

CHIVA-SOM International Health Resort

Wellness, Health and Supreme Luxury - Thai Style

BACKGROUND

Chiva-Som International Health Resort is a world famous 5-star super-luxury spa focusing on serving today's affluent and health-conscious clientele. Rated as one of the supreme spas world-wide by the readers of Conde Nast Traveler in 2017, and winners of many global awards over the years, they have been operating in Hua Hin, Thailand since their original founding by Thai visionary Boonchu Rojanastien in 1995.

WHY THAILAND

While international tourism arrivals grew by 3.9% worldwide in 2016, according to the UN's World Tourism Organization, Thailand's tourist numbers increased by almost 9% in that same time period. It's favorable climate, rich cultural heritage, and reputation for unmatched hospitality have made it the favorite vacation destination for millions of world travelers. According to the Mastercard Global Destinations Cities Index, Bangkok has been the world's top tourism destination city for the past two years in a row. While overall world-wide tourism growth has been robust, the growth of the health and wellness sector has been even more so. According to the Global Wellness Institute, global wellness tourism revenues grew more than twice as fast as overall tourism revenues in the sampled 2013 to 2015 time period, generating total revenues of US\$3.7 trillion. Realizing the importance of the tourism industry to Thailand's economy, the government has continued to promote Thailand as a global tourist destination, while expanding its transportation and tourism infrastructure to support foreign visitors during their stay.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Mr. Krod Rojanastien, the Government Liaison & Public Affairs Director of Chiva-Som, mentioned three key strengths which make him confident Thailand will continue to expand its share of the wellness tourism market. First, Thailand's natural attractions and diverse geographies are critical factors for creating a favorable wellness environment. Secondly, Thailand is renowned for having unique traditional therapies and providing incredible levels of personal service. Finally, the world class standards of Thai wellness staff which provides a high level of confidence for parties interested in participating in a health and wellness program in Thailand. To further strengthen Thailand's competitiveness in wellness services, Chiva-Som wants to form Thai wellness communities in local areas by fostering cooperation between public and private sectors to support service providers and ensure Thailand continues on a sustainable growth path.

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With word of mouth advertising about our impressive services, Chiva-Som is rapidly becoming a global wellness destination.”

*Mr. Krod Rojanastien,
Government Liaison & Public Affairs Director
of Chiva-Som*

SUPPORTING POLICIES FROM THE GOVERNMENT

To continue to strengthen Thailand's position as the medical hub of Asia, the government has made the health and wellness industry a top priority. Spending on healthcare is 14% of the total budget, which accounts for 4.6% of the country's GDP and is the highest among ASEAN countries. In 2016, the government adopted several policies to support additional efforts to make the country "a hub of wellness and medical services," over the following ten years. The plan involves four related activities: Wellness (including preventive treatments), provision of medical services, outputs from academic research, and medically-related products such as vaccines and medical technology. This will result in significant additional strengthening of the sector over the long-term.

SUPPORTING POLICIES FROM THE GOVERNMENT

The Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) offers a wide range of tax and non-tax incentives for projects that support this strategy.

Tax-based incentives include an exemption or reduction of import duties on machinery and raw materials, as well as corporate income tax exemptions of up to eight years. In addition, the entities involved in transportation services for patients, physicians or medical devices and services in Thai traditional medicines will receive a corporate income tax exemption for five years. Non-tax incentives include permission to bring in expatriates, own land and take or remit foreign currency abroad.

Additional information about specific activities relating to the health and wellness industries can be found by clicking [here](#) or contacting the BOI's Investment Promotion Division 4.