



Let's Talk...
Liz Janes-Brown is on leave. Her column will resume on her return.

Liz Janes-Brown

Currents

Life on the Valley Isle

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Move over, Martha Stewart — at least shuffle a few steps to the side of the stage. There's an up-and-coming authority on food and the home and she's prettier, younger, a vegan and ecologically minded, to boot.

Renee Loux also lives on Maui and she'll be one of the key speakers at LifeFest Kapalua health and wellness weekend Sept. 8 to 10 at the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua Resort.

She's the blue-eyed Queen of Green, whom some call the "Martha Stewart of Green," and everyone from young mothers who worry about household chemicals around their children to those who wish to learn more about eating healthfully will want to hear her speak.

Much of what she'll have to say is based on her soon-to-be-released book, "The Balanced Plate: The Essential Elements of Whole Foods and Good Health," by Rodale Press.

"The green wave has arrived," Renee said over a wonderfully flavorful vegan lunch she created at her oceanfront home in South Maui. "It's such a hot media topic. A current affair. It's great not to have to reinvent the wheel."

Renee found this out on a recent media blitz to New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, where she went to promote her book.

"I started in L.A., posing for a cover shoot for the Experience Life magazine with a circulation of 500,000. They did a beautiful shoot at a six-acre farm in Malibu. It's nice to know there are farms near L.A."

In New York, coincidentally enough, she met with the producers of the "Martha Stewart" show. An episode featuring Renee is tentatively scheduled to air, date to be announced.

Renee says she was a little anxious as her "best friend in the world," Alicia Silverstone (the actress best known for her role in "Clueless"), said she was a green Martha in one of the star-studded testimonials in the book.

"I was a little anxious as to how the producers would take that. But they loved it," she admitted. "They were very up to snuff about things eco-green. We were really on the same page. They even plan to integrate greening on their show. I was like a beacon of information and I showed them the tricks of the trade."

But for the really clueless, not the acting clueless, what IS green, anyway?

"Going 'green' is about sensible living in eco-balance," explains Renee. "It's a verdant way of living that does not mean forfeiting comfort and convenience, but simply choosing things that are better for us, better for our kids and better for the planet. Everybody wins."

"It's choosing food, cleaning products, energy and materials with consideration to the repercussive effects on our health, homes, precious land and water. Organic food and locally grown food, nontoxic and biodegradable cleaning products, renewable energy and sustainable materials are all part of the 'green' framework that will allow our future generations to flourish."

So green seems to be the topic du jour — and, if you are living a lifestyle that's anything but — then you're as politically incorrect as aerosol spray cans, GMOs and foie gras.

The Green Machine is also why she's recently been featured in Conde Nast Traveler magazine and was taped in New York City for an upcoming "CBS Early Morning Show."

"The response was fantastic," she says. "I'm so pleased. Going into these meetings, you never know what you'll be up against. What I discovered, is that green is now a household concept. It's no longer left-leaning, tree-hugging gorillas who are leading the charge."

Indeed. In this week's stories pouring into The Maui News over the AP Wire, there were features on everything from green burials to green fashion to green travel

The "tipping point," according to Renee, was an entirely green spring issue of Vanity Fair. "It's such



She's the blue-eyed
Queen of Green

story by Dining Editor CARLA TRACY

DOMINIQUE PANDOLFI photo

Maui author Renee Loux will launch her latest book at the LifeFest Kapalua health and wellness weekend by conducting seminars on its contents.

Her upcoming book: "The Balanced Plate: The Essential Elements of Whole Foods and Good Health" will be published by Rodale Press.

Testimonials: "This book is awesome. There is so much great information. It's an encyclopedia, dictionary, and basic manual for clean, healthy, inspired, delicious living. Renee is like a green Martha Stewart, making green living as easy as pie. I've had the pleasure of eating lots of Renee's food — YUMMY! I can't wait to start making these recipes!"

Alicia Silverstone

"A book to feed us and keep us company as we all wake up to the fact we are all One."

Helen Hunt

"Renee brings to the table the unbounded joy of someone in love with life and good

health" (as written in the foreword).

Dean Ornish, M.D.

Pre-launch signings: She will sign her books after each of her seminars at LifeFest Kapalua. Cost of book is \$21.95.

Seminars: Will be held at Ritz-Carlton Kapalua. Living Cuisine & The Balanced Plate is a cooking demo and talk Sept. 9 at 10:30 a.m. and Sept. 10 at 2 p.m. Green Kitchen, Green Home is Sept. 9 at 2 p.m. and Sept. 10 at 10:30 a.m. Cost is \$20.

About LifeFest: The weekend includes a host of other seminars and functions with keynote speakers such as Dr. Andrew Weil and Tim Sanders (see related story, Page C3). For more details or to book tickets, call 669-2440 or visit kapalua.com. The author's Web site is www.reneeloux.com.

a major, stylish and intelligent source and it rocked its readers."

In addition, Newsweek and Time have dedicated major space to things green. And Al Gore's latest book, "The Inconvenient Truth," "has sent ripples through the industry," she says.

But how did someone so young (age 30) grasp green would be so hot, so colorful, and be able to justly articulate it into a book?

"I'm a research hound. I'm like a night owl. I genuinely enjoy doing research and understanding how things work," she said, between bites of her fabulous Andalusian gazpacho with avocado sorbet, and chopped summer farm salad with browned tempeh, both from recipes found in her book. "I like to put it all together, make it conceptual so that it's user-friendly."

Renee has been in the thick of things green for years and as her biography says, she has, "walked and worked in many circles."

