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[Interview] Ms. A.W. Lake, Founder & Managing Director of A.W.Lake Spa Concepts

2013년 04월 05일 (금) 01:50:59

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Wellness Today is pleased to have the opportunity to speak with Adria W. Lake, Founder and Managing Director of internationally renowned A.W.Lake Spa Concepts.

[WT] You have quite an extensive background in the Spa & Wellness industry. Could you summarize your industry background?

I founded A.W. LAKE in 2001 while I was still managing one of my family's hotel properties. We were opening our first spa, and I was looking for a spa product company that would be able to formulate high quality organic products for us. This was a tall order, as most product manufacturers require a very high minimum order for custom formulation. It was then that I decided to start my own product company.



▲ Ms. A.W. Lake, Founder & Managing Director of A.W.Lake Spa Concepts

We work with some of the best skin care labs in the US to create small batches of pure and organic skin & body care products that are made fresh upon order. In the last 12 years, the company has grown from a small product company to a multi-national Spa Design & Consultancy firm with offices in Singapore, Indonesia, and China and hundreds of clients in over 30 different countries. We are very fortunate to work with some of the world's finest and most successful hotel brands because we share a common belief in offering only the very best to our customers.

[WT] What corporate philosophy or mission drives A.W.Lake?

Our corporate mission is to "Create Possibilities" for our clients by custom tailoring our concepts, designs, products and services to their exacting needs. We thrive on the challenge of creating something that is one of a kind – each and every time. We are a company of "creators", driven by our creativity, courage, and commitment to create intuitive, intelligent, and inspiring products and experiences.

[WT] Much of your time is spent in research and exploration. How has this impacted the way you address the market?

My research and exploration keep my curiosity and creativity alive and are the source of inspiration and ideas for what we do as a company. But, more importantly, my extensive research and travel bring a fresh perspective to each project we undertake. It allows us to take a broader view of a project and place it both in the global as well as local contexts. We understand that best spas are those that embrace and are completely immersed in local culture and traditions. But at the same time, the high end spas we work with must also understand the expectations of the global nomads – those who travel the world and are citizens of the world.

[WT] You've consulted for some of the top spa & wellness groups around the world. What are some of the exotic locations and sites your travels have taken you to?

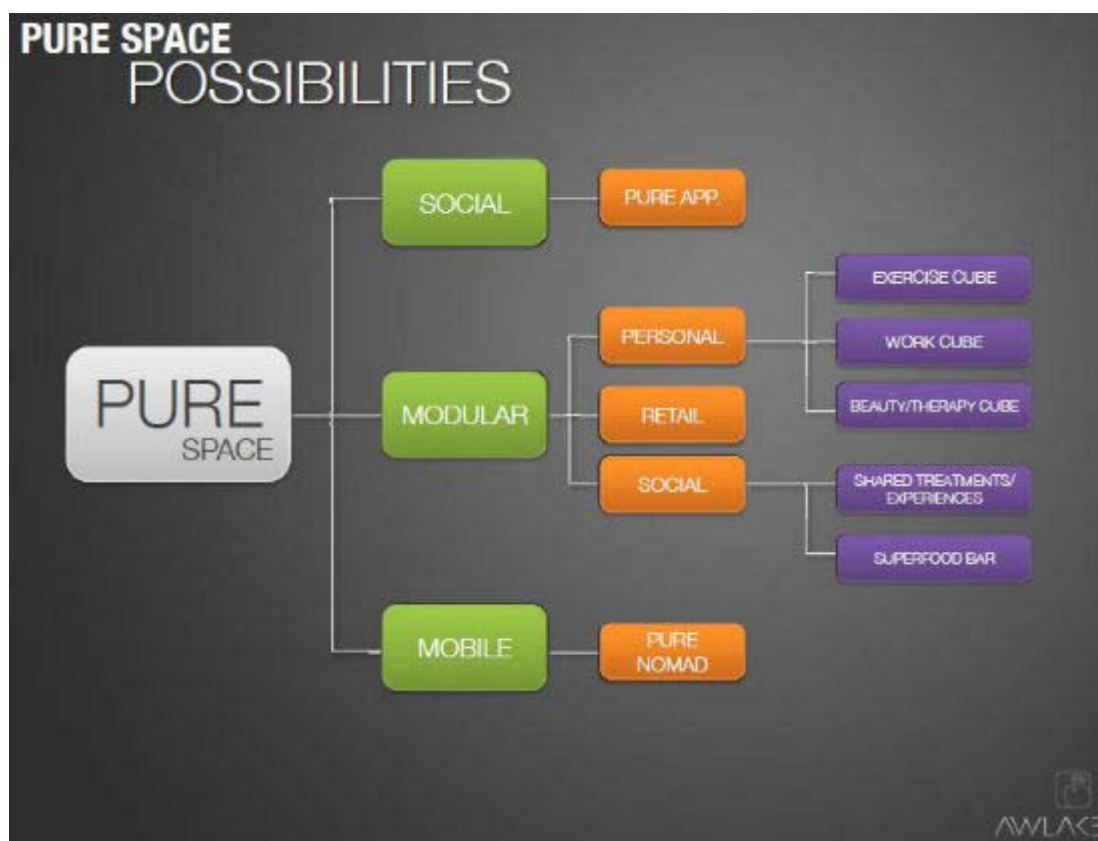
We have worked on spas in amazing locations such as Tibet, Mauritius, Seychelles, Dubai, India, and many parts of Asia & China, but the most memorable locations are those I visited while doing my research and exploration.

