

GALLEN'S SPA NOTES



Eco Warriors

AOIBHEANN GALLEN
argues the case for
eco-embedded spas.

As spa enthusiasts are typically a group who give extra consideration to both their own health and the general health of the planet, it is logical that spas are recognising this and now looking to create an environment that incorporates green ideas into their spa design. And it's not just the green destination spas that you may expect, environmentally friendly practices are extending into businesses small and large across the spa industry.

The trend seems to be presented to the spa consumer in a subtle manner, allowing them to enjoy their spa experience safe in the knowledge that the spa has already made the eco friendly decisions that they themselves would want. Consumers go to spas to relax, so while choice is no bad thing, does the average spa-goer really want to be presented with dozens of questions when trying to wind down? By visiting an eco embedded spa, they will know that the spa has already elected to source organically grown local produce for their meals, they already use organic products in their treatments, lighting is energy saving, behind the scenes they have a water recycling system and so on.

In addition to taking responsibility for their own carbon footprint, spas now acknowledge that

it makes good business sense to design a spa with eco friendly practices built in from the outset – from the half flush option on their toilets to organic sheets, the eco practices are embedded into the spa's building, concept and service practices. Essentially this trend means that the spa-goers who make a conscious effort to ensure that they think carefully about their choices in terms of the environment in everyday life, can visit a spa where they are thinking the same way. The beauty is that they don't have to think about it during their spa experience, everything's already in place.

I visited the Eco Friendly Gwinganna Spa in Australia last year. This facility was eco from the building to products, gym equipment, bed linen, fuel and even down to the treatment menu. Eco is the future and indeed, in years to come, we will see more eco friendly spas in Ireland. Our own natural resources are now being used to produce some of the best spa products in the world. Offering an organic Irish product in an eco embedded spa, no matter how big or small, is the ingredient for sustainable growth for years to come. This trend has been tried and tested and is here for the long term and so the time is right to go back to basics in every sense. ♦

AOIBHEANN GALLEN, founder of Irelandspas, is Ireland's leading independent spa consultant. To find out more about Aoibheann and the services she offers to the industry log on to www.irelandspas.com or email her at agallen@irelandspas.com.