



### Mud treatment becoming more popular

„As an alternative to medications, mud treatment is again becoming a popular form of natural healing,” says the manager of the spa hotel. Until now, mud has mainly been used in treatment of chronic skin and musculoskeletal problems, rheumatism and muscle stress. It is effective also for healing back pain, a common problem for office staff.

Between 10 and 15 customers receive mud treatment every day in Laine. Senior customers are limited to one mud treatment every few days because it causes fatigue.

„In the last ten months we have used 85 tons of mud, while a year earlier we only used 63 tons,” says the manager. The number of procedures undertaken in 2011 was 2,400 which is about 300 procedures more than in 2010.

In earlier times, mud was actively used for treating gynaecological problems. And also now the spa receives letters from women who have become pregnant after mud therapy and given birth to healthy babies. „It’s wonderful,” says Irene Väli.

At the end of this year, the competence centre set up at the Tartu University’s Haapsalu College will start scientific research of mud therapy in its new laboratory. Scientists are working intensively to find ways to use mud for cosmetic procedures.

### Like in mother’s womb

Once the warm liquid mud fully surrounds the naked customer, he or she is covered with plastic and blankets like a baby and left for half an hour to enjoy the treatment. Mud can also be used for

ing agents will remain to have an effect. The customer who has just had a mud treatment will feel relaxed and well.

Physician Marje Tamm who has worked in Haapsalu’s mud treatment resorts for more than 8 years says that mud is a natural product and believes that people with health problems should seek a closer contact with nature. „Mud therapy is like returning to mother’s womb – a warm, safe and liquid environment,” she laughs.

„Mud has the same amino acids as the human cell, but the effect on people is individual,” says doctor Tamm who recommends mud therapy to her customers whenever possible. „This is an ancient therapy treatment against rheumatism. Mud is very good also for skin, for instance in case of psoriasis.”

During the Soviet time, Tallinn Pharmaceutical Company started to manufacture Humisol, a distillation product from the Haapsalu mud that was used in injections. In 1973, more than 10 million ampoules of Humisol were used all over the Soviet Union.

### New research centre for therapeutic mud

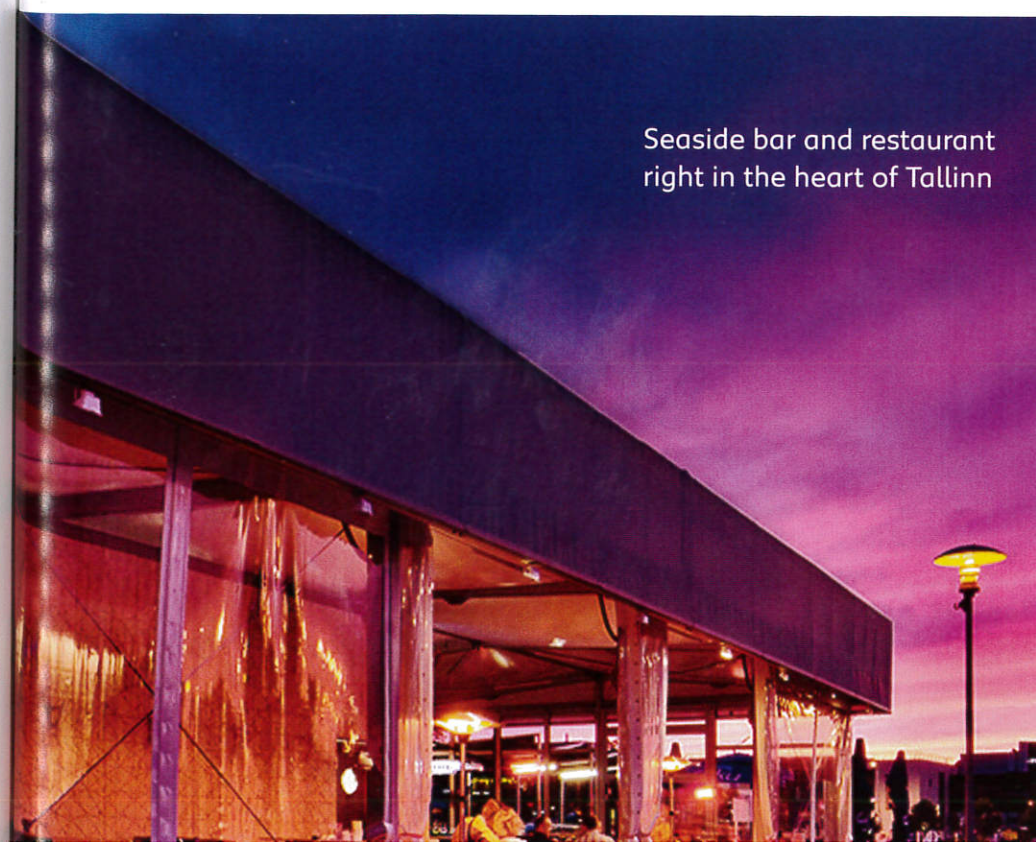
A competence centre for health promotion and rehabilitation will be completed and fully staffed by end of 2012. It will cost 3.75 million euros and is mainly funded by Enterprise Estonia, with a 15-percent co-financing from the Tallinn university, Haapsalu neurological rehabilitation centre and the town of Haapsalu.

It may take a few years before research is developed into new products and services. The first step is to install a rehabilitation therapy laboratory in the medical rehabilitation hospital, as well as an R&D and design laboratory for mud products and services.

As for staff, preliminary contracts have been made with 30 people from both Estonia and abroad, half of them with a PhD. The list of partners of the competence centre includes various research and development agencies and businesses. Of local enterprises, the project includes Fra Mare Spa and Laine Spa.

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