

INTERIOR DESIGN

NUMBER 6

from a new angle



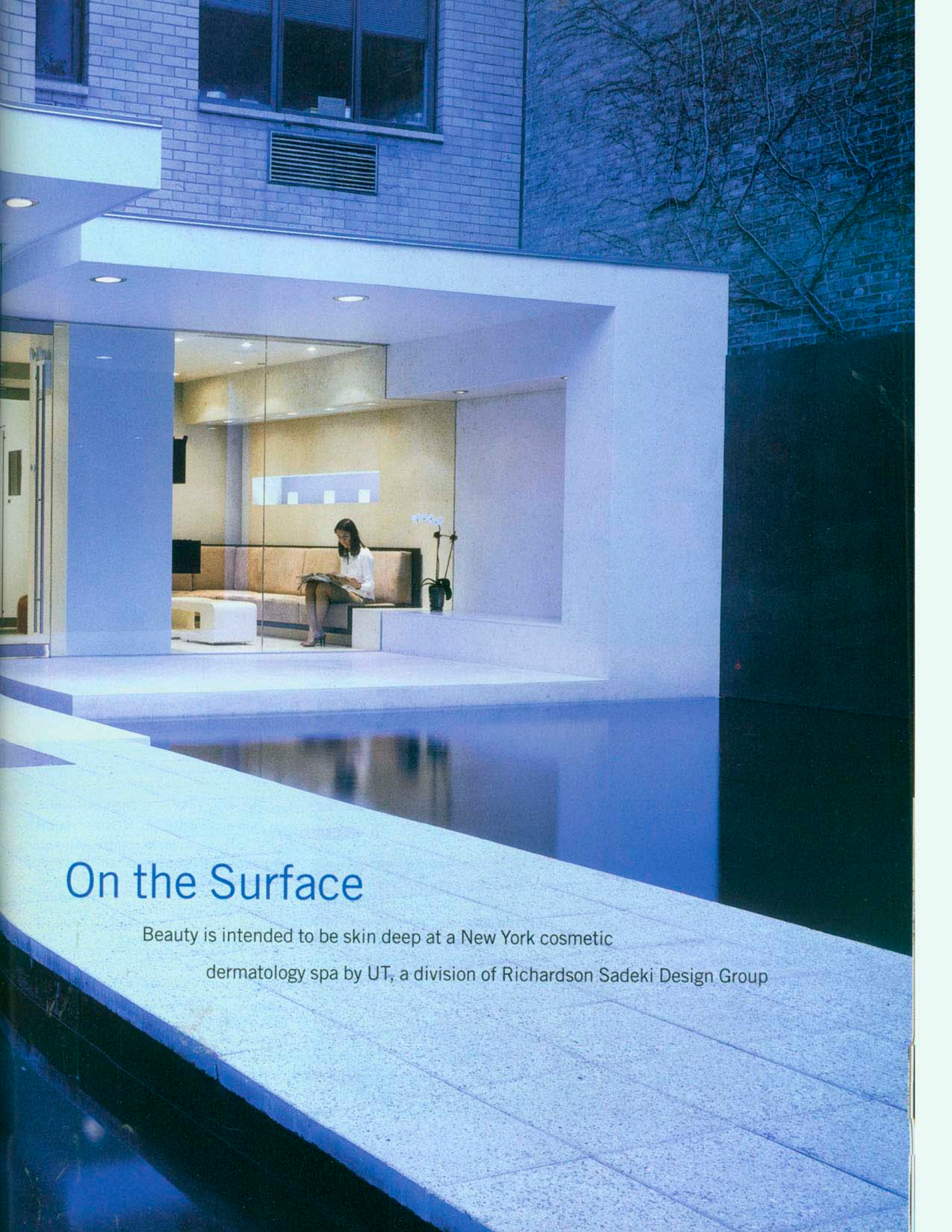
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On the Surface

Beauty is intended to be skin deep at a New York cosmetic dermatology spa by UT, a division of Richardson Sadeki Design Group



A FEELING OF repose materializes immediately at Skinklinic, a cosmetic dermatology spa in New York. Maybe it's the shocking speed with which one seems to have left Fifth Avenue behind. The entry procession begins at nondescript existing metal gates to a garden behind the spa's host building, a beige-brick postwar residential high-rise. The side-street approach does double duty, offering discreet access, for clients who prefer a low profile, while creating a decompression chamber between city and spa. A wall of polished-aluminum panels, 8 feet high, directs clients from the entrance and into a courtyard. Here, pools of water, black slate walls, and the taut geometry of the interlocking limestone facade elements framing the front door come into view—all very Barcelona Pavilion.

