

# European Spas Association



## ESPA Report 02-2009

### Current Event

#### Healthcare and Wellness: For more transparency in Europe Financial Times Deutschland award for the European Spas Association's EUROPESPA Seal of Quality

The EUROPESPA med quality initiative launched by the European Spas Association recently garnered an award in the "Health Business Ideas Park 2009", a competition staged by Financial Times Deutschland. At the newspaper's conference entitled 'Health business 2009' held on 23–24 March in Berlin, awards were given for the fourth time to the ten most innovative projects with promising strategies meant to improve the provision of healthcare. Among the top ten was the **EUROPESPA Seal of Quality**, which is designed to bring about more transparency in the European health resort and spa sector. FTD's jury declared: "The initiators have combined the numerous standards regulating the European market to enable a solid, understandable comparison." By introducing standardised quality certificates for the whole of Europe, the European Spas Association has developed a hitherto unique seal of quality that can guide consumers through the increasingly bewildering jungle of wellness and medical prevention services available. According to ESPA Secretary-General Joachim Lieber, this sector with an estimated annual turnover of some € 20 billion is one of the fastest growing markets in health tourism. The idea behind the EUROPESPA Seal of Quality is to judge services throughout Europe on a level playing field to enable fair comparison. The primary goals are to maintain medical competence at health resorts and to sustain the health and fitness of the people of Europe.



Assessment is carried out using an audit made up of 400 questions covering safety, hygiene and infrastructure mainly derived from international standards and legislation. Attention is paid to the quality of products and services as well as the hardware in wellness areas, swimming pools, kitchens and accommodation. By deliberately choosing stringent standards, ESPA is aiming to raise standards of quality. With 80 per cent of the criteria having to be met in order to pass, it is not surprising that about half the centres audited so far failed at the first attempt. So far, around 30 hotels and clinics in 12 countries bear the **EUROPESPA Seal of Quality**.

Once it has been awarded, the seal is valid for three years, although a re-audit must be passed after 18 months. All the certified hotels and clinics are publicised on the **www.europespa.eu** quality portal, where additional information is also available.

ESPA President Dr Sigrun Lang adds: "Only an international non-profit organisation can offer good providers wishing to distinguish themselves throughout Europe a credibly neutral platform."



Handout of the FTD-Award 2009  
To ESPA-President Dr. Sigrun Lang  
and Quality Manager Dr. von Storch  
23rd of March 2009, Germany

## Previous notices

### 20<sup>th</sup> Spa Congress in Serbia

The 20<sup>th</sup> Spa Congress in Vrnjci (SRB) patronised by the Republic of Serbia Government and organised by the Serbian Spas Association will be held on May 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Apart from the representatives of the Serbian Association the president of the ESPA, Dr. Sigrun Lang and the Profect Manager, Mr. Reinhard Petry will be lecturers on the following topics:

Thalasso Spa & Wellness Opportunities in Health Tourism in Serbia

The European Spa Market and Opportunities for Serbia

International Quality and Economical Success with the European Quality Seal "EUROPESPA med" and "EUROPESPA wellness"

International Standards in health tourism in EU

The stakeholders of this industry of Serbia will be present, as well as representatives from Turkey, Slovenia and Romania.



Serbia Spas Association

### Particulars

From April 2009 the office of the German Spas Association has moved with new staff to Berlin. Mr. Kathi Mende, economist is responsible press and PR and Mr. Jan-Peter Ramdohr, lawyer for scientific and technical questions. ESPA congratulates and wishes them all the best for the common work.

### Denmark - the Spa Family grows

Since the 24th of April 2009 the spa Vejleljord ([www.hotelvejleljord.dk](http://www.hotelvejleljord.dk)) is member of the ESPA. Mr Peer H. Kristensen, vice-director of the spa, will represent Denmark at the congress in Lithuania.

### New Board in Portugal

As new president of the Portuguese Spas Association Ms Teresa Viera has been elected on 30<sup>th</sup> April this year. Vice presidents are Mr Diogo Barbosa and Ms Ana Ladeiras. Congratulations to the new board and many thank to José Manuel Romão.



