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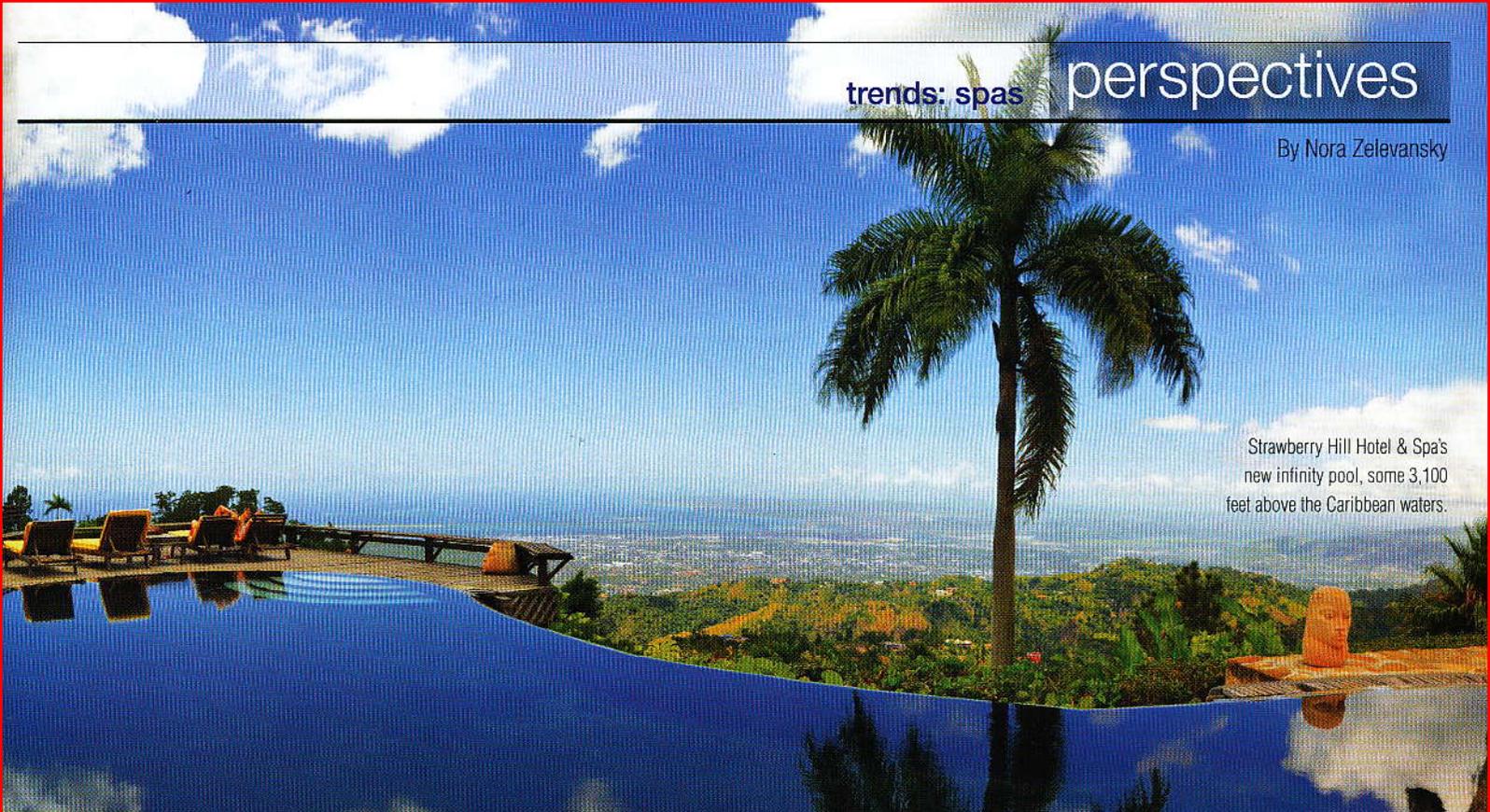
an instinct for innovation

the people issue

Presenter of

HDBoutique
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By Nora Zelevansky



