

CHINESE SPAS TO COMPETE WHOLE WORLD



China witnesses a boom in the spa industry. Number of new spas is emerging as the demand for this kind of services rises. The influx of foreign visitors boosts the industry as well as does the emerging Chinese middle class. Growing number of Chinese now have disposable income and they want to enjoy spa services within their country.

Only ten or five years ago, just few Chinese spas could compete with facilities in Thailand, Indonesia and in other tourism hubs. Nowadays, the situation has changed. New spas are mushrooming in China and the old ones are upgrading their services so that they can compete with the finest health resorts in Asia. Luxury hotels are also establishing spas. In Lijiang, a Unesco World Heritage site Banyan Tree has opened a spa. Near the Great Wall

Anantara set its own spa, while Marriott built a spa retreat, called Quan, on Sanya, a tropical resort in the south of Hainan Island.

The Chinese spa industry is still in its infancy but it develops quite rapidly. Even now, local spas begin to create their own spa treatments often based on the traditional Chinese medicine, instead of just copying techniques from the western world. "They don't just explore Western things, though, they are interested in exploring Chinese elements as well," said P. T. Black of Jigsaw International, a Shanghai-based market research firm.

The spa industry boom is expected to continue and even to become faster. Experts claim that the 2008 Olympics will cause even bigger demand for spa and wellness services. The spa boom is presently fueled by the expansion of foreign businesses and the influx of foreign spa professionals into China. The Olympics will supposedly affect emerging Chinese middleclass so that they will incline to healthier life style.

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