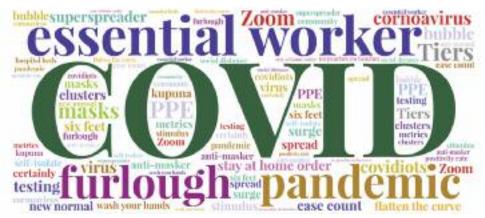
KEEPING THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY INFORMED SINCE 1998



Hawaii thrives and survives on tourism. Before the coronavirus pandemic shook the world to its core in March, the travel industry was on track to reach another record-breaking year as travel continued its meteoric rise. Visitors to Hawaii reached an all-time in 2019 with more than 10.4 million visitors who generated more than \$2 billion in state tax revenue and supported over 216,000 jobs statewide. Then COVID-19 changed everything and brought our travel industry – and the world – to its knees.

The pandemic affected everyone differently, but in many ways, it brought everyone together. No matter what your particular circumstances were, we were all in the same boat. There was no shame if you were unemployed. Our economic engine had ceased to exist, and several hundred thousand people lost their jobs, at least temporarily. Reports showed more than 1 in 3 people had lost their job due to COVID-19 by the middle of April.



Photo: David Ambrose retired Aulani castmember

Others found themselves working harder than ever before, often from their kitchen table while their children raced around, home from school. Waikiki was deserted. Shops, restaurants, and hotels were closed, and beaches and roads empty. But Hawaii has always been a special place, and despite the multitudes of challenges the pandemic brought to our shores, our resilience shined through.

Hawaii has been hit hard, and there's no telling how long it will take to bounce back, but the rebuilding has already begun. Day by day, this industry rises to the challenge, and together there isn't anything we can't accomplish. The strength and sense of community has never been stronger, and the Aloha Spirit continues to shine brightly. As my father used to say....this too, shall pass.



Photo: Jeff Davis

To illustrate the challenges and the victories, we decided no one could tell the story better than those of you that lived it. We asked many of you to submit your experiences, your photos, and your thoughts. Their stories follow. — Pan

Continued on page 7.



A year ago, I was getting ready to send the April issue to press, frantically making changes at the 11th hour as things started sliding down the perilous slope that was to become our everyday life for months on end. I never thought that would be the last issue I put out for an entire year! I resigned myself that I would skip the May issue, but I had to come back in June, right? Wrong. By the time June came around, I had resigned myself to the fact that I simply had to sit back and wait until things got better, just like most of you. In early October, front desk workers from one of the properties gearing up to open reached out. They asked if I could help them figure out what was actually open as guests kept reaching out to them for direction about their upcoming trip, and their concierge department had not yet returned. Thus began the weekly emailed What's Open Update. I thought I could transition from that to this at the beginning of the year, but there were still so many changes happening that a monthly did not make sense. Six months later, that email is still going out every Monday, but I am happy to report things have stabilized enough to bring back this format as well. The Oahu Concierge is back, and we are looking forward to continuing to navigate this challenge together.

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Publisher's Letter STRUNGER

So, that just happened. Holy Cow, who would've thought something could bring the islands to a grinding halt the way this virus did. It was mind-boggling when the Governor issued a stay-athome order and a mandatory quarantine for all arrivals. None of us had ever seen anything like this before. Lines of cars snaked around the stadium or other locations for hours waiting for food distribution by the Hawaii Food Bank, HLTA, or other charitable outlets while people were struggling to make ends meet, waiting for unemployment to catch up with all the applications. It was terrifying. But Hawaii is resilient, its people full of aloha, and everyone worked together to find a way around this problem the best they could. Some properties forged forward, staying open during the most trying of times, dealing with quarantine breakers and positive cases; others turned lemons into lemonade and decided to get a jump start on renovation projects planned for the future, or worked to refresh their concept taking advantage of the fact they were closed anyway. Restaurants were hit hard, but many adapted quickly to the take-out format, and some actually thrived, but sadly others did not survive. Bars were forced to close, and although they were finally allowed to reopen a few weeks ago, it was simply too late for some. Even worse, there are still companies out there that have not reopened. The economic toll has been staggering, and sadly not everyone made it through. We lost so very many beloved companies. And furloughs. So many furloughs. It rocked my world that I had to cease publication, but it's pretty hard to put out a publication for hotel employees when the majority of hotels were closed, and most of my readers were furloughed. Sadly, many are still furloughed, but I am hopeful that if we continue to work together, we will all come out of this on the other side. Our community impressed me with its perseverance, ingenuity, and integrity, and I know we will thrive if we continue to work together. This hospitality industry of ours on Oahu is a force to be reckoned with when we work together. We're almost there folks, stay strong. We got this!



Where to start? There have been ohso-many changes in the past year; it's impossible to list them all, so we will simply start with some of the ones we've heard about in 2021. What better way to start than announcing that Ha'aheo Zablan,



our 2012 Concierge of the Year, was named General Manager of the recently opened Kaimana Beach Hotel. Ha'aheo began his hospitality industry career as a concierge at

The Kahala Ha'aheo Zablan Hotel, before moving to the Aulani, where he our top honor, before comtinuing to work his way up through multiple departments before heading off to the Waikiki Beach Marriott as the Director of Front Office before clinching this latest role. Congratulations! • Outrigger Hospitality Group has made a lot of leadership announcements these past few months. They started off the year by announcing Markus Krebs as the General Manager of the soon to re-opened

Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. Markus has more than three decades of experience in the hospitality industry and has been with KSL resorts for the past four years. Carly Clement was promoted



Markus Krebs

to General Manager at *Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort*. She has held the resort manager position at the property since 2019. Chryssaldo Thomas was promoted to Area General Manager at the *OHANA Waikiki East* from his previous position as a resort manager at the Outrigger Reef. Edwin Torres was promoted to General Manager at the *Waikiki Beachcomber by*

Outrigger. He was previously the resort manager there. Lastly, So'o Tana was promoted to Hotel Manager of the Waikiki Malia by Outrigger from the Front Office Manager role he had held. Congrats!!



So'o Tana

Introducing TABLE V at TBD

When TBD first opened in 2019, it was described as an extended pop-up concept with plans to close it 18 months later. Located on the 2nd floor of The Lotus Honolulu, it put beloved Chef Vikram Garg back in the kitchen to do what he does best. After he stepped down from the Halekulani in 2016, Garq joined MacNaughton to lead its Hospitality Division and oversee all of its restaurant, retail, and residential concept creation, design, and guest experiences. The Lotus is one of their properties, and this was a great opportunity to pair the best of both worlds until MacNaughton moved forward with the plans it had for the location. But, given the restaurant's tremendous success, those former

plans have been scrapped, and diners can rejoice that a long-term residency has now been confirmed.

