

# europaean Spa

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## PARISIAN SPECIAL

Inside the luxury flagship spas of leading French brands

## EXPERT SOFTWARE

How management suites can improve efficiency and profit

## SPARKLING TIMES

Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, France is in a bubble of its own

## THE THREE GRACES

An elite spa and fitness offering at Grantley Hall, UK

# Welcome

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## Celebrating your success



Now is the time to toast an incredible year for the spa industry before moving into 2020, so in this issue we start the celebrations at Grantley Hall in Yorkshire, UK, which has made a lavish investment in its Three Graces Spa and ELITE performance centre (p36).

We also head to the effervescent Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa in France to find out how it attracts wine and wellness lovers from around the world (p82). Elsewhere, for our cover story we meet the leaders of six exceptional flagship day spas in Paris to discover how new demand for advanced beauty and wellbeing has reached the capital (p46).

The *European Spa* team has also been out and about to bring you the latest news from three key industry events we have been proud to support since their inception. Spa consultant and journalist Lisa Starr brings the latest thought leadership from the Global Wellness Summit in Singapore (p28), while Mark Smith provides wisdom from SpaFest in Cornwall, UK (p71) as well as highlights from SpaLife UK that reflect a booming industry (p42).

As ever, we have had our fingers on the pulse of the spa and wellness sector throughout this year, and my own observation is that there are challenges ahead if businesses are to keep up with increased consumer demand and expectation. Spas must also think harder about looking after the wellbeing of their teams if they are to recruit and retain the best people and win the war for talent.

At Spa Life, Google and Treatwell revealed that 'spa' featured in 100 million searches in the UK alone last year, a figure they predict is set to grow by 14% in 2020. They also reported that UK consumers make six million visits to spas every year and that the average spa booking is four times the value of the average salon booking. This all bodes very well, and if spas can get smarter with digital channels, more authentic in their wellness messaging and better at attracting new talent, the sky's the limit for their success.

We wish all our readers a happy and peaceful Christmas and hope you have time to celebrate, relax and recharge with your families and friends, ready for the opportunities that 2020 is sure to bring.

Sarah Camilleri  
Publisher & founding editor

### The Team

#### Publisher & founding editor

Sarah Camilleri  
+44 (0) 115 950 4748  
sarah.camilleri@spapublishing.com

#### Art director

Richard Page  
+44 (0) 7917 646495  
richard@spapublishing.com

#### Production editor

David Fagan  
+44 (0) 115 950 4748  
david.fagan@spapublishing.com

#### Contributing editor

Sarah Todd  
+44 (0) 115 950 4748  
sarah.todd@spapublishing.com

#### Contributing editor

Mark Smith  
+44 (0) 7956 658261  
mark.smith@spapublishing.com

#### Contributors

Lisa Starr  
Frankie Ward  
Laura Shallcross

#### Sales and brand development

Lucy Brialey  
+44 (0) 115 950 4748  
lucy.brialey@spapublishing.com

#### Subscriptions manager

Angela Sharpe  
+44 (0) 1353 772173  
subscribe@spapublishing.com

#### Accounts manager

Julie Jones  
+44 (0) 115 950 4748  
accounts@spapublishing.com

Office address: European Spa magazine, Spa Publishing Ltd, Halifax House, Halifax Place, Nottingham, NG1 1QN, UK.

Online & social media: [www.europeanspamagazine.com](http://www.europeanspamagazine.com) [@eurospamag](https://twitter.com/eurospamag) [/europeanspamagazine](https://facebook.com/europeanspamagazine) [eurospamag](https://instagram.com/eurospamag)



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# Sparkling times

We check in to Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, the first destination spa offering personalised programmes and customised spa journeys in this celebrated region of northern France

REPORT BY MARK SMITH

**S**ituated in a commanding position in the hills above Épernay, the capital of Champagne, Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa offers uninterrupted views over the bucolic vineyards of this world-renowned wine producing region. Within walking distance of the historic villages of Champillon and Hautvillers, the resting place of Dom Pérignon himself, the property attracts wine lovers and luxury wellness travellers from around the world.

