

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Affluents flock to spas as self-care becomes top priority

June 14, 2021



*As COVID-related restrictions lift, luxury consumers are seeking ways to look and feel good. Image credit: Getty*

By NORA HOWE

Affluents are eager to return to in-person pampering, after COVID-19 restrictions forced consumers to adapt to at-home skincare routines and virtual wellness checks.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Spas and premium wellness centers took a massive hit when lockdowns began, but are beginning to reopen as governments lift non-essential restrictions. In combination with the freedom to safely visit these businesses, new values centered on self-care and mental wellbeing are pushing consumers to indulge in aesthetic services.

"We see end consumers being super eager to come back to spas for treatments," said Cedric Roget, CEO of **Valmont** North America, Quebec. "They want to pamper themselves.

"People missed getting massages and facials," he said. "Nevertheless, most of the customers want to make sure that all the sanitary measures are taken seriously, even when vaccinated, so to thrive, spas will have to offer an amazing and personalized service to each customer."

### Value of self-care

Before the onset of the pandemic, beauty and wellness were converging as consumers began to take a more holistic approach to beauty.

At the beginning of 2020, French fashion house Christian Dior took beauty more than skin deep in a skincare campaign centered on physical and mental health. The brand tapped supermodel Gisele Bündchen to share her lessons about achieving a sense of well-being that extends to conscious skincare ([see story](#)).



*Carillon has introduced a Touchless Wellness Menu. Image credit: Carillon Miami*

"High-end consumers are more and more knowledgeable about skin care, and clearly understand the values of key active ingredients, efficacy and use," Mr. Roget said. "People are less sensitive to price point, and they are ready to pay the extra money for luxury brands that offer true efficacy as well as a sensorial experience."

Additionally, 46 percent of consumers said in April 2020 they purchased more skincare products than before because they had more time for self-care, according to a survey by [Bazaarvoice](#). In October, 58 percent indicated that they were more focused on skincare than ever before ([see story](#)).

"We see a strong trend towards spas with added value' such as medical spas run by doctors who are able to offer 360-degree services with beauty treatments, procedures, injections and machines, or spas with additional wellness services like yoga classes, nutrition and sculpting machines," Mr. Roget said. "Globally, we see an extremely positive trend for spas in the post pandemic world as taking care of [oneself] will be a key priority for most people."

Hospitality group Rosewood Hotels & Resorts unveiled a new wellness retreat idea designed to enhance one's ability to recover from life's adversities.

The elements of the retreat address the physical, emotional and mindful aspects of each participating individual, focusing on four main behavior elements to resilience: positivism, purpose, resourcefulness and compassion ([see story](#)).



*Valmont has also expanded into hospitality. Visitors at Les Residences Valmont can enjoy luxurious spa and wellness treatments. Image courtesy of Valmont*

Affluents are even craving wellness opportunities so much that they have started investing in real estate with wellness amenities and services. According to Luxury Portfolio International and YouGov Affluent Perspective, wellness will become a \$4.2 trillion industry for the next generation of high-end homebuyers ([see story](#)).

Simply, after a year of solitude, people are ready to feel and look their best.

"I see the spa industry growing," said [Vicki Morav](#), a New York-based celebrity aesthetician. "I feel as though there should be more pleasure to serve in the spa industry instead of a hard core profit count."

"Long-term success lies in a well educated professional that has integrity, passion, awareness and a desire to serve," she said. "Enjoying the journey, feeling comfortable in your skin and making that experience is contagious."

Fully booked

Another critical element of the pandemic was the sudden shift to the work-from-home model and video conferencing, which forced working individuals to physically reflect on their appearance more frequently than before.



*Spas are beginning to offer more medical, nonsurgical aesthetic treatments. Image credit: Getty*

"We have all become more self-aware during this time period," said Sheri Koetting, founder and creative director of **MSLK**, New York. "Video chatting software such as Zoom has forced us to take a good hard look at ourselves, often for several hours a day in a way that in person meetings does not require.

"This will surely have an impact on luxury skincare services and cosmetic dermatology as well."

While some people may associate cosmetic dermatology, such as Botox or lip fillers, with *The Real Housewives*, platforms like TikTok have fostered a community of young people speaking transparently about the beauty services they participate in.

"We already know that the clientele at medical spas has grown increasingly younger," Ms. Koetting said. "Younger generations are equally affected by the effects of video chatting and blue light exposure."

The #LipFlip hashtag on TikTok has more than 56 million views, and primarily features videos of young men and women recording their journeys leading up to and after cosmetic services.

"Our clients are back on a regular standing appointment schedule and want more of everything," Ms. Morav said. "Now that most people are vaccinated, we are seeing more comfort and fearlessness.

"Although I had a very strict protocol and took all necessary safety precautions, once we were allowed to work again and people were vaccinated, we had a full book."

While restrictions have only recently been lifted in places like New York and London, industry experts believe self-care service providers have been challenged with accommodating eager consumers while maintaining health protocols.

"One of our clients owns a laser clinic and they have been very busy trying to accommodate customers while still maintaining social distancing regulations," Ms. Koetting said. "Among my peers, I've seen many women anxious to get back to their self-care routines as well."