The restaurant has been officially rebranded as *TBD...by Vikram Garg*, offering French classic cuisine curated with culture. The restaurant remained open throughout the pandemic, offering to-go options that sold out nightly. Garg also went so far as to install Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization Technology, the only restaurant in Hawaii to offer this

added protection. Garg has also unveiled TABLE V, his signature bespoke VIP culinary experience, formerly known as Table One, with custom menus that curate each dish with culture. Guests are invited to collaborate in an advance questionnaire to inspire the chef's design of the minimum five-course menu, starting at \$225 per quest. TABLE V is limited to one seating per evening with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 10 quests. TABLE V is an extension of Chef Gara's commitment to the community. with 10% of each dinner donated to a cause of the Chef and/or the guests choosing. For more information, call 791-5164 or visit tbdhawaii.com.



A first look at Table V at TBD...by Vikram Garg, a new curated culinary experience. Image by Ric Noyle Photography

EXTR News flash XTRA

PLEASE HELP US UPDATE YOUR MAILING LIST

Needless to say, this past year took a toll on most everyone's employment status and by default - this mailing list. Did your property get magazines this issue for people that are no longer with you? I have been emailing and calling for months, but there are still a heck of a lot more of you than me, and some people may have come back since I reached out, so please take a moment to send any changes I may have missed via email.

COMING SOON: HAWAII CINEMATTRACTIONS

The exciting world of 4DFX is touching down in Waikiki. Located in the former CabaRAE location at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, Hawaii CinemAttractions has opened a state-of-the-art motion and sensory effects cinema experience. Guests will experience special effects through motion-enabled chairs, scents vibration, water, wind, and more that enhances the visuals on-screen. The venue will offer a virtual reality lounge and video arcade that includes an array of seated VR experiences and classic retro arcade games. 4dfxhawaii.com.

WELLNESS WITH RAMONA

Ramona Sidlo, former BAMP & The Republik marketing director, and the gal behind getting all those concert tickets in your hands has launched a wellness platform that focuses on healing through self-love. Working with Ramona is about getting a partner to guide and support you on your journey towards healing, revitalizing, and balance. Offering energy & chakra balancing treatments, astrology readings, and meditation classes. Treatments can be curated for groups individuals, and visitors. For info go to: ramonasidlo.com/self-love-advocacy.

KAKA'AKO FARMERS MARKET MAUKA & MAKAI

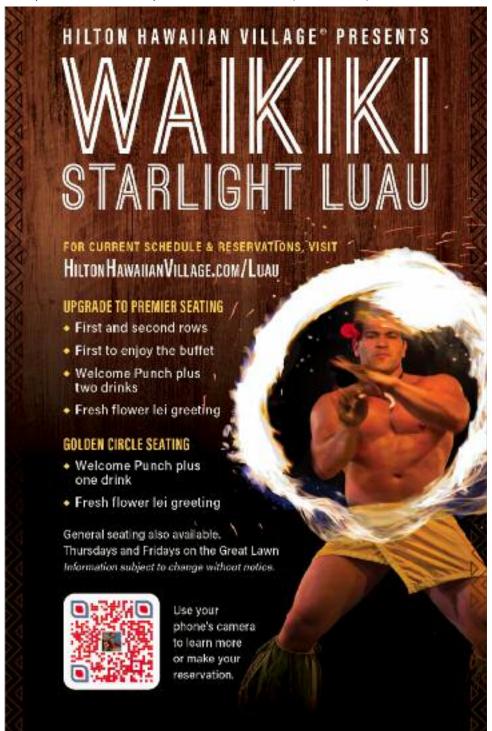
The Saturday Kaka'ako Market grew so much this past year, they had to move from their Ward Warehouse to the two lots across the street at 210 Ward & 919 Ala Moana. Throughout the pandemic the FarmLovers Markets has provided a home for 200+ small local businesses allowing them to keep their doors open. There are now over 110 booths filled with the best ingredients Oahu has to offer. 10 a.m. -12 p.m. farmloversmarkets.com

EXPEDIA LEFT THE ISLANDS BLUE HAWAIIAN FLEW IN

Late last year, Expedia announced it was closing its desks across the islands at the end of January, leaving hotels unsure who would handle their concierge needs. Enter Blue Hawaiian Activities, a brandnew activity concierge company created through a partnership between Blue Hawaiian Helicopters and local Expedia management out of necessity to fill the void being left. The new company did hire quite a few former Expedia staffers.

PARADISE CRUISES BRINGS BACK THEIR ENTITIES IN APRIL

Paradise Cruises is opening back up this month and reports that Rock A Hula will be introducing a new Waikiki Luau on April 2nd that will take place on Wednesdays and Fridays. The Star of Honolulu will bring back their Three Star Sunset Dinner and Show on Saturdays beginning April 24th. Dolphin Star is introducing a Waikiki Sunset BBQ & Cocktail Cruise Tuesdays and Saturdays as of April 3. Info at paradisecruises.com.



Let's be Together...

