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顶级异国风情SPA Top Exotic Spa in Thailand

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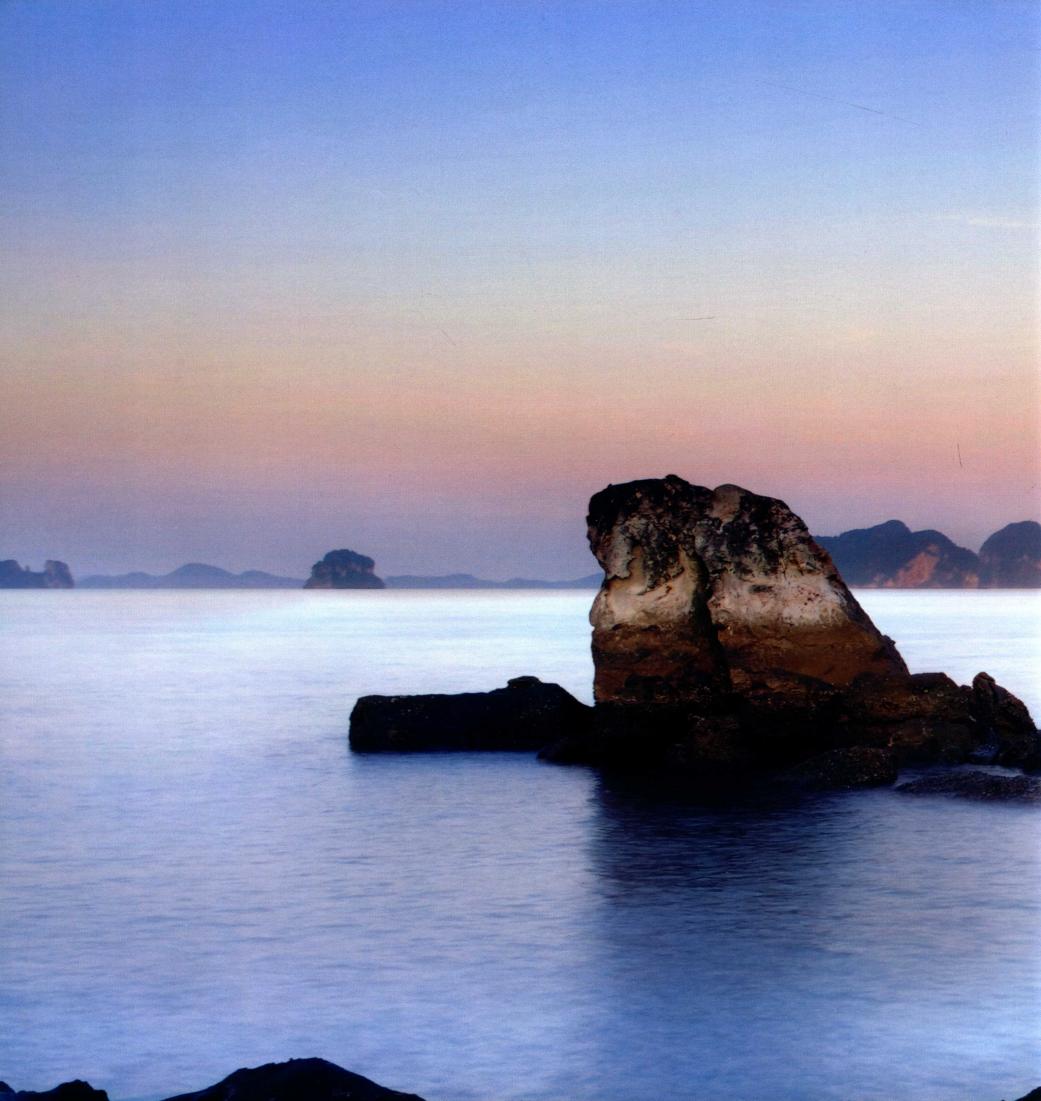
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Top Exotic Spa in Thailand





Spa Design Development

水疗设计的发展

当我受邀撰写这篇简介时,我惊喜地得知水疗世界终于开始在至少一个卓越的领域中得到了更多的重视。水疗设计领域长久以来一直被视为水疗业的核心,它使我们能提供的服务成为可能,虽然这一领域几乎没有得到建筑界的认可。

近年来,尽管面临重重困难,全世界的水疗业仍继续增长,据报道很多国家的增长率都在两位数。虽然据报道世界上四分之一的水疗中心在美国,但是亚太地区的水疗中心数量大约占全世界的三分之一。在该区域中,泰国水疗的数量最多并享有最高的产业价值。一项重要的统计显示直至1992年第一批水疗中心才在泰国出现。

