THE SPA WILL SEE YOU NOW

Two local spas closed this year. Bostonians didn't quit wellness—they started asking for data.

By Jaci Conry



WHEN G2O SPA + SALON ANNOUNCED it was shutting down this past summer after more than 30 years of massages and facials, it left a 17,000-square-foot hole in the city's wellness scene. But it wasn't the first temple of relaxation to fall. Earlier this year, Release Well-Being Center's Heritage on the Garden outpost shuttered after less than two years in business.

To the casual observer, the closures might suggest that Boston's wellness boom is losing steam. The reality, however, is more nuanced. As luxe hotel spas—Raffles Boston, Four Seasons One Dalton—cater to those seeking R&R, med spas promise more tangible aesthetic results, and businesses centered on longevity and recovery have emerged, experts say the city's definition of wellness is simply expanding. "A decade ago, wellness was largely fitness-oriented or about pampering," says Darshan Mehta, medical director of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Mass General and education director at the Osher Center for Integrative Health. "Today, it's evolved into a broader, evidence-informed concept focused on resilience, recovery, prevention, and longevity."

The pandemic accelerated that shift, Mehta says, bringing conversations about health into the mainstream at the same time wearable technology and at-home health tracking made wellness more measurable than ever. Consumers can now monitor everything from sleep quality to heart-rate variability, creating a desire not only for more data, but for experts who can help interpret it.

One example of that evolution is Next Health, a membership-based longevity clinic that chose Chestnut Hill for its East Coast flagship. To satisfy the increasing demand for individualized health plans, the facility offers advanced diagnostics, bloodwork, IV therapies, and even hormone optimization. "Patients want personalized guidance based on objective data," says Molly Reilly, a physician associate at Next Health. But that doesn't mean people are ditching their monthly massage. "We don't see people replacing spa days," she notes. "They're adding regular wellness routines to their health regimen."

Another example of the new wellness wave is Remedy Place, a membership-based social club where contrast therapy, infrared saunas, and lymphatic compression are designed to support recovery. Those types of services reflect a broader evolution in how people think about health itself. "People now approach wellness as a practice," Mehta says, "rather than an episodic treat."

ILLUSTRATION BY **MARK MATCHO**