

# SPA Pestany – the Widely Known Thermal SPA in Central Europe

The thermal SPA Pestany is one of many thermal SPA facilities in Central Europe. The first written mentions about the SPA is from the year 1549, published in Basel. It takes notice not only of the curious origin and properties of the waters but also of their curative uses. The description of the primitive therapeutic methods in dug out holes filled with warm sulfuric water along with the successes achieved at treating certain disorders it provides is invaluable. The “thermae” of Pestany are described as one of those with the best curative effects in the entire Hungarian Empire.



The main natural curative means used in Health Spa Pestany are thermal sulphur water and thermal sulphuric mud. The thermal water of Pestany is natural curative water with the temperature of 67 – 69°C. It is defined as a sulphate bicarbonate, calcareous sodium, hydrogen sulphide, hypotonic water containing approximately 1.500 mg of mineral substances per one liter of water, with contents of free gases, especially hydrogen sulphide. This water is created from surface water that seeps through calcareous rock to depths of about 2.000 meters under the surface. As it passes through the rock, it is mineralized and as it reaches its final depth, it absorbs heat. In the depths of the earth, it hits upon impermeable layers of tectonic breaks which cross over at the exact spots where the hot springs reach the surface. Most of the springs at the Spa Island are tapped professionally 50–60 m below the surface. The daily capacity of these tapped springs is about three million litres of water. A part of the springs is left untapped and they spring naturally into the buttress channel of the River Vah where they become part of the creation of our healing mud. In wells, water is protected from mixing with surface waters and this preserves a constantly high temperature and specific chemical composition. The thermal water of Pestany is the warmest and the most plentiful of the thermal springs in the Carpathian region. Based on its chemical constitution, the water was declared a natural healing resource used for treatment of disorders of the musculoskeletal system by the laws of the Slovak Republic. Thermal mineral water has mechanical effects and causes hydrostatic pressure and lifting force, thus making movement easier thanks to diminished effects of gravity; at the same time it improves circulation of blood and lymph. Water pressure functions as a bandage and makes exercising and movement in water easier. One of the important physical effects of thermal mineral water is the hyperthermic reaction of the body. The nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, endocrine and immunity systems are involved in this reaction. Apart

from physical effects, chemical effects of the sulphuric water are important as well – during and after a bath (since sulphur creates deposits in human skin), sulphuric substances penetrate through skin into tissues deeper in the body, especially in the form of chondroitin sulphate into connective tissues (ligaments, cartilages, tendons, etc). Sulphur also provides pronounced keratolytic, keratoplastic, vasodilating and antiseptic effects which are used to significant effect in the treatment of a select group of skin disorders.



The healing mud of Pestany is peloid sediment, one of the best known and highest quality peloids in the world. One of the most important qualities of the mud is its heterogeneity of its biological system which regulates its own dynamic balance. The homogenous sediment of the River Vah that settles in the spots where thermal springs touch the surface is a substrate of this mud, and it turns into a colloid mass due to the influence of thermal water. This mass is the nutrient medium for a complex of non-pathological microbial flora which comes to life in the presence of thermal mineral water. These microorganisms are highly thermo tolerant and they reach optimum growth at temperatures exceeding 60°C. Maturation and regeneration of mud is a biological process during which sulphates are transformed into a therapeutically more significant elementary sulphur, sulphides, and hydrosulphides. The microorganisms of the hot spring mud create a film of thermal essential oils on top of the thermal mud; with their jelly-like sheathing, these oils further improve physical qualities of the peloid.



Thus the mud of Piešťany boasts unique physical, chemical and biological qualities. Its consistency is tenacious, buttery; its colour is bluish even black; and it has excellent heat-containing qualities – it cools five times slower than water. Based on its composition, technology of preparation and a clinical study concerning its utilization for therapeutic purposes, the Pestany mud is certified in the entire European Union.



**Indications of complex spa treatment** in Pestany may be divided into seven basic groups of disorders:

- »» Non acute rheumatic inflammatory disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis or chronic juvenile arthritis
- »» Degenerative disorders of the musculoskeletal
- »» Metabolic arthropathies
- »» Extra-articular affections
- »» Nervous disorders
- »» Post-traumatic and post-surgery conditions of limbs and spine, pre-surgery preparation for preplanned joint replacement
- »» other cures, such as treatments for obesity related to disorders of the musculoskeletal system, prevention of disorders of the musculoskeletal system, and overall or specifically aimed regeneration.

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