

europa Spa

D I G I T A L E D I T I O N

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THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR SPA AND WELLNESS LEADERS



A GREEK ODYSSEY

The new approach to wellness
at KĒPOS by Goco, Crete

FESTIVE GIFTING

Our pick of luxurious spa gift
sets to boost your revenue

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

We spotlight the best new and
refurbished spa destinations

TREATMENT COUCHES

Our Expert Guide to the latest
treatment couch innovations

Welcome

ISSUE 85 | AUTUMN 2022



Take a fresh perspective



Welcome to our fabulous autumn edition, which is packed with the latest spas, product launches and expert advice to help your business run more successfully. Bringing you the inside track on new spa developments, we talk to the team behind the stunning KĒPOS by Goco in Crete (p14), and go on a whistlestop tour of ten new and refurbished spas (p88).

Highlighting the power of spa partnerships and creative concepts, I try out the reimagined treatment menu at the Waldorf Astoria Spa – The Caledonian in Edinburgh (p42). And there's more wellbeing magic from WOMAD Spa (p108), which pops up annually at one of the UK's most iconic festivals, thanks to Thirteen33's team of dedicated therapists.

This issue we welcome wellbeing expert Ian Bell, who joins us to flag up the warning signs of compassion fatigue (p38). In addition, public relations specialist Tracey Stapleton offers seven ways to achieve your Q4 marketing goals (p64).

As well as bringing you the very best autumn product launches in Menu (p29), we help you to prepare for one of the most important periods on the spa calendar with our Guide to Festive Retailing (p74). More invaluable advice is available in our Expert Guide to Treatment Couches (p66), with Spa Style innovations (p116) and the latest trends in the world of Wellness (p122) aiming to bring you a fresh perspective on the industry.

We hope you have a magical autumn and would love to hear your feedback as well as any exciting news from wherever you are in the spa world. Stay well.

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A handwritten signature of Sarah Camilleri in black ink.

Image: an aerial yoga class
at KĒPOS by Goco on the
Greek island of Crete





A Greek odyssey

We talk to the team at KĒPOS by Goco, in Daios Cove, Crete about their approach to luxury and integrative wellness

REPORT BY MARK SMITH

Daios Cove is a stunning resort in eastern Crete, and home to the new KĒPOS by Goco integrative wellness concept. Situated in a private bay near the town of Agios Nikolaos, the property features a beautiful beach and 290 rooms, suites and villas with sea views, offering guests a family-friendly holiday with a cool and sophisticated vibe.

While visitors are predominately from the UK and Germany, Spanish, Italian, Swiss, Austrian and American wellness seekers are also drawn to a varied offering that as well as water sports, a kids' club, visiting DJs and world-class restaurants and bars, includes a sumptuous spa.

In operation since the resort opened in 2010, the spa has been managed by GOCO Hospitality since 2018, exceeding expectations by doubling in revenue and capture rates. This year a refurbishment of the spa led to the creation of KĒPOS by Goco. With an investment of over £2 million, the project has been designed to attract new guests and extend opening times at the resort by one month on either side of summer.

All-round wellness

The spa's redevelopment story began in 2018 when Daios Cove's owner, Dimitris Daios, spoke with Ingo Schweder, founder and CEO of GOCO Hospitality, about his vision to create a new wellbeing concept that included a total renovation of the facility and the launch of a new integrative health concept.

"The Daios Cove philosophy has always been that anyone who



▷ visits the Cove is encompassed in a sense of wellness all around,” says Daios. “This is the case through the various offerings within the resort incorporating art, gastronomy, health and bespoke experiences. KĒPOS by Goco – our brand-new pioneering hub of wellbeing – delivers a whole new layer to our philosophy.”

Taken from the Greek word for a ‘garden, oasis or sanctuary’ KĒPOS by Goco is inspired by the garden in ancient Athens, where the philosopher Epicurus read and taught the art of wellbeing and happiness. Taking a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, the concept is led by an onsite doctor and nutritionist who have access to innovative diagnostic technologies, the latest wellness therapies and transformative fitness from BXR London.

The philosophy is about catering to current guests but also reaching new ones, says Nichola Roche, director of spa and wellness at GOCO Hospitality. “The whole concept in a nutshell is about embracing an integrative lifestyle, making a difference long-term, retaining our guests who have been coming to us for years, but also tapping into new markets,” she says.

The resort is also seeking to extend its high season by two months to cater for new guests who are seeking transformational wellness experiences while taking a family holiday.

Below: an aerial yoga session in the spa's Mind and Body studio



“Cryotherapy is great for muscle recovery and reducing inflammation. Many guests are choosing to use our chamber. There is a great understanding of the benefits.”