At Skinklinic, as at almost any spa, the atmosphere is as important as the treatments on offer. And the design is intended to make the tranquil transition nothing less than transformative. Inside, spare forms, tactile materials, and soothing colors complete the transaction: "Clients have said they come in and exhale," says Skinklinic founder and CEO Kathy Dwyer. The former president of Revlon Consumer Products, named one of the top 100 women in business

Previous spread: Skinklinic, a New York cosmetic dermatology spa designed by UT, is approached via a courtyard. Reflecting pools suggest the rejuvenating powers of the treatments offered inside. Waiting-room options include an outdoor terrace.

Above: The architects designed the reception desk, which is limestone and wenge, and the daybed, upholstered in pony skin with a Corian tabletop.

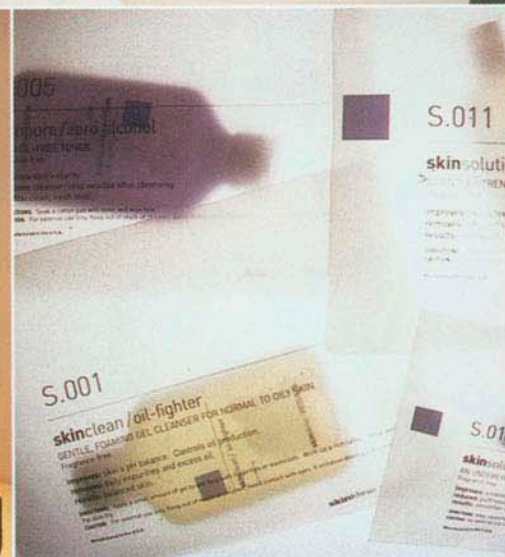
Opposite, clockwise from top: A consultation room walled off with translucent glass. Skinklinic product packaging, a collaboration with Utility Design. The Skinklinic Results line, displayed in a retail gallery next to the reception desk.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN BIBB

by *Fortune* magazine in 1998, she believes it is "important to establish a balance between escape and efficacious, efficient treatments." Dwyer hired Clarissa Richardson and Heidar Sadeki of UT to strike the appropriate chord. Best known for the design of Manhattan's Bliss 57 spa [*Interior Design*, February 2000], UT recently became part of the Richardson Sadeki Design Group. Just as Skinklinic provides a full complement of dermatological treatments, the firm provides wide-ranging design services—it's a kind of one-stop shop in the disciplines of architecture, interiors, graphics, and corporate-identity and product design. Dwyer took full advantage of the firm's offerings. UT was responsible for the entry sequence, the furniture, and the interiors. Beyond the physical environment, every aspect of Skinklinic's visual identity—right down to the corporate logo's gender-neutral purple and the skin-care products' packaging—was also handled by UT in collaboration with Utility Design.

Skinklinic's serious dermatological treatments notwithstanding, its Manhattan flagship wasn't to look like a typical medical facility, explains Sadeki. There were two key requirements for the 8,000-square-foot duplex space, which occupies portions of the high-rise building's ground floor and basement. The first was efficiency, for on-the-go clients, men and women over 30 who are serious about skin care. The second, a modern style, was to reflect the advanced technologies and techniques employed by the staff of registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and dermatologists.

Noting Dwyer's anti-medical-facility mandate, the designers mimicked or reflected the characteristics of skin, relying on materials and finishes heavy on reflectivity, tactility, transparency, and translucency. "We created opacity by layering," says Sadeki, citing →



the reception area's translucent wall panels, patterned like skin cells. (The effect is created by sandwiching structural plastic laminate between two layers of glass.) From Naugahyde to Ultrasuede and beyond, "skin" of varieties both natural and synthetic is stretched across walls. A corridor sheathed in sanded rubber delivers clients from the reception area to the treatment rooms. Floors are poured epoxy. Pony skin and Mongolian lamb cover custom furniture.

From the rejuvenating water of the courtyard reflecting pools to the furry upholstery in the reception area and the soft hues in the treatment rooms, UT created a conceptual framework for the project that, Sadeki points out, combines the "comfort of a girlfriend's loft" with the "immediate results of a car wash or a drive-through church." The theory goes like this: By taking advantage of Skinklinic's treatments, many only 30 minutes long, clients can attain dermatological results in an environment as cool and relaxing as a hip friend's digs.

