

African Living Spa



African Living Spa Newsletter, Winter 2010, Vol 1: No 2

10 Spa Trends for 2010

Ten compelling spa trends for 2010 were recently put forward* by the president of SpaFinders, Susie Ellis. In our conversation with Susie closing out 2009 she recognized that the African Living Spa® was incredibly aligned in satisfying these emerging trends.

"It would be a pleasure to work with you and help share the unique experience you have created," she said.

We start the year with this regular newsletter from the African Living Spa by highlighting how we measure up to 10 traveler expectations. After five years since we began this project we now know why those we have touched are so moved and overwhelmed by their healing results.



① The Price Is (Still) Right

Looking for an equal exchange: experience and value.

COWS, COWS, COWS. We have no set fees. At the African Living Spa, according to Maasai Land tradition, payment is offered at the conclusion of the treatment. The patient offers payment in the form of cows according to how satisfied they are with the service and the results they experience. In this way pricing will forever remain of value.

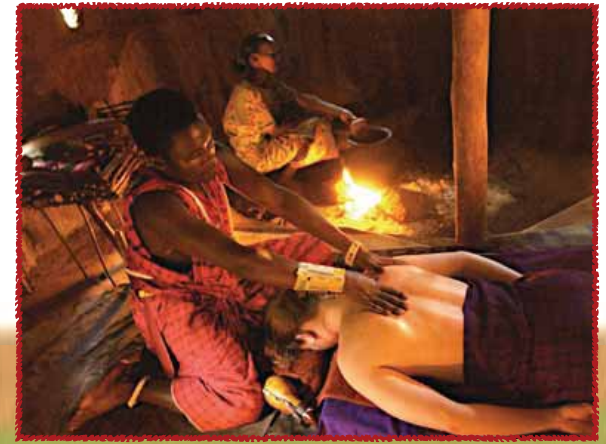
② Wellness Tourism Wows

Make room for "wellness tourism," a new term describing travel across borders for preventive services, diagnostics, spa and well-being vacations. The concept dramatically broadens the appeal of the medical tourism model (which has suffered from its narrow association with plastic surgery).

At the The African Living Spa an extraordinary alternative medicine option is under development called Personal Journey. In various ways it rivals the better known existing wellness systems of South Asia, China, South East Asia, the Pacific. The goal is go beyond basic rest and recuperation and engage in a journey back to restorative and stress-relieving encounters with indigenously-based medicinal and wellness treatments in a wide variety of settings.

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10 Spa Trends for 2010

③ Stillness is a growing craving

In response to an unprecedented amount of sensory overload, noise, and media stimulation we crave stillness. We're wired to the gills, spending nearly all waking hours in front of computer screens—bombarded, texting, tweeting, clattering away—now even on airplanes. From totally silent massages/treatments or using white noise and subtle nature sounds instead of music; to silent walks, hikes, and dinners to an upswing in meditation offerings and programs, spas will help clients move from busy-ness and overload to quiet, to stillness. "Sounds" awfully good.

Silence is an important part of the African Living Spa wellness system. Modern technology is never used, but if present is not seen. Solitude with natural sounds, aromas, and energy preclude any need for it. Indigenous wellness systems integrate only what is naturally present: the sound of wind, birds chirping or branches rustling, even the distant cow bell or bleating goat.

④ Goodbye, pampering. Hello, prevention.

Rather than replacing established industry concepts like pampering and wellness, prevention is a sharp (and smart) refocusing of the conversation.

Traditional medicine typically features prevention over cures. Allopathic medicine typically emphasizes cure.

⑤ The Hybrid Spa

An era of the spa/fitness/integrated-health-center/hospital/spiritual-retreat/wellness-center/beauty-clinic is on a serious upswing. It's one integrated human body, after all, and the "pure" spa is on the decline, while the hybrid spa is busy inventing new you-name-it plugged-in hybrid models.

Our Vision: To be a center of excellence in the design, development and promotion of traditional medical services as complimentary to the modern (western) health care services.

Our Mission: Provide high quality alternative medicine with traditional healthcare services through the development of healers.

⑥ Not "going to," but "belonging to" a spa

No longer a place where you infrequently "go" for the occasional treatment, spas are being creatively re-imagined as places of "belong."

We create a state of belonging to one's senses. The African Living Spa at Gibb's Farm is an experiential design of space which provides for relaxation choices in areas of the guest cottage, gardens and estate forest. Ample cottage capacity encourages friends to join others in their accommodation. A sense of belonging requires authenticity. Meanwhile trendy and modern spas are 'placeless' and could be located anywhere.

