



EUROPEAN SPAS ASSOCIATION

#europeanspas

Health | Quality | Innovation



Thierry Dubois
President

Ladies and gentlemen,

For more than 25 years the European Spas Association (ESPA) has promoted the use of natural remedies such as mineral and thermal water as well as healing climatic, sustainable and green destinations within the domain of Balneotherapy / spa medicine. The members of European Spas use such local healing resources and remedies as a basis for effectively treating medical conditions to ensure that guests not only become healthier during their stay but stay healthy afterwards too. This medical spa treatment is ideal for disease PREVENTION and REHABILITATION, recuperation, pain relief and healing, particularly concerning the treatment of chronic diseases and so-called 'civilization/lifestyle' based diseases. The experience of using natural resources such as mineral water and peloids, sea and climate in medicine has been based on hundreds of years of experience, proving successful treatment for numerous diseases.

Eleven European traditional spa towns were declared UNESCO WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE in 2021.

These local natural resources and remedies have been scientifically tested many times to show a healing and restorative effect. It should be also be emphasised that these spa operators are essentially medical health providers, offering treatment for post cancer patients, diabetes, arthritis, overweight and obesity, respiratory diseases, the loss of mobility among elderly people and other chronic conditions. According to a study amongst 50,000 participants, patients who had to forgo their spa cares in the Pandemic declared that their pain and symptoms had worsened (63.5% vs 13.4%) and their ability to perform daily tasks were also significantly reduced as well as their quality of life. On top of that, the patients who had to give up their medical spa stay saw an increase in the number of consultations they had with health professionals (26.5% vs 8.3%) as well as their consumption of medications (30.1% vs 6.5%). Mental health became a central focus and saw the introduction of Long Covid programs, and this demand is growing fast. Insufficient activities in European health policy primary prevention of so-called lifestyle diseases should be a warning to us. It's time to act and use the healing power of nature and this special medical spa know-how that is unique in Europe.

Thalasso therapy, medical wellness, relaxation, detox, anti-aging and beauty offers are also available in these European Health Spa destinations, complementing the traditional medical spa say. They also offer a range of services in areas such as sport, fitness, mental wellness and activities in nature.

Well-being and feeling: ESPA is committed to make it happen!



EUROPEAN SPAS ASSOCIATION

The European Spas Association (ESPA) is a non-profit and umbrella association of the European Spa sector based in Brussels (Belgium) since 1995.



OBJECTIVES

The European Spas Association's global objective is to promote spa medicine in Europe as a curative and preventive approach using natural resources and remedies, rehabilitation techniques, physical therapy and lifestyle education, to maintain and enhance the health status of patients and guests, in addition to promoting wellbeing and quality of life.

The historical treatments that medical spas offer are particularly effective in the areas rheumatology, respiratory disorders, dermatological and metabolic problems. Today new demands are emerging related to how society is developing, particularly with regard to the surge in chronic diseases and aging populations. Lifestyle disorders are more prevalent, particularly those that affect the musculoskeletal system, in addition to mental and eating disorders - diabetes and obesity are now at epidemic levels.

HEALTH – QUALITY – INNOVATION

- ④ Promoting the exchange of experiences, best practices and know-how
- ④ Stimulate and resource evidence-based research
- ④ Promoting excellence and innovation in the spa business
- ④ Creating a positive perception of the medical benefits of spa medicine with authorities, health insurance companies and doctors
- ④ Influencing politics in the European Union and at national level
- ④ Developing new cooperation in the fields of education, renewable energy and new technologies in the Green Deal
- ④ Promoting and improving quality standards in all spas, medical spas and health resorts in Europe
- ④ Emphasizing the role of health resorts and spa towns as drivers of regional economic development and job creation in structurally weak regions regardless of seasonality

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

E-LIBRARY of BALNEOLOGY www.espalibrary.eu

Exclusively dedicated to evidence-based medical studies

MEDICAL RESEARCH

Evidence Based research
European Balneotherapy, Epidemiological Survey,
Post Corona Recovery Concepts

EU4HEALTH

Healthier Together – EU Non-Communicable Diseases Initiative
EU Directive on Cross border Health care
Health Promotion, Information and Education
Beating Cancer Stakeholder Contact Group

INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERTISE www.europeanspas.eu

Insight News, Events, Networks
ESPA Annual Congress
Health Tourism Industry Summit
Stakeholder in Transition Pathway for Tourism in EU
Pact for Skills of the EU
#BeActive European Week of Sport– Partner from 2019

ESPA INNOVATION AWARDS www.europeanspas.eu/en/awards

QUALITY

Quality in Health - standards, certificates
Quality in Prevention





MEDICAL SPAS IN EUROPE

Facts and figures

ESPA represents over **1,400 medical spas and health resorts** as well as facilities for treatment, prevention, rehabilitation, and health and wellness tourism in Europe. The related European market contains according to ESPA approximately **10,000 facilities**. The industry **employs directly and indirectly around 850,000 people and has an annual turnover of approximately 50 billion euros**. This means that the European facilities are not only an essential part of national and European health services, but are also important economic contributors and offer employment - many situated in structurally weak regions. The central feature of many spas and health resorts is that they are also in sustainable, green destinations.