Thermas de Portugal



## News from ESPA Members

### Medical Spa standards in Estonia

Estonia Spa Association has 16 member spa-hotels now. Most of them are medical spas but in January 2009 we expanded our association with wellness spas. Since 1996 we have developed and introduced the spa-culture in Estonia and abroad.

The level of the medical spa services is today very high in Estonia. In co-operation with the Pärnu College of the University of Tartu we finished in 2008 a Medical Spa Qualification Standard System.

It is possible to apply qualifications from one to five stars.

There are today eight qualified medical spa-hotels in Estonia:

- 4\*\*\*\* Viimsi Spa
- 3\*\*\* Spa Tervis, Spa Estonia, Viiking Spa, Fra Mare Thalasso Spa, Spa Hotel Laine, Toile Spa, Värskä Spa

In 2009 we are working out the wellness spa qualification system and hope to finish it at the end of this year. These spa-hotels which are having medical spa or wellness spa stars can assure their guests a good service range.

### New MBA program of the University of Tartu: “Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management”

The interest in well-educated spa personal is increasing. Pärnu College of Tartu University is training these future specialists.

The full-time two-year Master's degree programme (taught in English) comprises 120 ECTS and offers unique content within a comprehensive Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management structure. The studies lead to the degree of Master of Arts (MA) of Social Sciences with the specialisation of Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management.

The master's programme is built upon four interrelated pillars: Society and Wellness, Individuals and Wellness, Tourism and Wellness, and Business and Wellness. All the pillars are linked with the concepts of sustainability, entrepreneurship, quality, creativity, innovations and experience. An emphasis is on a multifaceted development of management skills and competencies needed in the wellness and spa sector to deal with changing society, customers and markets, new research, contexts and concepts, new perspectives and developments.

The programme provides an opportunity to acquire the necessary way of thinking, knowledge, skills and competencies to plan, manage, operate research and develop wellness and spa services in different sectors. The program “Wellness and Spa Service Design and Management” aims to bridge theory to best practice.

The curriculum is developed and taught in English through intensive teaching and internship periods, it is supplemented by tutoring, guided study, and e-learning resources. Intensive study modules will be offered at Pärnu College in



University of Tartu, Estonia



the first year, whilst specialised work and internship periods will be offered in the second year by partner institutions. This module offers students flexible opportunities for specialisation and selection of their topic of the master's thesis in relation to their field of special interest. The Pärnu College of the University of Tartu is working closely together with Estonian Spa Association offering placement opportunities in various spas in Estonia.

### **Optimism reigns at the DHV German Spas Association The new type of cure: enjoy your health!**

Rediscovering your own body, sharpening awareness of your body's health and hence supporting medical prevention are nowadays more important than ever before. That was what the some 200 participants representing policymakers, tourism and healthcare all agreed at the 105th German Health Resort Conference in Bad Tölz last weekend. Dr Gerd Müller, President of the DHV German Spas Association, called on the German government to approve the Prevention Act and hence pave the way for systematic quality assurance in healthcare services and programmes.

"The new type of cure: enjoy your health!" There was definitely a fresh wind blowing at the 105th German Health Resort Conference. Dr Gerd Müller, the DHV's new President since October last year, announced the association's realignment in his keynote address – and also described health cures as a driver of economic growth in Germany. "We demand the exclusive integration of health resorts in a Prevention Act," declared Dr Müller. "It's only fair that help be granted in such a law for holidaymakers who pay their own way at health resorts in order to take care of themselves." Dr Müller called for the classification system for spas and health resorts to be recognised as a way to ensure that quality expectations are met. He also spoke out for more investment in science and research, particularly in connection with health resorts, and for the rate of VAT sales tax in the sector to be reduced.

Support was promised by the speakers at the conference: Ilse Aigner (the German Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection), Marion Caspers-Merk (Parliamentary Permanent Secretary at the German Ministry of Health), Petra Hedorfer (Chair of the DZT German Tourism Board) and Dr Johannes Vöcking (Chair of the BARMER health insurance company).