The original hotel on the site closed in 2014 after it was acquired by Boston-based Champagne Hospitality collection, a group of boutique luxury hotels and spas that includes the award-winning Le Barthélemy Hotel & Spa in St. Barths. It was subsequently razed to the ground as part of a four-year, multi-million-euro project that resulted in the opening of the current property in the summer of 2018.

Having gained a reputation for offering personalised service and unique experiences, Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa was recently named as the best hotel in France in the *Condé Nast Traveler* Reader's Choice Awards 2019. Less than an hour from the capital, it has proved popular with Parisians, but also attracts a large proportion of its guests from the UK, USA and the Benelux countries.

Despite its evolution, the eye-catching building has retained a slice of its heritage through the incorporation of the original 19th century Post House, where it is said that King Charles X of France stayed on the way to

Reims for his coronation.

Making the most of its hill-top position, the property was designed to resemble a contemporary amphitheatre, ensuring that all 47 rooms and suites, two restaurants and the spa have magnificent views across the Champagne valley. "The owners are passionate about the luxury hotel industry and wines, so obviously Champagne is the best destination for this," says general manager Vincent Parinaud. "We are in the middle of the vineyards and every single guest area allows enjoyment of the view."

## Spa at its heart

Parinaud who has previously worked at Peninsula hotels in Paris, Shanghai and Hong Kong, joined the team during the pre-opening phase and believes the spa will be central to the success of the hotel. "It is a very significant part of the project and makes us stand out. The spa is something that is important for the image of the hotel and will bring many benefits," he states.

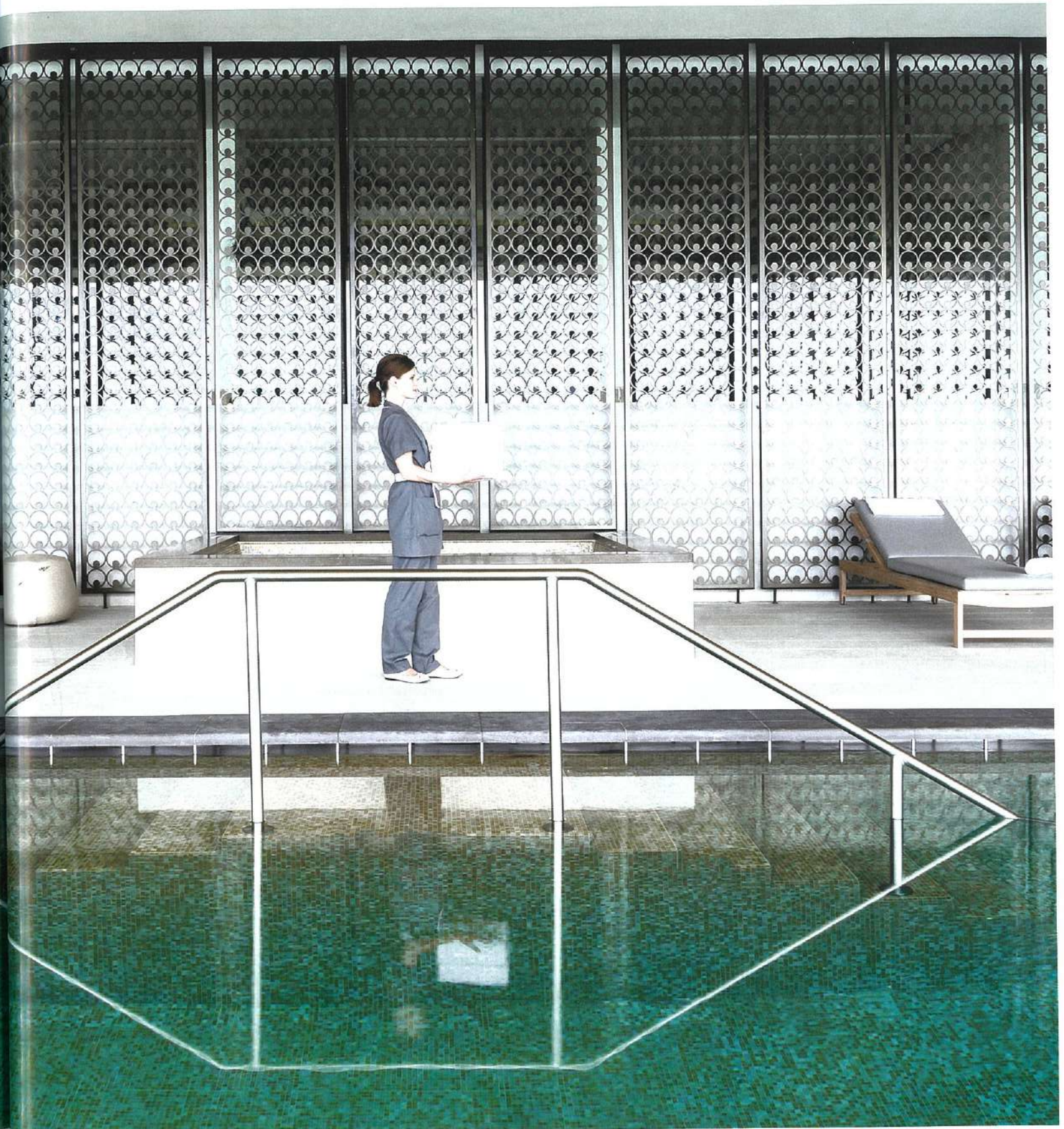
That this aspect of the hotel has the full support of its owners is evident in the apportioning of a whole floor of the building to the spa and wellness facilities. Indeed, Parinaud believes the facilities are key to