Our members were the first to react and begin delivering solutions for Covid-19 treatment from spring 2020. Balneology places corona virus as a top priority, SPA medicine offering a natural option to reduce the infection and an effective promoter of a healthy human immune system.

BALNEOTHERAPY/ HEALTH RESORTS OF EUROPE

Balneotherapy in many European countries has a long tradition and it is an integral part of the health care system.

Balneotherapy is provided only in medical spa facilities that are recognized by state authorities. As such it is part of the health care system and has to abide by strict regulations.

The local natural healing resources (natural healing water, peloids, gases, climatic conditions) have always been subject to scientific research. Based on the knowledge of scientists and medical doctors, the treatments of all diseases offered in medical spas have been observed, approved, and recommended.

Our members offer a wide range of services: physical activity and rehabilitation, healthy nutrition, relaxation and personal mental activities that enrich the traditional tourist experience in green destinations or in historical spa towns. Join the European Spas Association or visit our events and learn more about Balneotherapy, Spa Medicine in Europe.



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Your voice will be heard!

ESPA is your representative in Europe, and as a member you have the chance to be part of the organisation that helps shape policies that affect the Medical Spas & Health Resorts industry.

Being a member means you are part of an active European network and share our goal of promoting Medical Spas and balneotherapy.

We do this through:

- 🌐 Providing networking opportunities with other people involved in the Medical Spa & Health Resorts industry through regular events.
- 🌐 Contributing to the industry through the participation in the board meetings and the ESPA working groups. By participating in working groups, members help shape the focus of the ESPA's efforts

to develop strategies and policies on a variety of issues that affect Medical Spa & Health Resorts in Europe.

- 🌐 Your membership investment in the European Spas Association opens the door to a wealth of information on EU documentation, legislation, project and key initiatives, industry news, networking events, insights, and trends.


OUR MEMBERS

The European Spas Association is an umbrella organization representing 20 European countries, national spa organizations and Advisory Members.

 **BULGARIA**
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 **ESTONIA**
Estonian Spas Association represented by FraMare Spa
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 **SPAIN**
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Advisory members:

- American Balneo Medicine Association
- Deggendorf Institute of Technology
- ENSANA Health Spa Hotels
- Palindrome Edition
- Shenzen Academy
- Thermauvergne
- Karlovy Vary Institute of Balneology
- Aquatreatment, Hospitality development
- Passport Group International, Israel

CORE ACTIVITIES

Post Corona Recovery Concepts Medical Spas

Information and evaluation of spa programs for post Covid syndrome in many countries

The spa program is effective tool to solve long lasting health problems after COVID-19, that decrease quality of life (HLY)

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEY
ON BALNEOTHERAPY, to identify:

- ④ The different diseases and conditions treated by balneotherapy in the different European countries;
- ④ The health profile of the patients;
- ④ A European profile for balneotherapy indications and treatments.

E-LIBRARY

As part of its commitment to promote evidence-based medicine, ESPA has developed this unique e-library exclusively dedicated to balneology. It aims to offer high-quality information for health professionals and those engaged in basic research and clinical care, public health, health policy development, or related educational activities as well as professionals from the spa industry.

In ESPA e-library we have collected a large number of evidence based medical studies regarding our spa programs, including newest studies about Long Covid treatments. Contrary to other databases that have thousands of references, the ESPA e-library is a friendly tool focusing on comprehensive information selected by the ESPA scientific experts, therefore being extremely valuable in the assessment of the medical and economic interests of balneotherapy.

www.espalibrary.eu



ESPA IN BRIEF

Esipa Annual Congress

The ESPA Annual Congress is a one-of-a-kind, multi-dimensional event for all business partner of the spa industry. The Annual Congress includes meetings, the annual Gala of the ESPA Innovation Awards, strategic thinking and knowledge sharing about the industry – an outstanding international conference to network with key stakeholders of the Spa and Health Resorts Industry. Now we have also integrated SPA-CE B2B workshop and provide spa special training on updated subjects of EU calls for municipality decision makers.

