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Octave Living, which will have a spa with 69 treatment rooms, will be one of the first wellness communities in China

## Octave Living Destination Retreat

Suzhou, China

Opening: 2017

The Octave Living Destination Retreat – which is one of China’s first wellness communities – is now under construction just outside of Shanghai on the shores of Yangcheng Lake in Suzhou.

A project by IMC Octave, the hospital-ity arm of Singapore-based IMC Group, the retreat has been designed by New York City-based Tsai and McKown Architects.

GOCO Hospitality is the master consultant for the project and will also oversee the design and technical services. Horwath HTL – which joined forces with GOCO in September 2013 – was involved with market research and feasibility.

The 19-hectare (47-acre) development is being built in five phases, three of which

are already underway. The final opening date is scheduled for 2017.

The 85,000sq m (914,932sq ft) retreat will have a destination spa with 69 treatment rooms, 104 private villas, 100 serviced apartments and a 50-bed boutique hotel. There will also be a commercial village and lakefront real estate with retail, F&B, art and entertainment facilities and a learning centre.

The spa will include two aquatonic pools – one indoor, one outdoor – featuring therapeutic hydromassage stations.

A thermal area, by Hong Kong-based Deckelmann Wellness, will offer male and female facilities, as well as a unisex zone with five thermal experiences.

“GOCO Hospitality saw a clear opportunity to create wellness communities in China, because they’ve existed successfully in Europe and the US for centuries,” says Josephine Leung, the group director of design for GOCO.



“The wellness facility will offer comprehensive health programmes – combining both western and traditional treatments and advice to improve guests’ lifestyles,” she adds. “This will be the place where generations meet and interact in an urban resort setting – discovering, sharing and learning together.”

The main target audience of the Octave Living Destination Retreat will be local city professionals in their mid-30s to 50s.

**Read more:** <http://lei.sr?a=n2t3b>



**Ingo Schweder**

Owner, GOCO Hospitality

**T**here's a great opportunity for the spa industry to explore membership and retention programmes to convert customers into loyal, repeat guests and to also tap into unexplored revenue streams. Spas would do well to consider developing this business model and to think about variable price points such as peak, off-peak and family membership offers.

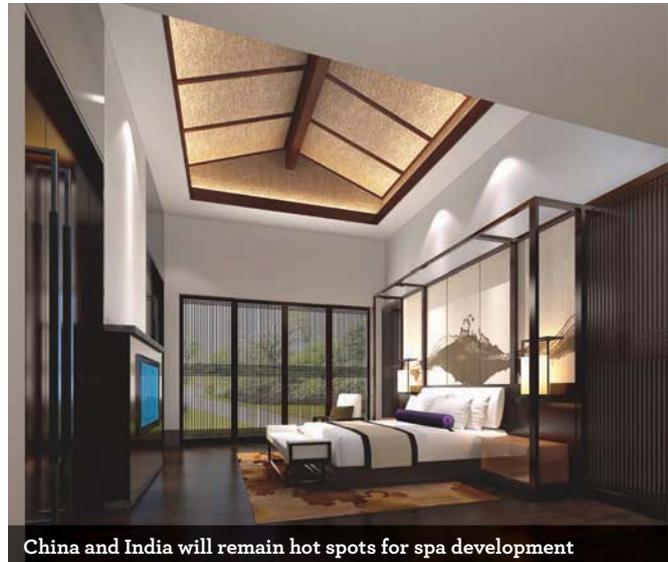
Monitoring and managing use at those peak times will play a key role in revenue management. We'll see facilities limiting the availability of low profit services during periods high-demand for example.

The biggest opportunity for overall growth, however, lies in integrated wellness communities. These will only increase in demand as more consumers look not only participate in wellness activities (such as those offered by the spa industry) but also look to assume greater overall wellness lifestyles. As the global economic environment gradually regains strength, individuals with greater disposable incomes will have an opportunity to make investments in their health and wellness over the long-term.



**Membership and loyalty programmes will encourage repeat customers and give spas a new source of revenue**

PHOTO © SHUTTERSTOCK/SYDA PRODUCTIONS



**China and India will remain hot spots for spa development**

There's a willingness to buy high-quality products and treatments delivered by well-informed, well-trained, service-conscious practitioners. At the same time, however, consumers are price conscious and will expect results and full-value for their money. Additionally, advancements in medical approaches to wellness continue to gain popularity. I'm curious to see how the medi-spa industry will continue to develop.

Both China and India will continue to be the hot spots for development given the sheer size of their emerging middle classes and fast growing economies.

In China, people have historically demonstrated an interest in holistic treatments and bathing experiences. Its wellness industry is dominated by domestic travel which makes up 90 per cent of tourism. Additionally, China's younger wealthy populations are more curious about, and open to pursuing, new spa experiences.

India's broadened consumerism, and the Bollywood influence on image and status, presents huge opportunities for spa investors, owners and operators. There's been much development in recent years, but there's still a chance to bring even more innovation into the local market by expanding definitions of health, relaxation and luxury beyond the traditional notions of ayurveda and yoga.

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