A survey carried out by the DZT German Tourism Board in 2008 revealed that almost one in two Germans plan to do more for their health over the next three years. Given this domestic demand, relaxation and health tourism harbour enormous growth potential.



Opening of the German Spas Congress 2009  
in Bad Tölz, Bavaria



#### **New address**

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With their high quality services in medical prevention and health promotion, German health resorts and spas are well poised for this future development. By directly and indirectly employing around 350,000 people and achieving annual turnover exceeding €26 billion, German spas and health resorts are major centres of healthcare services and tourism. And they are also a vital factor within tourism in Germany, accounting for far more than 30% of overnight stays. Dr Gerd Müller, President of the DHV German Spas Association, is encouraging Germans during the economic downturn to spend their holiday in a health resort this year – and hence invest in their own health. “Our health resorts and spas are unbeatable for healthy holidays for young as well as for old,” he stated. He noted that the various resorts are responding to interesting trends with varied programmes of therapy, sports and other exciting activities and also offering individual medical wellness and relaxation programmes for people of all ages. Dr Gerd Müller added: “Young people, too, should use the opportunity to claim subsidies for health applications from their medical insurance companies.”

The year 2009 is a time of new beginning for the DHV. With its head office moving from Bonn to Berlin, the organisation will now be more closely involved in the debate on healthcare policy and consumer protection. Moreover, relocation has also ushered in a more modern image and improved service quality – as amply demonstrated by the DHV Newsletter and the new website.

## The Seaside of Jurmala is ready for the guests in Summer Season

Before starting the active summer season Jurmala Resort city has done a lot of different activities to landscape the attractive, 33 km long white sand beach in which every citizen and guest of Jurmala will be able to find the finest way of recreation. The work for managing the seaside was done starting from estuary of River Lielupe till Jaunķemeri.

As well in the new season several beaches of Jurmala will receive the Blue Flag – an eco-label that stands for safety in the beach, well arranged utilities and high quality of water. It is planned that eco-certificate “Blue Flag” will receive beaches in Majori and Jaunķemeri. It guarantees tidiness, safety, order and water testing every week.

To provide social order in Jurmala city beaches and to set active and passive zones of recreation was made a project for seaside resort zoning. Together with that in year 2009 The gulf of Riga Jurmala City’s territories receive more precise zoning in active and passive recreation zones, so that every guest could enjoy the most suitable way of spending time on the beach – enjoying activities of sports on the beach or reading a book, magazine or newspaper or simply having a sunbathing on the seaside. In the upcoming season it has been



Left to right:  
Hans-Jürgen Kütbach, Bad Bramstedt;  
Klaus Holetscheck, Bad Wörishofen;  
DHV President Dr. Gerd Müller, Kempten;  
Prof Rudolf Forcher, Bad Waldsee;  
Bernhard Schönau, Bad Langensalza;  
Klaus Pelikan, Bad Tölz



Beach of Jurmala



thought about naturists as well and a part of the beach in Lielupe is marked as a nudist beach.

Jurmala beaches will be equipped with changing cabins, benches and there will be an opportunity to rent out water sports equipment as well as to play beach volleyball or football in free-of-charge fields. For children there are arranged several playgrounds and a lot of different cafes are opened in the summer.

For the safe swimming in Jurmala beaches there will be working several lifeguard stations. In the dunes and on the beaches toilettes will be set. In several places there are made special descents for handicapped people in wheelchairs, for prams etc.

Jurmala City Council has planned to invest 80 000 LVL for the seaside managing.

The active season in Jurmala in 2009 has started from May 1!

### **Natural healing remedies of Latvia's resorts**

With the support of Jūrmala City council a book "Natural healing remedies of Latvia's resorts" by medical doctor Larisa Terentjeva and biologist Lilija Fridenberga has been published.

To use Latvia's nature environment fully and to show the good impact on human's health, authors in this book has interpreted diverse information about Latvia's natural recourses, speciality of climate, changes of metrological factors, medical weather types, climate therapy and meteoprophylactical methods. The book also displays information about mineral waters in Latvia, their internal and external use, medical peat and sapropel mud compositions, their medical qualities and methods of their use, suggesting various combinations of factors of natural medical remedies.

