

Spa-ha Moments: Pampering Trends on the Rise

Written by Christina Tetreault

Tuesday, 14 July 2015 16:45 - Last Updated Wednesday, 29 July 2015 11:22



Picture this: you just returned from a fabulous vacation, and you are more exhausted than when you left. What gives?

The feeling of needing a vacation from your vacation or needing a vacation after vacation has spurred a new trend. The trend of wellness tourism, or travel that promotes health and well-being has been making waves in the traveling industry lately. The trend isn't limited to one travel mode. Resorts, travel agencies, and cruise lines all are taking notice.

Spas are a must and mainstay at upscale resorts and hotels, but consumers are seeking more than a day of pampering- they're seeking an entirely health-and-wellness-filled vacation. Sheryl McCormick, spa and retail director at The Phoenician, a AAA Five Diamond property, said the property's fitness classes have increased in recent years because of the trend's popularity. The Phoenician partners with Metta Yoga, a local yoga studio, to offer wellness classes and events at the resort. Offerings include aqua yoga in the pool one to two times per week. The **AAA Four Diamond** Omni Scottsdale Resort & Spa at Montelucia currently offers 28 fitness classes a week, including a poolside fitness series.

It's not just resort guests who partake in wellness programming. "About 50-percent of those who take classes with us are local residents," says Montelucia Spa Director Erin Stewart.

AAA Arizona, a full-service travel agency, launched [AAA Travel Experiences](#). Those experiences consist of specialized trips that cater to niche travel needs. These trips include food and wine included off the beaten path and spa and wellness retreats. Golf and luxury trips are slated to launch this summer. "Most people think of wellness tourism as a facial or massage, but it's a whole lot more," said Amy Moreno, senior travel manager for AAA Arizona. Spa and wellness retreats are designed for travelers looking to enhance their well-being. There are five tenets of these trips: physical activity, stress reduction, spiritual connectedness, nutrition, and community/environment.

Physical activity may involve yoga, hiking, or rock climbing. Stress reduction could include meditation, hot springs, or mud baths. Spiritually intimate activities may involve healing centers, life coaching, or ritual baths. Nutrition could include a cooking demonstration, herb gardening, or visiting a local farm. Community and environment may involve a local market, UNESCO heritage sites or "green" properties.

Groups for spa and wellness retreats generally range from eight to 16 travelers.

For additional tips on AAA Arizona Diamond properties, visit highroads.az.aaa.com/blog.

By Kelly Potts