

Spa Owners Tell it Like it is

BY ANNMARIE MARANO

David Simon, CEO, Chopra Center at La Costa, San Diego California



1. What are the top trends in treatments and how does that affect your design?

For us, our top trend in our spa is to make the spa experience a healing experience and allow the guest to be able to take something home with them. They want to be able to continue with what they've experienced and learned at home. And therefore, our design is affected by that trend, in that we allocate more space for education. We find some square footage where we teach, rather than treat. Through nourishing input from the five senses, we awaken the body's natural healing processes. We make sure that everything a guest sees, hears,

touches is all very nourishing and beautiful.

2. How quickly do trends come and go? In our experience with the spa industry, everyone is seeking authenticity but don't seek the resources to accomplish that. They try to jump on the bandwagon but don't really understand what it's all about, so they quickly move on. We want the experience at Chopra to be deep and lasting. And so we want to enhance what we already have, rather than add bells and whistles.

3. What do guests expect from their spa experiences nowadays? a. They expect to be relaxed. b. They expect to be affected in some way that is more lasting. For example, if they

Tracey Latkovic, corporate director of sales & revenue management, Miraval



1. What are the top trends in treatments and how does that affect your design?

Miraval has been the quality-setter for many years. Just as we originated the hot stone massage, we are now setting the standard in a luxury experience with a total environmental immersion. The New Outdoor Treatment Garden at Miraval will offer unique, indigenous spa treatments, while evoking the experience of a fragrant, private, botanical oasis. This unique addition to the Miraval Spa will give guests the opportunity to access Miraval's award-winning spa services while relaxing in natural fabric, open-air structures that offer

views of the Arizona desert through lattice windows and wooden double-doors.

2. How quickly do trends come and go? Our focus is on a quality luxury immersion experience.

3. What do guests expect from their spa experiences nowadays? Guests expect to feel differently when they are with us. It is about the total person from the inside out. With a day spa available in every neighborhood, the expectations from a destination spa are different: top therapists, unique treatments and a total experience that leaves the guests feeling renewed and refreshed.

Sandra Mendez, operating partner of White Tea Spa, NYC



1. What are the top trends in treatments and how does that affect your design?

If you look at spa menus lately, many have some sort of regional additions to the services. Napa has grape seed peels, Hawaii has black sand scrubs. White Tea Spa is located smack in the middle of busy and urban Union Square and the Meat Packing District which is now the new "it" spot for the rich and fab.

When we came into this spot we wanted to give a healthy nod to both walks of life. We used a lot of fabric, as well as warm enveloping gold and bronze tones to soften the feel but the art work consists of these amazing graffiti-esque paintings of women. We follow that idea right into our menu. Our treatments are all real, no nonsense protocols — less fluff and

more treatment. But the service descriptions are very cheeky, so I guess you could say our regional addition was a little NYC spunk.

2. How quickly do trends come and go? I don't think of them as trends so much as innovations. As a student and a practitioner of health and beauty, I really look to incorporate the new ideas more than toss aside older yet still effective treatments. I'm sure there are a million products out there for depuffing eyes but good old chilled tea bags will do the trick every time and unlike many newer products won't dry out the surrounding skin.

3. What do guests expect from their spa experiences nowadays? They are SO informed now! I remember 11 years ago

when I started in this business, I was in a medi-spa of a plastic surgeon in the Philly metro area. We would explain and re-explain and see them for a second consult before they decided on anything. Now they come in asking what wavelength my IPL unit has. I'm stunned. But what they want and need are people who are qualified as well as good clinicians who keep abreast of new advancements with full knowledge of the pros and cons for each skin type.

4. What qualifies as a successful spa experience and what design elements make for a successful spa experience?

For us and our clients, it's the ability to pretend that the city is further away than it is — and it's truly a challenge. White Tea Spa is located on 14th and 6th and literally in a week's time a good majority of our city's 8 million residents will pass by here either by car, bus, subway, or foot...that equals loads of noise.



Adding to that we have 40' of windowed store front. Our solution was to add curtains, curtains, and more curtains to block out the visual of the city. We used three panels of sheers to hide the city but allow for light. To keep the tone warm even at the height of the day we used two panels of cream sheers and the interior panel is a gold taffeta with a great sparkly sheen. **BD**