DINING, ENTERTAINMENT, PAU HANA, EAT, DRINK, BE MERRY, HAPPY HOUR

DII			- 41	AK DE MILIGIE	
MONDAY		Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Hawaiian	923-7311	Solo Contemporary Guitarist	
Barefoot Beach Café at Queen's Bea	och 924-2233	Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Matt Krahula (or others) 6-9pm	
Live Contemporary & Hawaiian	idi /24 2255	Eric Lee 6-9pi	m	The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfrid	er 922-3111
David Asing 5-8pm		Merriman's Honolulu	215-0022	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	
Chart House Waikiki	941-6660	Live Contemporary		Christian Yrizarry 5-9pm	
Live Contemporary Hawaiian	711.0000	John Kema 5:30-	-7:30pm	The Deck at the Queen Kapiolani Hot	tel 931-4488
Camarillo Brothers 6-9pm		Maui Brewing Company	843-2739	Old School Vinyl/ R&B/ Hip Hop	
Duke's Canoe Club Waikiki	922-2268	Live Contemporary Hawaiian		DJ Lowtide 6-9pm	
Live Contemporary Hawaiian	7	Fia 6-8pi	m	Tiki's Grill & Bar	923-TIKI
Jenna K (or others) 4-6pm		Monkeypod Kitchen Ko Olina	381-4086	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	
Denny Ono (or others) 7-10pm	1	Live Contemporary			:30pm
Mahina & Sun's	923-8882	Johnny the Third (or others) 6:30-	-8pm	Push O Verse 8-10pr	
Monday Vibes on the Lanai		Rumfire	921-4600	Tommy Bahama Restaurant	923-8785
Brent Limos 6:30-9:	30pm	Live Contemporary Hits		Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Hou	
Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Hawaiian	923-7311	Christian Yrizarry 6-9pi	m	Stan Albrecht 5-8pm	
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Swell at the Alohilani	294-4108	THURSDA	V
Christian Oasay 6-9pm		Lounge DJ			
Merriman's Honolulu	215-0022	DJ Ezzy (or others) 6-9pi	m	Barefoot Beach Café at Queen's Be	ach 924-2233
Live Slack Key guitarist		The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfri	ider 922-3111	Contemporary & Hawaiian	
Freddy Leone 5:30-7:	30pm	Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Sonny Kapu 5-8pm	
Monkeypod Kitchen Ko Olina	381-4086	Alex Oasay 5-9pi	m	Chart House Waikiki	941-6660
Live Contemporary	331 1333	Tiki's Grill & Bar	923-TIKI	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	
Gabe Miller or Dustin Park 6:30-8p	om	Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Tito & David 6-9pm	
Rumfire	921-4600		-7:30pm	Duke's Canoe Club Waikiki	922-2268
Live Contemporary Hits	721 1000	Ashton 8-10	pm	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	
Cris Salvador 6-9pm		Tommy Bahama Restaurant	923-8785	Walt Keale (or others) 4-6pm	
Swell at the Alohilani	294-4108	Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Ho		Alika Souza (or others) 7-10pr	
Solo Contemporary Guitarist		Johnny Kukui 5-8pi	m	Eating House 1849 Waikiki	924-1849
Johnny Helm 6-9pm		WEDNESD	DAY	Live Contemporary Hawaiian Shane Kainoa 5-8pm	
The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfride	er 922-3111				
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Barefoot Beach Café at Queen's Be Island Vibes	each 924-2233	Giovanni Pastrami	923-2100
Johnny Valentine 5-9pm			m	Live Contemporary	1.20mm
Tiki's Grill & Bar	923-TIKI	,		Billy Sage 6:30-9 Mahina & Sun's	923-8882
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Chart House Waikiki	941-6660	Hawaiian Contemporary on the Lanai	
Sonny Kapu 5:30-7:	30pm	Live Contemporary Hawaiian Mike Tulba 6-9pi	m	Kelly Boy DeLima 6:30-9	
Push O Verse 8-10pm				Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Hawaiian	923-7311
Tommy Bahama Restaurant	923-8785	Duke's Canoe Club Waikiki	922-2268	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	723-7311
Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Hou	r Daily 2 - 5 p.m.	Live Contemporary Hawaiian Denny Ono (or others) 4-6pi	m	Johnny Valentine 6-9pm	
Jeremy Hirokawa 5-8pm	, ,	Randy Allen (or others) 7-10		Merriman's Honolulu	215-0022
				Live Contemporary	213-0022
TUESDAY	,	Giovanni Pastrami Acoustic Guitar Soul, R&B	923-2100	, ,	:30pm
Barefoot Beach Café at Queen's Bea	nch 924-2233	,	-9:30pm	MINA's Fish House	679-0079
Backyard Hawaiian		Mahina & Sun's	923-8882	Live Contemporary Hits	0170017
Ben Kama 5-8pm		Soulful Guitar on the Lanai	923-0002	Christian Yrizarry 6-9pm	
Chart House Waikiki	941-6660		-9:30pm	Monkeypod Kitchen Ko Olina	381-4086
Live Contemporary Hawaiian				Live Contemporary	301-4000
Ryan Tang Group 6-9pm		Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Hawaiian Live Contemporary Hawaiian	923-7311	Sienna Souza 6:30-8	nm
Duke's Canoe Club Waikiki	922-2268	Jeremy Hirokawa 6-9pi	m	Rumfire	921-4600
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		,		Live Contemporary Hits	721-4000
Taz Vegas (or others) 4-6pm		Merriman's Honolulu	215-0022	Kamuela Kahoano 6-9pm	
Ellsworth Simeona (or others) 7-10pm	1	Live Contemporary Gabe Miller 5:30-	-7:30pm	Sky Waikiki	979-7590
Giovanni Pastrami	923-2100			Live Contemporary	717-1370
Acoustic Soul, R&B and Pop		Monkeypod Kitchen Ko Olina Live Contemporary	381-4086	John Akapo 5-8pm	1
YOZA 6:30-9:	30pm	Izik and Evan Khay 6:30-	-8n	Swell at the Alohilani	294-4108
Mahina & Sun's	923-8882	Rumfire 0.30	•	Solo Contemporary Guitarist	2/7-7100
Electrifying Acoustic on the Lanai		Live Contemporary Hits	921-4600	Denny Ono (or others) 6-9pm	
Laupepa Letuli 6:30-9:	30pm	Mike Tulba 6-9pi	m	The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfride	
Music calendars subject	,	Swell at the Alohilani	294-4108	Live Contemporary Hawaiian	/LL-JIII
- Music calendars subject	to thange	Swell at the Alonilani	274-4108	2.ve contemporary ridwandir	
4 mls - Oslav Constants					

