



THE AMERICAS: UNITED STATES

What is making news in your country when it comes to spa and wellness?

The big news is that the U.S. spa industry is returning to a period of growth. According to ISPA's 2013 U.S. Spa Industry Study by PwC, all five key indicators (revenue, spa visits, locations, revenue per visit and employees) experienced an increase for the first time since 2008.

In particular, revenue hit an all-time high of \$14 billion in 2012 which is a 4.7% increase over the previous year (and pacing ahead of inflation). Spa visits were up 2.8% and revenue per visit was up 1.8%. Overall, the story is one of steady growth after a difficult three years. More than half of spas are using social media to increase buzz about their promotions and offerings. Additional efforts to stimulate demand include using 30-minute treatments, loyalty programs, spa party packages and online options to book treatments.

As regards the consumer audience, we have seen a healthy increase in the male spa-going population. ISPA's most recent 2013 Spa Consumer Snapshot Initiative conducted by PwC shows that 47% of the spa-goer population in the U.S. are men, up from 31% in 2006.

What is happening in your country when it comes to wellness tourism and/or medical tourism?

People have been traveling to the United States for cutting-edge medical treatments for decades. A McKinsey & Co. report from 2008 found that between 60,000 to 85,000 medical tourists were traveling to the United States for the purpose of receiving in-patient medical care.

Please give us one sentence to describe the latest developments in your country for all spa categories:

The International SPA Association is recognized worldwide as the professional organization and voice of the spa industry, representing health and wellness facilities and providers in more than 70 countries. Membership encompasses the entire arena of the spa experience, from resort/hotel, destination, mineral springs, medical, club and day spas to service providers such as physicians, wellness instructors, nutritionists, massage therapists and product suppliers.

Several trends our members are seeing include the farm-to-spa movement; spas are sourcing locally grown produce to incorporate into their spa treatments. Thirty minute treatments or shorter are also popular as the spa-goer's time continues to be limited. Spa-goers are choosing to visit spas in a non-conventional way now as well. One may choose to visit a destination spa for a long weekend rather than stay for the week, and one may choose to spend the whole day at a day spa rather than choosing just one or two hour long treatments. Resorts are not only catering to out-of-town guests; locals are now able to buy seasonal memberships at these resorts just down the road.

What has been the general attitude about investing in the spa/wellness arena in 2013?

The market is ripe for investment and shows an optimistic economic turnaround. Spa locations showed a .5% increase in 2012 and, by all accounts, this slow growth trend promises to continue in 2013. ISPA has seen positive signs of growth through an increase in Spa Under Development memberships over the past year as more new spas prepare to open their doors.

Looking back at the past four decades of spa and wellness, what would you consider “a defining moment?”

More than 20 years ago, a group of spa professionals got together to form an association focused on education, networking and industry advocacy. The formation and growth of the International SPA Association has led to an advancement of the spa industry in the United States as an accepted, respected profession and business. ISPA continues to provide crucial resources for this industry worldwide, through invaluable educational and networking opportunity, promoting the value of the spa experience and speaking as the authoritative voice to foster professionalism and growth.

SUBMITTED BY:

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