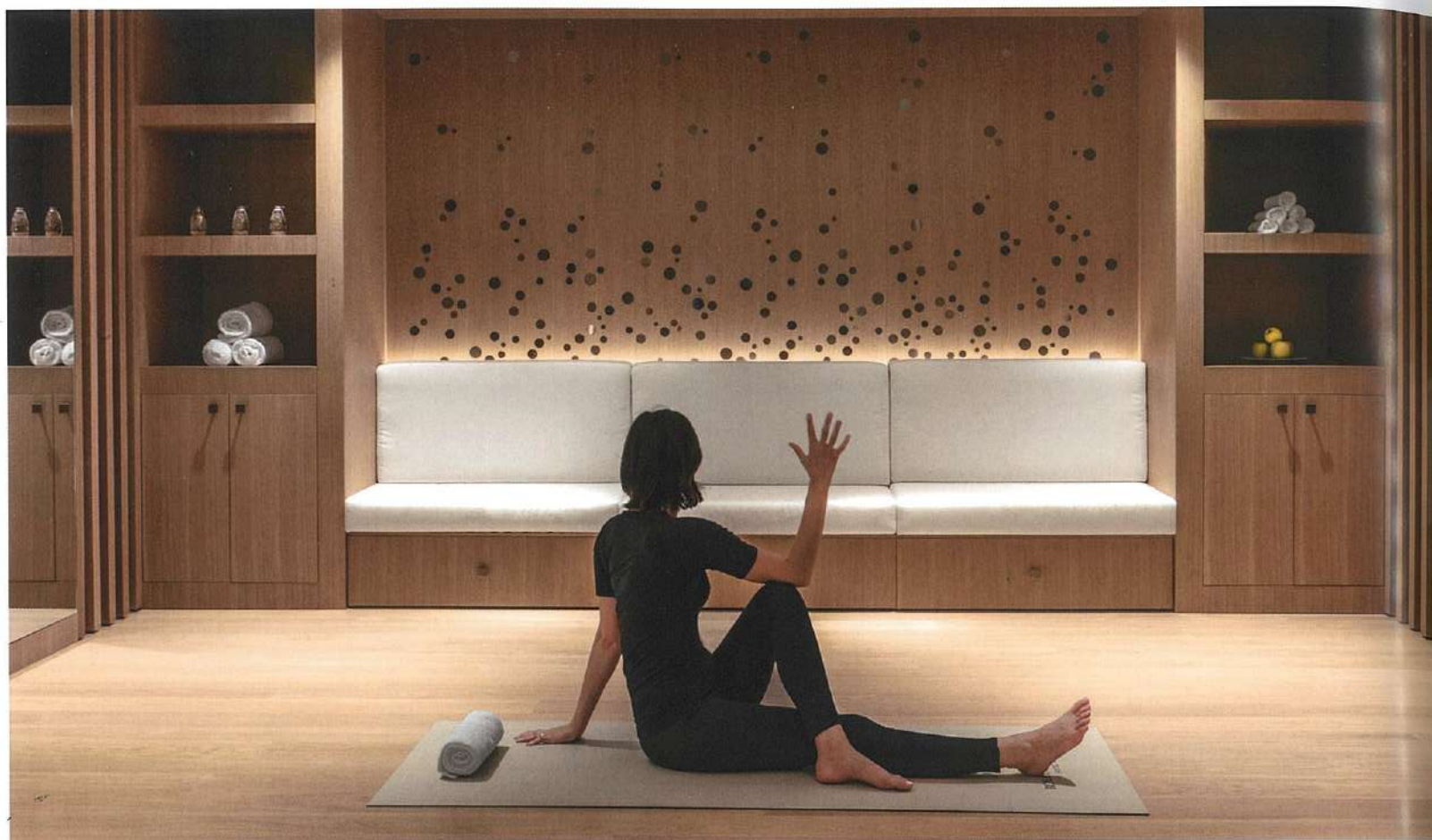
"When people come to our hotel, they are coming to experience a completely different environment, to relax and enjoy the stay. And for this, the spa is truly an asset."