—Abby Bussel

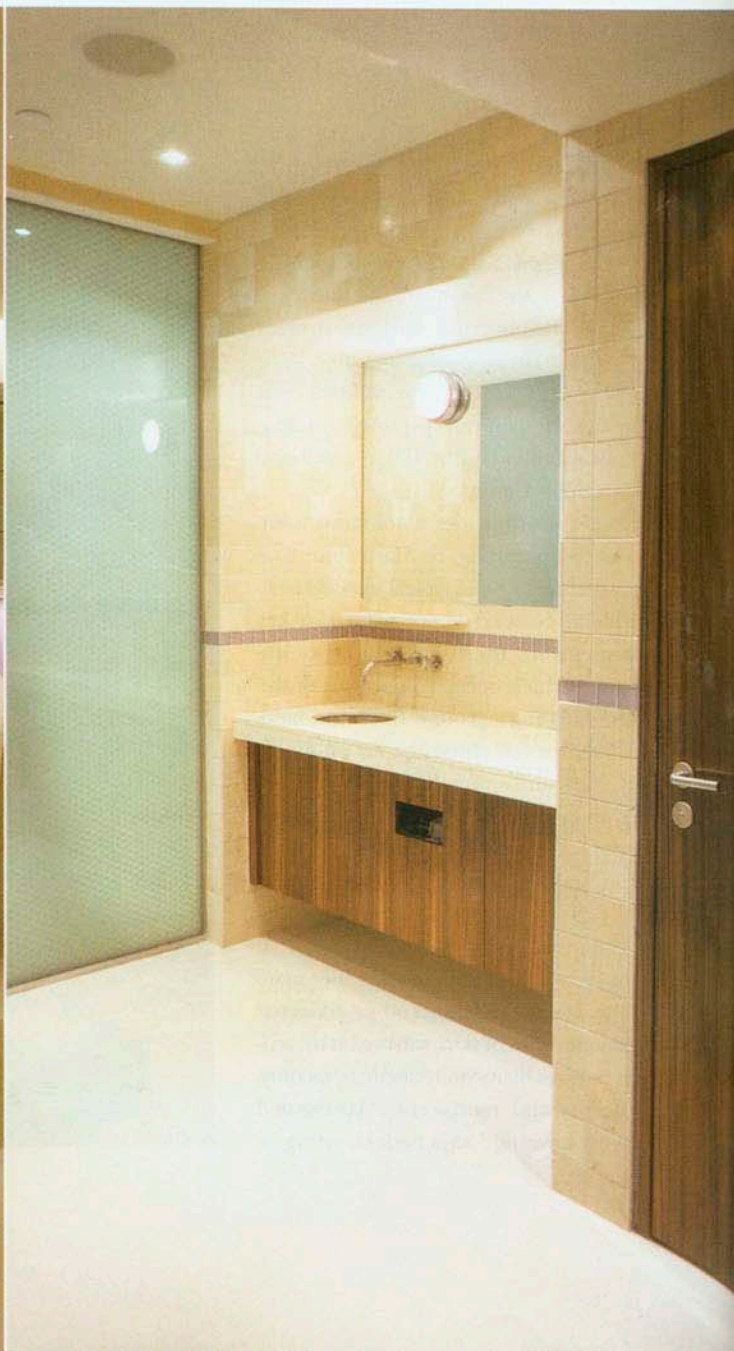
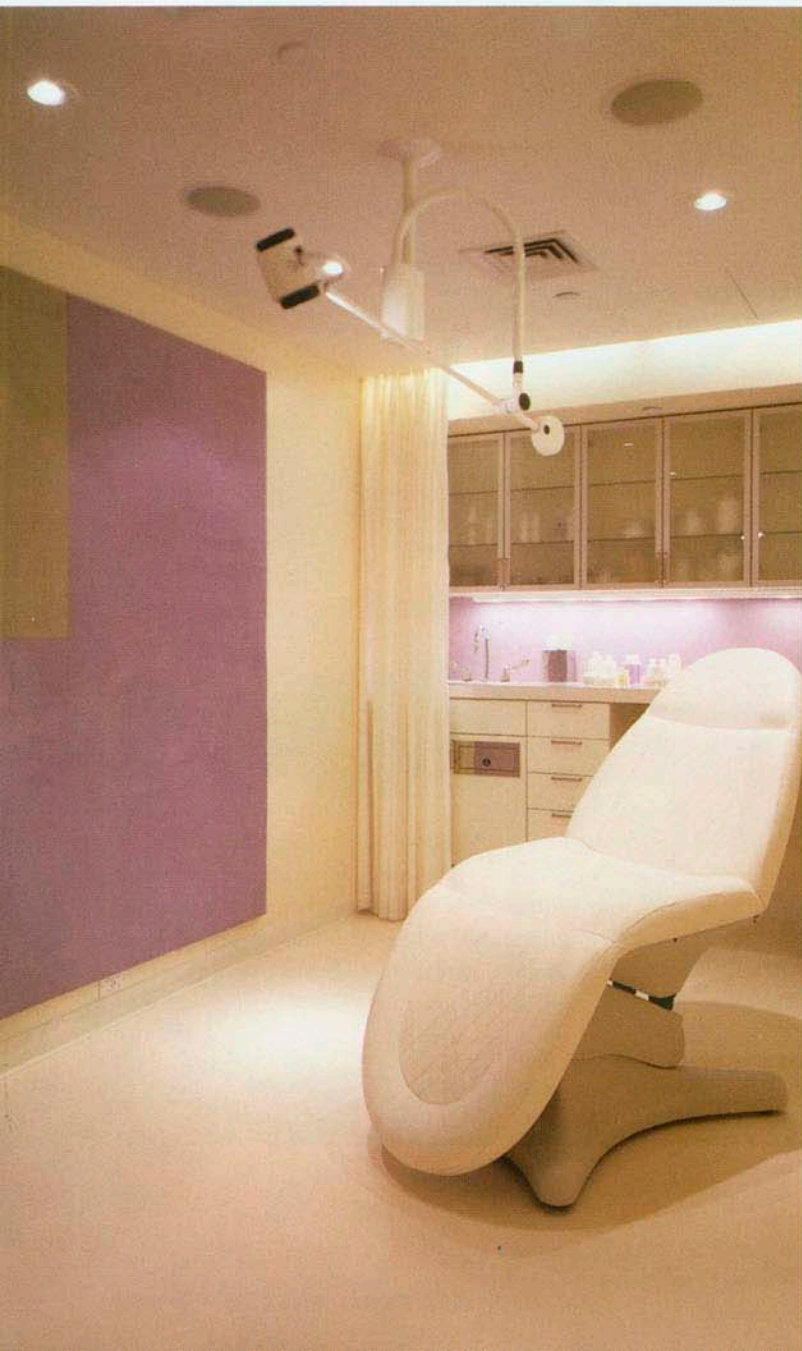
Below, left: Standard equipment includes a treatment chair covered in Naugahyde, wall panels in Ultrasuede, and aluminum-laminate cabinets.