⑦ The Online Spa were consumers are online searching for spas, and information.

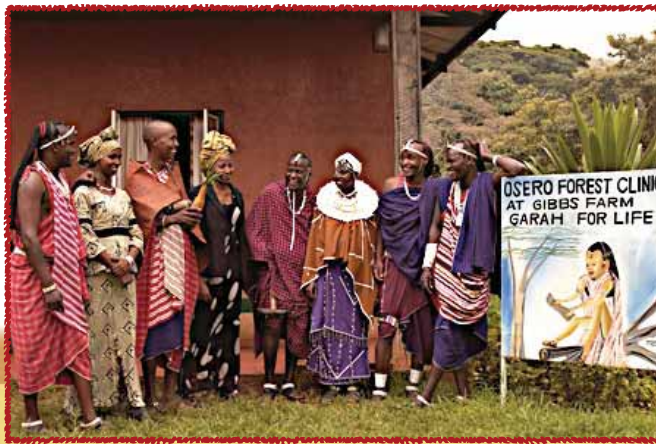
The African Living Spas website is vast, containing considerable on-line data. Some have said there is simply too much information there - a nice challenge in that we must continue to revise and format to make the information yet more accessible.



⑧ Authenticity, tradition, and that magical spa experience that also offers true results.

Our ten guiding principles define wellness as a lifestyle that focuses on physical and mental well-being. The spa concept continually innovates indigenous paradigms for optimal wellness through applying the following ten guiding principles:

- Indigenous remedies make up our uniquely African treatment experiences.
- Therapies and treatments deeply touch each individual, both emotionally and physically.
- Meditative environments offer seclusion and respite from the stress of life.
- Integrated medicine for complementary healthcare: organic indigenous medicines, allopathically and botanically catalogued, are featured.
- Local lifestyle fitness programming emphasizes forms of outdoor exercise.
- Lifestyle counseling focuses on nutrition, ingredient purity and native healing philosophy.
- Space is created for personal contemplation and opportunities for social participation.
- A multitude of available experiences at Gibb's Farm revel in the vitality of indigenous spaces and materials.
- Programs for traveler are personalized.
- An enthusiasm for superior standards of wellness education and availability of information is our abiding guideline.



⑨ Scary and Silly Spa Stories Drive Evidence, Science, and Standards

The fallout from heavily publicized spa horror stories—and the recession-driven consumer insistence on no-gimmick treatments with real, measurable benefits—will quicken a rising industry trend: the demand for evidence-based therapies, stricter industry standards, and greater transparency/resources to help spa-goers separate the wheat from the chaff. Facts, evidence, and science will support the treatments.

We are Tanzania's first integrated medical clinic. Like its better-known counterparts such as Ayurvedic and Chinese Medicine, African indigenous healthcare has a solid scientific basis, but little tradition of collaboration with allopathic medicine. Osero Forest Clinic has set out to initiate such a collaborative approach to community wellness.

The purpose of the project is to offer alternative solutions, to create a bridge between Maasai traditional medicine and allopathic medicine, to provide integrated health benefits to nearby communities, to build confidence in the scientific collaboration of traditional and western medicine thereby preserving the indigenous knowledge by mainstreaming it.



⑩ Diversity at a Tipping Point

Offerings that cater to diverse groups' needs and wants have become very important. Set to explode are events that cater to the special needs of couples, relationships, parent/child, silver age.

Alternative health solutions is a primary attribute of the world's indigenous health systems. When fully connected to themselves, their surroundings, those around them, and the natural healing power of the elements, the African Living Spa creates the context where travelers can naturally retune and reconnect. At the The African Living Spa an extraordinary alternative medicine option is under development called Personal Journey. Multiple journeys have been developed focusing primarily on "relationship wellness," catering to affirming one's life and well-being: mother/daughter, life-long women friends, couples, relationship issues that may include siblings or couples.

Celebrating Celebration

Honoring special occasions like the big 'Os', anniversaries, weddings, retirement parties, is becoming very important.

Gibb's Farm has is a perennial wedding and anniversary destination. Choice of gardens, indigenous cultures and cottage settings make the choices and planning easy. A favorite cottage is even called the Wedding House in honor if Margaret and Jim Gibb wedding tree at the front door, planted on their special day over sixty years ago.