

Wellness Trends for 2018

From mushrooms emerging from underground to a new era of transformative travel to the rise of the “wellness kitchen...”

Written by Judy Chapman

GROWING UP IN THE ALTERNATIVE TOWN OF BYRON BAY IN AUSTRALIA IN THE 1970'S, I often think that my childhood reflects many of the wellness trends emerging today. We lived in an eco-cabin in the forest with no electricity or TV. Our kitchen literally was an open-air ‘wellness kitchen’ surrounded by fruit trees. Family vacations were trips to yoga ashrams and monasteries and when I was 14, my mother, sister and I trekked alone through the Himalayas. Byron was also famed for its magic mushrooms and cannabis culture. Sleeping on beaches and campfires under the stars was normal as was immersing in colorful festivals. Our mothers were the pioneer ‘feminists’ and protests and marches were another weekend family activity. Which is why I found this year’s wellness trend report by The Global Wellness Summit (GWS) epic. As in the words of Susie Ellis, GWS chairman & CEO: ‘Every one of this year’s trends pushes the health and wellness envelope in unexpected ways.’



1. Psilocybe azurescens. 2. Alquimia Centre of Healing Arts. 3. Spa design by Johannes Torpe Studios. The Red Mountain Resort. 4. Spa journey at The Red Mountain Resort. 5. Punakha Lodge at Six Senses Bhutan. 6. JCS RAA Pasadena Residence



MUSHROOMS EMERGE FROM UNDERGROUND

Whether “magic” or medicinal, shrooms’ superpowers come to light

The mysterious underground kingdom of mushrooms is actually the largest set of organisms on the planet – and in 2018 more people will explore the unique medicine they provide our brains and bodies. Thanks to a surge in rather mind-blowing medical evidence, demonstrating that they reset the brain and shake the “snow globe” on rigid neural patterns, magic mushrooms will emerge from the underground, and could prove “better than existing treatments” for anxiety, depression and addiction.

There’s also a legalization movement, with pushes to get magic mushrooms on ballots

in states like California and Oregon, and with experts predicting they will be legalized medicine within five years.

Microdosing psilocybin as a brain booster will go more global. And a new kind of wellness “trip,” magic mushroom retreats (like Mycomeditations, Jamaica), will keep popping up. This magic mushroom moment bears resemblance to early days in the cannabis wellness trend.

The evidence also mounts that so many “regular” mushrooms are magical for health: particularly as stress and inflammation fighters. We’ll see mushrooms like reishi get infused in everything imaginable: powders, lattes, cocoas, chocolate, broths, and teas. And with many mushrooms boasting unique skin-boosting powers, mushroom-infused products will keep invading the beauty aisles.

Mushrooms...weird, far out? Anything but: this trend is driven by new medical evidence.

A NEW ERA OF TRANSFORMATIVE WELLNESS TRAVEL

Circuits, sagas and epic storylines

Wellness is, by nature, a journey – an ongoing physical and emotional quest. “Transformational travel” is the 2018 buzzword, described as “...travel that challenges people on a deeply personal level, creating emotion through the powerful medium of storytelling. We predict more wellness destinations will use the power of wellness circuits and epic storylines to create a “necklace” of linked wellness experiences rather than the disconnected “beads” of programming, amenities, and itineraries.



A bold first: the opening of Six Senses Bhutan (May), a multi-chapter wellness circuit where people journey across five lodges, at each totally immersed in one of five key pillars of Bhutan’s “Gross National Happiness Index.” More destinations will cast you as the fearless heroine in a dramatic wellness saga:

In Iceland’s The Red Mountain Resort concept spa-goers follow the intense, five-chapter emotional and sensory voyage of an ancient Icelandic hero. More performance, music and art (“story” immersion) will get served up with wellness: like soaking in hot springs while listening to a live concert (coming to Peninsula Hot Springs, AU). The future for wellness travel will be engaging people’s emotions as much as evidence-based healing.

THE WELLNESS KITCHEN

Kitchens catch up with healthy eating

The old eating and lifestyle habits of the 1950s are history, and today more people want to eat living, healthy, organic food. The newly christened “Wellness Kitchen” will store and showcase fresh fruits and vegetables as opposed to processed foods, and new designs and technology will celebrate uncluttered, well-ventilated spaces that are as encouraging of socializing as they are of preparing healthy food.

Refrigerators will be reimaged to properly store and transparently display fresh fruits and vegetables, and kitchens will have space for gardens and sprouting. Noisy appliances will be a thing of the past. Composting delivery systems and oxygen sensors will be standard features. And there will be more emphasis on healthy building materials. Because just like the food it contains, the Wellness Kitchen doesn’t merely feed – it nourishes. Leading examples: Veronica Schreiber, CEO and



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– and disagreements over standards get left on the table by governments – we will see individuals owning their own “clean air acts.”

This can mean filling our homes and offices with plants, donning chic air pollution masks, actively monitoring indoor air quality using new sensors and apps, investing in devices that purify the air around us (even within the confines of our cars), adopting the storm of new pollution-fighting beauty regimes, embracing more salt therapy and breathwork training, or choosing “lung-cleansing” travel destinations. Significantly, this trend will put more pressure on businesses and governments to take action against the ultra-fine particulates that are dirtying our air.

