



Wellness from the Heart

~ By Michael Effler and Christine Castigliano
International Design Concepts



Moyo is a Swahili word meaning Heart, Life, Spirit. The newest spa in Calgary, Moyo Spa and Wellness offers a warm, unique African influence.

The village of Lukobe in Tanzania is a second home for Moyo's founder, Dawn Schaller.

A Registered Massage Therapist, Ms. Schaller was drawn to Africa in her early 20s to do voluntary service work, to make a positive impact on the community. Although she found the continent of Africa indeed crying for help, the villages of Tanzania also offered her a gateway to paradise, an experience far from our technology-driven society.

These parts of Africa remain relatively untouched by the outside world. With no concrete jungle, sounds of the hustle and bustle of traffic were replaced by birdsong.

"The place and the people of Tanzania touch my heart in so

many ways," she said. "Despite poverty, drought and lack of the basics, it's a peaceful culture of deep generosity and the feeling of family."

"Sitting in the shade among the Acacia trees, relaxing into a sense of wellness, with a generous caring spirit, that is the feeling I want to recreate with Moyo."

The Journey to Moyo

Specializing in sports injuries, Ms. Schaller worked in a doctors' office in Victoria for several years, and at RnR Wellness in the Fairmount Hotel in Calgary. It was time to develop her own spa.

"Moyo Spa created the possibility of bridging two of my passions: first, to help people, by facilitating healing through massage therapy, and to support grass root initiatives in Tanzania and around the world."



relaxation area with water feature



visual merchandise display

“Moyo is a place with a warm sense of calmness. A place where time stops at the door... an inspiring ambience.”



dual treatment suite with Razul

Ms. Schaller chose International Design Concepts (IDC) as her design team. She visited the Felice Aveda Salon and Spa that IDC created in Vancouver, and was impressed by the facility: the lighting, warm feel, and inventive use of color and shape.

She also felt a kinship, an intuitive understanding, with Michael Effler, principal of IDC.

“When he showed me the design featuring an Acacia tree, I knew it would feel like home.”

The ancient Acacia represents renewal, endurance and pureness. Moyo guests experience all these qualities.

Ms. Schaller asked IDC to review a potential space before signing a lease, but Effler determined that location wasn't a good match for a center of wellness.

The chosen site is 2500 sq. ft., with a double door entry and great curb appeal. The large store frontage provides

excellent street exposure as well as lovely natural light for visual merchandising. Three sides offer space for signage, so Moyo's presence can stand out in the marketplace.

Clients enter an inviting reception area with a striking display of merchandise. Moyo features premium organic skin care products from Derme & Company's Nelly de Vuyst, who provided excellent educational support, makeup by Jane Iredale as well as the Barefoot Venus botanical bath and body care line from British Columbia.

Working in synergy with Ms. Schaller, IDC developed a rich

theme that is embodied throughout the spa. Design elements reflect the tone and texture of the African plains:

recycled materials, stone floors representing the sand colors, zebra print fabrics. Visual merchandising includes handmade items from Tanzania. Niches in the walls provide eye-catching spaces that change with the seasons, and display the earthy cultural influence of Africa.

The full design vision includes a metal tree arching over the hallway to match Moyo's logo, subtle African music with birdsong, and even scent. The intention is to create a feeling of excitement and warmth, especially in the dark, chilly Calgary winters.

Services and Features

Ms. Schaller's expertise with sports and rehabilitative massage enables her to work with several sport teams as well as amateur and professional athletes. Moyo has five multi-purpose treatment rooms, including an ADA accessible room with bath, and areas for both men and women.

A highlight of the spa is the couples' suite, warmed by a stone fireplace. The dual suite boasts a Razul steam bath shower combination, with heat lamps for mud treatments.





mani-pedi room with fireplace, also includes a children's seat

A second steam shower offers a combination monsoon and handheld showerheads, a makeup bar and hair drying area. There's a locker room and break area for staff as well.

Spa treatments include mani-pedi, skin treatments, facials, waxing, and makeup artistry in a niche with natural lighting.

Supporting wellness in many ways

Moyo offers a range of therapeutic massage options provided by Registered Massage Therapists. "We use a technique we call 'touch with intent.' Combining science and art, we focus on the relationship between caring and healing." All assure tension release, circulation enhancement and overall wellness.

Moyo also features pre-natal massage to minimize stress, promote relaxation and help with low back pain, offered by certified therapists with special training. The service menu includes reflexology and hot stone massage as well.

Signature services include Mineral Salt Glow with body polish, scrub and Razul with body butter, a detoxifying Enzymatic Sea Mud Wrap, and Dry Brush Exfoliation.

Upcoming offerings include Pilates, infrared sauna, acupuncture and Thai massage.

The relaxation room has a soothing water feature. Even Moyo's lighting is flexible to create a calming ambience. Ceiling lights feature chromatherapy, changing colors that can be a subtle influence on chakra alignment and healing treatments. In all, Moyo creates an "experience of balance between inner and outer beauty, contentment and wellness."

"All of us at IDC were touched by working with Dawn and her caring spirit. Moyo Spa is all about heart, and giving back."

~ Michael Effler, International Design Concepts



ergonomic cabinet, chromatherapy lighting

To learn more, please visit:



MoyoSpa.ca
403-570-8006



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Hearts and Hands at work in Tanzania and beyond

By Dawn Schaller, MOYO Spa & Wellness

"Karibu" in the language of Tanzania means welcome. The villagers of Tanzania are warm, friendly and so welcoming, yet they lack the basics we often take for granted: clean water, good health, access to education and livelihood.

For 10 years it has been my personal mission to create development projects that benefit these open-hearted people. Highlights of our organization's work include:

- Transformed a vacant plot of land into a thriving orphanage that feeds, houses and educates 30 kids.
- Improved access to clean water and offered basic health services to the villagers
- Raised funds for sustainable community projects and micro-businesses, including a local bus service and brick-building operation, helping the working poor become economically independent.

The Round World Project

2 years ago I travelled to Nepal and India with three women. Each had made annual volunteer trips to Tanzania, serving vital roles at the orphanage, school and community.

On that trip we formed a new concept. The Round World was born of our desire to empower those most in need by sharing handicrafts from the 'round world.'



"The Round World supports sustainable initiatives that offer opportunities for underprivileged women, communities and villages around the world. By sharing their handicrafts we are all helping to improve their standard of living and promote economic independence."

Moyo will display these handicrafts in our retail section, with all profits going to the women who make them.

In addition, Tanzanian women are designing and fabricating unique foot file paddles for our pedicure room. Another group of women will make gift bags, gift cards, stationary and envelopes using recycled paper, flowers and seeds.

Moyo is also committed to helping reforestation efforts around the world. **For each service completed at Moyo Spa, we will plant 3 trees in Africa and elsewhere.**

"My work in Tanzania is part of a global dialogue that creates awareness and change for the voices who are not so fortunate."