Below, right: Australian walnut and glass tile dominate the ground-level women's bathroom.

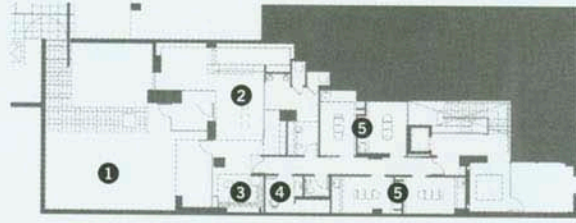
Opposite: A lounge cum presentation room on the lower level. Additional treatment rooms and offices are nearby.

PROJECT TEAM: JOHN SZABO; XIMENA OROZCO; YURI SANIKO; OLIVER PELLE; CECILIA KURIYAMA.

VINYL SIGNAGE: FORREST SIGN CO. DOOR HARDWARE: DORMA. DAYBED: EDELMAN LEATHER (PONY SKIN); DUPONT



(CORIAN TABLETOP). EPOXY, CONCRETE FLOORS: **HOFFMAN FLOORING**. SLIDING DOORS: **DORMA GLAS**. WALL COVERING (CONSULTATION ROOM, TREATMENT ROOM, LOUNGE): **TORAY ULTRASUEDE**. TREATMENT CHAIR: **PIBBS INDUSTRIES**. RUBBERIZED FLOOR: **KENVO FLOORING**. CABINETRY: **IKEA**. COUNTERTOP PLASTIC LAMINATE: **FORMICA**. SINK FITTINGS: **KOHLER**. MEDICAL LIGHT: **DIRECT ACCESS**. RUBBERIZED CURTAIN FABRIC: **Z-PLY CORPORATION**. GLASS TILE (BATHROOM): **ANN SACKS**. FITTINGS: **DORNBRACHT**. DOOR HARDWARE: **D LINE**. LIGHT FIXTURES: **ARTEMIDE**. MILLWORK: **J-CON**. FURNITURE FABRICATION: **BENCHMARK FURNITURE MANUFACTURING**. MECHANICAL ENGINEER: **COSENTINI ASSOCIATES**. STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: **ROBERT SILMAN ENGINEERS**. CONSTRUCTION MANAGER: **DAWN McDANIEL**. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: **CAYLEY BARRETT**.



- 1 COURTYARD
- 2 RECEPTION
- 3 LOUNGE
- 4 MEDICAL ZONE
- 5 TREATMENT ROOMS

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