

Tourists spending billions on wellness travel

By Jeri Clausing, Travel Weekly

At Blackberry Farm, a resort in Tennessee's Smoky Mountains, a new "Wellhouse" offers Japanese forest bathing and other "deep healing woods" activities, including in-forest yoga, meditation and endurance hikes. At the Fairmont Princess in Scottsdale, Ariz., guests can do a whole lot more than keep up with their usual workout routines at the hotel gym: They can also get state-of-the-art body-fat assessments and take the latest in fitness and wellness classes.

And in suburban New York and Washington, D.C., travelers now have the choice of a new, wellness-focused midscale hotel brand that has cork floors and in-room fitness equipment, healthy organic foods and bedding and amenities focused on relaxation and better sleep.

Over the past few years, wellness has moved way beyond the niche market of yoga retreats and fitness camps, informing and redefining virtually every aspect of the travel industry, from luxury hotels and spas to business hotels, even airports.

Several recent studies show wellness tourism is growing twice as fast as any other sector, and there are no signs that it will be letting up as everyone from aging baby boomers to millennials focus on adopting healthier lifestyles.

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