

# European Spa

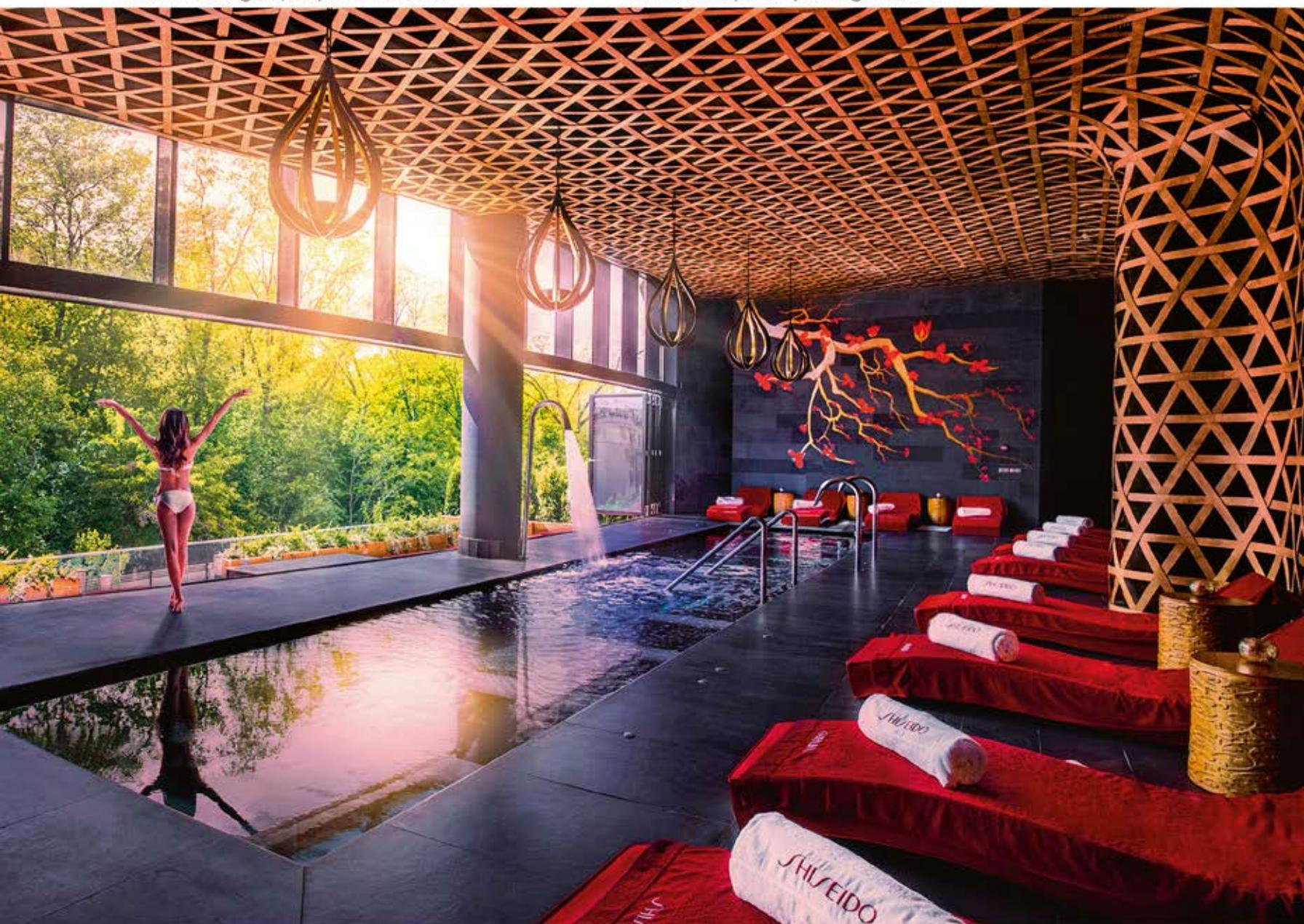
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**BEHIND THE BEAUTY**  
Design Insider explores the new Shiseido spa in Bucharest

**MARINE MILESTONE**  
Thalgo celebrates 50 years of skincare secrets from the sea

**GLOBAL AMBITION**  
World Wellness Day at Turkey's Richmond Nua Wellness-Spa

**A TREE WITH ROOTS**  
The fruitful growth of Angsana and the Banyan Tree brand



The 7th Edition of Forum HOTEL & Spa took place at the Four Seasons George V



Fashionizer's Debbie Leon and Juliette Blanzly of Spameeting



Architect Robert D Henry showcases innovative spa design



Diamond Award winner Dr Sven Greie of Hotel Schwarzbrenn and his wife



Philippe Bruny and the Intracuticals team



Guest of Honour Françoise Montenay, Markus Benz of Walter Knoll, Vladi Kovanic and architect Borina Andrieu



Guest of honour Ingo Schweder, founder of GOCO Hospitality and Horwath HTL Health & Wellness



