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SPA IN INDIA: AN ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to provide a literature review on analysis of Cascade Refrigeration Systems using various working fluids (refrigerants) and to give useful guidelines regarding background and operating principles of Cascade System. The recent interest and development of two-circuit cascade systems are highlighted and principal aspects of the environmental pollution by working fluids in Cascade refrigeration systems are reported. Thus, paper discussed one of the crucial point of refrigerants selection which makes these systems more efficient from both economical and environmental point of view.

Keywords: Spa, India, Market

INTRODUCTION

Spa is a treatment, where there is use of drinking waters, hot baths and natural vapor baths, as well as various kinds of mud and sand are applied for body treatment. The term Spa is derived from the name of the town of Spa, Belgium, whose name is known back to Roman times, when the location was called

Aquae Spadanae, perhaps related to the Latin word "spargere" meaning to scatter, sprinkle or moisten. The belief in the curative powers of mineral waters goes back to prehistoric times. Such exercise has been popular worldwide, but is especially well-known in Europe and Japan. Taking bath in hot and cold springs so as to cure some ailment is not new to human beings. Many people around the world believed that bathing in a particular spring, well, or river resulted in physical and spiritual purification.

Forms of ritual purification existed among the native Americans, Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Today, ritual purification through water can be found in the religious ceremonies of Jews, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus.¹

Spa Types and Treatments:²

In today's modern era there are various types of spa with range of treatments as per customers need. Few of them are listed below.

Spa Type	Spa treatment
Day Spa	A spa offering services like facials, massages, manicures and pedicures
Medical Spa	A spa offering hydrotherapy and various surgical procedures
Resort Spa	Body treatment, aromatic rubs
Destination Spa	Body treatment, aromatic rubs
Ayurvedic Spa	A spa in which all treatments and products are natural and it's often used as alternative medicine
Mineral springs Spa	A spa offering an on-site source of natural mineral, thermal or seawater used in hydrotherapy treatments.
Club Spa	A facility whose primary purpose is fitness and which offers a variety of professionally administered spa services on a day-use basis.

Day Spa: In a day spa a cosmetic treatment is given for the hands and nails that usually involve shaping and polishing the fingernails, pushing back the cuticles, and treating a rough skin, and they also provide a cosmetic or medical care for the feet.

Medical Spa: These are centers where Ayurvedic massage therapy, aesthetic medical skin care, aesthetic surgery, use of cosmeceuticals, cosmetic dentistry, purification and holistic treatments are blended together seamlessly with the help of physician-directed team of licensed professionals combine years of

expertise and training to help consumers look and feel best.³

Resort and Destination Spa: Today all major hotels and resorts across the country have a special section dedicated to spa treatments. These are centers where body massage is done by applying various aromatic oils. Spa treatments relax and rejuvenate with natural therapies and oils in a soothing environment.⁴

Global Spa market Scenario: Spa practices have been popular worldwide, but are especially widespread in Europe and Japan and USA. The estimated size of the global spa market is US\$ 60

billion, which has seen a 20 to 30 percent surge in the last few months.

Asian Spas: Favorite destination

Asia has a rich cultural history. Asian spas have become increasingly popular in recent years. The popularity of Asian spas in the international market is causing greater demand for trained Asian spa personnel in the international market. Asian spas have proven to be a good source of income and a way of increasing GDP throughout Asia due to their unique characteristics in the global industry. The culture and local wisdom in Asia varies greatly from country to country. Spa culture also varies by its origin. For example, Shiatsu and Onzen spa culture from Japan; Chinese acupuncture, Reflexology, Tui-Na and Tai Chi from China, Ayurveda from India, and Traditional Thai Massage from Thailand.⁵

Indian Spa Market: Enormous potential ahead

The spa industry in India has huge potential and has some unique development in recent years. Kerala, with its ayurvedic roots, has emerged as a sizzling destination for spa tourism. Other than Kerala, Maharashtra and North India had major growth witnessed in recent years. India is a powerhouse in the industry with its confluence of high-tech medicine, traditional healing and an abundance of tourist attractions.

Other than skin treatment and massages spas provides different therapies, such as reflexology, hydrotherapy, aromatherapy, and meditation which is very well-known among Indian

consumers. By looking at the potential ahead some groups of companies are even planning to setup a chain of spas across country. Further to make industry more professional the concerned associations are trying to bring all spa community together to create an organized message of the significance of spa. According to RNCOS business research, the market is poised to grow at an estimated CAGR of around 30% (which is one of the highest among the beauty service market segments) during 2009-2012.

The estimated market size of spas in India is US\$ 384 million, with an estimated annual growth rate of 20 to 40 percent. The total numbers of spas in the country are about 2,300. The number of therapists required in the Indian spa industry is about 3, 00,000 by 2012.⁶

According to Assocham each foreigner visiting India during the 2010 Commonwealth Games, the estimated profits is expected around Rs 8 billion, mainly through spas. International visitors during games would spend Rs 10,000 to Rs 35,000 in spa treatments. It also estimates that the Indian spa industry will receive investment of \$35 billion in the next 3-4 years.

Major Drivers and Challenges in Spa industry:

1. Large young consumer's base: People under the age of 15-64 years constitute the consumer base for the spa market since this category react to the latest trends and fashions scenarios. The number of people under this particular age group is

growing at a rapid pace and is forecasted to climb to about 790 million by 2015.

2. Life style of consumers: with increase in power of purchasing the consumers are more of aware of health and beauty. The reason for the demand for spa in India is greater access to television, which has created a growing awareness of the western world, greater product choice, availability and contribution of International beauty pageants. The demographic profile of spa industry is widening and extending to the males too.
3. Medical tourism: India will keep on to be a hot spot for medical tourists that seek travel services that incorporate diverse wellness packages, including those that couple medical procedures with spa indulgences, ayurvedic treatments or cultural immersion experiences. India occupies a unique and enviable position with a globally recognized and well-respected medical establishment generating English-speaking, highly qualified doctors.⁷
4. Entry of foreign players: More international investments are expected in day spas, as well as resort spas. International players are planning to open its specialty and day spas across the country—beginning with Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore. The companies are targeting major metropolitan areas as well as tourist destinations, in order to cater to both local consumers and international

travelers. Additionally, domestic companies have recently taken over a chain of day spas demonstrating that international players are seeking entry into the Indian spa market.⁸

Challenges:

1. **Lack of trained personnel:** Some of the issues related to spa are Who should perform medical spa services? What services should be offered and how should they be regulated? In what environment should these services be provided?
2. **Lack of regulations and standards:** The Ministry of Health has decided to regulate the wellness industry. The government has invited suggestions from industry, consumer bodies and civil society. According experts with the spa industry growing at about 70% annually, regulatory guidelines will help spas distinguish themselves from day spas, medi-spas and salons which are mushrooming everywhere.⁹ Before deciding which Medi spa is right for you, it's important to verify all accreditation and licenses to be sure it's a legitimate operation and to be sure you're in good hands. And even it's critical that you know what type of insurance is in place to protect against financial loss should the unthinkable occur. Once you've checked the Med spa out for safety, you are all set to begin enjoying the wonderful range of medical services in the calming, recharging environment of a spa for rejuvenated and refreshed you.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

India may become a premier spa destination for multinational and National spa giants in coming years, as India is known for land of alternative therapies for fighting some diseases and stress. India has advantage over other countries because of its huge geographical area, diverse culture , rich knowledge Ayurveda, growing hospitality industry, increased tourism industry, younger population and awareness of well-being among the society all these factors may contribute to this sector which may become a quite unique in future.

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