

Intelligent HOLIDAY

Six Senses Destination Spa, Phuket, pampers, re-energises, and teaches a holistic way of life

By: Soumya Jain

When Ana Maria Tavares, managing director of Six Senses Destination Spas, first stepped at the site of Six Senses Destination Spa, Phuket, she couldn't believe her eyes. The grass and bushes were so high that nobody could penetrate and walk through them to the other side of the private island. It had not been used for 25 years. At the same time, however, she felt tremendous positive energy around the island. It gives her a thrill now to see the destination spa standing on the island which was constructed in a record 16 months.

The destination spa is built on 85,000 sq mt Naka Yai Island. It has 61 villas, each spread over 450 sq mt, with a private plunge pool and a private salon where you can get some dry massages done in privacy of your villa. The villas also have a vanity area at the back, including steam room and changing room. The destination spa includes a large 3,000 sq mt suite along with six smaller suites.

The wellness village, called 7th Sense, provides three spheres of wellness: holistic fitness, alternative medicine and integrative health, and spa. The village has four fully-equipped Indonesian, Chinese, Indian and Thai spas. Each is set up in different buildings with interiors suiting the specific culture. For example, the Indian spa has nine treatment rooms and an Ayurveda doctor for consultation. "When you walk into the atrium of the spa you feel you are in India because of the music, incense and interiors of the spa," explains Tavares. The Thai spa consists of four treatment rooms and several indoor and outdoor areas for Thai massages.

Offering holistic fitness, the destination spa provides various facilities to burn calories. Tavares enumerates them, "When people say they don't want to exercise, it is because they are thinking of big gymnasiums with lots of machines. We have soft programmes which will help you burn



calories. Kinesis is the latest method to burn calories. You just have to pull on ropes which are attached to a digital machine. We have Pilates as well. You can sail on bamboo rafts while you relax and meditate. We not only address the physical part of the body, but mental and spiritual health as well." They also provide alternative healing therapies like naturopathy, herbal Chinese medicines, etc.

The unique concept of 'edible landscaping' makes them self-sufficient. The grounds of this destination spa are used to grow fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs which are used in their restaurants and spas. Tavares explains, "The landscaping of the property is like a farm. So, outside their villas, people will find pineapple plantations, banana trees, lettuce, pumpkins, basil, chilly plants, etc. It's like being in a huge farm."

It is not only enjoyment or relaxation that they provide at the spa but also inculcating good eating habits and lifestyle. "You don't want to spend the last years of life in bed. People don't realise that we have to face the consequences of what we do today." The spa not only gives classes on cooking, but on nutrition as well. They give counseling sessions so that you can carry on the lifestyle which you started in the resort. They also keep in touch with the guests through email or phone if they need any help. "Apart from weight loss or de-stressing, our aim is to give you information to make you understand the consequences of not doing certain things. Not to make you scared, but aware."

The serenity surrounding this pleasure palace is a prelude to what you can expect inside the retreat. ✓

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