Eleni Papadopoulos
Director of wellness, KĒPOS by Goco

Total transformation

The existing spa at Daios Cove was taken back to its brickwork for a total refurb that took six months. It included the creation of a new arrival and reception area, changing rooms and a mind and body studio that transformed an under-utilised space into a multifunctional room with stunning sea views.

A wellness reception, a new contemporary retail area and consultation rooms for the doctor and nutritionist were added. A luxurious guest waiting area and an elegant relaxation/TV lounge for vitamin infusions also formed part of the redevelopment. The vitality pool area was remodelled and the spa's treatment rooms were fully refurbished.





Left from top: earthy tones in one of the two double wellness suites; the outdoor pool overlooking Daios Cove



Partnering with BXR London, the new development added a BXR Gym, an outdoor functional area and BXR Arena outdoor training area. Other high-tech wellness facilities were added during this phase, including an infrared sauna, a hyperbaric oxygen chamber, a cryotherapy chamber and diagnostic equipment from Pnoë, and a Styku 3D body scanner.

These facilities complement the existing indoor pool and hammam, plus a colon hydrotherapy room, Finnish and soft saunas, a steam room and an experience shower walk. The space also features a hairdressing salon, a manicure and pedicure area, nine private single multifunctional treatment rooms, two double wellness suites and a double Thai massage suite.

The facilities have all been staged to reflect their unique location by lead designer Elastic Architects, using earthy tones to reflect a golden light through the spa. Soft furnishings boast an array of natural textiles and textures, while native materials have been used to create a unique sense of place, with Greek wood and stone displayed to stunning effect.

Hyperbarics and cryotherapy

The new spa and approach was opened to guests in April 2022 after the pandemic delayed the start of work in early 2020. This gave the team more time to enhance and update the offering, especially in response to guests' changing needs, which reflected an increased demand for wellness post-lockdown.

For example, Schweder explains, the hyperbaric oxygen chamber was not part of the original offering. "It is a very expensive piece of equipment, and in 2018 I wasn't sure if it would work here," he says. "But the pandemic opened up a much wider understanding of the general public to participate in more serious programmes."

Hyperbaric chambers increase the uptake of oxygen in the body, enhancing blood flow and circulation, and helping to create new white blood cells and trigger collagen growth. This therapy is non-invasive and involves breathing 100 per cent pure oxygen in a pressurised environment three to five times higher than that found at sea level for around 45 minutes.

Cryotherapy has also proved to be a popular addition to the new wellness programmes, according to director of wellness, Eleni Papadopoulou. "If someone goes to the gym or exercises every day, cryotherapy is great for muscle recovery and reducing inflammation," she says. "Many guests are choosing to use it. When we had the BXR retreat, everyone went in there. There is great



▷ **Right from top:** the spa's infrared sauna; the treatment menu offers guests a selection of classic and alternative facials and body rituals

understanding of the benefits of cryotherapy.”

Cryotherapy is a regenerative therapy that is said to stimulate the body to self-heal as blood vessels constrict and dilate following exposure to an extremely cold environment (-85C) for up to three minutes. In addition to boosting the immune system, enhancing athletic performance and providing beauty and anti-ageing benefits, cryotherapy can support the rejuvenation process by providing a rush of endorphins that helps to increase focus and improve mood.

Medical-led integrative health

The spa's high-tech systems are overseen by resident doctor Masoud Fawzi and wellness consultant and nutritionist George Fokas. However, KĒPOS by Goco is, by its very nature, quite different from a traditional medical wellness facility and while the pair do wear white coats, their style is personable, warm and friendly. The surroundings are modern and clinical but designed with elegance and style. There is a seamless blend of high-tech and high-touch treatments.

All of the programming at the spa is based around six pillars of healing that include care, movement, ▷



From holiday to health

Nichola Roche, director of spa and wellness at GOCO Hospitality, explains how guests can holiday with their family and immerse themselves in wellness at KĒPOS by Goco

The programmes at KĒPOS by Goco have been designed so that guests who are coming for something of a traditional family holiday are able to embrace and enhance their wellness at the same time. And from our experience so far – this is exactly what they are doing.

There are many variations on this approach, whether people come and take part in an intensive one-day itinerary or join a targeted programme for three days and then enjoy the last four days of their holiday, or simply mix it up as they wish.

We believe our diagnostic facilities are helping our guests to make long-term changes, because they're learning how to sleep better and how to eat better in relation



to their metabolic rate results. If somebody's giving you three days or giving you seven or 14 days, you have to deliver on this with results, because that's a lot of time they have given you and time is such a precious, precious commodity.