E Pili Kakou

, DINING , ENTERTAL

Monkeypod Kitchen Ko Olina

6:30-8p

6-9pm

6-9pm

5-8pm

6-9pm

5-8pm

Live Contemporary John Akapo

Live Contemporary Hits Johnny Helm

Signature Prime Steak

Contemporary Pianist in the bar

The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfrider

Live Contemporary Hawaiian

Rumfire

Pierre Grill

Lounge DJ

Alex Oasay

Sky Waikiki

Live Contemporary John Akapo

Swell at the Alohilani

DJ Jon Conscious

BE MERRY HAPPY HOUR

	CICIAIN	VMENIT			-DINK	7 DE		OR
		LLIVI	PAU HANA	EAT ,	DKII.			
Randy Allen	5-9pm		Chris Salvador	8-10pm		Mike Tulba	8-10pm	
The Deck at the Queen Ka	apiolani Hotel	931-4488	The Veranda at the Kahala		739-8760	The Veranda at the Kahala	'	739-8760
Acoustic/Country/Pop			Live Contemporary			Live Contemporary		
Jared Ming	5-8pm		Zanuck Lindsey (or others)	6pm-8pm		David Swanson	6pm-8pm	
The Veranda at the Kaha	la Hotel	739-8760	Tiki's Grill & Bar		923-TIKI	Tiki's Grill & Bar		923-TIKI
Live Contemporary			Contemporary Hawaiian, Al	lternative, Pop-Ro	ck, Reggae	Contemporary Hawaiian, Alt	ernative, Pop-R	ock, Reggae
Cory Oliveros (or others)	6pm-8pm		The City Boys	3-5pm		Johnny Helm	3:3	80-5:30pm
Tiki's Grill & Bar		923-TIKI	RootsKai	5:30-7:30pm		RootsKai	6-8	pm
Live Contemporary Hawaii	ian		La Pepe	8-10pm		Ashton	8-1	0pm
Malu Productions	5:30-7:30pm		Tommy Bahama Restau	rant	923-8785	Tommy Bahama Restau	rant	923-8785
Ashton	8-10pm		Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Hour Daily 2 - 5 p.m.		Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Hour Daily 2 - 5 p.m.		/ 2 - 5 p.m.	
Tommy Bahama Resta	urant	923-8785	Chris Murphy	5-8pm		Chris Murphy	5-8pm	
Contemporary Hawaiian.	Happy Hour Daily	2 - 5 p.m.						
Alex Oasay	5-8pm		SATURDAY		SUNDAY			
			Barefoot Beach Café at 0	lueen's Beach	924-2233	Barefoot Beach Café at Q	ueen's Beach	924-2233
FI	RIDAY		Live Contemporary Hawaiia	n		Live Contemporary Hawaiia	n	
Barefoot Beach Café at	Queen's Beach	924-2233	The Barefoot Boys	5-8pm		Alika Souza	11am-2pm	
Live Contemporary Hawaii	ian		Chart House Waikiki		941-6660	Pono Kaeo	5-8pm	
Art Kalahiki & Friends	5-8pm		Live Contemporary Hawaiia	n		Chart House Waikiki		941-6660
Chart House Waikiki		941-6660	Tito Berinobis	6-9pm		Live Contemporary Hawaiia	n	
Live Contemporary Hawaii	ian		Duke's Canoe Club Wail	kiki	922-2268	Dean & Dean	6-9pm	
Mike Tulba	6-9pm		Live Contemporary Hawaiian		Duke's Canoe Club Waikiki 922-22		922-2268	
Duke's Canoe Club Wa	ikiki	922-2268	Ben Kama (or others)	10am-12pm		Live Contemporary Hawaiia	n	
Live Contemporary Hawai	ian		YOZA (or others)	1-3pm		Ben Kama (or others)	10am-12pm	
Maunalua	4-6pm		Bobby Moderow (or others)	7-10pm		Ellsworth Simeona (or others)) 1-3pm	
Kawika Kahiapo	7-10pm		Mahina & Sun's		923-8882	Henry Kapono	4-6pm	
Mahina & Sun's		923-8882	Contemporary Hawaiian/Bl	ues on the Lanai		Kaiona (or others)	7-10pm	
Slack Key on the Lanai			Josh Akapo	6:30-9:30pm			V	

921-4600 949-3636 979-7590 294-4108

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381-4086

921-4600

949-3636

979-7590

294-4108

922-3111

Live Contemporary

Izik and Evan Khay

Live Contemporary Hits

Signature Prime Steak

Contemporary Pianist in the bar

The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfrider

Live Contemporary Hawaiian

Jeremy Hirokawa

Rumfire

Alex Oasay

Pierre Grill

Sky Waikiki

John Akapo

DJ KK

DJ Jem

Live Contemporary

Swell at the Alohilani

6:30-8pm

6-9pm

6-9pm

5-8pm

1-4pm

6-9pm

5-8pm

922-3111

DJ/Big Wave Pro Surfer Keala "KK" Kennelly Spins Poolside

Let's be Together...

DINING , ENTERTAINMENT , PAU HANA , EAT , DRINK , BE MERRY , HAPPY HOUR

Giovanni Pastrami		923-2100
Reggae Pop Music		720 2100
Kelandy	6:30-9:30pm	
Hinana Poolside Bar at the	e Hawaii Prince	679-0079
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		
Jeremy Hirokawa	4:30-6:30pm	
La Hiki Restaurant at the F Live Contemporary Hawaiian	679-0079	
Kamuela Kahoano (or others)	11am-2pm	
Mahina & Sun's		923-8882
Award-winning ukulele on th		
Trishnalei	6:30-9:30pm	
Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Haw	<i>r</i> aiian	923-7311
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		
Alex Oasay	6-9pm	
Maui Brewing Company		843-2739
Live Contemporary Hawaiian		
Randy Allen (or others)	6-8pm	
Merriman's Honolulu		215-0022
Live Contemporary	F 20 7 20	
Cassie and Selwyn	5:30-7:30pm	
Monkeypod Kitchen Ko C	381-4086	
Live Contemporary Sienna Souza	2.20 Anm	
Jenna Keala	2:30-4pm 6:30-8pm	
Rumfire	0.30-0piii	921-4600
Kullille		74 1-4000

Live Contemporary Hits 6-9pm Randy Allen Swell at the Alohilani 294-4108 DJ Spins Poolside DJ Jem (or others) 1-4pm DJ Vaughn (or others) 6-9pm The Beach Bar at the Moana Surfrider 922-3111 Live Contemporary Hawaiian Dave Watanabe 5-9pm The Deck at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel 931-4488 Latin/Electronic/ Dance DJ Marc Thyssen 11am-3pm Tiki's Grill & Bar 923-TIKI Live Contemporary Hawaiian Ellsworth & Friends 3 - 5pm Eddie & the Coconuts 5:30-7:30pm La Pepe 9-11pm **Tommy Bahama Restaurant** 923-8785 Contemporary Hawaiian. Happy Hour Daily 2 - 5 p.m.



Glen Domingo

So this is another where do I start kind of column. There have been so many changes in the restaurant industry over the past year. This has just been a roller coaster kind of year for them. Open, close, take-out only, repeat. We lost over 50 restaurants, and time will only tell how many bars, but on the flip side, around 3 dozen new restaurants opened. I've been privileged enough to have several in-depth conversations with restauranteurs about their struggles over the past year and what I take away from them most of all, is how resilient they are. How quickly they adapted and hard they worked to keep their businesses alive. Yes, I know this same train of thought can be attributed to most industries around town, but this column is about restaurants and I wanted to give them all their due. We all have our own favorite restaurants, let's continue to support them whenever possible. For now, let's talk about a few of them. • SKY Waikiki reopened under new management late last year. President and CEO Hide Sakurai, known to many of you as the man behind Shokudo, Buho and Bread + Butter, has reimagined the rooftop lounge as a raw bar and champagne lounge. There are also plans to open a high end Italian restaurant called La Bettola on the same floor by renown Japanese Italian Chef Tsutomu Ochiai in the next few months. 979-7590. • MW Restaurant has relocated to the space formerly occupied by Viaggio at Velocity Honolulu and offer a more refined and

contemporary approach to its current menu.