It is very important to find a time for the rest, relaxation and health recovery along with fast and exhausting weekdays. The more enriched place with natural medical remedies person will choose for his rest, the shorter will be the medical rehabilitation time for the person's body.

The book has been based on many years' researches (1962. – 1992.) that were carried out by the researchers of resort scientific labs together with the Hidrometeorological centre, Latvia's cardiological institute, Medical institute of Riga, department of geology, specialists of resort science and Physiotherapy institute of Moscow. This book is a very good help for doctors, middle medical staff, students and other employees of resort centres, as well as interesting and educational material for everyone, who takes care of his health.



Playground on Jurmala Beach



## Professional Lifeguards for Working in Jurmala Beaches

Within the framework of European Union's (EU) financially supported Estonian – Latvian cross-border programme project "Beach Hopping" for ensuring Blue Flag requirements in the Baltic Sea region in Jurmala was implemented the training programme "First Aid for the Lifeguards".

Seven partners of the project – Estonian and Latvian regional governments – delegated 22 persons for the lifeguard training in Jurmala city. In June, when the second round will take place, students who will pass the exam successfully will receive lifeguard certificate.

In Jurmala there are located the largest amount of lifeguard stations in Latvia as well the lifeguards have a big experience in rescuing people. Within the framework of EU project "Bay Watch" was developed a teaching programme and now instructors - Andris Kraulis, Pēteris Pētersons and Kaspars Karlsons are training and sharing the experience with the neighbours.

During five days of training the instructors taught 22 lifeguards having lessons in the pools and in the study-rooms. During the lectures trainees learned the technique of the first aid and in the pool they had to pass the swimming standards and practical exercises.

From seven EU project "Beach Hopping" partners two are from Estonia and five from Latvia – Saulkrasti City Council as the leading partner, Audru Parish Council (Estonia), Häädemeste Parish Council (Estonia), Carnikava Region Council, Jurmala City Council, Liepupe Parish Council and Salacgrīva City Council.

The main goals of the project are the security on the beach, experience exchange that was gained during the project "Bay watch" as well as passing this experience and to implement it in the areas of the project partners. There are planned informative seminars for local schools' students about the safety on the beach. There will be provided co-ordination for lifeguarding in the most intense areas as well as the beaches further away from the centre. Renovating and building new lifeguard stations is planned in the future as well. Jurmala and Saulkrasti already have some lifeguard stations, but other partners of the project do not have this kind of infrastructure and professionals yet.

Jurmala City has six lifeguard stations – in Bulduri, Majori, Dubulti, Mēluži, Kauguri (the most weighted) and in Jaunkēmeri – plus one mobile rescue tower. Each station covers the beach in 1.2 kilometres wide territory. Overall lifeguards are all lifeguards are supervising 8.4 kilometres of Jurmala beaches, which is not enough for 32.8 km long coastline of the city. Within the framework of the project there is a plan to purchase two more lifeguard towers and with that to increase the lifeguarding monitoring area up to 10.8 kilometres.



The blue flag on Jurmala Beach



## Report from the Netherlands

### NBTC study

NBTC, the national tourism association in the Netherlands, has recently published a study of the future opportunities for wellness in the Netherlands. The current market comprises more than 3.7 million citizens of the Netherlands, with the potential market estimated to exceed 4.5 million. The focus is mainly on all age groups among better-off social strata, especially double-income households. About 68% were found to prefer relaxation holidays while 21% opted for health resorts. The biggest attraction is exerted by the power of the sea, appealing to 29%. Meanwhile 42% of today's German visitors to the Netherlands prefer spa holidays and are pleased to see new projects with improved, diverse health services that are being tackled. However, the sector is not yet extensive enough to position itself on the international market, which is why large sums are being invested in new schemes.

