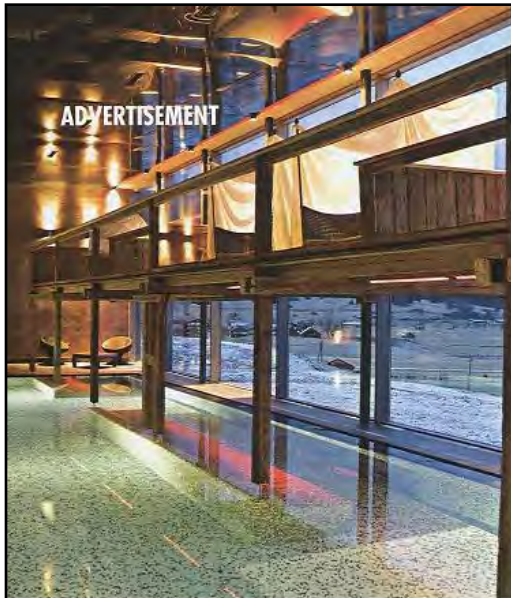


# Design Trends

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## DESIGN TRENDS

**Dr. Gerald Huber, Regional Director at Schletterer Wellness & Spa Design, discusses how to deliver unique spa concepts.**



### 1. What is your strategy in reaction to the increasing demand for spas in the region?

By developing an individual, strategic, overall concept, the three specialised divisions at Schletterer Wellness & Spa Design guarantee excellent profitability.

Depending on our customers' needs we start with a vision, plan the architecture and do the interior design, conduct a feasibility study, realise a project turn key and support our clients so they successfully operate their spa. Our three divisions cooperate closely to ensure an efficient workflow already during the planning stage.

Based on our holistic understanding of a spa, we take into account all functional areas determining the success of your spa.

Depending on the focus and the target group of your hotel or spa, we develop the right concept.

After all, it's your guests who will return and serve as ambassadors for your spa.

The Middle East is one of our core markets, on which we will also focus in the future.

Due to the trust and great cooperation with our clients and partners, the number of impressive projects, our integrated PR and marketing activities, and the sustainable work and

effort of the whole team, we are constantly growing our presence in the region.

### 2. What do you think contributes to this increase in demand?

- The international market is changing.
- The globalisation brings additional competitors, but also opportunities for the hotel business.
- There is a heavy trend towards repeated short holidays as a break away from stressful jobs.
- There is a strong trend towards pure health holidays for regeneration.
- The tourism market will be more selective than ever. Guests look for specialists for their needs.
- People are striving for more vitality and quality of life in every phase of life, as well as more individualism and self-awareness.
- There has been high investment into the tourism infrastructure in the regions of the Middle East, Asia, Eastern Europe, Russia and North America.

### 3. What differentiates your designs?

Guests have to be convinced without compromises, and absolutely positively surprised about the right functional flow and provision of multi-functional facilities.

We want everybody using a Schletterer spa to enjoy a unique and fascinating relaxation experience – an unforgettable experience that enhances their mental, spiritual and physical health and beauty.

### 4. What are your major projects in the Middle East?

Al Reem – Abu Dhabi, UAE  
Dubai Pearl – Dubai, UAE  
Mövenpick Business Hotel – Bahrain  
Platinum Yachts – Dubai, UAE  
The Royal Amwaj, Palm Jumeirah - Dubai, UAE  
Oceana, Palm Jumeirah - Dubai, UAE  
Luxor Hilton - Luxor, Egypt

Essque Palm, Palm Jumeirah - Dubai, UAE  
 Sheraton Dammam - Dammam, Saudi Arabia  
 Louthan Spa & Health Club - Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
 The Cube - Dubai, UAE  
 Hilton Jordan Gate - Amman, Jordan  
 Mövenpick Hotel & Resort Al Bidaa - Kuwait  
 Adia Health & Wellness Centre - Abu Dhabi, UAE  
 Mövenpick Hotel & Resort Al Reem - Abu Dhabi, UAE

**International:**

Mohr Life Resort - Austria  
 Grupotel Valparaiso Palace - Mallorca/Spain  
 Center Parks - UK  
 Tropical Islands - Berlin, Germany  
 Hotel Sackmann - Baiersbronn, Germany  
 Sport und Wellness Resort Quellenhof - St. Martin, Italy  
 Sheraton Porto - Porto, Portugal  
 Les Ottomans - Istanbul, Turkey  
 SAS Radisson Hotel - Nizza, France  
 Livland - Riga, Lithuania  
 Raevsky SPA - St. Petersburg, Russia  
 Garden Palace Moscow - Moscow, Russia  
 Harkany - Hungary  
 Le Meridien Bukarest - Bukarest, Romania  
 Spa Viktoria - Sotschi, Russia  
 Kurortpark Sojus - Russia

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**5. What in your opinion is important to consider when designing a spa?**

All and everything has to start first on a clear market positioning strategy, and the relevant functional spa concept, including all guest, staff and material flows. Of course, the impression and therefore the mental energy taken from the mood of the spa area is very essential, but this alone would lead to serious loss of operational profit without the optimal functional provisions, material durability and maintenance. Therefore our design is strongly guided by operational competence and workflow know-how.

**6. What is the trend for this sector in the region?**

All these criteria are combined in a creative spa design solution and concept:

- Closeness to nature - implementing of natural features within your spa design.
- Smart combination of different materials - wood with steel, water with fire, hot/cold elements to create a well-being atmosphere, glass with grass, etc.
- Fascinating and clever lighting solutions - flexible and changing according to the mood of guests, to create an outstanding relaxing atmosphere.
- The staging of design with lighting support.
- Arrange something with interior design that nobody would expect in such an area (hay in a sauna, milk for showering etc.)
- All senses approach - combination of see and feel

experiences, together with hearing, smelling and tasting.

- Stimulate impulses for more self-awareness with emotions and experiences, but avoid impression overloads

**7. What design challenges have you had to face in the past? How did you overcome them?**

Taking the best synergy from all involved disciplines - interior design, engineering, operation, investment and profit - is the biggest challenge in general but also the most inspiring part of the job.

Water and electrical load limitations were one of our recent challenges.

We only had the allowance for a small fitness centre and to create a tailor-made spa facility with innovative spa and wellness equipment, this generally takes more load than a fitness club.

So through our research department, we created new techniques for our equipment designs in order to reduce the normal loads and not to reduce the equipment and thus the spa experience for the end user.

**8. How will the future design for spas change?**

In the future it will become ever more important to have a close look at the target groups' social backgrounds and their cultural conventions.

In the UK, for instance, a sauna is a place to communicate. In the Alpine region, however, it is a place of calmness. In Northern and Eastern Europe the sauna is considered a place of body care, whereas the Arabs adhere to a strict gender-segregation. Furthermore, countries have different conventions in terms of which areas of a spa are considered nude areas.

In order to avoid misinvestment it will be important to respond to the guest's individual needs.

This means that hotels have to offer various ways of enjoying the sauna experience.



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