

As part of Travel Pink, Travel Oahu clients can enjoy a catamaran ride at Kualoa Ranch.

# Thinking Pink

Agents help create a worthy program

By Marty Wentzel



## THE DETAILS

Descriptions of Best of Oahu activity packages are available on the Travel Pink, Travel Oahu Web site. They can be booked by calling any of the certified Oahu Destination Specialists listed on the site ([www.visit-oahu.com/travelpink](http://www.visit-oahu.com/travelpink)).

## WEB EXCLUSIVE

For specific hotels on Oahu that are participating in the Travel Pink, Travel Oahu campaign, visit [TravelAgeWest.com/TravelPink](http://TravelAgeWest.com/TravelPink) ♦



Earlier this year, when a group of Oahu Destination Specialists learned about the Oahu Visitors Bureau's (OVB) campaign benefiting breast cancer research, they immediately asked if they could help. The result of their participation is a creative new component to Travel Pink, Travel Oahu, the OVB's annual marketing initiative supporting the Hawaii affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure (a grassroots network of breast cancer activists and survivors).

Launched in 2006 and offered each fall, Travel Pink, Travel Oahu has traditionally featured October value-added specials at partner hotels that also make donations to the cause. However, this year's involvement of mainland travel agents has enhanced the campaign significantly, according to the OVB senior director of sales and marketing Noelani Schilling-Wheeler.

"Our Oahu Destination Specialists [OVB-certified travel agents] carved out a role for themselves, pitched the idea to us and ran with it," said Schilling-Wheeler. "While a group of them were on Oahu attending the annual Oahu Destination Specialist Masters Program, they scheduled meetings with our activity partners, museums, chefs and retailers. They invited everyone to play a part and conducted the follow-up."

The end product is a series of October experiences called Best of Oahu. When clients book one of the activities, the vendor contributes a portion of the payment to the Komen affiliate in Hawaii. For example, if clients take part in a Hans Hedemann Surf School class, the school donates 5 percent of the cost.

Another participating firm, Bike Hawaii, is taking riders out on a 10-mile, single-track course through a rainforest. The company is donating \$3 per person to the Komen effort.

Kualoa Ranch is taking part in the campaign — and kicking in \$3 per person — by offering a day in the Hawaiian countryside. Or, clients can join Two-good Kayaks Hawaii for a paddle trip to islets off Oahu's windward coast. Once there, they can swim,

share as a national team," she said. "In this case, they worked together with a common vision and passion. The key for them was to build awareness of what it means to be a specialist. The Best of Oahu program achieves that goal, and it stands behind a significant

**'New and repeat visitors to Oahu can connect to a universal cause and positively impact others during their travels.'**

eat a picnic lunch, watch the area's many seabirds and go on a nature walk to natural tide pools and sea caves, knowing that \$50 of each booking goes toward Komen.

During Wild Side Eco-Tours' Pink by the Sea wildlife adventure, clients can swim with spinner dolphins and snorkel beside Hawaii's endangered green sea turtles along the leeward coast's coral reef. For each booking, \$3 goes to Komen.

Foodies can sign up for Gourmet Cooking Hawaii's epicurean experience at a historic estate, with 5 percent donated. Other special Travel Pink programs include an afternoon with renowned chef Chai Chaowasaree (\$10 is donated) and a program on Hawaiian healing (\$3 is donated). Nearly all the activities pay commission, too.

In dreaming up the Best of Oahu program, the Oahu Destination Specialists have demonstrated their vast knowledge of the island, said Schilling-Wheeler.

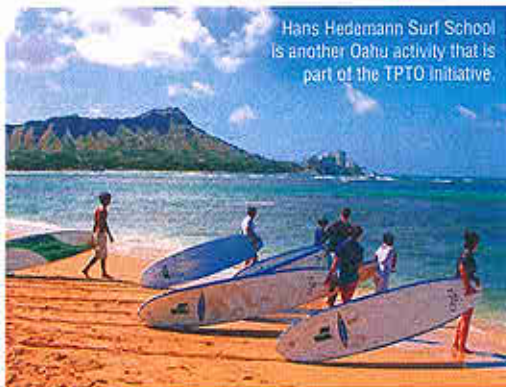
"They place a high value on their expertise, and they see the potential of capturing new market

cause. This was all their initiative."

According to Schilling-Wheeler, Travel Pink, Travel Oahu continues to give travelers an opportunity to experience a fantastic Hawaiian vacation, while making a difference in the fight against cancer.

"[Supporting causes] is a way that many visitors want to travel these days," she said. "New and repeat visitors to Oahu can connect to a universal cause and positively impact others during their travels. Along the way, they can enjoy Oahu's many outdoor activities, unique arts and cultural scene, rich Hawaiian and American history, warm and friendly people, and the aloha spirit found only in Hawaii."

"Susan G. Komen for the Cure is fighting to eradicate breast cancer — which affects more than 215,000 women in the U.S. each year — by supporting grants, education and assistance," said Shelia Callum of the Hawaii affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. "We are so grateful to the OVB for creating opportunities that raise breast cancer awareness and exclusively benefit the cure. Collectively, these contributions will greatly benefit our cause." ♦



Hans Hedemann Surf School is another Oahu activity that is part of the TPTO initiative.

BOAT: KUALOA RANCH; SURFERS: HANS HEDEMANN SURF SCHOOL