We allow people to come here and still enjoy all of the fruits of the vine and the food of the land, and this changes the landscape for wellness in this part of the world. We believe it sets a new benchmark where people don't have to choose one or the other, they can do both. We want it to be a joyful experience too, then they can take it away with them. Whatever they learn here, they can continue to do at home, and there's longevity in that.
www.gocohospitality.com

Right from top: relaxation loungers line the indoor vitality pool; the light and airy reception area; a hyperbaric oxygen chamber enhances blood flow, improving circulation and skin health

▷ nourishment, rest, treatment and bathing.

‘Care’ addresses the skincare concerns of each guest, while ‘movement’ combines a training consultation and cutting-edge diagnostics to create a custom-made plan for guests, varying in intensity depending on need. Nutritionally, guests are offered a healthy Mediterranean diet, freshly prepared using local ingredients. To enhance this, all of the resort's à la carte restaurants boast a selection of specifically targeted wellness dishes curated by chef and holistic specialist Sarah Safarian.

For guests struggling with restful sleep, the rooms and villas onsite are designed to promote healthy slumber and spa therapies can link into this. ‘Treatments’ are a core element of the wellness programming while ‘bathing’ rituals are evident throughout the entire wellness facility and designed into each guest journey.

Transformative programmes

The spa’s programmes are highly personalised, allowing each guest to explore a series of modalities for total transformation, or to dip in and out to suit their current lifestyle needs.

All journeys begin with a consultation to understand the guest’s physical state and discuss their individual needs and objectives. These feature specialised diagnostic sessions that aim to give the client (and team) an overview of the current state of health of each guest.

The team can prepare a strict dietary regime if needed, partnered with exercise, movement, high-tech solutions and more traditional spa treatments from incumbent brands 111SKIN and [comfort zone]. “We can literally personalise the experience to whatever the guest needs,” says Roche. “We’re not dictating rituals. There is no black-and-white in what we are offering, and it has to be like this.”

Diagnostics at a cellular level

Today’s wellness guests are well informed when it comes to health data, with many tracking elements of their physical and mental wellbeing through apps that measure everything from heart rate to steps and calorific intake. This is integral to the approach at KĒPOS by Goco, says Schweder: “Technology, which is very precise and very personalised, ensures a treatment programme and journey that’s actually very intuitive.”



▷

Some simple, but informative tests can measure metabolism, fat-to-weight ratios, body composition, lung fitness and cellular health. They are designed to give an overall picture of a guest's health at that time and will set achievable goals and define the parameters of the programme during the stay.

The three key diagnostic and consultation elements include the Styku 3D body scanner, which uses an advanced Microsoft Kinect V2 infrared camera to analyse key points of the body to provide exact measurements of the body's fat, muscle percentages and overall physical status.

A non-invasive Cell Wellbeing epigenetic test uses the cutting-edge technology of the Cell Wellbeing S-Drive, to gather a deeper understanding of the body's systems. This 15-minute process generates a comprehensive

report, including a detailed analysis of the client's cellular health. This can profile toxins that may arise from other lifestyle factors that aren't related to diet, such as the presence of aluminium perhaps derived from the use of anti-perspirants.

The Pnoë breath analysis system provides an overview of nutrition, training and metabolic health. Recording the breath, it gives a detailed overview of current lung function and fitness and offers ways to improve it. Lung health is one of the key indicators of overall health, with tailored breathwork practices said to be able to lower blood pressure, improving cognitive ability and managing stress.

Armed with these unique profiles, both the doctor and nutritionist will adapt the wellness journey accordingly, adding elements to address key concerns.

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Creating a sense of place for authentic wellness journeys

Ingo Schweder, founder and CEO of GOCO Hospitality, talks exclusively to European Spa about the unique concept that awaits guests at KĒPOS by Goco

Founded in Bangkok, Thailand in 2008, GOCO Hospitality is a consulting and management company that specialises in the development and ongoing management of wellness centres, resorts and spas around the world.

Founder Ingo Schweder owns and manages Glen Ivy Hot Springs in southern California, the United States' oldest and highest-grossing hot spring resort. He was formerly a board member of Mandarin Oriental and corporate director of operations for Oberoi Hotels & Resorts. His 40 years' experience includes taking more than 400 projects worth over \$3.5 billion (£3 billion/ €3.5 billion) across 42 countries to profitable realisation and on-going management.

How did the concept for KĒPOS by Goco come about?

