Professor Ian Bradley delves into the colourful and racy history of Europe's leading watering places which established themselves on the basis of their medical reputation but became the first modern holiday resorts and came to attract the rich and famous on the basis of their pleasures and distractions. Britain led the way in the development of spa therapies and attractions but as its population followed monarchs in preferring the more bracing climes of the seaside to inland watering places, the initiative passed to Continental Europe where the therapeutic benefits of spa cures and hydrotherapy continue to be championed by the medical profession, supported by Government and social security payments. Ian Bradley has been fascinated by the medical claims, culture and ambience of spas throughout his life. In this light-hearted talk, based on his newly published book *Health Hedonism and Hypochondria - The Hidden History of Spas,*he covers medical aspects, literary references and personal anecdotes.

Ian Bradley is Emeritus Professor of Cultural and Spiritual History at the University of St Andrews. He has had a fascination with spas from a medical, cultural and social perspective for most of his life - he attributes its origin to growing up near Tunbridge Wells in Kent.