Yogi

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Sublime Adventures For the Soul

5 Fun and Festive Vintage Looks for the Holidays

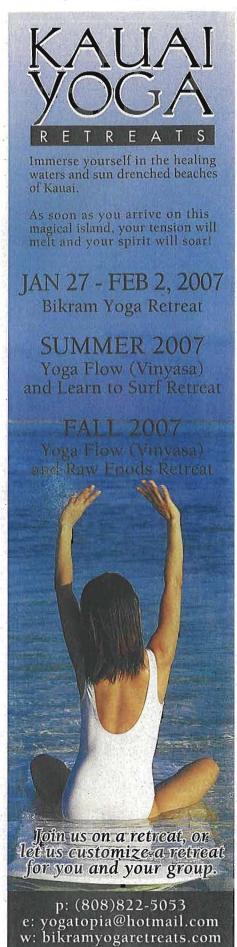
Brandon Routh

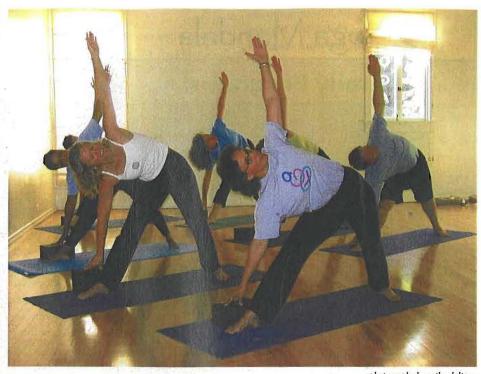
Superman Is a Supervogi

Plus +

A Decadent Finale for Your Holiday Feast

Spas that Soothe the Skin and the Soul





photography by cathy dalton

alameda yoga station

by cathy dalton

solid yoga in the heart of alameda

Alameda, or are lucky enough to live there, you've noticed the small town, neighborhood feel that pervades the area, including a very vibrant downtown. Located in just about the middle of the island, in the busiest shopping and restaurant area, is Alameda Yoga Station, quietly tucked behind thriving Park and Central Avenues, next to an old-time ice cream shop and a public parking lot. Inside and out, the 10-year-old studio suits this small town environment. Alameda Yoga Station is a simple, straightforward yoga studio – absent a retail store, devotional displays or elaborate decorations.

Opened in 1995 by long-time business partners Sandy Blaine and Betsy Weiss, Alameda Yoga Station was established to serve the tightly knit Alameda community. Their goal was to provide "yoga for everybody", through small classes taught by personally selected teachers. Both Sandy and Betsy graduated from the Berkeley Yoga Room's Advanced Studies Program and have been teaching for more than a decade. Sandy is now a faculty member of that program, founded and directed by Donald Moyer. She also is the author of Yoga for Healthy Knees -- currently the best selling yoga book on Amazon.com -- and the forthcoming book Yoga for Computer Users. Betsy is an elementary school teacher, an oarswoman and a mother, in addition to teaching yoga and co-directing the studio.

Committed to establishing and sustaining a personal connection with students and to focusing on healthy alignment and safety in the practice, Sandy and Betsy have kept the teacher pool relatively small. Many of the teachers are graduates of the Berkeley Yoga Room's program, although some other styles and backgrounds are represented here.

"We try to meet the needs of our students by holding classes when they are most convenient to the community and offering a range of classes," says Blaine. "Our philosophy is that yoga is for everyone, and we try to help people optimize their health and well-being, offering classes for people with special needs such as Gentle Yoga, Feldenkrais and pre-natal classes on an ongoing basis. Our Introduction to Yoga class is our most popular offering and it is always filled. We do, however, have some very advanced classes on our weekly schedule as well."

Alameda Yoga Station holds classes seven days a week – primarily on weeknights and weekends. In addition, two lunchtime Community Yoga classes are held weekly at a reduced rate for community service.

The studio has recently added a motherdaughter series taught by Johanna Svedberg -- along with her 11-year-old daughter Emelie. The classes are for mothers (or aunties, grandmothers, etc.) and their daughters (age 9 and up) who are curious about yoga and/or want to deepen their practice together from a feminine perspective. The playful, mindful classes explore different aspects of yoga such as asanas (postures), partner poses, restorative yoga, sun salutations, female health issues, the blossoming body, meditation, pranayama (breathing) and chanting. Sharing this array of practices can nurture an overall sense of well-being and inner peace, plus body awareness, strength, flexibility, self-esteem and stress reduction. The intention is to deepen and honor the relationship between mother and daughter while creating a legacy of physical and emotional health.

On the other end of the spectrum, Alameda Yoga Station was asked in 2005 to develop and teach a series of yoga classes for the Oakland Raiders. The success of that twiceweekly, 10-week series is being expanded upon for a new series, General Yoga for Athletes, in 2007.

Next time you're in Alameda or you're looking for a new yoga experience, join the locals at Alameda Yoga Station.

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