### “Pieken in de Delta”

The Ministry of Finance in The Hague has started a two-year project to offer further training to businesses operating in vitality and wellness and to support them in connection with the development of new projects. Marlies Sobczak, board member of ESPA, is the project manager. The project arose in connection with the universities of professional education at Breda and Vlissingen. Responsibility for co-ordination is the “Economische Impuls Zeeland”. The programme covers combining new products and markets, research abroad with employers, specialist courses and lectures. The ESPA and EUROPESPA standards of quality such as hygiene, service, expertise etc are key aspects within the project.

### ‘Vitality and Tourism’: new degree course on offer at Vlissingen

Zeeland University of Professional Education in Vlissingen has submitted an official application to start a new degree course this year. The course has been developed in close cooperation with Breda University of Professional Education, which has already enjoyed a great international reputation for many years in the study of tourism and is now developing a specialist course focusing on health issues.

Apart from business components, the new degree course addresses areas such as therapies and treatment methods, trends, hygiene and spa-management. In addition to students from the Netherlands, international interest in this four-year course is also expected since graduates are awarded a Bachelor's degree. ESPA has supported the application to the ministry and its Secretary-General Joachim Lieber spoke about the support of this work in the field of quality standards and certification at the registration committee at the Zeeland University on 20 February 2009.





## ESPA Activities

### First European Peloid Conference in Bad Saarow, Germany

The 26th to the 28th of March 2009, Bad Saarow (D), 1. European Peloid Conference, arranged by the spa association of Brandenburg and the ESPA. 70 experts from 12 countries informed the public during two days. Topics had been the various modes of application of fango, turf, mud, loam and silt and the different perspectives and trends concerning the revival of these treatments. Finally, a new world record has been established: 50 participants took a 15 minutes mud bath in 50 bathtubs under the view of spectators and regional TV. They participated on the world's biggest individual mud bath.

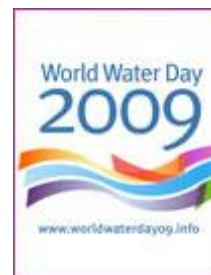
Main objective of the Conference was to bring the positive aspects of the natural remedy "peloids" to the public. In the last decennies the information about therapeutic aspects has been neglected, even though the results on human health are proved in many cases and studies. Lecturers from 7 European countries presented their experience. All peloid spas should present their offers much more in the markets; therefore it was decided to have a follow up of the conference next year



After work is over Axel Walter, Bad Saarow and August Großmann, Bad Senkelteich, from the right, said hello to the audience.

### World Water Day of the UN

Every year on 22th of March the World Water Day is celebrated in all over the world. As the water suppliers always promoted their water with "water is life" the spas and health resorts should also engage. The General Secretariat was applying to all members to promote their natural remedy – the water. In Bad Schmiedeberg and Belzig both in Germany, Lithuania and Iceland took the initiative and presented by actions in and with water, what is offered in the spas. Congratulation!



On 20 March, 2009, the Birštonas Tourist Information Centre, organised the campaign "The Port of the Flying Fish", which was dedicated to mark International Earth Day and World Water Day.

With the equinox approaching, three invincible natural elements, i.e. air (wind), fire and water united to perform the awaking the Earth ceremony. While the participants of the event were enjoying the fish soup, the Director of Birštonas Tourist Information Centre Mrs. Miliauskienė presented the book "Catch Me in Birštonas", dedicated to mark International Earth Day and World Water Day. It presents information on where fishing permits can be purchased as well as encyclopaedic data and information collected by experienced fishermen about the various fish inhabiting the Nemunas River, their nutritional habits, and reproduction peculiarities. In addition, the booklet contains a number of interesting and reliable recipes for fish dishes, which can be of great interest to fishermen's wives.



# News from the EU

## Report about EU-Projects

The EU-Commission published in the last month several programs. From these programs concrete projects should be developed. The official papers and mails were sent to the members of the ESPA via email. The dead end for the answers of these „Call for proposals“ is unfortunately always rather short, but it should be used. The content of the EU-commissions initiatives is health tourism, which is a request of all ESPA members.

