

american spa

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INSIDE STORY

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ALPINE LUXURY

THE STILLWATER SPA AT THE HYATT REGENCY
LAKE TAHOE RESORT, SPA AND CASINO

AN ADVANSTAR PUBLICATION





american spa november

Spanning the country, we discovered three unique spas that have made their mark in the cities they reside. From a lodge-inspired spa in Lake Tahoe, NV, to a stylish hotel spa on San Antonio's famed Riverwalk, to a day spa with a loyal following in an uptown New York City neighborhood, these stellar spas illustrate the diversity found throughout the industry. Pictured, an infinity tub in one of the couple's rooms at Stillwater Spa in Lake Tahoe.

in focus





Stillwater Spa

In the style of a traditional alpine lodge, a new resort spa in Lake Tahoe makes its mark with a mountain-inspired menu that appeals to both visitors and locals alike. **WRITTEN BY HEATHER MIKESELL**

LOCATED ON TAHOE'S NORTH SHORE, STILLWATER SPA AT THE HYATT REGENCY LAKE TAHOE RESORT, SPA and Casino (Incline Village, NV) benefited from the property's recent four-year \$60 million renovation. The addition of the new 20,000-square-foot spa gives guests and locals a place to relax and unwind. With its use of dark wood and stone, the spa's lodge-inspired decor complements its serene mountain

LEFT: The Fireside Suite is one of two couple's rooms in the spa. A stone fireplace enhances the warm ambience.

setting. "We wanted to create a sense of home," says spa director Carl Velleno. "The spa has all the things you'd find in a nice residential home." Stone fireplaces and copper bowl sinks are just some of the design elements used to infuse the spa with a feeling of warmth. The renovation also



Open year-round, the swim-out pool flows under a glass partition. Guests can reach the resort's lap pool without ever walking outdoors. It's located a mere 20 or so feet from the spa.



MOST PROFITABLE SERVICE: 50-minute Deep-Tissue or Swedish Massage

included the addition of the Spa Terrace, a new three-story wing adjacent to the hotel.

According to Velleno, approximately 80 percent of the spa's clients are vacationers, and the majority of them are looking to relax. In addition, "The spa also has a strong base of locals who come down in the off-peak season," says Velleno. Of the spa's entire client makeup, he notes that about 40 percent are new spa-goers who commonly rely on recommendations from the staff. The other 60 percent are more spa savvy and, as a result, want unique treatments and a more extensive menu.

After spending years on the project, Velleno was determined to offer an original menu. "I didn't want products you could find down the street," he says. Ultimately, he opted for Kerstin Florian. Drawing on the spa's mountain setting, Velleno focused on creating hydrating treatments, which are in demand at the higher elevation. From the High Altitude Body Masque (\$65,



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The women's locker room features a spacious vanity with copper bowl sinks. A decorative mosaic, similar to that used in the showers, is illuminated from above.

30 minutes) to the Alpen-Glow scrub (\$120, 50 minutes), many of the treatments take into account the spa's mountainous location. Kerstin Florian also created the Alpine Meadows Ritual (\$175, 90 minutes) specifically for the spa. Utilizing local botanicals, it includes a body exfoliation with essence of pine; a bath using either melissa, wildflower, eucalyptus, pine, or chamomile; and an aromatherapy massage.

According to Velleno, the standard 50-minute Swedish and deep-tissue massage make up approximately 60 percent of the spa's treatments. Another 30 percent is divided equally between

facials and body treatments. The remaining 10 percent is devoted to salon treatments. "Our biggest challenge is staying cutting edge," says Velleno, who plans to update the menu each year. He stays current by talking to other spa directors, visiting other spas, attending trade shows, and listening to his staff and clientele.

Although still growing, the spa's employee roster is hovering just below 40. With a mix of full- and part-time employees, Stillwater has 17 therapists on-hand as well as two on-call and four estheticians. All work four to five days a

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week. The rest of the staff is composed of spa attendants and spa concierges.

Carrying a selection of blankets, candles, robes, yoga wear, and other products, the spa places a priority on retail. Although retail makes up only 10 percent of Stillwater's revenue, Velleno is looking to increase that number to 15 percent by year's end. At this time, Kashwère blankets

and robes are selling especially well, particularly in pink. As for other goals, Velleno is focused on being the best in the area and beyond. "As our newness wears off, we can't sit back and rely on being the biggest spa in the area," says Velleno. "We need to make sure that we offer the best treatments with first-class service." ■

The men's relaxation area comes complete with masculine dark-chocolate leather chairs and a stone fireplace.

STILLWATER SPA

Owner: Hyatt Hotels Corporation

Spa Director: Carl Velleno

Opened: November 2003

• CLIENT BASE

70% female

30% male

ages 18 and up

• SPACE

20,000 square feet;
16 treatment rooms

• COST

\$65 million for entire resort renovation (spa included)

• SERVICES

-body treatments

-facials

-fitness center

-full-service salon

-manicures and pedicures

-massage

-packages

-waxing

• MOST POPULAR

Sierra Stones

(\$165, 80 minutes)

• PRICE RANGE

\$10 for an add-on Warm Honey Foot Scrub to **\$540** for the three-hour Couple's Day at Stillwater, which involves aromatherapy foot baths, full massages, and facials for two

• PRODUCT LINE

-Kashwère

-Kerstin Florian

-Spa Blends

-Warren Botanicals

• EQUIPMENT

-Life Fitness

-Silhouet-Tone

-Touch America

• ARCHITECT

Lundahl & Associates
(Reno, NV)

• INTERIOR DESIGNER

Brayton & Hughes
(San Francisco)

• SPA CONSULTANT

Gordon Tareta, Hyatt Corporation (Chicago)