Fernand Donnet of Sophos Hotels



Givenchy's Marc Lannuzel with Jacky Maisonneuve of Swiss Phytotherapy



Françoise Montenay of Chanel, president of Cosmetic Executive Women, France



Networking breaks to meet suppliers are an important part of Forum HOTELSpa



Adrien Kovanic discusses how to optimise online bookings through [massageprive.com](http://massageprive.com)



Organiser Vladi Kovanic welcomes an international delegation to the event



Jean-Eric Knecht of Ecole Gontard with journalist Anne Autret and publisher Martine Bal

# Hot in the city

*European Spa* heads for Paris to see how things are hotting up in the world of hotel spa development at the Forum HOTEL & Spa event

[ Report by Sarah Camilleri ]

A prestigious, dedicated networking day for leading spa professionals, the seventh Forum HOTEL & Spa was held in June at the fittingly luxurious Four Seasons George V in Paris. The event, founded by VK-Organisation director Vladi Kovanic, presented a welcome opportunity for 120 delegates to gather intelligence on development opportunities and benefit from the expertise of a host of international speakers.

Gathering momentum each year, this latest meeting proved both insightful and inspiring, its carefully arranged programme exploring three key themes of Architecture; Finding Oneself; and Innovation. A number of presentations in English and French were offered in each category and the day also celebrated the achievements of hard working spa directors by way of the Black Diamond Awards for excellence.

## An exchange of humanity

After her welcome address, Vladi Kovanic invited two honorary guests to the stage: Françoise Montenay, president of the Supervisory Board of Chanel SAS and president of Cosmetic Executive Women France (CEWF); and international spa consultant Ingo Schweder, founder and CEO of GOCO Hospitality and Horwath HTL Health & Wellness.

A shining light in haute couture and commerce with Chanel, Montenay referenced spas as “places of liberation” in today’s 24/7 world. She also highlighted the growing role spa and beauty can play in “the exchange of humanity”, revealing that in the past five years, CEWF has provided over 90,000 hospital patients with 185,000 free beauty treatments. According to Montenay, this initiative has had a profoundly positive effect on patients’ wellbeing and recovery. She cited the growing number of people, particularly those fighting cancer, who “need hope, dignity and someone to listen in their time of need”.

Ingo Schweder continued the humanitarian theme with a candid address about his own journey to carve a career in wellness, inspired by his recovery from cancer in his twenties. Adopting a positive mind-set

when gravely ill, he followed his own strict regimen of nutrition, exercise and wellness therapies to evidentially beat the disease. This life-changing chapter inspired him to seek a career in the spa industry and he urged delegates to stay focused on future opportunities, drawing their attention to significant drivers such as healing nutrition and evidence-based treatments and modalities.

## Experiential architecture

Three international designers led fascinating tours of a number of prestigious global hotel spas. Borina Andrieu, from Wilmotte & Associates in France – a 200-strong architectural practice boasting a client base in over 21 countries – addressed the need for innovative hospitality architecture that delivers timeless design and engages guests through a tangible connection with location and nature. She presented several innovative design solutions for notable luxury hotel spa developments, including Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Paris and Hôtel La Réserve, Ramatuelle, as well as a sneak preview of a new Akasha Spa planned for Hôtel Lutetia Paris, due to be opened in 2016.

Architect Josephine Leung of GOCO Hospitality took a futuristic look at wellness travel and dedicated wellness destinations. The innovative projects in her consultancy’s international portfolio are each designed to reflect their specific location and accommodate a fascinating array of modalities.

Leung quoted some disquieting World Health Organisation statistics predicting that by the year 2020, 25% of the global population will suffer from either cancer or heart disease. Her presentation showcased several GOCO projects, including GoSpa at JW Marriott Resort & Spa, currently under construction on the private island of Sacca Sessola in Venice, Italy and due to open in March 2015. She also shared the development plans for a significant wellness destination, Go Retreat, planned for Niutuo, Greater Beijing. Located one hour south of Beijing, this project has ambitions to be China’s leading luxury hot spring wellness retreat.



GOCO's Josephine Leung shares the latest wellness integration trends in design



Vladi Kovanic with this year's Diamond Award Winners and Emotion Spa magazine's Isabelle Charrier, right



White Diamond winner Adila Oliveira with Jean Guy De Gabriac of Tip Touch Consultancy



Dr Roland Fuschelberger of Hotel Lanserhof spoke on Vital Ageing and 'self-responsibility'



Roger Allen of Thermarium Spa Management presents 'Do Hotel Spas Make money?'

Lanserhof, Austria, was one of the day's highlights. He tracked the fundamental shift the medi-spa destination hotel has made in order to deliver a more holistic approach to wellness. With the FX Mayr detox cleansing method at its core, the Lans Med Concept works on the principal of promoting Vital Ageing and 'self-responsibility'.