The „Eden Project“ is addressed to public administrations Everybody can get more information in the „EDEN portal“ [www.edenineurope.eu](http://www.edenineurope.eu)

A second project is „Networks fort he competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism“. Also in this case we have published the “Call for Proposals” Deadline is 30th June 2009. There is not much time to present proposals and to find partners.

The „Mittelwater Project“ is addressed to spas in the south-east area of Europe. the General Secretariat has taken contact to the leader of the project and will also contact possible partners directly. Die following topics will be in the central part of the discussion:

- Improve prevention of environmental risks,
- Promote co-operation in management of natural assets and protected areas,
- remote energy and resource efficiency.

The Calypso Project is without any doubt very important fort he members of the ESPA. In the text of the EU-Commission is said:

Study on ‘Tourism exchanges in Europe: Enhancing employment, extending the seasonality spread, strengthening European citizenship and improving regional/local economies through the development of social tourism’.

The word “social tourism” includes health tourism, so that many of the members can participate. The website of the EU-Commission gives more information.



## **Workshop “Tourism and Spa Resorts” on 25th of March 2009 in Brussels, Committee of the Regions**

The Czech Republic took over the presidency of the EU for the first 6 months 2009. During this time many conferences and workshops are organised. One of the workshops organised in the Committee of the Regions in Brussels had the title: „Tourism and Spa Resorts : Strengthening the Sector“ on 25<sup>th</sup> March. President Dr. Lang hinted in her lecture at the importance of the regions in this field and explained the economic importance of the spas. The importance for public health, rehabilitation and prevention were the key words in her lecture.

- Creating awareness for the important contribution made by European health resorts and spas in the health sector in the Member States
- Supporting the preservation and further development of the Central European spa culture with its proud heritage and ensuring its contemporary positioning in the national healthcare systems and the EU
- Establishing the importance of preventive medicine for maintaining health and the prevention of illness in legislation
- Furthering the expansion and securing of patient mobility within the Member States
- Supporting cooperation by local authorities and regions with private and public investors as well as decision-makers
- Making the quality of service providers transparent and having it rated objectively to provide a level playing field in the health service
- Making even better use of the extensive network of the European Spas Association and supporting and simplifying access to the initial and further training available to qualified health service employees



## **Czech spas elected the new board**

The General Assembly of the association elected on 29th April the new board. Dr. Eduard Bláha has been re-elected for two years. Martin Plachý will be responsible in the board of the ESPA.



Dr. Eduard Bláha, President



## Background information

### Report Spring-meeting EURADON

EURADON – European Association of Radon spas – is since 2006 a section of the ESPA as well as the thalassotherapie. The utilization of radon as a remedy is in the center of attention.

The Radon-Spa Bad Brambach in Saxonia (D) invited interested persons the 3rd of April 2009 to a conference. Among the current formalities discussions concerning the international radon survey had taken place. This survey is financed and realized by the members. It is a “double blind study”, under the participation of 15 radon spas (Altenberg, Bad Brambach, Bad Kreuznach, Bad Münster am Stein-Ebernburg, Bad Schmiedeberg, Bad Steben, Bad Schlema, St. Blasien, Sibyllenbad; Weißenstadt, Bad Gastein, Bad Hofgastein, Bad Zell, Gasteiner Heilstollen and Jáchymov). All the costs are financed by the members. At this moment trainings of the personal took place.

For further informations please contact Mr Steffen Matthias, chairman, via e-mail: [arge@euroadon.de](mailto:arge@euroadon.de) (Internet: [www.euradon.de](http://www.euradon.de)) or the ESPA.



### Optimal Market-Positioning for Spas in Europe

#### International Comparison of Mineral- and Thermal Waters for Medical Spa Purposes

Each natural healing water has something unique. Used and marketed in the right way these “gold-nuggets of nature” can offer an enormous economic potential.

But how to know where the own healing water is unique or which other spas are using a similar water for what sort of health indications and with which techniques?

We compare the chemical composition of your natural thermal or mineral water with approx. 500 water analyses of other medical spa facilities from Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland.

Now you can get answers to the following questions:

- Application spectrum of the healing water: how do other spas use similar water?
- Where to find good partners and co-operation possibilities?
- Is your healing water unique by its chemical composition?

