

# boutique DESIGN

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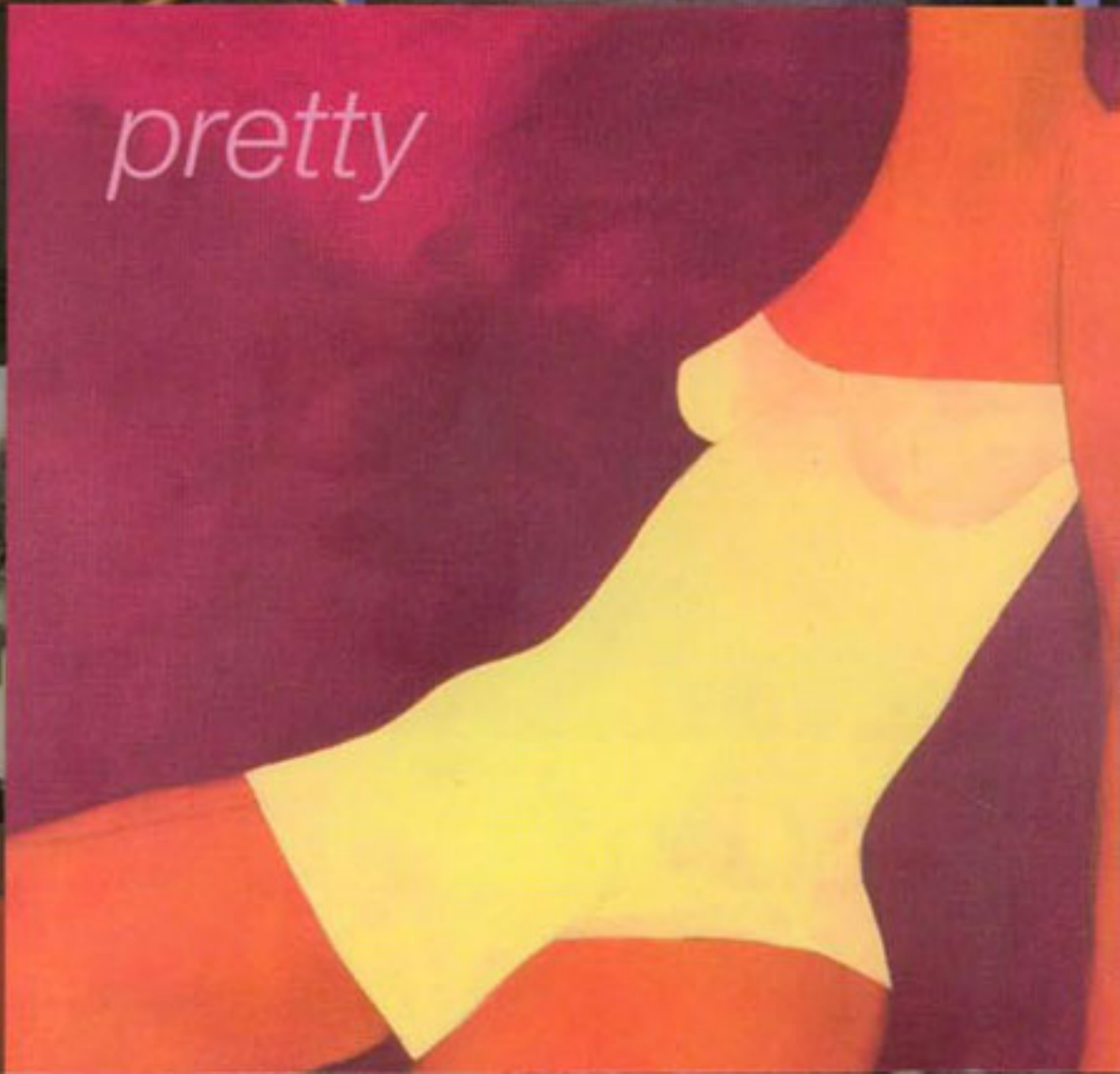
Kor Re-Imagines The Chamberlain

Boutique 18: Big Firms, Fresh Ideas

High-End Suppliers Examine Luxury

Studio Gaia Takes Tao to Vegas

## Denise Corso Designs Seattle's Hotel Max



# Spa Design: The Science of Luxury

'Luxury' as "something inessential but conducive to pleasure and comfort" requires a complex process to be achieved within the design of a Spa.

Luxury is experience; our design philosophy revolves around designing an overall experience as opposed to purely designing a space. The difference between the two lies within an ephemeral substance rather than a physical one. This can be compared to

the process of moving through a spa is thought of as a whole. The whole process traces the client's experience from reception, to the locker room, to their treatment room as opposed to each functioning independently. Therefore, luxury must function at all levels. And ideally, the service within the spa should interfere as little as possible with guest experience. If achieved successfully, spa guests will be unaware of such things as treatment rooms being cleaned out, towels being replaced or the shampoo in the shower being re-filled.

Luxury is style; as a spa user, I can enjoy a modern spa or a classical one. What I cannot enjoy is an imitation of a certain style without any authenticity. If I receive a gift certificate to a classical spa, I appreciate some resemblance to the style it is meant to be. If there must be a lion head at the pool spitting out water, I would like it to be made out of stone rather than fiberglass. If the plan is following classical symmetrical strategies (think Palladio), I will be impressed only if it is followed through.

Luxury is detail; to me it is having everything I might ever think about implemented for me. Just finished your 50-minute massage? How wonderful is it to have slippers ready (and warmed no less) when you get off the treatment table so your feet don't touch the ground. Lockers designed with suffi-

cient hanging space, a built in 'jewelry box' and a clearly defined area for one's shoes in areas large enough to change in comfortably without feeling like you are in an 11th grade locker room. Programs have to be designed around what it takes to service them, not just what is going to 'look' good. Clean towels need to be available (and disposal clearly indicated) in areas such as showers, pools and steam rooms or hooks need to be in the right place to hang up robes so these don't have to be thrown on benches.

Luxury is good product. No, I don't want to go somewhere else to buy my products. Not only do I need/want these products, but they will be a reminder of the luxurious experience that I had.

They elevate the spa experience through specific treatments on the service menu to the products sold in retail. Using better products and amenities in the retail area will result in increased sales and a reinforcement of the overall brand experience.

Spas and the experience of going to a spa are considered luxurious. A luxurious treat to oneself for taking the time out to go, and, if the design / service mix is right an extremely pleasurable experience made better because it is not an essential one. Likewise, boutique hotels can only heighten a guests' experience and brand by adding a spa to their list of luxe amenities.



Clarissa Richardson



Bathhouse, Las Vegas, was designed by Richardson Sadeki

conversation, in which the arrangement of topics, the modes of articulation and timing all come together to make it "rich." The same conversation with different arrangement of topics, articulation and timing will not come across as provocative.

Just as with the syntax of language,