Fuschelberger stressed that spas need to fully understand the prevalence of chronic stress and the physiological damage it can trigger through inflammation, which he said was the root cause of all disease. He told delegates how Lanserhof works to understand each guest's true health status – including their psychological state and stress levels – before working out a regimen and specific goals for their stay. This avoids the application of unnecessarily powerful therapies that can cause more harm than good, especially if the guest is in a 'burnout stage' of stress.

He also flagged the importance of spas offering life coaching and supportive educational programmes to help motivate long-term change and encourage self-responsibility for good health and wellness.

**Do hotel spas make money?**

Roger Allen of Thermarium Spa Management, Austria, had the audience's full attention with his frank presentation entitled 'Do hotel spas make money?' He reminded delegates that "revenue is vanity and profit is sanity" and voiced concern that the spa industry needs to up its game to be taken seriously by investors. He said operational and financial success should be spas' primary goals, but were often glossed over by many spa operations.

According to Allen, "the aesthetic focus of the industry masks many failures and lack of ROI", often due to capital overspend upon creation, compounded

From the Big Apple, Robert Henry, principal of architectural practice Robert D. Henry New York, took delegates on a journey through wellness design. Six spa projects that reflect his application of "evidence-based design" were used to exemplify elements that can be used to promote a positive guest experience. These included the incorporation of natural elements; the use of 'eco-psychology' techniques to promote healing; smooth circulation and intuitive navigation; and reinforcing 'a sense of place' by reflecting unique site characteristics in spa designs.

His presentation highlighted Palm Integrated Health in St. Louis, Missouri; Jumeirah Talise Spa in Guangzhou, China; Mandarin Oriental in Miami, Florida; Vdara Hotel & Spa in Las Vegas, Nevada; and the lush Hotel Esperanza eco resort in Costa Rica.

**Finding oneself**

Looking to the future, the presentation given by Dr Roland Fuschelberger, medical director of Hotel



Andreas Meixger and Jacqueline Piotaz of Jacqueline Piotaz Cosmetics



Guerlain's international spa & institute director Louis de Vilmorin talks about innovation



Ingo Shweder with Annette Mansfield of The Spa Frankfurter Hof and architect Robert D Henry



European Spa's Sarah Camilleri with event organiser Vladi Kovanic



RKF's Rudolph Sandretti discusses luxury linen and towelling with a delegate

by the lack of a clear strategy to achieve performance. He added that "incompetence breeds incompetence, which will inevitably lead to failure", citing managers and consultants being promoted through the ranks, without the right expertise or commercial training.

On a positive note, he pointed to the huge range of opportunities now open to innovative spas who run a tight ship, urging delegates to hire the right experts and invest properly in mentoring their teams to succeed and optimise performance.

#### Sharing insights

Another notable presentation was delivered by Louis de Vilmorin, international spa director of Guerlain, who detailed the significant rebranding and relaunch of L'Institut Guerlain in Paris. During his talk, Vilmorin reminded delegates that "innovation is the key driver for business growth".

Elsewhere, Amani Sliman, founder of Orienka Paris, spoke to delegates on the power of 'authentic beauty' and the 'Exchange and Discover' panel, moderated by Isabelle Boutteville, saw Jacqueline Piotaz founder of Jacqueline Piotaz SAS, Sammy Garieni of Garieni Group and Philippe Bruny of Intracuticals share expertise from their respective fields.

Last, but not least, Jean-Guy de Gabriac, founder of Tip Touch consultancy, gave a whistle-stop presentation of seven ways to boost innovation within the spa environment.

#### Shine bright like a Diamond

Rounding off a dynamic event, Forum HOTEL & Spa delegates celebrated exceptional spa management and

service with the presentation of the Black Diamond Awards, which this year saw 17 candidates from six countries honoured.

"Once again, the international jury had a difficult choice to make," said Vladi Kovanic. "The finalists for the award came from five different countries and taking into consideration the exceptional qualities of all the candidates, the jury took the decision to award three prizes.

"The White Diamond went to Adilia Oliveira of The Yeatman, Portugal and Inez Waschl of the Ritz Carlton Austria. The Blue Diamond was awarded to Melina Pourcel of Six Senses France and Dr Sven Greie of Hotel Schwarzbrunn Austria. Our top award, the Black Diamond, was presented to Estelle Gomez of Chalet Royal Hotel & SPA Suisse."

Summing up the success of this year's event, Kovanic told *European Spa*: "I was very satisfied with Forum HOTEL&SPA this year. The atmosphere was excellent and all our delegates came ready to contribute and take advantage of the opportunity to learn, share and achieve high-level networking.

"The loyalty of our partners RKF Luxury Linen, Gharieni GmbH, Biologique Recherche and Massageprive.com – present since the creation of the Forum – heightened the success of the event.

"We are happy to announce that the next event will be held at Four Seasons George V in Paris on May 28, 2015. We look forward to welcoming back the best of the industry." ●●●●●

■ For more information about Forum HOTEL & Spa, visit [www.forumhotspa.com](http://www.forumhotspa.com)