From our data base you will receive a report, which medical spas are using chemically similar waters: Listing and describing of thermal and mineral waters similar to yours and their providers with addresses and – if possible – health indications and main medical treatments, which are published.

For further information please ask Mr. Reinhard Petry, ESPA - Project Manager: [petry@espa-ehv.eu](mailto:petry@espa-ehv.eu).





## Presentation of our members



### National Resort Association of Lithuania

Lithuania health resorts are national resources of our country. Body hardening, health promotion, disease prevention and rehabilitation by means of applying natural factors are linked for centuries with the name of Lithuanian resorts: Birštonas, Druskininkai, Neringa, Palanga.

A mineral water convalescent home operated near Biržai dates back to 1587. The first patients received treatment in Birštonas in 1846. That year has been recorded as the year of establishment of the Resort. From that year people would come for treatment even from Warsaw, St Petersburg. Before the WWI more than 2 thousand people would arrive for cure at the resort. In 1794 King of Poland and Lithuania Stanisław August issued a decree declaring Druskininkai location of cure and the first scientific research about mineral waters was launched in 1830.

Palanga was already known at the beginning of the 19th century for its climate and sea-water and was famous as a summer seaside resort.

The healing factors of Lithuanian resorts currently used are mineral water, peaty mud, and the unique resort microclimate. Currently, over 20 mineral water wells operate in Lithuanian resorts. Calcium-sodium-chloride mineral waters are most widely used. Significant quantities of sulphate, bromine, and magnesium are found in some wells. Their mineralization accounts for 3 g/l to 115 g/l which determines the methods of using water for treatment, and the indications. Chlorine ions constitute more than 80 equivalents/%, while the composition of cations is more diverse: sodium, calcium, magnesium. This mineral water does not have specific components and properties. Low and medium mineralization water is used for drinking.



Mineralization of calcium-sodium-chloride mineral water applied externally fluctuates between 10 g/l and 40 g/l; the optimal mineralization is 20–40 g/l.

Lithuanian resorts operate as health resorts for secondary prevention, i.e. to stop the progress of chronic diseases, prevent their exacerbations, treat those with the incapacity to work, protect from development of disability, and improve life quality. At present, Lithuanian sanatoriums and rehabilitation centres use balneotherapy and peloidotherapy procedures, mostly in combination with physiotherapy procedures, such as classical massage, ultrasound therapy, various electro stimulation procedures. Resorts are able to use resort factors maximally and guarantee not only functionality of infrastructure but also quality of service has best perspective to attract customers and to satisfy their needs at the maximum.

It was obvious that individual market players (whether they participate in business, science, state government, etc) could hardly reach quality necessary for new economics alone. It was evident that problems can be solved via partnership and mutual activity, because each group may reach its aims, act effectively and create relative advantage best when it cooperates with others. In order to help coordinate activities and guarantee fast connection with all institutions that render resort services **National Resort Association of Lithuania was established in March 2007.**

National Resort Association of Lithuania is a non – governmental association, representing the interests of its members and promoting Health Tourism. It was set up in 2007, starting with 3 members – 3 Resort Municipalities:

Birštonas, Neringa and Palanga. Anykščiai and Ignalina Municipalities become members of Association in 2008. Druskininkai and Zarasai got membership starting from this year.

Our aims:

- To represent the joint interest of Health Resort Treatment, Spa and Wellness Tourism aiming at their development as a priority sector of economics;
- To contribute to the protection, development and efficient use of the Lithuanian natural resources: mineral water, medical mud, climate, etc.
- To establish connections with the central and local bodies of public authority with the aim of improving the legislative and legal regulations in the field of Health Resort Treatment, Spa and Wellness Tourism;
- To develop new marketing, advertisement programs for the use of mineral water, medical mud, climate and other natural resources, directed to prophylaxis, treatment, rehabilitation and wellness;
- To collaborate with related organizations in Europe and worldwide as well as with international and leading foreign educational institutions in the field of Health tourism;
- To popularize the legislation and experiences of the European Union in the field of Health Resort Treatment, Spa and Wellness Tourism;
- To popularize the activity of the Association through Lithuanian and foreign means for mass information.