Strawberry Hill Hotel & Spa's new infinity pool, some 3,100 feet above the Caribbean waters.

relaxed fit

As evidenced by the latest crop of extravagant escapes opening at high-end hotels across the globe, a spa's design is as important as the treatments themselves. "We want to represent the quality of the brand and also have the spa design incorporate distinctive elements to highlight the unique sense of place," says Ravi Chandran, senior vice president and managing director of spa operations for the new spa at the Angsana Laguna Phuket resort. Standing out may depend on flashy innovation, but the *au courant* trend from Jamaica to Thailand is largely about projecting local flavor:

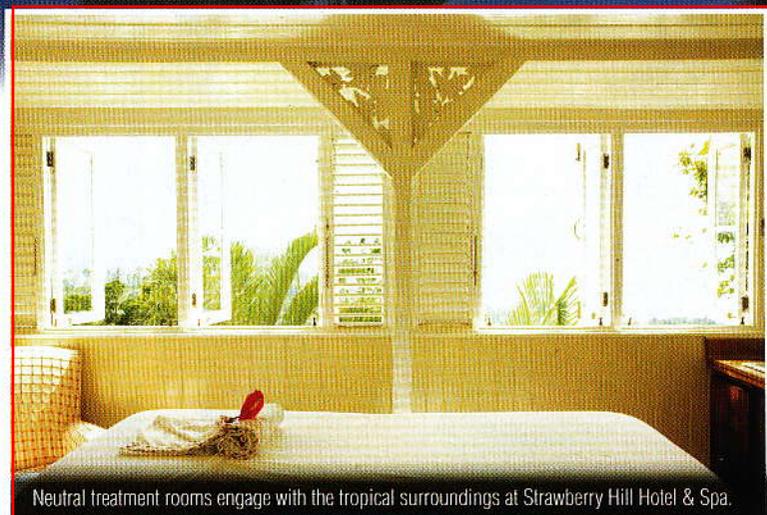
Strawberry Hill Hotel & Spa

The Strawberry Hill Hotel & Spa, tucked into Jamaica's Blue Mountains overlooking the town of Kingston, has a brand new infinity pool set against tropical foliage 3,100 feet above turquoise Caribbean waters.

This wellness destination and former 18th century coffee plantation owned by Chris Blackwell just re-opened in October following a renovation that included a facelift of the spa's interior and cedar shingle roof.

Any updates had to feel seamless, blending with the style of a dozen 19th-century Georgian cottages—built in the Colonial style with louvered picture windows, fretwork designs, and mahogany floors—that serve as guestrooms.

Local Jamaican architect Ann Hodges originally designed the spa building with five indoor/outdoor treatment rooms that take advantage of the tropical setting. The color scheme is neutral: mostly white and light green hues mixed with wood to highlight the verdant surroundings. And, since the spa is based around Avoda's Ayurvedic ideals of balancing the mind, body, and soul, serene gardens were cultivated to boot.



Neutral treatment rooms engage with the tropical surroundings at Strawberry Hill Hotel & Spa.

Angsana Laguna Phuket

Located alongside Phuket Island's Bang Tao Bay in Southern Thailand, new flagship resort Angsana Laguna Phuket, sister brand to wellness-focused hotel group Banyan Tree, is part of a consortium of five hotels within one destination comprised of 600 acres of parkland and expansive beaches.

Opened in December, the spa's theme centers on aromatherapy and a "fusion of East and West" with treatments like a warm bamboo massage. Banyan Tree's design arm Architrave Design & Planning ensured that vibe was maintained throughout the 12 indoor treatment rooms, relaxation lounge, and signature Rain Mist Room.

The Thai locale and culture immediately informed the concept with shades of royal purple and soothing cream found throughout the property. "The treatment rooms have decorative materials [that reference] the