



OPENING REMARKS

By Kamala Nayeli, Hi-Spa President



As we approach the midpoint of 2025 and navigate both personal and professional challenges, let us be reminded of the struggles and victories that have brought us to this very moment. Clearly, we have mastered the art of resilience. My hope is that we can continue to weather the storms, celebrate our successes and look back on this year as one of remarkable growth and empowerment.

I would be remiss if I didn't also share my vision for the Hawaii Spa Association. After successfully hosting the first event last month and now preparing for our next Shop Talk mid-July, this community of spa enthusiasts stands to gain valuable insights to enhance our skills and foster relationships that only those living on our beautiful islands can appreciate.

Thank you for continuing to support the Hi-Spa initiatives and please share how best we can be of service to you.

THE STATE OF TOURISM IN HAWAII

by Lena Andrade, Board Member

Over the past few years, we have all observed significant changes in visitor trends across our islands. While tourism steadily increased from 2020 through 2023, the momentum began to slow in 2024 — and this deceleration has continued into 2025. Visitor arrival numbers have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels seen in 2019.

Notably, many of the international markets that dominated prior to COVID-19 have yet to fully recover, and current forecasts suggest they may not return to those previous levels soon. This shift can be attributed to several factors, including lingering travel restrictions, fluctuations in currency strength, reduced travel options, and the rising overall cost of travel.

In addition to changes in origin markets, we are also seeing changes in travel behavior. There has been a noticeable increase in short-term rentals, a decline in overall visitor numbers, but longer average stays and more inter-island travel. These emerging patterns suggest a new type of traveler is engaging with Hawaii in different, more intentional ways.

The recent travel advisories related to visiting the United States may also influence visitor behavior, particularly among international markets. While our strongest visitor base currently comes from the Western U.S., it remains to be seen how these developments might further impact European and other global travelers.

On a positive note, the visitors we are welcoming today are more selective and intentional with their spending. They are prioritizing quality over quantity, actively seeking out unique, meaningful, and harder-to-find experiences. They appear to be making the most of their time on the islands and showing a strong interest in authenticity and connection to Hawaii.

These shifts in visitor behavior present both...

THE STATE OF TOURISM IN HAWAII ...continued

challenges and opportunities for our businesses and communities. They encourage us to rethink how we engage with this evolving audience:

- How do we connect with travelers who no longer fit the traditional visitor profile?
- How can we capture their attention when so much of their trip is planned before arrival?
- Where are the key platforms or touchpoints we should be using to reach them — especially when they are constantly on the move?

In our recent Shop Talk, we invited everyone to share their insights, observations, and ideas. What trends are you noticing? How are you adapting to these changes? And most importantly — what can we do collectively to better respond to the evolving needs and interests of today's visitors?

Let us continue to explore new ways to grow, innovate, and strengthen Hawaii's visitor experience.

For those who want to dig deeper, please go to the following link: [2025 Spring Tourism Update - Hawaii Tourism Authority](#).



WELCOME NEW HI-SPA MEMBERS

Anne Ridgely (Farmer and Founder of Shine Naturally)

Donna Dodier (Esthetician/Account Sales Rep for Spongelle)

Alex Huynh (Owner of Hawaiian Beauty Products)

Paul Vierling (Owner of Wailana Spa)

Judiah McRoberts (Manufacturer for Kauai Hemp Company)

Satomi Goo (Sales Manager for Tea Chest)



Hawaii Spa Promotion

Universal Companies now offers \$2/pound shipping to island spas.

For more information, please contact UCo at UniversalCompanies.com or call 800-558-5571

RECAP OF SPA EVENTS

by Mary Ronnow, Event Planner

Hi-Spa 2025 Event: Unlock the Secrets to a Thriving Spa Team

The Hawaii Spa Association held our in-person event on March 27th at The Skin Institute International. Our featured guest speaker was CC Cameron, PhD., a global leadership consultant from San Diego. The event and timely topic proved to be a high energy workshop and discussion about the challenges of leading diverse teams from varying generations and personality styles. Dr. Cameron gave real-world strategies and proven leadership techniques to unify a diverse workforce, motivate, collaborate and build trust with teams of various backgrounds, work ethics and aspirations.