Dimitris Daios, the owner, said to me that every hotel has a beach, a café, a dining room, even a sauna or a tennis court or gym – but many Greek hotels don't offer real wellness in a modern setting. This really is about much more than including these various elements and that's where the future is.

The pandemic has facilitated a conscious change and has seen a wider awareness of what needs to



be done preventively – going further into diagnostic analysis and serious programmes to work on a more balanced lifestyle – and that is what the concept here will do.

How do you realise this vision?

You need to identify your market, look at who your target is and decide how to bring together the equipment, design, journeys and products. The interpretation needs to be commensurate with the positioning of the resort and its surroundings. We have created a sense of place, delivering a Greek wellness journey aligned with the culture and the authenticity of the location.

Is KĒPOS by Goco a blueprint for future developments?

I honestly believe that the market should be more democratic with a wider appeal to penetrate and share the goodness of wellness with more people. For that you need a product that can seamlessly integrate into a luxury lifestyle and that's what we did.

I'm happy with the guest feedback as it confirms that what we did there really fits like a glove for what is needed right now.

www.gocohospitality.com

Below: the spa has partnered with BXR London to provide functional and personal training equipment and classes, as well as fitness retreats



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The targeted consultations can also set aims and objectives for life beyond the resort when people return home from their stay.

The perfect touch

By partnering with world-class wellness and skincare brands [comfort zone] and 111SKIN, KĒPOS by Goco sets itself apart at the forefront of wellness in the region. Massage remains the most in-demand treatment at the spa and the spa menu boasts traditional Thai as well as a full spectrum of modalities including aromatherapy, energising, volcanic stones, back, neck, shoulder, feet and pre and post-natal.

Treatments also include classic and alternative therapeutic facials and body rituals to support guests' overall wellbeing, together with a collection of unique signature rituals including a 90-minute journey developed by 111SKIN that includes body exfoliation, cryotherapy and LED red light. A signature hammam experience in the private spa suite draws on eastern traditions to deliver a totally rejuvenating treatment.

Movement in motion

When looking for a new fitness concept for the wellness offering at Daios Cove, the team settled on BXR London, said to be the world's first high-end boxing gym. Launched in London in 2017, the company offers a wide array of fitness services, including a range of combat disciplines, strength and conditioning, boxing, circuit training and group classes. BXR London focuses on developing a 'championship mindset', by offering the highest standards of training and advice from



professional athletes, regardless of the level of ability and fitness of the clients.

The BXR Programme includes functional training, personal training and BXR Retreats with visiting coaches and trainers combining activities such as jogging, running and hiking. The team also oversees the yoga, aerial yoga, Pilates, Gyrokinesis, Aqua Reax and circuit training classes.

An integral part of the whole wellness concept at Daios Cove, the team takes a truly personalised approach to movement that ensures guests are treated as individuals. This holistic approach to wellness offered at KĒPOS by Goco has proved a hit with new and returning guests.

"The crafted 360-degree wellbeing offering at KĒPOS by Goco has dramatically improved the overall guest experience whether one is wellness orientated or not," says Daios. "In its opening season, KĒPOS by Goco has attracted guests from across the board, which is proof that there is a universal need to connect to our sense of wellbeing and to thrive more than ever before." ●●●●●



Left from top: a peaceful moment taking in the view from the indoor leisure pool; restful cabanas lined up by the spa's vitality pool



SPA STATISTICS

KĒPOS by Goco

www.daioscovecrete.com

Owner: Dimitris Daios

General manager: George Brilakis

Director of wellness: Eleni Papadopoulou

Founder and CEO, GOCO Hospitality:

Ingo Schweder

Director spa and wellness,

GOCO Hospitality: Nichola Roche

Lead designers: Elastic Architects

Spa size: 2,620sqm

Spa team: 20

Treatment rooms: Nine single multi-function treatment rooms, two double wellness suites, one private Hammam suite with steam room and one double Thai massage suite.

Uniforms: Extra Unitex

Slippers: Salvini

Pool, sauna, steam room: Barr+Wray

Hyperbaric Oxygen Chamber: Oxyhelp

Cryotherapy: MecoTec

Yoga equipment: Salachi and Manduka

Treatment room equipment and beds:

Gharieni

Loungers and soft furnishings: Almeco

IV lounge and relaxation lounge furniture:

Deloudis

Gym equipment: BXR London, Life Fitness, Technogym, Rogue Fitness Europe

Diagnostic systems: Phœ, Styku, Cell Wellbeing

Specialist facial equipment: Dr. Pen

Dermapen, High Frequency device

Product suppliers: 111SKIN, [comfort zone], Authentic Beauty Concept