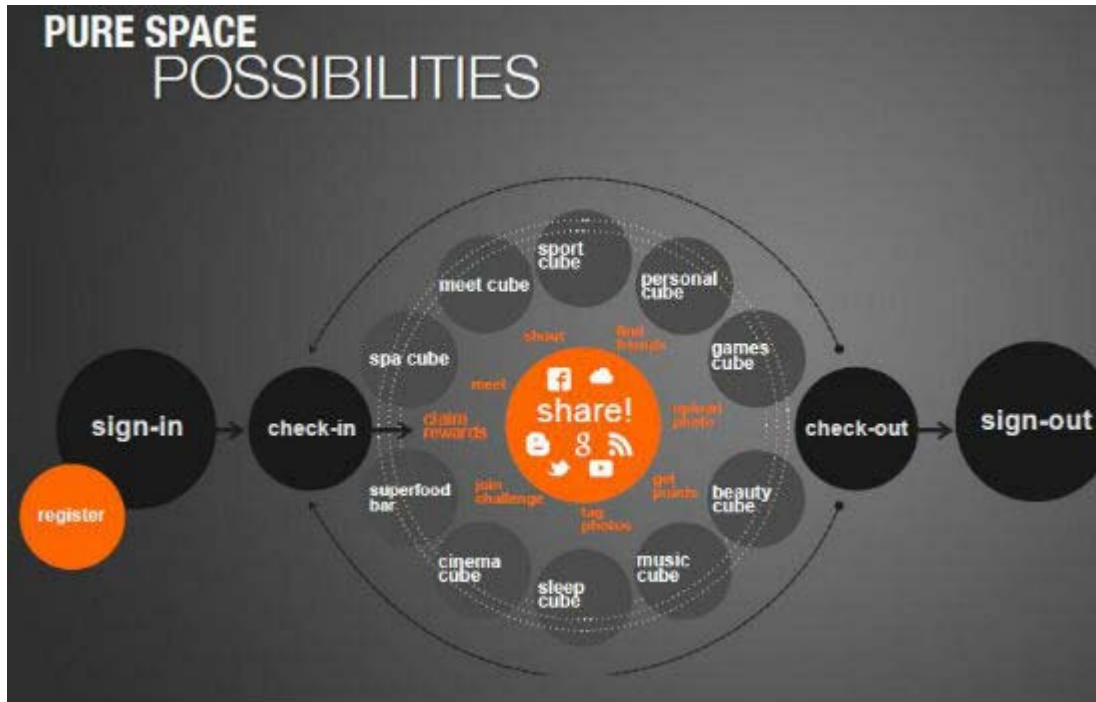
I spent some time living with the nomads in the Tibetan plateau observing and immersing myself in their disappearing way of life while learning about their animistic Bon traditions, trekked the high mountain passes (most over 5000 meters above sea level) in Bhutan to research rare high altitude medicinal plants, climbed Everest (to the 2nd base camp, above 6500m) for the sheer challenge of it, lived in a tree house on a beautiful granite island in Seychelles while working on an amazing project ... these are just a few highlights.

[WT] What are some of the interesting trends in spa & wellness?

Spa & wellness is on an upward trend, backed by ground breaking scientific research and innovative technologies entering the industry and a growing demand for preventive and anti-aging/longevity treatments. But, at the same time, we continue to see a global increase in preventable lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, heart, respiratory and digestive problems. We've added years to our lives, but I wonder if we're dying, instead of living, longer. The Spa and wellness industry has not had the impact that it should have as it is still viewed as a luxury or indulgence. Rather than focusing on passing trends, the industry needs to wake up to its true potential and find ways to make wellness accessible to more people and make its programs and services more relevant to the fast paced, technology driven lifestyle of today.

We are developing a concept called "PURE SPACE", and its tag line is: "an addictive feel good space that's good for you". We believe that wellness is about feeling good about yourself, and EVERYONE wants to feel good. So, the question is how to make wellness "accessible" – easy to understand, fun to do, intuitive – so that it becomes a habit, rather than an indulgence or luxury. Please find below, diagrams of how we envision PURE SPACE will work and the possibilities it will create.





[WT] How do you see the prospects for industry growth in Asia for the coming years?

The Wellness & Beauty industries are thriving in Asia, but customer expectation is also rising. Growth will be driven by demand for result driven treatments – especially for city hotel spas.

Consumers are not only more savvy, they are also time strapped and value seekers. Spas will need to evolve to keep up with the changing lifestyle and expectations. This is why we developed the PURE SPACE concept, which is specifically targeted for people on the move. Most spa consumers still view spas as a luxury or an indulgent instead of a necessity. This is because we (the industry) position ourselves as an ‘escape’ rather than a place to ‘top up, tune up, and catch up’ – which is something we all need to do on a daily or regular basis.

The growth of the wellness/spa industry will be even greater if we are able to offer programs, treatments, and services which are more ‘relevant’ to the modern lifestyle – ie. High performance quick/express treatments; fast superfood that is good for you, work out pods where you can compete with friends in other cities/locations or motivate each other online/virtually, and more. (see link to PURE SPACE CONCEPT: <https://awlakeprojects.egnyte.com/h-s/20130326/90019b53b38a4948>)

[WT] Have your efforts taken you into Korea? How do you see the Korean Spa & Wellness industry?

We have not done a project in Korea, but we see great opportunities there. Korea is known as the global trendsetter in skin care technology. Each year, Korean skin care companies launch ground-breaking products that become instant best-sellers in Asia. Korea’s climate (cool & dry in the winter, humid and hot in the summer) is one of the reasons why Korean skin care is excellent at delivering high performance products.

Knowing full well her busy travel schedule, Wellness Today is sincerely grateful for the time and contribution Ms. Lake was able to provide.

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