Several members came from neighboring islands to attend the event and enjoy pupus while networking. A special thank you to the following vendors for their generous swag bag and raffle contributions, offered to all attendees →→→

Ola Hawaiian Body Products
Shine Naturally
Hawaiian Beauty Products
Lechat Nails
Bao-Med
TIZO
Nelly DeVurst Black Coral Wax
Gylmed
Naturopathica Physiadermie
Dr. Bradford Lee
TSII

ISPA CONVENTION 2025

I enjoyed the opportunity to attend the 35th annual iSPA conference held at the beautiful Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, March 10-13. The following is a summary of my takeaways:

Inspiring power sessions were presented by Amy Purdy, former massage therapist and double amputee, who went on to become a paralympic medalist and second place contestant on Dancing With the Stars. Equally inspiring was Will Guidara, author of Unreasonable Hospitality.

Some of my favorite workshops were:

The General Manager's Perspective, where Ann Alba, Spa Director at the Broadmoor, described extraordinary customer service stating, "If the request is not life threatening, illegal, or immoral, we will do it for our guests".

Another favorite was Elevating the Spa Experience by Michael Conte of Forbes Travel Guide. He reminded us to scrutinize our guest experience from first contact in reservations to departure and everything in between.

I am always inspired when attending iSPA. The effort is worth it. The power sessions are life changing and the workshops are extremely valuable, but the greatest learning takes place at the dining table when one has the opportunity to communicate with, listen to and understand what other industry professionals are experiencing. I love making new friends and am reminded of what a privilege it is to meet lovely people and spa professionals, who are as dedicated as I am to serving the guest in our industry.

Next year the iSpa event will be held at the Venetian in Las Vegas.



Photo credit: International Spa Association

AN OASIS OF CALM: Middle East Spa Escapes

by Darryll Leiman, Hi-Spa Treasurer

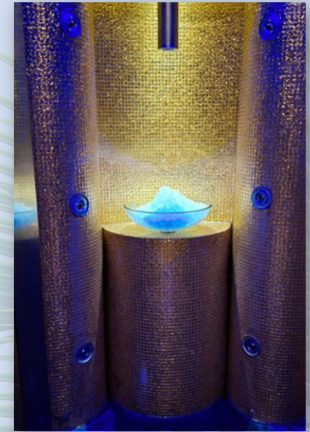
This past December 2024, Darryll took a trip to the Middle East, visiting Dubai, Qatar, Bahrain, Sir Bani Yas & Abu Dhabi. Of course, a focus of interest was seeking out some of the world renowned spas. The opulence and extravagance were almost overwhelming, matched only by the level of guest service and sense of hospitality experienced in almost every spa visited. As difficult as it was to pick, the two spas that left a lasting impression were:



MO Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi Spa Skin Care Treatment Room

The Spa at Mandarin Oriental, Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi.

Not having any appointment I arrived at the Emirates Palace Hotel, said to the security guard at the entrance of the hotel that I had a spa appointment and proceeded to the spa nestled at one wing of the sprawling but breathtakingly beautiful hotel. At the front desk, I took the liberty of dropping **Jeremy McCarthy's** name. Jeremy is the Group Director of Spa & Wellness of Mandara Oriental's internationally acclaimed luxury spa division, whom I knew back when he was next door at Four Seasons Maui Spa and I was at Grand Wailea Spa. Jeremy's name got me to have the front desk Concierge call the spa director, **Bruce Lawrence**, who made me feel so welcome and personally showed me around his gorgeous spa, blending an Arabian and Moroccan theme featuring a hammam, ice cavern among a range of other features. What a treat to visit such a spa, the winner for the 3rd consecutive year of Abu Dhabi's Best Resort Spa by World Spa Awards, 2024 <https://www.mandarinoriental.com/en/abu-dhabi/emirates-palace/spa>



MO Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi Spa Ice Cavern



MANDARIN ORIENTAL

Another highlight of my trip was visiting the **Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach's Pearl Spa** where I met none other than our "own" former Hi-SPA President, **Amanda Schmiede**, who is the Spa Director there and manages two other Four Seasons Spa locations at Dubai's International Financial Center and Al Maryah Island in Abu Dhabi. It was such a treat meeting Amanda again. Unlike the aloha attire we were accustomed to see Amanda, here she was in the most elegant, dressy business attire, high heels and all. I had to smile when we posed for a photo (see attached), because of the high heels, Amanda kindly and considerably bent over so she would not seem that much taller than me! Needless to say, Amanda's spa was most beautiful, in-keeping with the highest standards of Four Seasons' elegance, featuring a hammam (see image), and staff smiling, professional and extending the highest levels of warmth and guest service (and THE best coffee at the adjacent Shai Salon I have EVER tasted.) Such a treat! <https://www.fourseasons.com/dubai-jb/spa/>



FOUR SEASONS

Four Seasons Dubai at Jumeirah Beach Pearl Spa Hammam



Darryll and Amanda at Four Seasons Dubai at Jumeirah Beach Pearl Spa