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[www.espa-ehv.eu](http://www.espa-ehv.eu)

## News from EUROPSPA

### Expert Advisory Board

EUROPESPA med is the first international quality certification which is evaluating all spa facilities in Europe under the same criteria. The approximately 400 criteria for the ambitious catalogue for EUROPESPA med will be continuously revised by an international expert advisory board. The members of this board are:

- Dr. Janka Zálešáková, president of Balneotherma LLC, Bratislava and President of the Slovak Spas Association, Slovakia
- Prof. Dr. Zeki Karagülle, Istanbul Medical Faculty and President of the International Society of Medical Hydrology (ISMH), Turkey
- Mr. Siegfried Scholz, CEO of the Eisenmoorbad Bad Schmiedeberg, Germany
- Mr. Herbert Renn, operations manager of the Keidel Mineral-Thermalbad Freiburg and member of the board of the VBK - Academy of Balneology and Climatology, Germany
- Mr. Reinhard Petry, Lawyer and project manager of the ESPA, Brussels

Next time the expert advisory board will have its meeting in Birstonas (Royal Residence) at the 13<sup>th</sup> Mai.

### Three of the leading 5 Star Wellness-Hotels in Antalya (Turkey) applied for the international ESPA certificate EUROPESPA wellness.

The international certificate EUROPESPA wellness is specially designed for first class hotels providing wellness services for international guests. EUROPESPA wellness is created to evaluate the quality of the spa-area of 5 star hotels in Europe. The aim is to point out the best wellness facilities under the criteria wellness-infrastructure, service-quality, hygiene and safety and to present them under the independent web-portal [www.europespa.eu](http://www.europespa.eu). About 350 criteria will be tested on-site by an announced audit which is covering the hotel-facility, the spa-area and wellness-products, the kitchen, the swimming pools and saunas as well as the environment and the service quality. Additionally in an anonymous check the service quality will be estimated from the guest's point of view (600 criteria).

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> May up to the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2009 the hotels

- ELA Quality Resort Hotel
- Cornelia Diamond Golf Resort & Spa and
- Delphin Palace Hotel

were checked by an ESPA expert under the EUROPESPA wellness criteria under the support of the ESPA-member TURKSPA.



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## Dates for your Diary

11st – 13rd June 2009	Congress and General Assembly of the Romanian Spas Organisation (OPTBR) in Ocna Sibiului
01 <sup>st</sup> -04 <sup>th</sup> October 2009	Forum and workshop to Health Tourism
07 <sup>th</sup> – 09 <sup>th</sup> October 2009	Conference of the Baltic Tourism Commission with lecture of our Secretary General Joachim Lieber about: "New Trends in Spa- Wellness" in Tartu, Estonia
16 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2009	International fair of Thermal Tourism, Ourense, Spain
23 <sup>rd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2009	Congress and general Assembly of the German Spas Association in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

## Last News

Our member of the Board for the Czech Spas Association, Martin Plachý, who is for his member association since 2005 in the ESPA board and since this time the representative for the e-commerce, has become Vice Minister in the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic. He is also responsible for the field of tourism and spas.

After having finished his studies with the Masters degree at the faculty for international relations of the university in Prague in 1993 he worked for 6 years for the Czech Government most time in their Embassy in Singapore.

Since 2001 he is director and member of the board of ROYAL SPA, Kur&Medical Spa Group.

2002 he became consul general of the Republic of Singapore in the Czech Republic.

ESPA congratulates our friend for this important function and wishes him all the best for the future; we will continue the cooperation with him and our common work.



## ESPA Image-Brochure

Our Brochure with the headlines of the policy of the ESPA is now available for our members to inform interested person about our priorities and activities.

The Brochure can be ordered in the office in Brussels.

Brussels, May 2009

**European Spas Association (ESPA)**  
**Europäischer Heilbäderverband (EHV)**  
**Association Européenne du Thermalisme et du Climatisme (AETC)**

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