

Chrysalis Emerging:

Blending Services to Create a Unique Advantage

Beneath snow-covered mountains and a stone's throw from the waters of Puget Sound, *Chrysalis Inn and Spa*, in Bellingham Washington, is the picture of modern Northwest luxury. Named a Conde Naste 'Best Places Boutique Hotel', Chrysalis had originally included a spa as an amenity. The spa had always done well, but after seven years it needed a fresh competitive advantage. Based on International Design Concepts' long history and strong standing in the industry, the owner came to them with a unique challenge: revitalize the spa from the inside out, adding new profit centers and improving the guest experience – all within the original footprint.

The IDC creative team noted that, while the hotel had been built and maintained to an excellent standard, the spa had originally been designed by a generic

architect, who might not have understood industry-specific needs. The owner; adds IDC Director Michael Effler, “gave us the freedom... to bring the spa to the level of fit-and-finish of the hotel.”

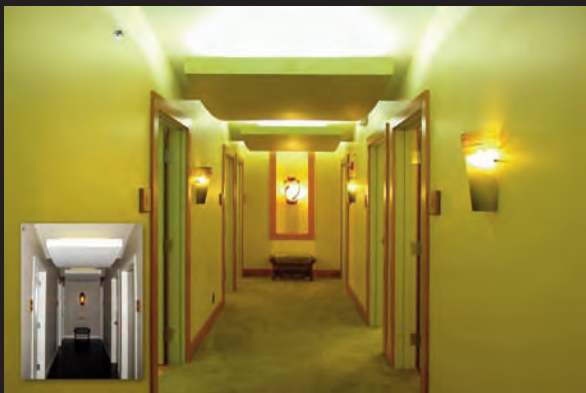
IDC approached the project in a characteristically unique way. Thinking economically and environmentally, they reupholstered and refinished much of the spa's existing furniture rather than buying new. Next, they completely renovated the spa's color palette and lighting fixtures, with fresh ceiling fixtures and Italian sconces, organic no-VOC paints, and high-quality natural materials including slate and vertical grain fir. Finally, along with autumnal copper-fountain in the entry hall, each therapy room gained an etched-glass ceiling motif within a larger Northwest theme.



Next, said Effler, the team “looked at the local competitive landscape... to see what was being done, [and] what was not being done.” IDC worked closely with Chrysalis' managers and owners to create service packages unique to their facility – referred to as 'signature services' – that give guests the opportunity for uniquely multi-layered experiences, at the same time multiplying the possible simultaneous revenue streams from single assets.



To do this, IDC first enhanced every service area, and then looked for additional functions that could be gracefully added without major renovation. One room had held only an underutilized hydrotherapy tub and shower with a small massage room next door. This became the Turkish chamber: the IDC team opened a portal between the two rooms, and replaced the hydrotherapy tub with a lounging tub, natural rock walls, relaxed lighting, and fiber-optic stars in the ceiling. They also added a custom-built heated stone bench, Swiss shower, steam therapy, and Thalasso water therapy. With the inclusion of Rasul mud for couples to massage onto one another, the Turkish Chamber became home to a Chrysalis signature service – the Rasul Mud Ritual.



Finally, the IDC team completely renovated the retail and reception areas. Existing visual merchandising

was minimal, with low-key displays, and curtains covering major front-facing windows. Working with the renovated color palette and lighting, the design team created integrated displays that increased visual merchandising 100%, and used the windows to show those products – and the spa – to arriving hotel guests. Since the spa had been struggling to handle increased volume in its relatively small relaxation lounge, the team added a concierge's station in the hotel's luxurious lobby, where arriving guests could be invited to enjoy the hotel's much larger fireside lounge and waterfront views, while they awaited their service.

Individual results aside, the larger process was that of bringing the spa to the next level, from a pleasant addition to the guest experience to a major highlight, and from a hotel amenity to an attraction in its own right. The success of the project is visible in concrete terms, notes general manager Sandy Robb, “Business is up 30 percent!”



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