Vincent Parinaud General manager

The indoor pool at Royal Champagne Hotel and Spa is located in a cathedral-like space with floor-to-ceiling windows that let the light flood in







**Clockwise from above:** Activities on offer include yoga and Pilates in a dedicated wood-lined studio; Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa sits amid the bucolic vineyards of the world-famous wine-producing region; the spa offers personal training in state-of-the-art fitness facilities; natural wood and golden fixtures and fittings create a honeyed tone throughout the spa; unique design elements create intimate spaces for guests to rest and relax

encouraging guests to extend their stays. "Many Parisian guests would come for one day and go back," he explains. "The idea with the spa, two restaurants, bar and terrace is to give guests enough to do for two or three nights. The hotel will be full this winter because of the spa."

The idea is to create an experience for guests that can include wine-tasting, walking and cycling during the day, with fine dining and spa time for added relaxation and downtime. This destination concept has so far proven successful, with many guests now calling the spa to check treatment availability before booking a room at the hotel.

"Some people are coming only because of the spa," says Parinaud. "They know we have Biologique Recherche here and they know they will have an amazing facial treatment."

The spa is set over two floors of the building and, in an

effort to connect the inside with the exterior surroundings, is flooded with natural daylight. At every opportunity, the interiors, designed by Sybille de Margerie, are warm and welcoming; lined with natural wood, the spa benefits from a unique honey-coloured glow that carries on from the reception and throughout the corridors and studios.

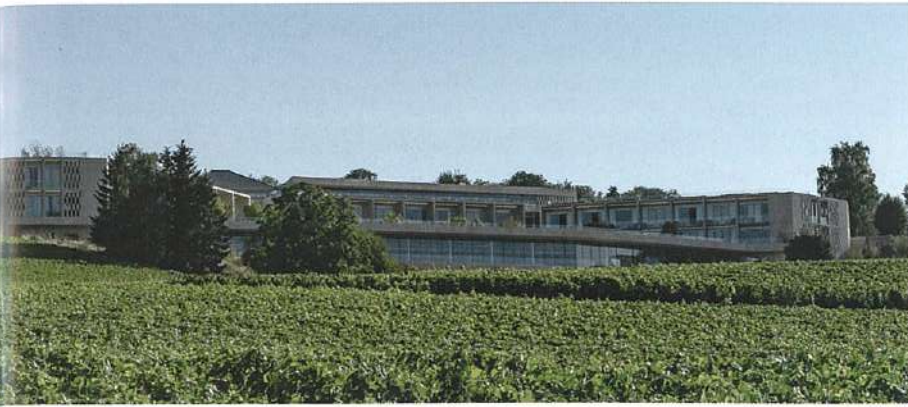
Designed to captivate the senses, the spa benefits from nine treatment rooms; state-of-the-art fitness facilities; a wood-lined yoga studio; a eucalyptus-infused sauna; manicure and pedicure stations; and a mosaic-tiled hammam.