She was first interviewed by the Dining Scene in this newspaper in the mid 1990s, when she was a partner in the Raw Experience restaurant in Paia. It was on the cutting-edge of raw, organic vegan fare in the country at the time.

In the story, titled "Rawsome," her restaurant partner Jeremy Safron said, "Renee is a master chef and food artist as well as a raw foods alchemist." Over the years, she's loosened her eating habits to now include cooked foods and a little wine but she is still totally vegan by nature.

In more recent years, Renee sold her interest in the eatery and consulted, taught and concentrated on writing full time. As her biography says, "Some celebrities and musicians caught on and demand for her skills grew with invitations to some outrageous places."

One such celeb is Woody Harrelson, and she's a contributor to his 2005 book, "How to Go Further — A Guide to Simple Organic Living with Woody Harrelson and Friends." She's also contributed to a pamphlet on GMOs.

"I had pretty good rounds in the Hollywood world and the political world," she says of her years consulting with private clients with a focus on green living and whole foods.

Then she met her future husband, a well-known Maui entertainment producer and restaurateur, whose name is Shep Gordon. Wait a minute, the guy who makes everyone else famous?

Yes, Shep was the guy who started the Hawaii Regional Cuisine movement in the islands and he has also been in cahoots with many celebs as their manager, promoter of products and just plain good friend.

But don't think Renee is tagging onto his laurels. Her book is awesome, a true resource guide to keep around the house, a veritable wealth of information on things green.

At the interview, Shep swung by the say "Hi" and the newlyweds seemed to be positively glowing. Renee later revealed they were married by the Dalai Lama in October.

"I had been around the Dalai Lama before, prior to meeting Shep," she says. "But his marrying us here in our home was a moment to remember. An unexpected gift. The one thing I learned from His Highness is to have no expectations. It was beyond what I'd hoped."

In fact, the Dalai Lama is even in the book and offers a few words of wisdom, such as "Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon." It may not be green, but it's fun.

In "The Balanced Plate," Renee says the Dalai Lama "embodies happiness and compassion with such strength and sweetness. He holds so much with such a light heart and contagious giggle, even in the face of great challenge. May the world catch the wave."

"He's planning another trip to Maui next April to appear at the MACC and the Dharma Center," she said over green tea lemonade.

With the Dalai Lama's blessing, it's no wonder
See QUEEN OF GREEN on Page C3

Feel the mana with Hawaiian healers at LifeFest

Hawaii is rich with culture and has always had a history of healing practices to rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit.

The third annual LifeFest Kapalua, being touted as Hawaii's premier health and wellness weekend, offers participants a rare look into these cultural traditions and their impact on healthy living. It will be held Sept 8 to 10 at the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua Resort.

LifeFest will bring together Hawaiian experts known for their traditional practices. Attendees will learn how to improve life through these many workshops and presentations the traditional island way while being in one of Maui's most beautiful and serene settings.

Clifford Nae'ole, Hawaiian cultural adviser of the Kapalua Resort and the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, will lead E Ala E ceremony at the ocean's edge Saturday and Sunday mornings. The experience is free and open to the public.

An ancient chant and cleansing ritual, E Ala E celebrates the rejuvenation of one's life and pays homage to one's ancestors.

Ritz-Carlton Kapalua's cultural adviser, Clifford Nae'ole, will host several Hawaiian seminars throughout the LifeFest Kapalua wellness event Sept. 8 to 10.

"Your prescription towards wellness will begin as early as 5:30 a.m. on the shores of Honokahua Bay," says Nae'ole, referring to the time his E Ala E ceremonies will kick off each day over the weekend. "By the time the sun rises you will have come to terms with your actions and conduct from days past and life begins anew!"

Nae'ole is the kind of kindred spirit will can make the crowd feel the mana, the divine power, of Hawaii.

"I'm honored to start each day in remembrance of those who came before us," he says. "This is a chance for all of us to set aside our daily activities and to be open to self-discovery while exploring and embracing new possibilities that may arise. It is especially refreshing to be able to do this at home on Maui alongside guests and residents who are as enthusiastic about Native Hawaiian practices as I am."

Over the LifeFest weekend, the public may buy tickets to attend the many other Native Hawaiian presentations highlighting the importance of indigenous healing traditions and their significance to conventional healthcare.

Noted local practitioners include Kumu Ramsay Taum, Kahu Kapi'ioho Lyons Na'one and guest panelist Elizabeth Kapu'uwailani Lindsey. Valuable information on both the healing arts and mainstream medicine will be discussed. Kumu Taum is

the special assistant to the dean on Host Culture and Community Affairs at the University of Hawaii Travel Industry Management School at Manoa and a practitioner of ho'oponopono (stress release and conflict management), lua (battle art) and haha (alignment practice).

Kahu Na'one is a Hawaiian practitioner and expert in la'au lapa'au (Hawaiian herbal medicines) and ho'oponopono.

Cultural anthropologist, award-winning filmmaker and former Miss Hawaii, Dr. Lindsey, is an international speaker with a passion for expressing and articulating her knowledge of ancestral wisdom and how it can help the modern world. Raised by Native Hawaiian elders, she is the great-granddaughter of Hawaiian chieftains, English seafarers and Chinese merchants.

Certified Hawaiian healing instructor/facilitator and medicinal specialist Dr. Maka'ala Yates will guide guests through a Hawaiian sweat, or Hale Pulo'ulo'u.

This ancient purification ritual will be held in a transformation house, or hale, and is intended to help the body release toxins and impurities as well as facilitate emotional release, mental clarity and physical healing.

A la carte tickets start at \$20 for lectures and workshops. Power Passes are also available. Visit www.kapalua.com or call 669-2440.