The Congress provides an increasingly rare opportunity for communication and engagement. Meet, greet, and share ideas with the individuals and organizations who are growing and sustaining the Spa and Health Resorts business in Europe.

www.europeanspas.eu/en/congress

European
Health
Tourism
Summit



4-6
October
2023
KARLOVY
VARY



25th ESPA ANNUAL CONGRESS

29 September – 1 October 2021
Moravske Toplice & Radenci Health Resort
www.europeanspas.eu



ESPA INNOVATION AWARDS

*Celebrating Innovation and Excellence
in the European Spa Business*

The ESPA Innovation Awards celebrates Innovation in the categories:

- 🏆 Spa & Health Resort Destination
- 🏆 Medical Spa
- 🏆 Spa Hotel
- 🏆 Spa Concept
- 🏆 Health Spa Program
- 🏆 Spa Research

The emphasis in judging applicants for the ESPA Innovation Awards will be on how effectively the submitted innovation addresses its stated objectives, such as improving efficiency, increasing marketability, achieving environmental goals and improving its market position.

www.europeanspas.eu/en/awards



The ESPA Innovation Awards reflects the ESPA aim to stimulate experience-exchange, best practice, and know-how.



QUALITY IN HEALTH PREVENTION

Healthcare services based on Balneotherapy

The cross-border association “Quality in Health Prevention” constitutes a milestone for quality in international health tourism. This association founded by ESPA, representatives of tour operators, other associations, health insurance companies, scientific institutes and other operators of medical spa hotels and facilities, will serve as a unique multi- stakeholder platform of the European medical spa and balneology industry regarding quality aspects.



Quality in Health Prevention

Healthcare Services based on Balneotherapy

www.quhep.org



EUROPE SPA CERTIFICATE

The international Quality system for Medical Spa and Wellness

ESPA launched its international EuropeSpa med and EuropeSpa wellness certificates with leading experts in order to boost cross- border transparency and fairness in competition. EuropeSpa criteria focus on safety, hygiene, and therapy infrastructure (EuropeSpa med) and safety, hygiene, and wellness infrastructure plus service quality (EuropeSpa wellness). The certificates help professionals such as health insurance companies and tour operators as well as patients and guests to identify quality spa facilities in the balneotherapy and wellness sector in Europe. The facilities applying for the EuropeSpa quality scheme have to enter to a step-by-step process that leads to continuous improvement resulting in more satisfied guests, economic success, and a positive reputation through offering better quality.



COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

The purpose of our cooperation with the Bellavista Institute of Higher Education (a new International Centre associated with the UNWTO Academy for tourism training in Switzerland), is to establish and operate a competence profile for human resources development in the field of health tourism. This new education service develops a competence profile for health and tourism partners, providers of various complementary and alternative methods of treatment. The main purpose of the project is to offer a cooperation between related companies in the industry, the creation of competence models, and the establishment systematic and focused human resource development to ensure a better future for spa tourism.

COOPERATION FOR GREEN DESTINATION & RENEWABLE ENERGY

Although energy requirements have a heavy toll on the spa and hotel sector's bottom line, challenges such as outdated technology, inefficient appliances, and poor operations management erode profits and hold back sustainability efforts. Our goal is to support our members in improving sustainability and energy efficiency. The movement towards accountable energy consumption is promising, and the benefits of awareness should continue to drive further change across the industry. The current skyrocketing energy prices are also giving the industry more impetus for change.





ROMAN THERMAL SPAS OF EUROPE

Explore a unique Spa & Wellness experience built on a tradition of more than two Millennium

Initiated by ESPA with eight national partners, the Roman Thermal Spas of Europe brings together health resorts and thermal spa destinations of Roman origin. Based at the intersection of spa and cultural tourism, all destinations offer contemporary and innovative combinations of medical spa and wellness facilities as well as history, arts, embracing the tradition and charm of the European continent.

The main criteria for participation in this unique initiative is that member destinations have to be founded as a spa destination in Roman times and that they have maintained and cultivated this heritage over the course of the centuries until today. The initiative has the goal to market this special tradition to national, European and intercontinental tourist.

www.roman-thermal-spas.eu



SPA-CE, a boutique workshop for Spa & Wellness offers in Central Europe

Network and business for SPAS

BUYERS – tourist agencies offering spa services, tour operators, the organisers of incentive trips, representatives of insurance companies, healthcare institutions, medical travel providers and others looking to discover spa & wellness offer of Central Europe are eligible for hosted buyer status. Each year around 80 % of hosted buyers are new!

SUPPLIERS – natural spas and thermal spas from Central Europe, wellness hotels, resorts and centres, providers of wellness services, tourist destinations with the spa offer and providers of cosmetic and medical services & equipment looking to present their offer and establish new business contacts.

www.spa-ce.si

SPACE
Experience



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