Completing the experience are two temperature-controlled, chaise longue-lined swimming pools. The indoor pool and hot tub are positioned in a cathedral-like space with floor-to-ceiling windows that open up on the vineyards to create a sense of space and light that is rare in many spas. The outdoor terrace and infinity pool, meanwhile, are perfect for sunbathing, swimming and enjoying the incredible views.

"The Bubbles concept is very Champagne. As a guest you may have one-and-a-half hours free, so you know you want one hour of massage, but you can add on half an hour more. It's a little bubble of happiness, a beautiful add on."

Anna Pierzak Spa director





### Customised facial care

Pierre-Louis Delapalme toasts Biologique Recherche's partnership with Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa



Pierre-Louis Delapalme

Renowned for its ultra-personalised approach to face care, Biologique Recherche was a natural choice as the sole partner for facials at the Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa.

"Guests at Royal Champagne are coming for a fully personalised experience, combining hospitality, food, the Champagne heritage and, of course, the spa," says the brand's co-president, Pierre-Louis Delapalme. "Biologique Recherche, with its bespoke and results-driven treatments, is an obvious part of their journey."

The spa menu includes all of the brand's treatments and products as well as the exclusively developed signature facial, Second Skin Royal Champagne Treatment. Said to be a world first, this regenerating and lifting protocol features an electrospun mask with 80% pharmaceutical-grade hyaluronic acid and is designed for devitalised skin that has been damaged by the ageing process.

The treatment also features one of the hero products from the brand's range. "Grand Millésime is one of our key serums, created by Yvan Allouche, the founder of the company," explains Delapalme. "It was, therefore, obvious to all of us to build a treatment around this great product, which is famous for its regenerating and anti-oxidating properties. The actives in it are also very similar to the polyphenols from grapes."

[www.biologique-recherche.com](http://www.biologique-recherche.com)

**From top:** The minimalist but welcoming spa reception area; chaise longues line the indoor pool, which offers stunning views of the surrounding vineyards; the spa's large retail area is used for guest consultations and to showcase the product lines from Biologique Recherche, KOS and Jane Iredale.

### Led by experience

Spa director Anna Pierzak joined the team to foster the concept and focus on staff development. Formerly director of Spa My Blend by Clarins at Le Royal Monceau, Raffles Paris, and most recently director of spa and wellness at Mandarin Oriental Paris, Pierzak says she was attracted by the new challenge, a move to the countryside and the lifestyle changes this would bring.

"This project is very interesting," she explains. "We have a unique possibility as it's the first destination spa in France that is not in the mountains or at the seaside. I met the owners and decided to leave Paris and start a new life here to develop the philosophy of this project."

Staff training has focused on personalisation, including how to listen and observe in order to pre-empt, meet and exceed customer expectations. Pierzak bases herself at reception and greets each guest personally to ensure the customer connection is natural and attentive.

The spa, which has a team of six full-time therapists and three freelancers, often sees huge demand for treatments from 5pm onwards, after guests have been exploring the wine region or enjoying the countryside. The solution for Pierzak is to provide a selection of offers and a range of options for visitors, such as balneotherapy in a private room using oils and a glass of Champagne.

Around 35% of guests are from the local area, which makes these bookings more simple and flexible to manage time-wise, with many of them using vouchers, which are said to have proved to be a very popular option.

### Hero treatments from KOS Paris



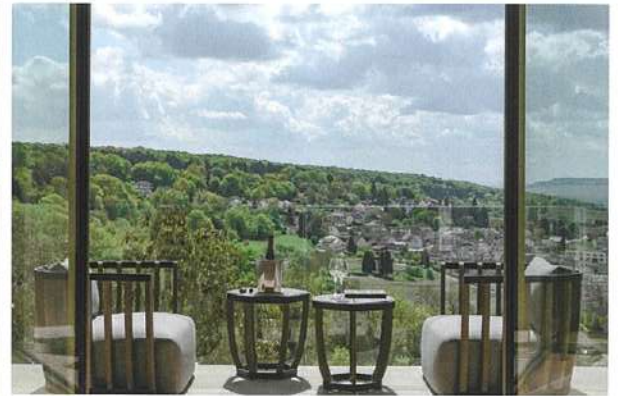
KOS Paris's founder, Sophie Allouche, has worked in collaboration with professional cosmetic formulators and an ethnobotanist to create a line of products for the body and face that respects both the environment and the skin's natural balance.

