four weeks to a year). Others are offering perks like unlimited PTO (paid time off) and extended parental leave.

EXTREME LEAVE

More and more companies are offering perks like unlimited PTO (paid time off) and extended parental leave, particularly in the forward-looking, ultra-competitive tech industry. Netflix, Eventbrite, Ask.com, and Evernote already offer unlimited PTO policies, but even companies like General Electric and the Virgin Group are gradually catching on.

The Seattle Times recently reported on the parental leave trend, highlighting companies that far surpass the requirements of state and federal law, including Hilton Worldwide (two weeks paid leave, which is unusual for the hospitality industry), Accenture (16 weeks paid leave), Microsoft (20 weeks paid leave), and Netflix (unlimited paid leave for both parents for a year after a birth or adoption). Some even offer cash bonuses to mothers-to-be for maternity clothes and baby gear.

Persistent immersion in the work culture is also more often seen as damaging to the worker first and to the company shortly thereafter. Workaholicism, overwork and their milder variants are problems that can be dealt with through approaches like mandated vacation time and encouraging employees to “unplug” from work once office hours are over. More and more companies realize that worker health and a 12-hour workday are irreconcilable.

THE FUTURE

Workplace wellness is growing up but companies that embrace these new philosophies and approaches towards workplace wellness still remain the pioneering exception rather than the rule. As of now, conceiving worker wellness as an integrated set of ideas is still a first-world phenomenon. However, there is a growing realization that the profit-maximizing business model cannot be lasting, useful or even morally acceptable as long as it doesn’t take into account the human aspect. The upcoming Millennial generation, as it prepares to take its place in the managerial tier, is not as content merely to accept these things as preceding generations have been, and their increased presence in the workforce will drive change and innovation.

As more employers come to understand that the welfare of their companies is intricately tied in with the health of the workers they employ, we will see the steadily increased linkage of workplace policies and worker wellness. And there is no shortage of clear financial inducements. For example, one study presented at the Global Wellness Summit showed that companies nurturing a culture of health, by specifically focusing on the wellbeing and safety of their workers, have outperformed the stock market by a factor of 2.3:1 from 2000-2015. The companies that fail to offer wholesale, holistic solutions to wellness—

by paying mere lip-service to notions of employee wellness, or providing superficial solutions that fail to address real worker needs and issues in real time—will find themselves losing valuable, motivated employees to those companies that do offer such advantages.

We will gradually see the increased prevalence of the across-the-board approach to worker wellness, beginning with preventative approaches to problems that need never arise if addressed early, thoroughly and intelligently enough (stress, diet, comfort, restfulness, work-life balance etc.). Stale, self-destructive and outdated paradigms like the workaholic 70-hour week, the miserly allotment of vacation-time (is two weeks ever enough?) an inflexible approach to working hours, sick time, maternity leave (and paternity leave), user-hostile workspaces and coin-slot snack machines instead of healthy food options, will all soon enough be seen as counter-productive and self-defeating not only to employee wellness and welfare, but as an active threat to a company's bottom line, and to its ability to attract and retain the best workers. More companies around the world will see the wisdom of time-off concepts offered in Europe (four weeks to a year). Ideally, such innovations, broadly and intelligently applied, will drive healthcare costs downwards, increase employee wellbeing and

serve as a model for the future relationship between work and wellness.

Above all, in response to the needs of more health-conscious employees, forward-looking employers have begun to take more seriously the notion of work-life balance. People everywhere want a healthy work environment, including comfortable and ergonomic furniture in a non-hierarchical office layout. They want aspects of their home life, like healthy eating options and the chance for exercise and relaxation, available in the workplace as well. This has encouraged the gradual, holistically based interlacing of wellness maintenance inside and outside the worksite.

And all of these developments will create new opportunities for wellness practitioners and educators, as companies seek to hire yoga and meditation instructors, nutrition and stress-reduction specialists, massage therapists and more.

Workplace wellness is growing up and finally the people it was meant to affect—employees—will reap the benefits.

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If businesses want to get workers engaged with healthy behaviors, they need to provide access to a broader range of wellness activities that go beyond the traditional gym membership. In addition, a culture of wellness goes beyond physical health and includes financial issues and social wellbeing.

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