

BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

OCTOBER | 2013

BRITISH INVASION

Tara Bernerd designs
the Thompson Chicago





BRINGING IT HOME

Three new hotel-based spas create unique experiences by drawing deeply from their local settings.

BY MATTHEW HALL

THE SPA EXPERIENCE at some hotels is akin to boarding a spaceship. Guests enter a sleek, self-contained environment in search of some escape and serenity. But these days, more hotels are seeking to ground their spas by connecting them with their surroundings.

That trend is reflected in the designs of three noteworthy new spas. Two of those projects recently opened, at the Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort

& Spa in Hawaii and the Salamander Spa & Resort in Virginia, respectively, while the third—in the Gainsborough Bath Spa in the U.K.—is slated to debut next year.

The Andaz Maui is the tenth member of that Hyatt Hotels Corp. luxury flag, and the first to be located in a resort destination. Hired to design the 297-key hotel complex, including its 14,000-sq.-ft. Awili Spa and Salon, was Rockwell Group.

1 Textured stone walls and warm woods help create an inviting, relaxing environment in the spa entry at the new Salamander resort complex in Virginia.



2

2 Floor-to-ceiling millwork screens with drawers and niches surround a central blending bar within the Andaz spa's apothecary.

"We wanted the resort's design to highlight its lush Hawaiian surroundings," says Rockwell principal Shawn Sullivan. "So we started by creating public areas and guest rooms that are open and airy."

That approach was integrated into the spa, as well. "The 10 en-suite treatment rooms provide guests with the comfort of having their own private beachside cabanas," says Sullivan. "In addition, each room has a private, timber-lined changing area, a shower with a view of the beach and a private lounge for unwinding and enjoying post-treatment offerings."

Serving as the centerpiece of the spa complex is its apothecary. "We felt an island apothecary was an ideal setting to combine local ingredients and influences with

a new menu of spa treatments," says Sullivan. "The focal point of the space is a blending bar, where the staff works with guests to create customized teas, lotions, oils and other treatments that incorporate indigenous herbs, plants and fruits."

Lining the walls of the apothecary are three floor-to-ceiling millwork screens featuring drawers and niches. Similar to a library card catalogue, the various treatment ingredients are stored in backlit displays. "The apothecary space is open to the rest of the spa, so wherever guests are, they connect to this act of mixing and blending of local ingredients," Sullivan explains. "In that way, the apothecary serves as both the beginning and end of patrons' wellness journey at the spa."

Like the Andaz, the new Salamander Resort & Spa uses design to help its guests immerse themselves in the locale. Situated in the heart of Virginia's horse and wine country, the project is the brainchild of Salamander Hotels & Resorts founder and ceo Sheila Johnson, whose nearby farm provided the architectural inspiration for her new, 168-key resort.

Housed within that complex is a 25,000-sq.-ft. spa with 14 treatment rooms that was designed by Blu Spas Inc. "Sheila Johnson asked us to create a spa that would capture the genteel elegance of Southern hospitality, in an environment infused with romance, warmth and grace," says Blu Spas principal Cary Collier.

Designers began that process by creating treatment rooms that,