



Best of the Bay: Ten Years and Still Going Strong



By Thomas James

Every spa owner knows that the equation for success has to include the right services and the right team of professionals. Add the right place - turned into the right space through careful planning and design - and the results can be amazing.

In Green Bay, Wisconsin, the owners of The Day Spa asked industry-leading International Design Concepts to help them build exactly the right space for their services. The results are tangible.

After 10 years in this location, they're still going strong, winning Best of the Bay awards not only for services, but for the spa itself. It's a winning brand built on services interwoven within a memorable sense of place.

The principle behind The Day Spa's success is simple: when the shape and texture of a space perfectly fit the motions within, it creates an effortless synergy.

In business terms, it's the foundation of efficient, seamless service delivery. Instead of working around the challenges of a

generic space, providers can perform more services each day. For guests, purposeful spaces let the spa experience happen organically, without awkward pauses or the subtle discomfort of finding something out of place.

Most importantly, a sense of place adds a tangible, permanent dimension to a business' brand. By tying the guest's experience so firmly to the place where they received it, there's no question whether they'll be able to find the same experience anywhere else.

After nine years in another location, the well-established Day Spa and growing service menu came up against the limits of their space. The landlord wouldn't allow them to renovate or expand, so they quietly started looking for a new home.

Around the same time, the owners attended presentations by IDC designer Michael Effler. In his seminars, Michael walked the audience through some of the ideas that have made IDC leaders in the field of ergonomic, holistic design and refurbishment for more than twenty-five years.

The fourth time the owners saw Michael speak, they

approached him after his presentation. They'd tried to apply what they had learned in his talks, but the result wasn't the same. They dreamt of a space that wasn't just a spa, but a true community gathering place; a complete, essential escape, offering food service, classes, and able to host large groups and weddings.

At 15,000 square feet, their large new space needed massive renovation, but the site had potential to become a destination: set apart from other commerce at the end of a road and bordering a nature preserve. The Day Spa did become a successful destination as well a clearly articulated brand, defined by its uniquely designed facility.

The moment guests arrive they are greeted by an outdoor fire-and-water sculpture, where flames dance over bubbling water, as if by magic. Passing through one-of-a-kind hand-carved doors, visitors enter a space where water tumbles down stone walls. They cross a glass bridge over a Koi pool beneath, into a 2-story enclosure with a cupola.

From the outside, especially on long Wisconsin winter nights, the cupola shines like a beacon. As you turn the corner it grabs your eye, and you know you've arrived.

Michael notes that a drawing of the cupola marks The

Photos by Steve Ryan (ryanphotography.com)

Above: Library & visual merchandising; Facade; Reception; Site Plan
Below: Entry with Koi pool under glass bridge



*On long Wisconsin winter nights,
the cupola shines like a beacon and grabs your eye.
You know you've arrived.*



The Day Spa
your essential escape

600 N. 10th Street
De Pere, WI 54115
Ph / 920.339.5250
www.dayspaescape.com

*Fountain with fire & water elemental effect;
Day Spa brand featuring the cupola*



Michael Effler is the founder of International Design Concepts, an industry-leading spa design firm. Michael regularly brings his expertise to audiences in the Canada, US, and Europe. With more than 25 years of experience, IDC is known in the field for its cutting-edge work in day, medical, hotel and resort spas.

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Day Spa's printed materials. "It became their business card and their brand."

Deeper within the spa, the feeling of a unique destination continues with design features that support signature services. In addition to the spa cafe, a separate Tatami Room features a sunken, Japanese-style seating area with heated bamboo floors, where guests can enjoy regional cuisine. During summer months, an outdoor cabana offers treatments within earshot of the nature reserve.

Behind the center, a large garden leads to a private, standalone couples' cabin featuring a private treatment area, changing rooms, and a fireplace sitting area. Nearby, a gazebo features a kitchen where professional chefs give classes in the newest healthy cooking techniques.

More subtle, but no less intentional, is the way visual merchandising is woven into almost every space. Beyond the reception area, product is promoted in strategically-placed glass displays set into the walls. As guests move down hallways, motion sensors gently raise lights as they pass. Even in treatment rooms, cases are flush with the wall and soothingly lit, to avoid intruding on the

treatment experience while highlighting the visual merchandising opportunity.

Behind the scenes, the attention to detail continues. The Day Spa's owners and the IDC team shared a belief in cultivating staff well-being and growth for the long-term success of a spa. To care for the caregivers, the design team added a second story, with a relaxation area, kitchen, library and presentation area for classes on the latest techniques and treatments.

According to Michael, in twenty-five years of designing spas, The Day Spa stands out for the way the owners dedicated themselves to incorporating design in every element of the project.

"This project is the epitome of everything we teach in our classes," Michael said. "It's got first impression, it's got identity, it's got the 'wow' factor. It's all there."

Although the Day Spa is large, design and creativity is just as important, whether a project is 1,500 square feet or 15,000. When spa owners can create a design that is as unique as the services they want to offer, the result is a foundation for lasting success.

Together, the IDC team and the owners of The Day Spa laid the groundwork for a destination - and an experience - that guests will always remember.