Not to worry, fan favorites such as mochi-

crusted fish and their popular dessert items

aren't going anywhere. Their casual restaurant Artizen by MW, previously at the Hawaii State Art Museum, has taken over the ground floor area that used to house Italica Cafe and is currently offering grab-and-go pastries and coffee service in the morning, and quick and informal bites for lunch and early dinner. 955-6505. • Although it's not quite back to its 24/7 moniker, a sign that things are going in the right direction is that MAC 24/7 has extended their hours to 6 a.m. - midnight. 921-5564. The pandemic brought out some extremely innovative ideas from many restaurants. Among them, 12th Avenue Grill. When dining rooms were closed, they turned their private dining areas into a take out DeliCafe offering delicious sandwiches, lasagna, lamb shanks, breakfast items and more. I'm personally addicted to their Truffle oast, scrambled eggs on a toasted slice of sweet potato topped with truffled fondue and bacon. Delicious and only \$8.50. They also launched a happy hour every Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday from 3 - 6 p.m. 732-9469 • M by Chef Mavro has introduced their new Bar 'M' Happy Hour on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30 pm with some delicious and affordable delicacies. 944-4714. At Ka Makana Ali'i, Sugarcane by Chai will have its grand opening on April 8th. Open for dinner nightly from 4 p.m. - 12 a.m., the menu will be curated by Chef Chai Chaowasaree, and cocktails created by former Nobu and HFWF mixologist Kenny Lum. 670-2744. • Although there's much more to say, we're out of room, so I just wanted to mention I finally ventured out to Longhi's Ko Olina for the first time since they opened out there and it was amazing. For all you Longhi's fans that miss the Ala Moana and Maui locations like I do, it did not disappoint. Menu favorites I hadn't had in years were thankfully still on the menu, and completely on point. The location was fabulous and manager Andrew Lovesee was an absolute pro. Wish it was closer because I cannot wait to go back. 671-8887. ~ Pam

RESERVATIONS ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED RIGHT NOW

Music Disclaimer

It took quite a bit of effort to piece together the calendar this time around since there have been so many restrictions surrounding live music. Please note that more than ever before, every time and musician listed is subject to change especially as restrictions are being lifted and hours extended. Two items of note: SKY Waikiki was in the process of trying to extend their music hours at press time and has likely done so by the time you read this so double check if that's of interst. Also, please note Shorefyre has live music every night as well as a weekend concert series, but since there is a cover charge to enter, they are not listed here. Please check their website for a list of performers.

BarefootBeachCafe.com "WE PUT Aloha INTO EVERY BITE SO SIT BACK, RELAX AND **ENJOY THE VIEW." OPEN DAILY** BREAKFAST 8AM - 2PM **LUNCH/DINNER 11AM - 8:30PM LIVE MUSIC NIGHTLY 5PM - 8PM** & SUNDAYS 11AM - 2PM **BAREFOOT BEACH CAFE 2699 KALAKAUA AVENUE** 808.924.2233 **EVENTS & GROUP RESERVATIONS** 808.699.8830

COVID Conversations

Continued from page 1.



Photo: Acky Nishimura, Sales Gallery Coordinator

Sean Dee

Executive Vice President & Chief Marketing Officer, Outrigger Hospitality Group

How has the last year been for you?

2020 was a challenging year for everyone in the hospitality industry, but we feel well-positioned to emerge from the global pandemic stronger than ever.

Did you stay open the whole time? The Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort stayed open the entire time to accommodate front-line workers, traveling doctors, nurses, flight crews as well as military personnel.

How did your business adapt?

First and foremost - we strove to care for our people and our community through #OutriggerCARES. We launched the program last April to provide support for team and the community. This included donating half-a-million dollars worth of rooms to the Hotels for Heroes program. For the added safety of our guests and hosts - we developed Outrigger's Clean Commitment in partnership with ECOLAB and local healthcare leaders.

How was the reopening process?

As visitors to Hawai'i started to rise, we were able to open back many of our properties. The very best part about this was seeing the sincere joy that our hosts had when returning to work.

What are your thoughts to the future?

With vaccines become more readily available and travel restrictions lifting, we're cautiously optimistic about the future of our industry. Tourism in Hawai'i is critical to help support local restaurants and retail, small business owners and farmers.

Continued on page 9.

NEW RESTAURANT ALERT

369-2444

Amazingly enough, as hard as the last year has been for restaurants, there were over two dozen brave souls that decided to OPEN a restaurant in the midst of a pandemic. From a high end speakeasy to casual (and amazingly delicious) saimin and virtually everything in-between, restaurant continued to open, even while

many long-time favorites shut their doors. (See our COVID casualty list on the next page). Several of them even opened for business during the time that restaurants were forced to offer take-out only. The resilency this industry showed during the most difficult of times has been inspriring. Support and eat local!

1938 Indochine 545-7777

604 Ala Moana Boulevard 1938indochine.com Mon - Sun 4pm - 10pm Sun Brunch 11am - 2pm Kevin Aoki's latest eatery featuring Southeast Asia flavors

Brick Fire Tavern

3447 Waialae Avenue brickfiretavern.com 11am -2pm, 5pm-9pm, Sun 5pm - 9pm Tue - Sat Authentic Napoletana pizza

Cocina de Roja

2334 S. King Street instagram.com/cocinaderoja 11am - 7pm Tue - Sat

Birria Taqueria w/birria tacos, banh mi & pho

Coco Bloom Kitchen 784-0206

3221 Waialae Avenue cafe.coco-bloom.com Mon - Sat 11am - 4pm

Sandwiches, salads, smoothies & dessert toast

888-2800 **DT Steak House**

1339 N. School Street www.dtsteakhouse.com Mon - Sun 11am - 9pm Taiwanese Steakhouse

Et Al. 732-2440

4230 Waialae Avenue etalhawaii.com

Mon-Sun 6am – 9pm

A collaboration w/Chef Colin Sato & Keoni Chang

Farmhouse Cafe 888-2055

808 Sheridan Street facebook.com/farmhousecafe20 9am - 3pm Sat 8am - 4pm European café featuring coffee, sandwiches,, baked goods

