

EUROPE: HUNGARY

1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to wellness or wellbeing?

Innovation: genetic and molecular biology science research based therapies are currently making news – Hungary is traditionally strong in medical and balneological research and some of the best universities are dealing with this topic. Hungary has a new innovation support system and this activity is supported by the EU funds, the biggest operative program of the national development plan. Héviz has launched a new mud product line based on its really unique natural thermal lake and other spa product lines are also under development.

2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think are important developments in your country for each of the following:

Spas: Spas with pool areas are built even for 3 stars hotels in the country but it is still rare to see a spa separately from a hotel or public bath.

Wellness Tourism: There has never been recession in this segment in Hungary and more and more hotels have built or transformed to wellness hotels. The number of treatment-users is also growing but more than half of the wellness customers still do not use any treatments.

Wellness Living Communities/Real Estate: Wellness living communities are not characteristic, but there are some initiatives in Budapest mostly based on fitness.

Beauty: In Hungary the beauty industry has an own network. The beauty industry continues to expand and men are gaining increasing attention. Eco friendly salons can offer a new line in hair care. The number of bio products is growing.

Fitness: Sports are traditionally important in Hungary, according to the good Olympic results (more gold medals than in much bigger countries). Fitness is more and more important for the Hungarians and number of middle aged people visiting fitness centers is increasing.

Nutrition: Manufacturers started to create healthier varieties of their products, including functional products helping to create health. The state tries to make effort to maintain good eating habits. Unhealthy products have to pay more tax. Canteens have to use less sugar and salt and more vegetables.

3. How would you describe the state of workplace wellness in your country?

Apart from the international companies the topic is not characteristic but there is a strong program for workers from the national health insurance system and the ergonomic standard is traditionally high and controlled by the state.

4. What has been the general attitude about investing in spa/wellness in your country in 2015? Specific examples?

According to the statistics the wellness hotels customers and their income are growing they are often working full with a healthy ratio between foreign and domestic customers. This fact can help the investor's decision.

The government has finished the modernization of the traditional thermal bathes in more than 50 cities. This has made the investment cheaper - a smaller indoor spa is enough for a wellness hotel.

Hungary has nice new wine spa hotels in Tokaj, Balaton and Villany but there are plans in Eger and in other places. There are traditional spa towns which are waiting for investors for 5 start hotels, including Heviz.

5. Whose responsibility is it to create a well world?

Everybody has to work on it including sap and wellness experts. This industry has possibility to influence people make them more health-conscious and to reduce stress.

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