

MARITIM HOTEL SPA, MAURITIUS

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20th
Architect of
the Year
Awards

'Focus Countries' Architecture
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FLOWER SPA - MARITIM HOTEL

The Flower Spa is the heart of the Maritim Spa located in the Maritim Hotel on the west coast of Mauritius. The spawas created to provide a unique concept for a tropical spa. The concept was based on guests choosing from four or five indigenous flowers which are blended in front of the guests...totally organic and highly effective. This concept resulted in the spa design evolving as a village grouped around

a luscious flower garden. The consultation pavilion became the garden temple where guests come face to face with the flower concept.

The spa consists of a village of buildings including:
Reception centre and management offices
6nos. Single treatment rooms

- Guest changing and private sauna facilities
- Dry treatment pavilion
- Hair salon and Manicure/Bridal suites
- 2nos. Double treatment rooms
- Wet treatment pavilion
- Relaxation lounge behind a waterfall

The spa village is divided into outer and inner sanctuaries. Both are protected by gates. The first gate is always open leading the client into the first sanctuary. The facilities in this part of the spa include the reception, salon, manicure/bridal suites, changing facilities and the wet treatment pavilion. This latter pavilion has views out into the inner sanctuary, with views of the pond and waterfall, but no direct access. Entry to the inner sanctuary is available to clients who have selected their flower treatment and are allowed into this area through the second gate with the consultation pavilion and treatment rooms beyond. A sense of mystery is achieved.

The various buildings that form the spa village each have their own appropriate design with airy treatment spaces. All are grouped around a pond which is fed by a feature waterfall behind which can be found a relaxing lounge. The consultation pavilion is flanked by beds of the specially selected flowers that have been chosen for the various treatments available to the clients.

The materials used through all the buildings of the spa village are consistent with each other, apart from the consultation pavilion, although the building forms change to suite each

activity. All buildings are thatched with sugar cane thatch, yet the treatment rooms are air conditioned rooms with large glazed openings leading onto private gardens, the wet treatment area is a large covered amphitheatre veranda open to the flower garden beyond, and the dry treatment pavilion is a circular structure providing an ideal yoga and stretching pavilion on the edge of the central pond. The relaxation pavilion is cut into a hillside and the curved open facade which steps down into the central pond is the washed by a feature waterfall cascading from the hillside behind the building.

The basic materials of local field stone and sugar cane thatch are natural materials found in Mauritius. The field stone is not quarried but is cut from surface boulders or is brought to site as flat slabs which have been dug from just under the surface of cane fields. These stones are then worked by local craftsmen who can still be found on the island of Mauritius. The sugar cane thatch is a bi-product of the sugar cane industry. The thatch is cut from the top of the sugar cane and is today dipped into a fire retardant treatment before being woven onto the timber roof structures.

One of the exciting features of the spa village is the wet treatment area. This amphitheatre has a panoramic view on the flower garden and houses the relaxation pool, sauna, hammam and wet treatment rooms. The entrance to this facility is on the middle level of the stepped amphitheatre with the pool and pool deck 45cms below and the wet treatment facilities 45cms above. The wet treatment rooms are local field stone clad nautilus shell forms creating private rooms at the back of the



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