自那时起,泰国的水疗业实现了跨越式的发展,从只为高端旅游人士提供一次奢侈骄纵的贴身护理发展成为更加平民化的产业。现今的泰国水疗不仅吸引着乐于享受按摩的泰国客户,也吸引着要求繁多形形色色的国际消费者。奢侈的贴身护理也有所发展,尽管对于很多人来说这是水疗中一个重要的组成部分,但健康、预防和可持续发展的医疗保健已成为水疗所提供的一部分。除了目的型水疗,水疗已经逐渐成为竞争激烈的酒店和度假村行业中日益重要的一个部分。国际游客仍是泰国水疗业忠实的拥护者,没有这一客户群这个行业有可能会消失。然而政府和私营企业都在继续寻求新的途径,以在极富竞争的世界中吸引精明的水疗消费者。访问水疗中心已经更多地成为健康生活的一部分而不是享受奢侈的贴身护理。

然而有些人可能不这样认为,全世界的水疗有着近乎相同的治疗服务范围。虽然有些水疗馆提供当地或地区性的特色服务,但是基本项目如推擦、裹敷、沐浴、按摩以及面部护理等几乎是服务项目的主流。很多水疗中心已经开始尝试扩充这些服务,创造包括各种疗法的定制疗程,但是在一次水疗中可以获得的最常用的疗法组合的数量是有限的,例如,瑞典按摩、芳香疗法、泰式按摩、日式指压按摩及运动后快速击打按摩。不幸的是,水疗业不免为了行业利益而明目张胆地掠夺当地资源或是不遵循那些已经推行了数百年或是数千年的传统疗法。这些疗法常常在缺少其传统应用条件的背景下被修改及改变。因为治疗师对疗法的基础了解甚微或完全不懂,这可以改变历史,并且减少有可能达到的治疗效果。幸运的是,作为一个正在发展的产业,这种对前辈的不敬和对传统背景的藐视已经受到了关注,其中蕴含的精华也正在被理解。整体情况正在发生变化,虽然这种变化是很缓慢的。

不同的国家都努力定义着自己独特的水疗文化。很多人将2500年来代代传承的泰式按摩视为在这方面最成功的一个典范。现今的泰式按摩,作为泰国传统医学的一个分支被认为有能力治愈多种疾病,并由政府监管。尽管如此,绝大多数人永远没有必要去体验全部的泰式按摩,而且也只有一小部分泰式按摩从业者有高水平的诊断技巧。

现在,整个泰国有数以百计的学校及培训中心在传授泰式按摩,这些学校的数量在全球也呈现增长的趋势。在这些学校中,只有少数几个传授"民间风格"的按摩,这种按摩能很好地缓解小病痛,提升整体健康状况。植根于传统医学,泰国水疗业发展成为一个独特的产业。这个产业得到了泰国文化和传统的支持,古老的泰国草药以及独特的泰式元素因其天然性被全世界享受、模仿、渴望及羡慕。

很多西方人敬畏东方迥然不同而又充满诱惑的神秘之感,他们长久以来在东方寻求灵感。随着蓬勃发展的旅游业,泰国充分利用了这种需求,在酒店和度假村水疗的带动下发展出了水疗产业。在一个更富竞争力的市场,设计元素是划定界限的标尺。标志性水疗的特点是细节设计丰富豪华,有些人认为的过度奢华的设计却永远脱颖而出。纵观泰国全境的水疗,有些在没有推行奢华或细致的设计之前就凭借其自身的特点成就了其标志性,或是因为其地理位置,或是因为其美学价值,或是因为其服务。但是我们在本书中所关注的正是这些整体设计上的复杂性,这一复杂性结合了概念、仪式和美学等特点。这些优秀设计的展示充分证明泰国水疗远比泰式按摩的内容多得多,而且设计是整个水疗体验中不可分割的一部分。

从位于曼谷中心的成立时间相对较短的So Spa和Elemis Spa,到那些早已名声在外的水疗中心,如普吉岛上多次获奖的Coqoon Spa和Anantara Spa,华欣的the Barai spa以及苏梅岛上的The Forest Spa,都拥有着不同的地理位置、概念和设计。虽然从严格意义上说它们不都是"泰式"的,但从本质上说,它们毫无疑问都打上了泰国文化和传统的标签,也正是在这一文化和传统的基础上这一产业得以发展并取得成功。柔和的配色方案和高高的天花板塑造出了空间感,精心挑选的材料提升了真实和想象的自然性,"整体性"使客人在一个难以超越的水准上体验水疗,这也是泰国水疗在饱和的市场中的优势。长远看来,虽然优秀细致的设计可能给泰国水疗市场带来优势,但是最高质量的服务将最终决定每个水疗中心在泰国水疗史上的最终命运。

因此当你探访下一个水疗中心时,略微抽出些时间向后退一步,真正地欣赏一下其所创造的环境;注意那些简单或复杂、自然性或工业性、当代或传统,或者任意组合的细节,花片刻时间琢磨一下,了解使这些水疗中心的所有者、开发者及设计者的梦想变成你拥有的现实的思维过程。这些梦想的实现提供了真正独特的体验,而这种体验只能在本书中的每一个水疗项目中得以实现。

When I was asked to write this introduction, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that at long last the spa world has started to be taken more seriously in at least one of the fields of excellence which has long been acknowledged from within the industry, but that which has yet to be rarely acknowledged by the architectural world upon whom we are so reliant to deliver on the vision of what we offer.