KOS products contain no petrochemical derivatives or mineral oils and are preservative, silicone, and paraben-free. They are made with botanical ingredients including prickly pear seed oil, acai berry, babassu nut butter, argan oil, and kukui nut oil sourced from locations as far flung as the Amazon, Finland, Japan, Maghreb and Australia.

Among Royal Champagne's hero treatments are Discovery Treatment KOS, a deeply relaxing body scrub and massage with soft facial and regenerating hair care.

In addition, Intensive Wrap Treatment takes in a scrub, a wrap and a massage to offer a full body treatment to firm and detox heavy legs. The spa's Scrubbing/Hydration treatment is an exfoliating and renovating experience for which guests can select their own scrub and oil to achieve a unique and personalised result. [www.kos-paris.com](http://www.kos-paris.com)





**Clockwise from above:** The spa's luxurious indoor hot tub; Champagne can be taken on the terrace with views over the wine-producing countryside; the spa has become popular with a wide range of guests, including those from Paris as well as international visitors to the region

### A Bubble of your own

Personalisation is a central tenet of the spa concept, and this is effected through service provision, the guest journey and the treatment offering from Biologique Recherche. The iconic French brand's individualised approach to skincare has been a key draw for the spa. "The Biologique Recherche products are fantastic," says Pierzak. "Thanks to this brand, we perform a lot of facials – up to 10 bookings per day, which, of course, makes retail revenue higher."

The treatment menu, which facilitates a bespoke journey at every stage, also offers KOS Paris experiences for the body, including a series of scrubs, wraps and massage, plus a personalised cure. The brand's elegant face and bodycare products are crafted from natural and organic ingredients and its treatments and products are found in luxury spas around the world including Miraggio Thermal Spa Resort, Greece and Four Seasons Seattle and Peninsula Beverly Hills, USA.

Guests are also offered the chance to add on a choice of 'Bubbles' – specific add-ons that evoke the spa concept and location – to their main treatment choice.


"The Bubbles concept is very Champagne," says Pierzak. "As a guest you may have one-and-a-half hours free, so you know you want one hour of massage, but you can add on half an hour more. It's a little bubble of happiness, a beautiful add

on. Perhaps you would like a massage for the feet and head, a scrub and treatment for the hands and feet, or even a nail polish. We can even add on a half-hour facial as a discovery experience. This is true personalisation."

### Wellness in motion

The spa currently offers yoga and Pilates as well as personal training, Nordic walking, cycling and other outdoor activities depending on the weather. A running club for staff members has also been launched to encourage them to care for their own health and wellness.

The spa has already been meeting its targets and its position as the leading spa destination in the region has been confirmed. Creating unique guest journeys with a customer-centric approach has been key to this, ensuring personalisation and individual attention at every stage.

"Guests come to a hotel to enjoy a stay and an experience," says Vincent Parinaud. "They don't just come for a night's sleep. That's why the spa is so important. You have to have one. When people come to our hotel, they are coming to experience a completely different environment, to relax and enjoy the stay. And for this, the spa is truly an asset." 

### The Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa

+33 3 26 52 87 11 | [www.royalchampagne.com](http://www.royalchampagne.com)

**Owner:** Champagne Hospitality Group **General manager:** Vincent Parinaud  
**Spa director:** Anna Pierzak **Spa interior design:** Sybille de Margerie  
**Spa Size:** 1,500sqm **Treatment rooms:** Nine including two couple's suites  
**Staff:** 10-12 **Suppliers:** Technogym, Tylo, Nordic France, Ever Blue, RKF  
 Luxury Linen, Jane Iredale, Biologique Recherche, KOS Paris, Skinhaptics