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## Chopra adds spiritual twist to new spa

Yoga, meditation, massage to be featured at wellness center in Westminster

By Janet Forgive, Rocky Mountain News  
October 13, 2005

Friends old and new lined the table at the Westin Westminster on Thursday morning, sipping Chopra Chai Bliss Shakes with their zucchini pecan bread.

The group dined on recipes from the cookbook of prolific author Deepak Chopra, as did the author himself, who was in town to unveil his Chopra Center's Colorado expansion.

"(Colorado) is very attractive to us in terms of the number of people interested in our ways of thinking," he said.

Chopra will lend his recipes as well as his name to a new 17,000-square-foot spa and wellness center at the Westin Westminster, part of a \$40 million, 60-unit condominium project attached to the hotel.

Before the center opens in 2007, Chopra will offer at least two programs at the Westin to acquaint area residents and interested visitors with the center's services, he said.

Chopra has made his fortune and fame espousing a lifestyle based on Ayurvedic medicine. Billed as an ancient Indian practice, it places emphasis on healing body, mind and spirit.

In 1995, Chopra and partner David Simon opened the Chopra Center at the La Costa Resort in Carlsbad, Calif.

The center's practices complement traditional Western medicine and include massage, herbal oils, yoga and meditation. Westin will operate the spa in Westminster under a licensing agreement with the Chopra Center, said hotel general manager Scott Weber.



Dennis Schroeder ©  
News

David Simon, left, and Deepak Chopra chat Thursday after an event at the Westin Westminster unveiling the Chopra Center's expansion in Colorado. Chopra, a prolific author who espouses a lifestyle based on Ayurvedic medicine, is lending his name to a new spa and wellness center at the Westin Westminster. He and Simon, who are both medical doctors, previously opened a Chopra Center in Carlsbad, Calif., in

Chopra and Simon have not invested cash in the project but are working alongside Westin to ensure that the new center adheres to their standards, the pair said.

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About 25 instructors trained in Chopra's meditation and yoga methods live in the Denver area, and some will likely join the staff, Weber said.

Trained as an endocrinologist, Chopra is licensed to practice medicine in California, as is Simon, a neurologist before partnering with Chopra.

Simon said he sees patients almost daily at the Chopra Center, practicing what he calls "the best medicine."

In addition to offering traditional medical tests and treatments, he said, doctors at the center also focus on listening to the patient and treating the mind and spirit along with the body.

It's quite likely the 10,000 square feet of retail space planned for the Westminster development will be taken by a physician, quite possibly one certified by the Chopra Center, Weber said.

"We're in discussions with a number of physicians and surgeons," he said.

The spa is one part of an ongoing expansion plan. On Nov. 1, Chopra and Simon will debut a 9,000-square-foot center at the Dream Hotel in New York's theater district.

The partners said they also have plans to expand abroad by developing a 17-acre oceanfront property in Mexico and a former hunting lodge of King Henry VIII in rural England.

The new properties will adhere to principles developed by Chopra and Simon at the Chopra Center in Carlsbad, but each also will have its own flavor, they said.

"We've been keeping close to home for a long time," Chopra said. "We're excited with this next phase, bringing it to a wider audience."

Well-known fans of Chopra include former President Bill Clinton and Oprah Winfrey. Along the way, however, he also has garnered detractors.

Criticism of Chopra's theories and methods and the empire he has built doesn't seem to concern him much.

"We never had a plan," he said. "We never had an ambition. We've just sung our own song, in a sense, not caring who listened."

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