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## India Wellness Getaway

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By: David Moseder  
Travel Agent

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Ananda offers a yogic detox program among its many popular wellness treatments.

India has many obvious attributes to appeal to American visitors, including a wealth of historical and cultural attractions, of course, but it also has much in store for niche market travelers as well. One such niche is the spa and wellness market.

India has long been associated with wellness programs, including yoga and ayurveda healing treatments, and continues to be regarded as a global health care destination. So much so, in fact, that New Delhi has been chosen to host the first Global Wellness Tourism Congress on October 5, 2013. As one of the congress's speakers, Jean-Claude Baumgarten, former president & CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTTC), said in a written statement, "Wellness tourism is poised to reshape tourism as we know it. Millions more people every year are demanding destinations that deliver physical, emotional, spiritual and environmental health—another sign of niche travel gaining on the old, mass-market model."

This ties in with some of the findings of MMGY Global's 2013 Portrait of American Travelers. Under the category of "Attributes Considered Extremely/Very Desirable," 36 percent of leisure travelers surveyed checked off "Going to an amenity spa that is part of a hotel, resort or cruise ship," while 31 percent chose "Going to a destination spa that offers complete spa and wellness programs." (Note: Many choices overlap due to multiple responses.) When broken down by generations, Millennials are the most eager for spa travel. The Portrait also shows that interest increases as household income rises.

### Resorts for Spa Aficionados

Following are some options that should appeal to the serious wellness travelers.

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Nestled in the heart of the Himalayas, [Ananda](#) is a destination spa that was once the residence of the Maharaja of Tehri-Garhwal. The most popular services are the signature all-inclusive wellness packages, which range from five to 21 nights. Favorites among guests are the Ayurvedic Rejuvenation, Detox, Yogic Detox, and Weight Management programs. Each of these is completely tailor-made to suit each individual's goals while taking into account their physical and mental conditions.

Spa slots should be pre-scheduled to ensure availability. Contact Colin Hall ([colinh@ihhrhospitality.com](mailto:colinh@ihhrhospitality.com)), corporate head of spa operations or Ritu Srivastava ([ritus@anandaspa.com](mailto:ritus@anandaspa.com)), spa manager.



The Leela Palace Chennai houses a spa by ESPA.

Because the entire guest experience at Ananda is based around health and wellness, all accommodations at the resort embrace the spa ambience, but the Premium Valley View rooms are the most sought after, as they are located on the fifth and sixth floors, providing guests with a panoramic view of Rishikesh Valley and the Ganges River. Agents should reach out to General Manager Jaideep Anand ([jaideepa@anandaspa.com](mailto:jaideepa@anandaspa.com)) with any queries.

Surrounded by 22 acres of pine and cedar forest in the shadow of the Himalayas, [Wildflower Hall](#) is a landmark above India's hill station town of Shimla. The former residence of Lord Kitchener reflects the grand style of the colonial era—full of teaks, hand-knotted rugs, and four-poster beds. This Oberoi resort commands a lofty setting 8,250 feet high in the Himalayas—a truly tranquil retreat. With inspiring views over the green carpeted hills, the Oberoi Spa offers holistic treatments based on Ayurvedic, Asian and Western therapies. Omorovicza brand products are used exclusively for all facials.

Agents can direct their questions to GM Abhishek Sharma ([generalmanager.wildflowerhall@oberoihotels.com](mailto:generalmanager.wildflowerhall@oberoihotels.com)). Other Oberoi spa properties in India can be found in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Kolkata, Gurgaon, Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur and Ranthambhore.

Likewise, clients can enjoy the Indian therapies and other all-natural signature treatments of Jiva Spas from [Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces](#) throughout India.

Jiva's approach to wellness is essentially through Ayurveda, the ancient body of knowledge of holistic wellness in the world. Guests have the option to choose from the two Ayurveda Journeys options: Deep Rest to relax mind and body, and De-Stress to tone the body and relax the mind. Jiva also offers yoga, meditation and holistic treatments.

Jiva Yoga draws largely from the renowned, ancient Bihar Yoga, an international school of yoga based in Munger, Bihar, India. Over centuries, the Bihar School of Yoga has evolved its spiritual heritage into a body of holistic yoga practices that seamlessly integrate the physical, psychological and spiritual facets of asanas. Contact the individual properties for more information or e-mail [spa.division@tajhotels.com](mailto:spa.division@tajhotels.com).

One of India's newest hotels, [The Leela Palace Chennai](#), houses a spa by ESPA, as does Leela's hotels in Bangalore, Mumbai, New Delhi and Udaipur. Guests can indulge in ayurveda treatments; eye therapies; head, neck and back therapies; body baths, relaxation programs, holistic regimens and a full menu of other ESPA signature treatments. Reach out to Director of Sales Ranjith Reddy ([ranjith.reddy@theleela.com](mailto:ranjith.reddy@theleela.com)) with any questions.

[Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts'](#) newest India property, Banyan Tree Kerala, is home to the group's first Ayurvedic Centre, offering personalized consultations. Guests can enjoy a variety of other wellness therapies from the Banyan Tree Spa in one of four Ayurvedic treatment rooms or one of six spa pavilions. The resort also has a yoga pavilion. Reach out to Director of Sales & Marketing Jaya Mishra ([jaya.mishra@banyantree.com](mailto:jaya.mishra@banyantree.com)) with any queries.

The Luxury Spa at another recently opened hotel, the [Kempinski Ambience Hotel, Delhi](#), is equipped with a hammam (Turkish bath) and sauna, as well as eight treatment rooms, nail and foot massage lounge, two fitness rooms, and a yoga deck alongside one of the two swimming pools. Travel agents should get in touch with Aditya Singh ([aditya.singh@kempinski.com](mailto:aditya.singh@kempinski.com)), director of sales and marketing, for additional information.

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## Tour Operator Offerings

A spa experience can also be part of a more encompassing visit to India. [G Adventures](#), for example, includes two days in Marari on its 14-day "Highlights of India" and seven-day "Highlights of South India" itineraries with the notation, "Option to visit an Ayurveda spa." The company put these days toward the end, when tour participants may be looking forward to a little rejuvenation after several days of touring.

[Geringer Global Travel](#), which specialized in custom tours to India and beyond, offers two wellness-centric itineraries that also include tradition sightseeing opportunities. The 11-day "Kerala Ayurveda Retreat" devotes seven days to a stay at [Marari Beach Resort](#) for Ayurvedic treatments, including consultation with a doctor, who will plan a complete regimen. Participants on the 10-day "Ayurveda in the Himalayas" undergo a similar program at the aforementioned Ananda spa during days three through nine of the 10-day itinerary.

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