Han No Daidokoro 517-3229

Anaha at Ward Village nanaaikatsu.com 5pm - 10pm Tue-Sun Japanese Yakiniku known for its top rated wagyu

Heiho House 260-9670

1127 11th Avenue instagram.com/heiho house Sun, Wed, Thu 5pm – 10pm Fri – Sat 5pm – 12am Square Barrels owners opened a Gastropub-style Izakaya

Holey Grail Donuts 482-0311

1240 Ala Moana Boulevard holeygraildonuts.com Tue - Thu, Sun 7am - 5pm; Fri-Sat 7am - 9pm Popular plant-based taro doughnuts next to Ginza

Honolulu Skewerhouse 888-888

567 Kapahulu Ave facebook.com/hnlskewerhouse Mon - Sun 5pm - 10pm

North Eastern Chinese Skewer Restaurant next to Uncle Bo's

'Ili'ili Cash & Carry

2065 S Beretania St. instagram.com/p/CKr0REyjDQ6 Tues-Sun 11am – 8pm

Miss V-Lounge pizza? İts pizza & hoagies are offered here

Istanbul Hawaii 772-4440

Anaha at Ward Village istanbulhawaii.com Tue - Sun 11am - 10pm

Featuring Turkish & Mediterranean cuisine

497-3733 Kapa Hale

4614 Waialae Avenue kapahale.com Tues – Fri 10:30am - 2:30pm Sun - Thu 5-9pm Fri-Sat Sat - Sun brunch 7:30am - 2:30pm Modern take on Hawaiian Regional Cuisine by Olive Tree

Mama Kim's 260-4109

1481 S. King Street instagram.com/mamakimshawaii Mon - Fri 10am - 3:30pm, 5pm - 7pm Sat 10am - 7pm Fresh sushi and poke bowls

Miro Kaimuki 379-0124

3446 Waialae Avenue mirokaimuki.com

Wed - Sun 5pm - 9pm

Chris Kajioka & Mourad Lahlou's French-style cafe

Mochi Do Hawaii

444 Niu Street mochidohawaii.com

Tue - Sat 8am - noon

Fresh mochi donut shop at the Hawaiian Monarch

Nani Ai Katsu 772-0146

Ohana Hale Marketplace nanaaikatsu.com Mon-Sat 10:30am - 1:30pm, 4pm - 6pm A premium specialty tonkatsu shop

Noods Ramen Bar

888-2115

noodsramenbar808.com 3611 Waialae Avenue Mon - Sun 11am-2pm, 5-9pm

Osoyami a McCully pop-up, has a new home

Olive Garden 942-2000

Ala Moana Center media.olivegarden.com Mon – Sun 11am – 10pm

The first Olive Garden in Hawaii has finally opened

Ono-ya Ramen 425-4415

611 Kapahulu Ave onoyaramen.com Mon - Sun 11am – 10pm

Ramen shop opened in the old Wada/ Waioli Grill spot

Original Magoo's Pizza 949-5381

3110 Winam Avenue originalmagoospizza.com Sun - Thu 11pm - 8pm Fri -Sat 11am - 9pm No hu hu - the original Magoo's is back!

Papa Kurts Saimin Stand 947-1215

925 Isenberg St (old Agu) papakurts.com

Wed – Sun 10am – 2pm

Chefs Chris Kajioka & Mark Noguchi partner up on saimin

Purvé Donuts 762-8351 4210 Waialae Avenue purvehawaii.com

Mon - Sun 6am - 9pm

These delightful donuts are anything but standard

Sugarcane by Chai 670-2744

Ka Makana Alii

Mon – Sun 4pm – 12pm

Chef Chai curated the menu

400-0506 Tanaka Ramen & Izakaya

Ala Moana Center tanakaramen.com Kapolei Marketplace 744-1231 Mon - Sat 11am - 10pm, Sun 11am - 9:30pm

Authentic Japanese Ramen

The Blind Ox 254-6369

829 Kapahulu Avenue Tue - Sat 5pm – 10pm

Tapas & craft cocktails are served at this new speakeasy

Yoshoku Ginza Bairin

926-8082 ginzabairinhawaii.com

Regency on Beachwalk Mon - Sun 11am - 8:30pm

Japanese Western-Style comfort food

blindox.com

Hotel Update

In addition to everything else that happened this past year, there have been quite a few changes in Oahu's hotel world this past year. Most hotels closed down as Hawaii issued a stay-at-home order and a mandatory quarantine for all arrivals. Quite a bit of confusion followed in the months that followed as the actual date of Hawaii's re-opening ended up pushed back several times. With all the uncertainty the virus brought to the industry, several hotels decided to move up scheduled renovation projects and begin improvement plans to ensure they had a shiny new property to present once things visitors were allowed to return to the Island. Currently, the Turtle Bay Resort and the Halekulani remain closed as they work on completing their renovations. Both have announced plans to re-open sometime this summer.

Another hotel that decided to turn a bad situation around is the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. Plans were already in the works to transform the property. Since they were already closed, they decided to begin an \$80 million transformation to the property that is just about finished. The guest rooms and suites have been redone to give them an upscale residential-style feel with color schemes that better reflect their beachfront location and showcase art that focuses on Polynesian ocean voyaging. In addition to completely renovating the Ocean and Pacific Towers, the Diamond Head Tower, previously used for other purposes, has also been redesigned to add 23 new rooms and





Guest rooms at the Reef feature beach-themed color schemes and Polynesian Ocean Voyaging Art. Photo courtesy of Outrigger Hospitality Group.

suites to the property. In addition to enhancing their Fitness Center, Spa, Cultural Center, and Kids Club. The Reef has also upgraded the technology used on the property so guests can now download an app that will allow them to have keyless entry to their rooms. They upgraded their WiFi, and a new digital service will be available to expedite guest requests. The most noticeable transformation will be in the lobby area as the hotel opens up that area to take advantage of the fact they are a beachfront property, offering guests easier access and fuller views of both the beach and the ocean. The resort will reopen later this month with sophisticated property enhancements, including chic poolside experiences, a wedding chapel and a fully reimagined Kani Ka Pila Grille, and a bigger stage. However, even after it opens, there is more to come, as Monkeypod Kitchen by Merriman announced building a brand-new restaurant in the 12,000 square-foot beachfront space that will open by the end of the year.

Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk just completed an \$8 million modernization that refreshed all 369 suites in both the Hula Tower and Aloha Tower. The resort's expansive refresh boasts all-new furnishings and local art installations that provide guests with a unique sense of place amidst an expansive, family-friendly environment. The property's modernization also features an enhanced Pool Bar and Pakini Bar, complete with a new menu and cocktail offerings.

