

# 14

## Conclusions: The Future of Wellness Management

This chapter draws conclusions from the previous chapters and offers suggestions for current and future wellness management in foodservice, hospitality, and tourism businesses. It starts by introducing the wellness programs that EVEN Hotels offer. Next, it revisits wellness management concepts in hospitality and tourism, looks at generations of travelers and their travel preferences, and discusses future trends.

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### Learning outcomes

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By the end of this chapter, students should be able to do the following:

1. Describe what wellness programs and offerings EVEN Hotels provides to its guests.
  2. Draw conclusions from previous chapters.
  3. Discuss current and future generations' expectations of health and wellness.
  4. Offer discussions and recommendations on the future of wellness concepts.
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### Case study: EVEN Hotels

EVEN Hotels' tagline is "Where wellness is built in." This is embodied throughout a traveler's stay, as EVEN offers ways to stay healthier and happier away from home. Their employees are wellness-savvy, and their fitness offerings, healthy food choices, and relaxing spaces combine to help guests stay active and productive. This well-rounded approach to wellness encourages their guests to incorporate physical, mental, and social health while traveling.

EVEN Hotels boast about their best-in-class Athletic Studio, in-room training zone, online instructional videos, and group classes. Simple and natural food options like smoothies, gluten-free snacks, and even organic signature cocktails are available at the Cork & Kale™ Market and Bar found at each property. Like many hotel brands,

rooms at EVEN Hotels feature premium sleep systems, but theirs go beyond an adjustable bed and into the territory of natural eucalyptus fiber bedding. Other room amenities include comfortable, eco-friendly products to help ensure a good night's sleep and a balanced stay. Free WiFi and lots of calming workspaces around each property help their guests accomplish their goals during their stay. (EVEN Hotels, 2020).

IHG, the parent company of EVEN Hotels, offers plenty more tips for wellness travel on their blog, Wellwellwell. The blog features articles on “keeping well, eating well, resting easy, and accomplishing more” (IHG, 2020). For example, one article on getting a solid night's sleep in a hotel room encourages travelers to eat foods rich in melatonin and tryptophan, complete a quick pre-bedtime yoga routine, sleep on sheets with a blend of natural eucalyptus and cotton fibers, and enjoy relaxing scents like lavender and sage (Russock, 2017). While many large hotel brands are now offering wellness-focused products, EVEN Hotels was one of the pioneers.

### Discussion questions

1. What do EVEN Hotels offer to improve guests' physical, mental and social wellness?
2. Who would like to stay at EVEN Hotels, and why?
3. What improvements could EVEN Hotels make to their wellness offerings?
4. What other topics could IHG/EVEN Hotels discuss on their wellness blog?

## Revisiting wellness management concepts

Common themes have been mentioned throughout this textbook as current trends in health and wellness travel. The main ones will be summarized in this section briefly, and the next sections will look at upcoming future trends. Generational differences in health and wellness expectations will also be considered.

### Primary and secondary wellness travel

The concepts of primary and secondary wellness travel have been discussed throughout this text. Retreats will become more popular, as people look for time away from their stressful workplaces and daily lives and seek ways of better managing and balancing their days in all areas of wellness (Smith & Puczkó, 2008). Wellness travel offerings that mix primary and secondary travel are also becoming more common, allowing each person in a party to customize their own experience (Rokou, 2019). For example, a business traveler may only be able to partake in exercise classes and healthy dining options, but their accompanying partner might seek a fully immersed wellness experience.

### Identifying a destination's unique wellness offerings

Every destination has its history, traditions, and unique amenities to offer health and wellness travelers. This may serve underdeveloped destinations particularly well, as these travelers are often seeking places that remove them from their developed

concrete world and bring them back to nature with exercise, play, rest, nutrition, and mindfulness in peaceful settings that run at a slower pace (Rokou, 2019).

### **Customization and personalization**

While this is a general trend in hospitality and tourism, wellness travelers, in particular, are looking for customized and personalized trips that address their individual goals. Some travelers are looking for complete silence, mindfulness, and nature to reverse the effects of constant digital noise and connectivity; ‘silent zones’ are becoming popular at spas, restaurants, fitness centers, and airports. Others are looking for ways to embrace their creativity through classes that encourage painting, writing, and other creative outlets (Hill, 2017). Even nutrition will become personalized, using science, low-cost medical testing, and new technologies (Insider’s Guide to Spas, 2019).

### **Wellness food**

As mentioned in Chapter 6, the health and wellness food market was valued at \$733 billion in 2020 and is estimated to be worth \$1 trillion in 2026 (Statista, 2021). Special diets are becoming the norm, for example, limited-ingredient diets like vegetarianism, veganism, plant-based, pescetarianism, and the Paleo diet (Innovation Group, 201a). Younger generations expect products to be available that are GMO-free, organic, natural, and sustainable, and they want locally sourced farm-to-table dining experiences (UnityPoint Health, 2018). The healthy beverages market is moving past smoothies and cold-pressed juices and into non-alcoholic spirits and teas. Foods filled with serotonin and other “happiness hormones,” high-fiber and high-antioxidant foods, and fermented foods with naturally occurring probiotics are increasing in popularity as well (Innovation Group, 2017b). Immersive and sensory food experiences like food festivals and add-ons like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are becoming more popular, and technology is also being used to decrease production time, create new products, and confirm trustworthiness (Mintel, 2019).

### **Wellness spas and hot springs**

Trends in the spa and hot springs industry are moving more toward individualized treatments and addressing specific visitor needs. For example, mineral springs have curative properties when ingested or bathed in, and different types of mineral contents address different skin, joint, and other bodily concerns (Erfurt-Cooper, 2010). Some springs have radon, which in low doses of exposure may improve the body’s metabolism, immunity, antioxidant functions, and natural healing capabilities (Misasa Onsen Ryokan Cooperative, 2020). Wellness travelers are also looking for eco-tourism friendly accommodation and attractions, and spa and hot spring facilities need to be designed and built accordingly (Mill, 2011).

### **Wellness events**

Chapters 7 and 8 discussed primary, secondary, and corporate wellness events in detail. Primary wellness events like retreats give wellness travelers a way to immerse themselves in wellness for a few days or even a few hours, and many resorts like