

PROFESSIONAL

JULY 2007  
£3.50

# beauty

incorporating spa and nails

## THE GREEN ISSUE

SAVE THE PLANET WHILE SAVING YOUR  
MONEY, ORGANIC SKINCARE LINES AND  
CONSUMERS' VIEWS ON ETHICAL BEAUTY

BE A WINNING NAIL  
TECH OR HIGH-FLYING  
THERAPIST

**30** IDEAS TO HELP  
YOU SAVE TIME  
IN YOUR SPA OR SALON

CELEBRITY MAKE-UP  
EXPERTS REVEAL  
THEIR SECRETS

# ARTSPA, THE COTSWOLDS

Artspa on Lower Mill Estate in the Cotswolds is a private, residents-only spa but, while exclusivity may reign supreme within the glass walls, its approach to the environment is far more inclusive. When Jeremy Paxton, chairman and owner of the estate (a series of bespoke second homes with a wildlife reserve and a spa) first conceived the spa, he did so with the objective of helping the natural environment in manageable ways through every facet of its building and operation.

One of the first things that you notice as you enter the Artspa is the lack of electrical lighting. All walls and the ceiling are made of glass, which means that natural light floods the place in the day and atmospheric candles light it at night, rendering the (energy-saving) light bulbs all but redundant. "Even in winter there is enough light to create a cosy, dimly lit atmosphere for the spa," says Paxton.

## EFFICIENCY IN HEATING

But the spa hasn't stopped at lighting. Other elements of the construction have also been implemented on the back of their environmental impact. "We employ submersible heat pump technology to efficiently heat the building and are now experimenting with photovoltaic cells and solar collectors so that we can also harness the power of the sun," continues Paxton. All of the timber used in the building came from renewable sources, while the continued use of local produce and labour also brings employment to the area.

During the construction phase of Artspa and the other buildings on Lower Mill Estate, all



The eco pool is less costly to treat



The huge windows help the spa to conserve energy, as it requires less electric light

excavation products were recycled. Some were used elsewhere in the spa - for example, the reception desk is made from off cuts of timber - while others were sorted and placed in specially coded recycling skips for collection.

Paxton looked at every detail and considered how he could make small changes for the better. Short-flush

toilets and low-flow shower heads were fitted throughout the spa and the rest of the estate to save water. All showers are on automatic timers, which means that they can't be left running. The spa also uses volatile organic compound (VOC)-free paints throughout its décor (VOCs can pollute the atmosphere so check your paints carefully) as well as Ecover environmentally friendly cleaning products. The totally natural Pevorina product range is used in all treatments.

The main environmental wonder of the spa,

however, has to be its outdoor eco pool. The pool is chemical free, instead it makes use of gravel and plants to keep it clean and warm. The main swimming area is roped off but the area to the right is shallower so allows the water to draw heat from the sun before being pumped through a gravel filtration bed then through plants, which take nutrients from the water meaning bacteria cannot breed there. "We know it is working well when the plants start looking ill," says Will Vicary, head of the estate's ecological team. "It means they've taken anything harmful from the water - elements that would otherwise need treating with chemicals."

Once eco pools are established they prove less time consuming and costly to operate. "There are no chemicals so no costs there," says Vicary. "The pool also needs a smaller pump which is cheaper to run. And Vicary refutes the idea that eco pools are the more expensive option. "It cost us approximately 60% of what a normal outdoor pool would have set us back," he says.

## FINANCIAL PAYBACK

Watching others play on the lawn and dragonflies crowd over the eco pool at the harmonious Artspa provides justification enough for its environmental policies, but the financial benefits also speak for themselves. No electric lighting means smaller electric bills, using off-cuts of building materials means less materials are bought, and so on. That said, many of the measures implemented involved a higher than normal set up cost. Paxton suggests this is because fewer suppliers operate within this sphere, making prices less competitive.

"I calculated that the payback period for all the energy saving and environmental systems we have installed will be between five and ten years," he says. "It is a fairly long time but for us it's worth it." Consumer reaction to the green side of the business has been entirely positive, which Paxton puts down to green issues being "at the top of every media agenda". He is also keen to point out that the benefits are far from short term. "I eventually want to make the estate a zero net energy community," he says. "I currently sell my homes on a 999-year leasehold and a portion of the service charge is guaranteed to go to the nature reserves for the duration of that, so even if I sell the estate, the reserves will not be lost."

Set-up costs for the Artspa in the Cotswolds may have been hefty, but the spa is making savings already