Although it remains open during its refresh, renovations are also underway at the Waikiki Malia by Outrigger.

When the New Otani's lease expired at the end of the year, the hotel's owners, BlackSands Capital and Tokyo-based

Tsukada Global Holdings, assumed control of the property and brought on the Hawaii-based full-service luxury hospitality management company, Private Label Collections to operate the hotel now known simply as the Kamaina Beach Hotel. Since the hotel's previous owners had just completed a full renovation of the rooms in 2018, the new owners simply added their finishing touches to them. They then focused their attention on completely re-envisioning the top floor suites and the entire ground floor, including the lobby, restaurant, and bar, implementing artful interpretations of Hawaii's history through an eclectic mix of new and upcycled furniture, textiles arrangements, vintage and new



The hotel lobby features eclectic floor to ceiling art work. Photo courtesy of Kaimana Beach Hotel. art on gallery-style walls and offering boho-style seating spaces. The biggest change revolved around the hotel's 56-year old restaurant, the Hau Tree Lanai. The modernized the hotel's signature restaurant space and the menu and installed James Beard-nominated chef Chris Kajioka (Senia, Vintage Cave and Miro Kaimuki) at the helm. Now known as simply the Hau Tree, Kajioka brought on Alan Takahashi (Le Bistro) as Hau Tree's executive chef. To add the finishing touch, they brought on beloved local



The beautifully modernized and redesigned Hau Tree. Photo courtesy of Kaimana Beach Hotel.

mixologist, Jen Ackrill (San Francisco's modern craft cocktail bar Rye, Pint & Jigger, Sky and Top of Waikiki), to create an ideal cocktail menu where there is something for everyone, whether they are visiting the hotel, stopping in for a quick pau hana drink, or even the quintessential cocktailian. * *Pam*

COVID Conversations

Continued from page 7.



Photo: Seagem Fix

Valerie King

General Manager, Sea Life Park

How has the last year been for you?

It has been an extremely challenging year, particularly having to furlough and lay-off many of our employees. We closed our doors on March 17th and reopened the park to the public 354 days later. We continued to provide 7 days a week care for our animals and about a third of our staff remained on full time while we were closed

How was the reopening process?

We were closed for over 11 months. Reopening was challenging having to bring back and retrain team members, reopen and clean up exhibits, public areas and set up new safety procedures. Capacity limits are especially challenging for show seating and indoor areas.

What are your thoughts to the future?

We are very thankful for our local residents who are coming out in record numbers to support us. We are hoping to get back to a normal schedule by summer and continue to rebuild.

Frank Among

Director Sales & Marketing Kualoa Ranch Hawai'i

How are things now?

We're super busy with filming activity going on, with 14 different productions all in different stages of filming at the same time. (We've never had this many at once, ever!) Guests are loving seeing all the action around the ranch as the tours pass by. We're fortunate that the limited seats we are offering are mostly selling out. There are lots of walk-ins and it's interesting that the most expensive tours are the ones selling the quickest.

Continued on page 9.

COVID Restaurant Casualties

It was a very tough year for restaurants, most of whom operate on an extremely thin margin. The challenges the pandemic brought were simply to much for the the following restaurants, all of whom shut down this past year. Aloha!!

Ahi Assassins Alan Wong's Honolulu Arancino on Beachwalk Artizen by MW Bob's Sports Bar Kailua Cheeseburger Waikiki Prime Cheeseburger Waikiki Beach Walk Chuck's Cellar Dillingham Saimin Formaggio Honolulu Harpo's Pizza and Pasta HASR Bistro (Terry's Place) House of Pure Aloha Ala Moana Hyung Jae Restaurant Islands Fine Burgers Italica Café Izakaya Kei Kaka'ako Kitchen Kaneohe Bakery Kapiolani Spaghetti House Kawailoa Tavern Kobe Japanese Steak House Like Like Drive In Limon Rotisserie Kapolei Malee Thai Restaurant

Mexico Fiesta Hawaii Kai Mivako Japanese Restaurant Monterey Bay Canners Nobu Honolulu Otoro Hawaii Fusion Phoenix Chinese Restaurant Plantation Tavern Kapolei Pomaikai Ballrooms Real Gastropub Smith & Kings Tempura Kaneko Hannosuke The Brewseum The Street Food Hall Tokyo Noodle House Tony Roma's Waikiki Top of Waikiki **TOWN** Two Scoops Uncle's Fish Market at Pier 38 Viaggio Waikiki Yokocho Wang Chung's Yamagen Restaurant Zippy's Pearlridge We will miss vou all!



ections on the Past Year Hospitality workers share their experiences



I've been with Outrigger for over 3 years as the Front Office Manager of the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. I am proud of all the efforts that Outrigger did (and continues to do) during the pandemic.

Cecilia Derramas

All of our employees came together to work during a very uncertain time.

The Reef temporarily suspended operations due to the pandemic in April 2020. I was supposed to be furloughed along with the rest of team, however, the Outrigger Waikiki stayed open, and I was able to keep working with their Front Desk Team.

Looking back from April to June 2020, Waikiki was very different from the bustling city we knew. There were very few guests - Outrigger Waikiki had airline crew, military, and some essential travelers during the Stay at Home order time. When restrictions begin to lift, we saw support from our kama'aina quests, and our occupancy started to pick up.

With an intense focus on safety and security, Outrigger worked diligently to have a program in place for safety. Our Outrigger Clean Commitment program, in partnership with Ecolab, is an extensive guideline for our hosts and guests' safety and protection. We have modified service strategies focusing on sanitization, disinfection, safety, physical distancing, and everyone's well-being.

What I learned most about this experience is that courage and learning to adapt to changes immediately are very important when facing extraordinary times. As hospitality workers, we know all about the service aspect of our job. It was important for us to balance service and commitment to safety while adapting to all the changes happening. Our team at Outrigger continued to stay positive and service our guests by applying our Outrigger Way: Caring for each other, caring for our guests, caring for our place, with our values as our guide in the difficult times.

What I enjoyed most was being able to connect with our local guests. Outrigger participated in programs such as "Hotel for Heroes" to offer a complimentary stay to health care workers. We built a strong relationship with our local quests. Some

of them are now staying more frequently with us. I also enjoyed connecting more with our hosts. We had a smaller team, and we all had to help each other out in every situation.

