

# 8

## Wellness Events, Festivals and Activities

This chapter covers health and wellness events, festivals, and activities in food service, hospitality, and tourism. It first presents the MindBodySpirit Festival case study. Second, the chapter defines events, festivals, wellness events, and wellness festivals. Next, it categorizes health and wellness events, festivals, and activities into three distinct classes: primary, secondary, and corporate, followed by specific examples of primary, secondary, and corporate wellness activities. Then, the chapter discusses how to incorporate wellness activities in regular events and festivals. The chapter ends with a summary and discussion questions to help the reader better understand the topic.

---

### Learning outcomes

---

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

1. Explain the case study of MindBodySpirit Festival.
  2. Define event, festival, wellness event, and wellness festival.
  3. Categorize wellness events and define primary wellness events, secondary wellness events, and corporate and industry wellness events.
  4. Provide real examples of primary, secondary, and corporate wellness events and festivals.
  5. Offer suggestions on how to incorporate wellness elements into regular events.
  6. Discuss the various ways the impact of an event can be measured.
-

## Case study: The MindBodySpirit Festival

The MindBodySpirit Festival is Australia's largest health, well-being and natural therapies event. Four 3-day festival events were held in 2022: two in Melbourne, one in Sydney, and one in Brisbane. Free entrance gives attendees access to over 200 exhibitors, inspirational seminars, stage performances, and a marketplace of wellness-related vendors selling products like jewelry, cosmetics, music, books, giftware, clothing, crystals, body treatments and more.

The events also host lots of educational courses, many of which are free, on topics like cooking with spices, foods that fight inflammation and reduce autoimmune responses, merging spirituality and business, healing through Past Life Regression, and more. Psychic readings and healthy food are also available for purchase at all of the events. MindBodySpirit festivals pride themselves on bringing visitors the best in health, wellness, and spiritual guidance (MindBodySpirit Festival, 2022a).

The Melbourne festival is trying a new feature in 2022—EveryWoman, which is offering a fun girls day out with friends and family. Booths center around wine, jewelry, natural body products, candles, and lots more (MindBodySpirit Festival, 2022b).

To complement their in-person festivals, the MindBodySpirit festival organization also has an online Healthy Living Hub. This website has blog-style articles on nutrition, beauty, parenting, mental health, dream journaling, astrology, and other related wellness topics. The group is also active on many social media channels, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and Twitter (MindBodySpirit Festival, 2022c).

### Discussion questions

1. What categories does each of the activities offered at the MindBodySpirit event fall into?
2. What additional activities could be incorporated into the MindBodySpirit event to benefit the local community?
3. What kinds of tools and habits do attendees receive from an event like this?
4. How do the Healthy Living Hub and the MindBodySpirit social media pages complement the in-person events?

## Events, festivals and wellness events definitions

- An **event** is “a public assembly for the purpose of celebration, education, marketing, or reunion. Events can be classified on the basis of their size, type, and context.” Some possible types of events include social/lifecycle, education and career, sports, entertainment, political, corporate, religious, and fundraising/cause-related (EventEducation.com, 2020).
- A **wellness event** is a type of event that focuses on spiritual, social, physical, and/or emotional well-being. It may incorporate physical exercise, mindful-

ness education, holistic therapies, environmental awareness and engagement programs, and other activities to improve the overall well-being of attendees.

- A **festival** is a time of celebration, with an organized series of social events. Festivals can celebrate many things, for example, religious occasions or a harvest.
- A **wellness festival** is a festival that brings people together to celebrate overall well-being and has a focus on one or more aspects of wellness.

### ***Categorizing health and wellness events, festivals and activities***

With the growing wellness movement, different types of health and wellness events and activities abound in foodservice, hospitality, and tourism. **Primary wellness events** can be categorized as events that cater to primary wellness travelers. In contrast, **secondary wellness events** target secondary wellness travelers with additions to their primary travel itinerary or incorporating healthy elements into a larger event. **Corporate and industry wellness events** encompass activities sponsored by a corporation or industry association, such as a workplace wellness event hosted by a company for its employees, or a wellness tradeshow organized by a wellness industry association. Each of these categories is explained below. The Covid-19 pandemic caused many events to become virtual and accessible only online, to decrease the risk of spreading the disease. As the world recovers from the pandemic and vaccines become widely available, some people are excited and willing to meet in-person again, while others prefer to attend virtual events due to travel restrictions or personal preference. Because of this, many events are operating on a hybrid model, with in-person functions and meals, and classes and/or speakers being streamed online (Eventtia, 2022).

#### ***Primary wellness events***

Primary wellness-oriented accommodations and facilities are available around the globe for all types of travelers seeking improvement in various areas of their lives. Primary wellness travelers are often looking for a way to immerse themselves in wellness for a few days, or at least a couple of hours. There are many existing wellness retreats, many of which are focused on yoga, clean living, physical fitness, recovering from a divorce or other traumatic experiences, connecting to a destination in a truly authentic way, and other activities. MindBodySpirit Festival is one example of what attendees seek out and travel to immerse themselves in a wellness experience.

Facilities also exist that focus solely on providing wellness-focused activities and programs to their visitors. Since its original location in Tucson, Arizona opened in 1979, Canyon Ranch has been a well-known health and wellness destination where visitors go to unify the mind, body, and spirit. Their wellness resorts in Tucson and Lenox, Massachusetts, have experts on staff to guide guests through improving their overall health through fitness and movement, nutrition and food, health and healing, mind and spirit, and spa and beauty. One category of offerings is called “life man-