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HAWAII *hospitality*

LODGING & FOODSERVICE | SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

TOURISM CONSTRUCTION

Finding & Keeping
Productive
Employees

Yoga *for* Travelers

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(Top) Weekly yoga classes are offered at the Ocean View Terrace at the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park. (Above) Yoga classes are a popular activity at the Kalani Honua Retreat Center.

BY MEREDITH ENOS

When friends took her to Vino & Vinyasa, the Moana Surfrider, A Westin Resort & Spa's monthly yoga session, Kaira Resch didn't know what to expect. "I was told it was going to be yoga on the beach; I thought it was going to be some small, informal thing on the sand, surrounded by tourists."

Instead, Resch, a Honolulu-based project manager, was pleasantly surprised. "They really make it an event. It's on the lawn, by the beach. It's a relaxing experience."

Launched in March 2014, Vino & Vinyasa is part of the Sheraton's "global initiative dedicated to enhancing the well-being of travelers around the world and locals in our very own community," says Shannon McAnealey, the Moana Surfrider's Spa Sales Manager.

The Surfrider is not alone; many properties across the state now see yoga as less of an exotic activity, and more of a way to connect to a lifestyle that both visitors and locals can enjoy, in ways that showcase their properties. For example, the newly renovated Kauai Shores offers complimentary morning yoga on



Shannon McAnealey



Kaira Resch

its oceanside lawn.

Other properties, like The Modern Honolulu, have more elaborate offerings. In addition to thrice-weekly yoga classes around its Sunset Pool, which is free for guests and \$15 for non-guests—comparable to the price of a class at a local yoga studio—and a monthly "Glow Flow Yoga," with body paint, black lights and a deejay spinning music.

Kalani Honua Retreat Center, a "nonprofit educational retreat center and eco-community" on the "Yoga Coast" of Puna on the Big Island, has seen a rise in interest in yoga and other wellness practices since opening in 1975. The center currently teaches more than 50 classes per week in more than 10 styles of yoga, and over 100 residential workshops annually.

"Most recently, we have experienced tremendous growth in the demand for educational retreats such as Yoga Teacher Trainings as well as offerings in meditation, sound healing, dance and wellness-oriented events," says Alexandra Slous, marketing and communications director.

Kalani is hosting its fourth annual Hawaii Yoga Festival on Oct. 11-6.

"The Puna District and Hawaiian Islands have a wealth of resources and wisdom to share with regard to yoga and wellness practice," Slous says. "The Hawaii Yoga Festival aims to bring our community together for a celebration of life and the collective pursuit of well-being. We hope this festival helps position the Puna District as a 'must-visit' for yogis and spiritual seekers because of its rugged natural beauty, spectacular local sites and energetic power."

Yoga and meditation enthusiasts seeking a peaceful and inspiring setting are also attracted to the Ocean View Terrace at the renowned cemetery on the windward side of Oahu—the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park. The park offers three free and/or donation-based yoga and meditation sessions a week. Ocean View Terrace, built in June 2013, includes a heart-shaped garden. The park, with views of the Koolau Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, features a stream and a cascading waterfall.

At the Moana Surfrider, it's not just about yoga: after class, attendees can have a glass of organic wine, some *pupu* and peruse local craft and clothing vendors.

"They are not in a rush to get everyone out the door, and I appreciate that," Resch says. "You can do yoga with people around the world, and we always have someone new hang out with us at the tables afterward."

"I've been there when there are about 100 people, but it's very low-key, very easy, very intimate," she adds. "There is music, but sometimes the teachers turn it off and instruct us to listen to the waves, watch the sunset. It's such a perfect setting."



Alexandra Slous