

Altitude

ALT-07

ISSUE 20

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Featuring
UNBURNABLE

A NOVEL

Marie-Elena John

St. Kitts 10th
Annual
Music Festival


Caribbean Star
AIRLINES


Caribbean Sun
AIRLINES

VISTAS DE LAS ISLAS EN ESPAÑOL • CARIBBEAN CUISINE • WEEKEND IN BARBADOS



SENSORY

Overload

The Evolution of Resort Spas

By: Debi Carson

Senior Interior Designer, OBM International

Photos Courtesy OBM International

Imagine yourself in a place where the sun eases your worries away, the Caribbean Sea mists your body, and fragrant flowers seduce your senses. All the while, your skin is being detoxified, your chakras are being balanced and your energy is finding new spirit. Enter the world of resort spas – where you can enhance your vacation experience in new and exciting ways.

A growing number of visitors to the Caribbean are making their hotel selections based on spa amenities and facilities. Travel agents are also capitalizing on this trend by offering spa packages geared toward honeymooners, groups of friends, families and even business colleagues. As a result, the hospitality industry is designing extremely sophisticated spas, in order to offer their guests the most exotic treatments from around the world.

Lodging is a competitive business in the Caribbean. When one hotel introduces a new feature, the others quickly attempt to match it and, in some cases, even surpass it. In the past, resorts with golf courses were the leading hotels in the region. Now, however, a breathtaking course is not enough. Golf resorts that include spas, fitness centers and a healthy cuisine have serious advantages over others that don't.

A key element for a spa is a design that not only highlights the beauty of its surroundings, but also makes it stand out. The Peter Island Resort and Spa does just that. With over 10,000-square-feet of space, it is one of the most hailed resort spas in the Caribbean, as it blends today's advanced spa technology with the beauty of its surroundings. Tim Peck, OBM International's CEO for Bermuda and the Caribbean, led our team of architects, consultants and designers in its creation.

A major component of the Peter Island Spa project was assessing the treatments that were going to be offered and designing the spaces accordingly. For instance, oversized massage rooms were necessary for couples and duo massages. Moreover, two outdoor, 'bohios' (treatment rooms) were designed in such a way that, although they incorporate the sounds and scents of the ocean in the treatments, they are done in complete privacy.

If you are one of the few people who have not had the 'spa experience,' what are you waiting for? The next time you are traveling, whether for business or pleasure, it is very likely that your hotel will have an intriguing spa menu. Consider an aromatic massage, a seaweed wrap or a mud facial, then you, too, will understand why spas are considered an essential element for total guest satisfaction.

Debi Carson is the Senior Interior Designer of OBM International's British Virgin Islands Office.



**Q&A with Sarah Kajonborrirak,
President and Founder of the Thai
Heritage Spa**

Sarah is the President and Founder of Thai Heritage Spa, a highly prestigious spa management company. Sarah offers design consulting services, as well as products and education for luxury hotels, real estate developers and investors in Asia and around the world. Thai Heritage Spa operates the brand *Sivalai Spa*.

DC: As you know, the hospitality industry is capitalizing on the incredible popularity of spas. How are resorts accommodating this trend?

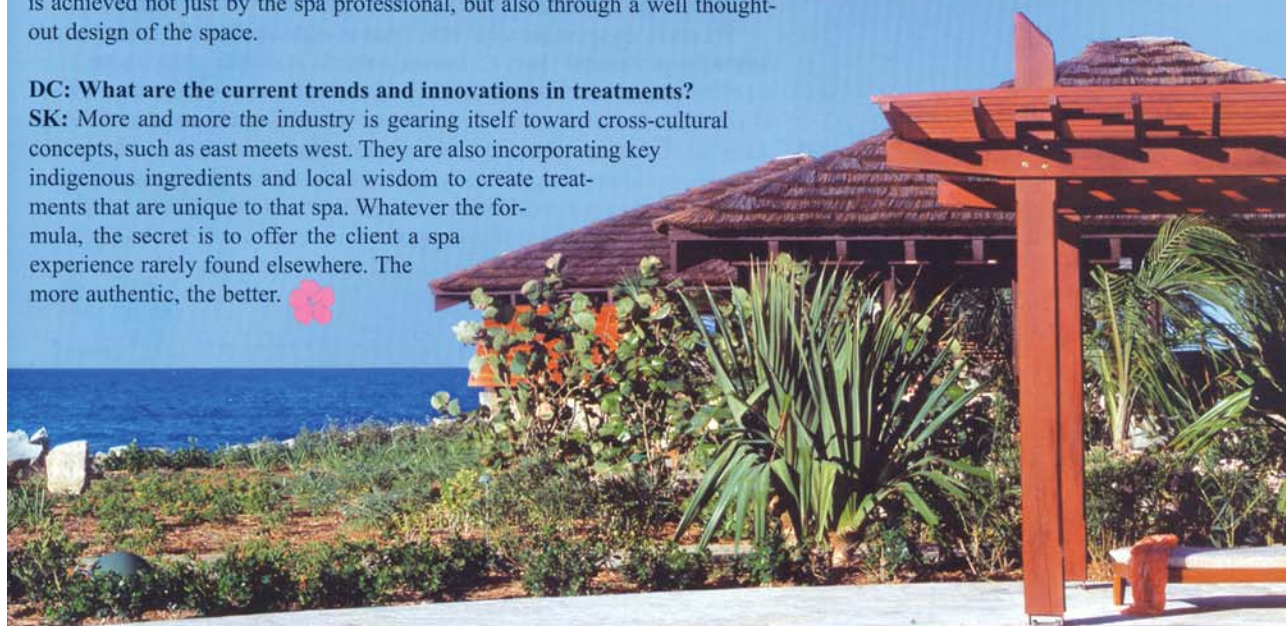
SK: Creating the ideal spa ambiance takes more than building rooms and walls. That is why the hospitality industry turns to talented architects, interior designers, spa designers and experienced spa consultants in order to accurately configure these spaces.

DC: Can you elaborate on how a spa expert can help in the design process of a resort spa?

SK: Spa experts know the day-to-day functions, the requisites for treatments and the market demands. These factors are of great importance to the designer. For instance, an expert can offer valuable information on the traffic flow of clients and therapists alike. You wouldn't want your journey to relaxation starting with a crowded and noisy hallway, right? You want clients to be swept off their feet from the moment they walk in, so that their entire experience is wonderfully relaxing and pleasurable – that is, unforgettable. Of course, this is achieved not just by the spa professional, but also through a well thought-out design of the space.

DC: What are the current trends and innovations in treatments?

SK: More and more the industry is gearing itself toward cross-cultural concepts, such as east meets west. They are also incorporating key indigenous ingredients and local wisdom to create treatments that are unique to that spa. Whatever the formula, the secret is to offer the client a spa experience rarely found elsewhere. The more authentic, the better. 🌸



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About OBM:

For seven decades, OBM International has been the premier full-service design-consulting firm in Bermuda and the Caribbean. Today, with nine multinational offices, projects throughout the world and a diverse team of experts, OBM is a global leader in luxury hotel/resort design development, architecture, master/town planning and interior design, with landmark projects in the Caribbean, the Americas, Europe and the Arabian Peninsula.

OBM currently has eight operations offices located in Antigua, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Madrid, Miami, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks & Caicos Islands, a strategic alliance in the Bahamas, and a business development office in Bath (UK).