Spas around the world have continued to grow over recent times, with many countries reporting double digit growth rates, despite difficulties one after the other. While America is reportedly home to over a quarter of the worlds spas, the Asia Pacific region accounts for approximately one third, with Thailand being number one for the number of spas, and enjoys the highest industry value in the region, a significant statistic given that it was only in 1992 that the first spas came to the kingdom.

Since then, in leaps and bounds the Thai spa industry has grown from one which was targeted to the tourist industry, offering a luxury pampering experience, to one which is more accessible than ever, appealing not only to a massage savvy Thai clientele, but also to the seeming insatiable international consumer. The luxury pampering has also evolved, and while for many this remains an important part of the experience, the world of wellness, preventative and sustainable healthcare has become part of what is being offered, not only in Destination spas, but increasingly in the competitive hotel and resort sectors of the industry. The international tourist remains the stalwart of the Thai spa industry, an industry that probably would not exist without their support, yet both government and private enterprise continue to seek new offerings to entice spa savvy consumers in an ever more competitive world, where a visit to a spa is more about healthy living than pampering indulgence.

While many may not agree, spas around the world have a familiar offering of treatments, and while there are some which offer local or regional variations, the basics are much the same with scrubs, wraps, baths, massages and facials being the mainstay of the offering. Many have ventured to expand on this, creating customized treatments combining various therapies but there is a limit to the number of variations you can get by combining Swedish, Aromatherapy, Thai, Shiatsu, Sport massages which are the treatments most commonly taken in a spa. Beyond this it is the local culture traditions which the spa industry has raped and pillaged to its own benefit (generally without respect or consideration to those that have practiced the traditional therapies for hundreds if not thousands of years), modifying and changing the therapies so that they are practiced outside of the context from which they would traditionally be practiced, by therapists who have little or no understanding of the basis of the treatment, thereby changing history, and minimizing the potential healing benefits that could be available. Fortunately as an industry that is ever evolving, our disrespect for our forefathers is now being understood and acknowledged, with things starting to change – all be it very slowly.

Individual countries are endeavoring to define their own unique spa cultures, with many seeing Thailand as one of the most successful, give its more than 2,500 year heritage of Thai Massage, handed done from generation to generation. Today as a branch of Thai traditional medicine, able to treat a wide variety of ailments, it is regulated by the government. However the vast majority of people will never need nor experience the full scope of Thai massage techniques, besides which it is only a small proportion of practitioners whom have this level of diagnostic skill.

Today there are hundreds of schools and training centres around the kingdom and a growing number across the globe, that teach Thai massage, with all but a few teaching 'folk style' massage, well suited to the easing of minor aches and pains and the promotion of a general state of well-being. With its roots in traditional medicine, the Thai spa industry has blossomed into a unique industry, supported by culture and traditions, ancient Thai herbs and the element of Thainess into an industry that is enjoyed, copied, envied and desired, the world over.

Many in the western world have long looked to the east for inspiration, being in awe of the mystique that the region offers, so different, yet so in demand. Thailand has capitalized on this demand with its burgeoning tourism industry, developing a spa industry driven by the hotel and resort spa sector. In a market that is ever more competitive, it is the element of design in which boundaries are being pushed, as iconic spas featuring luxurious, impressive (and some may say over-indulgent) designs seem to perpetually come to the fore. Some of these spas, across the length and breadth of the kingdom, have already become iconic in their own right, be it for their design, their services, or a combination thereof, however it is the design that we are celebrating here following, to showcase that Thai spas are much, much more than Thai massage, and that design is an integral part of the overall spa experience.

The relatively new comers such as So Spa, Elemis Spa and Kempinski The Spa in the heart of Bangkok, to those that are the more established like the multi award winning Coqoon Spa and Anantara Spa (both) in Phuket; The Barai, Hua Hin and The Forest Spa, Koh Samui, they all celebrate the diversity of location, concept and design. While not always 'Thai' they are by their nature unquestionably underwritten and intrinsically liked by the Thai culture and traditions from which the industry has grown, and for which they owe much of their success. From the sense of space, emboldened by high ceilings, to muted colour schemes, and the careful selection of building materials that enhance the sense of nature (real or perceived) and promote a sense of 'whole-ness' enabling one to experience the spa on a level far surpassing that of those that seek to emulate them, that gives them the edge in a saturated market. Ultimately though, while it may give them a marketing edge it is the deliverance of quality level of service that will decide their ultimate fate in the annuls of Thai spa history.

So when visiting your next spa, take a little extra time to step back and truly look at the environment that has been created, the architectural nuances - simple or complex, natural or industrial, contemporary or traditional, or any combination thereof; and take a moment to reflect on the thought process that has been undertaken to enable the owners/developers dream to become your reality, proving you with a genuine experience as can be offered by each of the spas include in the pages following.



Top Exotic Spa in Thailand

顶级异国风情SPA

AWAY SPA W Retreat Koh Samui	013	125	THE SPA Four Seasons Resort
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AWAY SPA

W Retreat Koh Samui, Surat Thani



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