The most awkward incident for me was the first time we had to deal with a quarantine breaker back in June. A quest checked in and was acting strange. When I Googled her name, I found an article that she previously violated quarantine at a different hotel. I called the hotel, and they confirmed. The GM and I warned the guest that Hawaii takes guarantine protocol seriously, and she had to stay in her room. She checked out an hour later. Later that night, I saw on the news that she was arrested Since it was new to us at that time, it was awkward to explain to the guest that HPD gets involved, and they could get be arrested if they violated quarantine. We've since learned and work closely with the Attorney General contact and HPD if we have guests violating guarantine protocol.

For those who are working, I would like to commend everyone in the hospitality industry for being positive continuing to share the Aloha spirit with guests. For those who are eager to come back to work, I will say that they need to be optimistic. We see that the occupancy has been picking up and as the travel industry improve, we look forward to going back to the normal work staffing.

~ Cecilia Derramas, Outrigger Waikiki Front Office Manager



The day Manager pulled me into the office, March 20, 2020, and told me it would be my last day of work was so surreal. I had been working at the Hilton Hawaiian Village going on 14 Christy Ann Jones years. To be told that

day would be my last day of work due to unforeseen circumstances and would now be temporarily laid off until further notice was like being told in a relationship that "I need space, it's not you, it's me." I was sad, and I called my mom and sobbed. She told me, "Hey, you always wanted to be a stay-at-homemom, LOL." She was right, so I wiped my tears and prayed, and I thanked God that He would protect me and provide for my

boys and me even during a time like this, and I went home and told my boyfriend and kids. They were just as shocked as I was initially but were relieved that I would be home safe.

Within the first week, I had contacted my Union, filed for unemployment, and applied for other assistance programs. I contacted H.A.R.I.E.T.T. and completed a course in beginner's Spanish. With the extra funds, I could pay off debts that I otherwise would not have been able to do. I cooked and cleaned day and night but also ordered take-out more than usual. I rearranged the furniture in my house several times and threw away old items I no longer needed. I connected a lot more with my family on Messenger and joined the family prayer meetings on Sundays over the phone. I set up a home office for myself which I've always wanted to do. I went for nightly walks with my boyfriend and spent more time with my boys. I got into the Christmas Spirit earlier than usual because I actually had the time, money, and energy to do so.

By the end of December, I finally got the call to return to work that I had been anxiously waiting for. The first day back, I was so full of emotions. I was missing people I knew wouldn't be coming back and trying to find my footing, my stride, my groove. So many places were closed or had reopened with reduced hours. It would take time to memorize it all over again. I couldn't do my job effectively without Pam sending us all those weekly updates. Working with less staff, fewer amenities and fewer quests definitely took some getting used to as we transition back to full capacity. I am thankful that my job called me when they did because my UI had been exhausted.

Things at work are slowly getting back to "normal." The lobby is busy again with arrivals and departures. Team members are coming back to work one by one as the occupancy rises. Everyone is taking part in keeping our stations sanitized and doing our best to follow the guidelines by keeping 6-feet apart and wearing masks. It's a different time we live in these days, but I feel that everyone wants to get back to normalcy. They finally offered hotel workers the vaccine, so many of us are more at ease working around outside travelers and guests. It feels good to assist my guests and offer them information about places that have reopened. Looking back at the year, I would actually say I was blessed, protected, and provided for, and I am thankful to God through it all.

~ Christy Ann Jones, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Front Services Clerk

COVID Conversations

Continued from page 9.



Photo: Acky Nishimura, Sales Gallery Coordinator

Kim Taylor Reece

Board President, The ARTS at Marks Garage

How has the last year been for you?

It has been very difficult as we have kept the space open but the expenses did not decrease. Having an art gallery and performance space in quarantine was unbelievably difficult and we are still not above water. We stayed open. That may not have been the best decision, but we are still here and hopeful about the support The ARTS at Marks Garage is seeing in the community.

What are your thoughts to the future?

The ARTS is still struggling but are excited about the future. Our artists and performers are anxious for audiences to return and enjoy the arts again.

Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

We learned so much during this pandemic and hope to never have to experience this again. Lessons learned!

Erica Tso

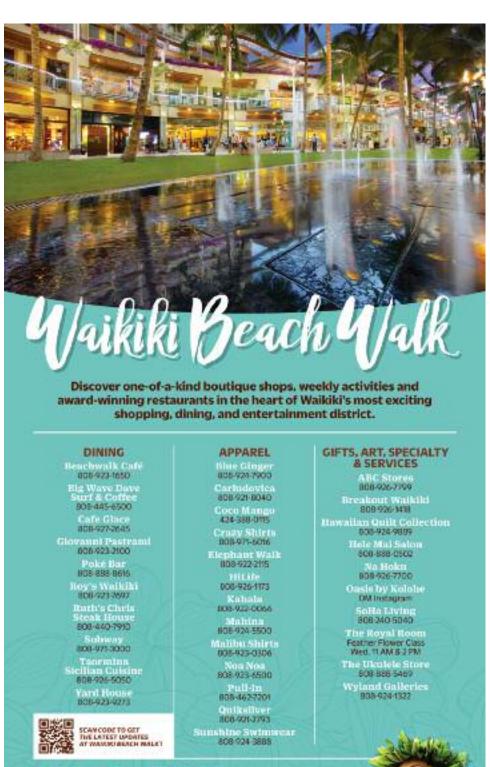
Night Auditor, Hyatt Centric Waikiki Beach

How was the reopening process?

We re-opened at the end of November. Although it was a slow but steady start, since we have been in Tier 3 of reopening our numbers are slowly going up, and of course lots of love from our kamaaina's as well.

Any final thoughts?

We did go through a lot of tough changes, but I have to say when we came back to work many of our colleagues are counting our blessings and have a whole new appreciation for our roles. Team work has never been better, especially now when we are in a mindset as a team to just do what we need to for our guest and be as flexible as we can to make sure everyone is comfortable and safe during their stay with us.



KU HA'AHEO LIVE MUSIC

Continuing our tradition of supporting local culture, join us for live Hawaian music at our plaza stage or in the comfort of your home with our renowned lineup of award winning musicians.

TUESDAYS 5:30PM-6:30PM

O /Works/ReachWalk IB /wokik/beachwalt

KALEI HULA

Free Hula classes every Sunday at Walkiki Beach Walk Plaze Stage with Kumu Hula Blaine Kta.

SUNDAYS 9AM-10AM



FREE PARKING 10AM-3PM DAILY

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CONTACT Davis Media

Ph: 596-4422 www.oahuconcierge.com

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We do not take changes via telephone. All changes to mailing list <u>must be submitted in writing</u> by the 16th of the month to make the next issue, email is preferred.

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