

THE SPA & WELLNESS AUTHORITY

# american spa

WINTER 2025

*Luxe*  
ESCAPE

PLUME SPA & WELLNESS  
AT BLACK DESERT RESORT (IVINS, UT)

[www.americanspa.com](http://www.americanspa.com)

## PEACE OF MIND

Discover the ways that spas can help promote mindfulness and improve mental health.

### WEAVING MINDFULNESS INTO ALL



aspects of the guest journey allows spas to support guests with internal reconnection and reflection. This can be

demonstrated through simple, subtle cues throughout the experience that remind clients to be present, including incorporating breath awareness during touch therapies; making space for moments of intentional stillness to reconnect with the senses; or offering gentle invitations to notice their body, breath, and the nature around them. Wellness-focused classes and activities are another avenue to integrate mindfulness and encourage connection to self, nature, and others; experiences like guided meditation and walks or classes that incorporate creativity not only complement the traditional spa experience, but expand the concept of mindfulness into immersive opportunities for self-discovery, reflection, and renewal. Bringing guests outdoors and exposing them to sunlight, fresh air, and natural rhythms of the universe reinforce what many guests are intuitively seeking out from spas—a sense of grounding and calmness that, ultimately, support their holistic wellbeing.”—*Jacqueline Berry, director of spa and wellbeing, Miraval Resorts & Spas (multiple locations)*

### SPAS CAN INCORPORATE MENTAL



health and mindfulness into their offerings by creating intentional spaces and experiences that nurture emotional

wellbeing. Equally important is therapist training—ensuring each treatment is delivered with presence, empathy, and mindfulness to create a truly restorative experience. Guests today seek spaces that calm the mind as much as they relax the body. Spas that nurture both mental and physical wellbeing foster deeper guest satisfaction and loyalty—transforming a simple visit into a holistic, restorative journey.”—*Marizza Contreras, CEO and founder, K'Alma Spa Concepts & Management, on behalf of Leaf Spa at Hotel AKA Brickell (Miami)*

### MENTAL HEALTH AND MINDFULNESS



can be offered by inviting moments of pause for slow breaths at the start and end of each service or class. Breath

is linked to the nervous system via the vagus nerve and is a powerful way to access the parasympathetic state. It is

also helpful to support clients in disconnecting from devices during services. Nature features and small gardens support the downregulation of the nervous system and shift mood. Downregulating the nervous system reduces the circulation of stress hormones, improves digestion, supports the limbic system, and reestablishes access to responsive rather than reactive thinking. This not only ensures a client leaves feeling like their physical health is in a better place, but also their relationship to their life and overall wellbeing has shifted for the better.”—*Bridgette Becker, director of wellness, We Care Spa (Desert Hot Springs, CA)*

### TRUE RELAXATION AND HEALING



come from addressing what the mind, body, and spirit truly need. Spas should incorporate experiences that remind

guests of their ability to pause, reflect, and take control of their wellbeing on their own terms. This can look like offering experiences rooted in meditation and mindfulness or rolling out private sessions with spa specialists who are trained in guiding guests through mental blocks or manifestations, including guided intention setting, tarot readings, one-



The Caldarium at THE WELL Bay Harbor Islands is modeled after ancient Roman baths and supports mind and body relaxation.

PHOTOGRAPHY: THE WELL



on-one yoga sessions, and more. In our modern society, sound mental health is an integral part of holistic wellbeing. To ensure that every client leaves our facilities feeling refreshed, it's imperative that spas seek out ways to encourage and educate guests on how to build a strong mental foundation."—*Gina Bolton, director of spa and programming, The Spa at Bernardus at Bernardus Lodge & Spa (Carmel Valley, CA)*

#### FOR SPAS SEEKING TO INCORPORATE



mindfulness and mental health into their offerings without expanding their treatment menu significantly, it can

be as simple as introducing guided breathwork or intention-setting with practitioners before treatments, offering custom-recorded guided meditations to listen to throughout a service, or creating dedicated quiet spaces for reflection. Another approach that can stand alone but still maintain lower overhead costs is one-to-many programming like group meditation or sound healing sessions. When the mind is cared for alongside the body, treatments become deeper, more transformative experiences, leaving guests feeling balanced, centered, and truly renewed."—*Kane Sarhan, co-founder and chief creative officer, THE WELL (multiple locations)*

#### SPAS CAN NURTURE MENTAL



health and mindfulness by creating spaces that invite guests to slow down, breathe, and come home to themselves. It's

about moving beyond the physical and reconnecting to what's ancient and alive within and around us. By integrating land-based practices, such as grounding rituals, nature workshops, or using locally sourced botanicals, guests are guided to remem-

ber their place within the larger rhythm of the earth. Even the smallest details make a difference, such as intentional stillness and incorporating deep breaths during a massage. These moments allow the guest to surrender into deeper relaxation and calm their nervous system. A simple invitation to take shoes off and feel the ground underneath allows moments of connection that not only soothe the body but the mind, as well."—*Nicole Massengale, spa director, The Stable Spa at The Horse Shoe Farm (Hendersonville, NC)*

#### IN TODAY'S FAST-PACED AND HYPER-



connected world, stress, anxiety, and emotional fatigue are increasingly prevalent, manifesting not only

as psychological distress but also as physical and psychosomatic disorders. Every thought, emotion, and intention influences the body's internal chemistry and energy flow. When the mind is calm and aware, the body naturally follows into balance. Conversely, when the mind is restless or burdened, no amount of external intervention can bring lasting peace. By addressing the mind first, we create the conditions for holistic healing that endures well beyond the retreat experience. Incorporating mental health and mindfulness into every aspect of a guest's wellness journey ensures a truly integrative approach that addresses the root causes of imbalance rather than only the symptoms. Ancient Indian sciences, such as yoga, Ayurveda, and Vedanta have long emphasized the profound interconnection between thought, emotion, and physical vitality. These traditions teach that awareness is both the means and the goal of transformation. Mindfulness practices, meditation, and guided self-reflection help guests slow down, observe their inner landscape, and reconnect with their natural state of peace."—*Mahesh Natarajan, chief operating officer, Ananda in the Himalayas (Uttarakhand, India)*

—COMPILED BY NICOLE ALTAVILLA



PHOTOGRAPHY: BERNARDUS LODGE & SPA



PHOTOGRAPHY: MIRAPAL RESORTS

Offerings that promote mindfulness and improve mental health can range from yoga and other fitness classes to meditation and service add-ons, among others.