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The Pinnacle of Dentistry Redefines the Patient-Centered Practice

Sam Kirk, D.M.D., M.A.G.D., has created a truly warm, relaxing, and unique dental office where no expense has been spared to pamper patients and treat them with such gracious and attentive care that fear and anxiety fade away and patients are reluctant to leave.

It really has to be seen to be believed.

The Pinnacle of Dentistry in Franklin is a state-of-the-art dental practice that has taken the concept of "spa dentistry" to an unprecedented level, creating perhaps the most well-thought-out, most patient-oriented dental experience in the entire country.

The one-story building resembles an upscale spa resort. The entrance is marked by two ten-foot-high solid mahogany doors. Beyond that, patients enter a hallway appointed with water fountains and decorative features, all contained beneath a 16-foot ceiling. As patients approach the greeter's desk, the greeter welcomes them, introduces herself, takes their paperwork or provides them with forms to complete, and offers them beverages and a bite to eat, or anything else to make them feel at home. She also gives patients a tour of the office to familiarize them with the abundance of amenities. No money or information related to the patient's appointment or treatment is exchanged.

The hallway leads seamlessly to a waiting area with a 14-foot ceiling and stylish yet homey touches, including a fireplace and comfortable furniture, and natural tones and materials (mostly stone, glass, and wood) are predominant throughout the office. Patients are welcome to make use of two Internet stations to check their email or print out information. The office is equipped with WiFi and there is a private area where patients can take their laptops to work. Several windows admit an abundance of natural light throughout the office, contributing to the bright, open feeling.

"It's very relaxing," says Sam Kirk, D.M.D., M.A.G.D., a general/wellness dentist who has broadened his expertise into cosmetic restoration, prosthodontics, endodontics, periodontics, and orthodontics. He conceived this amazing and unique office design. "I've actually had patients who came in and sat down and fell sound asleep in their chair before we could even get them in for their appointment," he recalls with a chuckle.

PAMPERED PATIENTS

Patients are escorted from the waiting area to one of ten spacious treatment areas, each with a 12-foot ceiling and windows overlooking a lush garden area. Paraffin wax hand treatments are available to relax patients during treatment.

Dr. Kirk wanted to create an office that would focus on overall wellness, not just dental wellness, so the staff includes a nutritionist who works with patients, and a massage therapist who cares for patients in the office's massage room.

The office also features a photography studio and a cosmetology room with a wash sink so patients can have their hair and makeup perfected and then take very professional photos at the end of their makeovers.

When a patient's appointment is completed, he or she is escorted to one of three payment stations and seated at a granite desk where another staff member greets the patient and asks if everything went smoothly and satisfactorily with their appointment and inquires about anything else they can do for the patient. "We are very, very, *very* customer-service-oriented because I believe that's the level of service we need to provide for patients to make it a truly different experience," states Dr. Kirk.

A DREAM REALIZED

The Pinnacle of Dentistry's warm, inviting, luxurious, patient-focused atmosphere is the realization of Dr. Kirk's decades-long dream. "After I'd been in practice for a while, I realized what I wanted for my patients because I knew what they were looking for and the issues they had with dental treatment. I wanted to address those things and come up with a different practice concept."

A few years ago, the time to make the dream a reality arrived. Dr. Kirk took on Alex Vine, D.M.D., first as an associate, and later as a partner. With someone to share the responsibilities of running the practice, Dr. Kirk was then positioned to undertake the creation of his new office.

Keeping in mind that he spends most of his days in a treatment room, Dr. Kirk wanted to design the ideal one. He worked with Adec, the premier dental equipment manufacturer in the United States, to choose the equipment for the treatment room then worked with Benco Dental Supply to design ten such rooms. The rest of the office was designed around that clinical area. Once he had the size of the office, he designed the building around it.

Watson Construction erected the office and when that was completed, Dr. Kirk brought in an interior designer, Janet Pinkry, owner of Pinkry Interiors, to help him with the finishing touches. "She was phenomenal. She had really, really good concepts and managed the subcontractors so well."

The final step was to create a web presence that accurately reflected the office's visual impact and welcoming feel. The Pinnacle of Dentistry's website was designed by Thomas Norman at Norman Web Studio. "He did a great job," says Dr. Kirk, "and Dr. Vine worked closely with him to ensure that the website reflects our practice well. Dr. Vine handles a lot of the technology in the office and is intimately involved not just with the website but also with the computer system and with the marketing aspects of the practice."

The Pinnacle of Dentistry opened its doors about 18 months ago after a tremendous amount of planning and a hefty financial investment. Throughout the process, though, Dr. Kirk remained focused on achieving his vision without compromise. "When you treat people the best that you can and provide them with the best treatments possible, the money just comes. I think that's true in any business.

"What gives me the most pleasure is to see the patients smile and to hear them say, 'Gosh, I had such a great experience here!' or to hear them ask, 'How come I just feel like staying here and I don't want to leave?' I really enjoy seeing my staff come in every day and love what they're doing, get along well with one another, and work as a team to help the patients. That's the reward right there. It's just great to come to work in the morning and have all that."

*The Pinnacle of Dentistry is located at 7714 Green Slope Lane, Franklin, Maine
78443. Contact the office at (555) 792-0022. For more information, visit
www.Website.com.*

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