EXTREME WELLNESS

Hacking our way to better brains, bodies and overall well-being

The power to become the best we can be has never been more attainable, and the pursuit of wellness has never been more extreme. More people will train like an Olympic athlete, or tough out extreme “mind over matter” workshops, like the “Ice Man” Wim Hof’s training in Switzerland, deploying meditation and breathwork to brave extreme ice and learn to master our immune and autonomic nervous systems. (Note: ice is very hot, and icy and extreme hot/cold experiences are one of the top trends at wellness destinations.) The new luxury travel escapes challenge both body and mind: take Black Tomato’s “Get Lost” adventures, where the very brave are dropped into the wilderness to fend for themselves. The focus: building a better brain and hacking the body’s basic make-up through precision medicine and wellness – anything and everything seems suddenly possible. With a bit of grit – extreme wellness often borders on scary and downright uncomfortable – an open mind, and a little extra cash (this is not necessarily affordable wellness), get ready to build a better you in 2018. Because extreme challenges and experiences will bring a wealth of super powers to everyday, ordinary humans.



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Founder, Vera Iconica Kitchen; International WELL Building Institute; Pratt Institute, Industrial Design Department.

GETTING OUR “CLEAN AIR ACT” TOGETHER

Taking personal responsibility for the air we breathe

The toxins in the air that we breathe (both indoors and out) have become a catastrophic invisible killer, responsible for the premature deaths of 6.5 million people worldwide. Over 90% of the world’s population now breathe air that violates air quality guidelines: countries like China and India are smothered in toxic air, while the (energy efficient) airtight buildings in developed nations can prove just as deadly. As the gravity of this issue becomes clearer

WELLNESS MEETS HAPPINESS

The conversation becomes more important

The happiness science lessons are clear: the wellness world needs to put a greater focus on happiness generally and on driving social connection and tech disconnection specifically. With loneliness as big a killer as smoking, governments will start to take action. 2018 will also be the watershed backlash year against big tech, as more medical evidence comes to light – about the disastrous effects that 24/7 digital/social media connection has on our brains and happiness.

A massive trend is co-working, co-living and social spaces laser-focused on building well communities in our age of digital isolation and remote work. The Assemblage (NYC), one of the new “third

whether trampoline fitness classes (from Ireland’s Boogie Bounce to Hong Kong’s BounceLimit) or classes that feel like school recess, with everything from dodge ball to monkey bars. And yes...more laughter yoga and smile asana.

A NEW FEMINIST WELLNESS

From a surge in women-only, wellness-infused clubs and co-working spaces—to a storm of FemTech “solving” for women’s bodies

2017 was a year of attacks on, and fighting back, by women: With this new feminist wave, we’ve also seen a shift in the self-care concept and we predict new intersections between women’s empowerment, feminism and wellness in 2018.

We’ll see more women-only clubs, co-working spaces, and collectives: where women work, network, empower each other, unwind and learn – with much wellness on tap (From NYC’s The Wing to LA’s WMN Space). The FemTech wave will only rise, with a new army of women doctors, technologists and designers “solving” for women’s actual bodies and lives - whether apps putting fertility, contraception and hormone tracking in women’s hands to “smart” clothing engineered for real women’s bodies (Universal Standard) to a raft of for-women sexual wellness products/platforms.

More wellness travel will be aimed at women’s empowerment: from all-women’s adventure travel to more “painmoons,” wellness retreats providing emotional healing after divorce, breakups, grief, anger, loss of sexual

happiness, etc. There will also be new, more feminist beauty programs, that put a brain back in the beauty equation. But no matter the future political climate, this trend comes down to one fact: the sheer growth in women’s spending power, because economists agree – the global economic future is female. □

Access the 90-page report here: www.globalwellnesssummit.com/2018-global-wellness-trends. The Global Wellness Summit is an invitation-only international gathering that brings together leaders and visionaries to positively shape the future of the \$3.7 trillion global wellness economy. Held in a different location each year, the 12th annual Summit will be held at Technogym Village, Cesena, Italy from October 6-8, 2018.



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6. Heathrow Airport Garden Gate. 7. Pollution Pods by Michael A Pinsky. 8. Black Tomato, Mongolia. 9. Spain SHA Wellness Clinic. 10. The Wing, SoHo. 11. WMN Space.



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About the author: Judy Chapman is the author of four books on spas and the former Editor-in-Chief of Spa Asia magazine. Over the past twenty years, Judy has created award winning spas, wellness retreats, and products for luxury brands in Australia, Bali, Germany, India, Maldives, Middle East, Myanmar, Singapore and New York. With a relentless pursuit of unique and original experiences, her curiosity has led Judy to explore the Himalayas, spending time with Tibetan doctors to onsen bathing in Japan and Ayurvedic retreats in India. She has created over 200 skincare, tea, and candle collections for luxury brands around the world. Judy is also the Editor of ‘The Chapman Guides, a curation of wellness retreats and destinations. www.thechapmanguides.com

place” membership clubs, blends events and mindful exercise and an Ayurvedic restaurant. Co-working giant WeWork is on a global expansion and are now launching other new community and wellness-focused concepts, like WeLive (co-living) and Rise by We (fitness/wellness centers).

In wellness travel, off-the-grid and no WiFi destinations focused on contemplative community and nature will be the most sought after – like gorgeous Eremito’s (Italy) 50-hour silent experiences. And “happy fitness” that returns exercise to childlike play,



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Photo by Mel Blanchard