



# Industry Briefing Papers 2016

## EUROPE: GERMANY

### 1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to spa, wellness, wellness travel or well-being?

It is the sheer size of the industry unfolding right now, before everyone's eyes. Wellness becomes a staple part of your leisure time, of your holidays. In the German speaking areas of Europe, it is rather wellness people speak of than Spa.

One particular word does come to mind, though, and that is Kneipp. This hot-and-cold water treatment, dating back to the 18th century, was long considered outdated and old folks stuff, and it now sees an amazing revival, creating great results, truly measurable, with a minimum of effort. Quite ecological, too.

Like Finland claiming the Sauna as part of its own wellness heritage, Kneipp may once again become a signature treatment for Germany.

### 2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think is the most important development in your country for each of the following wellness sectors:

#### Spas:

It is a word people get accommodated, too, mainly from staying at one when travelling to hotels and resorts, and it is clearly connected to personal luxury. Be it an urban Day Spa or a destination featuring a branded Spa, the perception will be of a high end experience. This move to a higher level of quality softens the way for better equipment and hard ware investment, and highly trained, skilled staff, working on a level clients expect when paying big Euros.

#### Beauty:

Beauty has been the little sister of Spa here, or so to say, still there is development to be seen, too: More brands working with natural materials, and the first avant-garde ones crossing the line to curing and even healing properties, with Voya being a great example.

#### Fitness:

Fitness has been around at all times, recent trends point to the monitoring of fitness. Rather than waiting for results to show at some future point, wearables instantly

create a data sheet of your most recent fitness status. This in return points to a higher level of personal responsibility for your own health than ever before.

#### **Nutrition:**

Presently, every discussion about wellness is dominated by vegetarian and vegan statements. The number of those doing without meat is sky rocketing, with the food industry following suit. The trend points to conscious choices for non-meat, and not towards a cover up, with meat substitutes. Even traditional meat manufacturers will add items such as vegetarian cold cuts to their sales portfolio.

#### **Wellness Tourism:**

Wellness tourism is growing at twice the pace as the ordinary travel is doing right now, with the majority of tourists seeking the Destination Spa. Branches of wellness tourism, such as medical travel, have already been established, on a much smaller scale, though, for beauty surgery and dental corrections. It presently shows that the more traditional wellness weekend is growing into a full flung holiday more and more, and into being a family oriented event, from earlier notions of a romantic getaway.

#### **Wellness Communities or Real Estate:**

Only very scarce in Europe, or at least visible to us, will we see the wellness estate or property; this is more often connected to tourism. It certainly makes a sales argument for a property to see, and hopefully, owners will invest in their own private Spa. Asia has known the Club Spa open to tenants in a house for quite some time, we have not seen a true growth of these here.

### **3. Our theme this year is “Back to the Future.” What do you feel is your country’s most significant contribution to what is now a global wellness economy?**

Kneipp: As already described before, this old, and ( by now well examined) treatment has made its way from the Bavarian mountains to mainstream. Created by a priest, named father Kneipp, it comprises the use of hot and cold water splashes from a hose - and buckets in old times- to spur blood circulation, nervous and lymphic system improvement, detox and other curing effects.

Long confined to his native Bad Wörrishofen, with “Bad” translating into “Spa” (!), this treatment has seen the biggest revival ever. A proper institution has been founded, the Kneippianum, committed to research and future development of new applications.

The co called “Aufguss”, which basically stands for a water pour. It is connected to the finish Sauna, but while in Finland water will be poured onto the hot stove, the Aufguss in Germany has developed into a part of your sauna walk all by itself: The therapist will announce the next Aufguss, and visitors will rush to the room. His job now is to put up a kind of mini-show, swirling towels dipped in fragrance infused

water, dispersing cool water, explaining the effect of a herbal infusion he may be using and so on. This quite entertaining ritual, re-occurring on a regular base like once an hour, is very popular with sauna visitors.

Somehow it hardly made it to countries outside Europe, and remains completely unknown in Asia and the USA. It is very recent that tourists from these countries have made that new experience here and are now beginning to spread the word. Personally, I find it a source of the much needed fun. When it comes to talking about Spa and wellness, it seems that treatments and visits altogether may have a rather sober note, while one global source of wellness at all times has been good humour. Why not have a laugh in the Spa?

#### **4. What do you feel is the biggest challenge in your country when it comes to growing the wellness economy?**

Up to now, this industry has been pushed forward by private entrepreneurs who ventured into wellness when no institution really did. These businesses must be protected, and not be inhibited by a plethora of regulations.

The more wellness and Spa become a part of democracy (and demographics), the more local and state policy have to get involved, there are no two ways about it. This can be a blessing, by making wellness an integral part of a country's health system. It paves the way to better funds, for more people to benefit. It may turn into a curse, though, whenever well-meant legislation makes it increasingly hard to operate your business

#### **5. While no answers are right or wrong, we would like to know what you feel is the difference - if any - between the terms/concepts of "wellness" and "well-being" in your country.**

The term wellbeing has a matching translation into German: Wohlbefinden. It is made up of a number of factors which have to come together - given the right balance they create your status of well being: Once all the physical, mental and spiritual elements are lined up perfectly, you as a person can experience a high level of Wohlbefinden.

Wellness, on the other hand, is a word creation not really translating into our language. It has sunken in totally, though, and now is seen as a part of German vocabulary.

The difference to wellbeing is clear: While the latter is a status, wellness is the vehicle, the means to get there. It comprises all elements needed for that perfect status, and in German is not to be mixed with the word Spa: The Spa stands for one more instrument, a detail and an instrument to support wellness.

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