

# MidWeek

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## A Little Hideaway On The Beach

March 10, 2006

By Jo McGarry



Jo McGarry photo

Fred DeAngelo's Ola at Turtle Bay is literally on the sand

When Fred DeAngelo called me a few months ago to tell me about his new restaurant, Ola at Turtle Bay, he spoke enthusiastically of the beautiful location right on the beach. I remember thinking at the time that it must be within a few hundred yards of the ocean and with a fairly good view for him to be so excited.

I finally drove out there a couple of weeks ago - and discovered he wasn't exaggerating at all.

Ola really is on the beach. So when DeAngelo talks about the waves lapping in, the sound of the ocean breaking at night and the feel of sand between guests' toes - he's telling the truth.

"It's literally right on the sand," he says with a huge grin. "It's a little hideaway that's romantic and fun. You can come and have a great day at the beach or come and enjoy it as a romantic place for dinner."

The gorgeous restaurant opened quietly in December - its formal opening is this week - and since sliding back the glass doors to the ocean, things have been busy.

"We've been really fortunate," says Fred. "We have a lot of local people who've come from the North Shore to visit us, and we're getting a lot of Mainland visitors too."

It's the first time in a decade that Turtle Bay has a restaurant it can proudly boast of to its guests.

Visually, it's truly beautiful. "The supporting beams are made from ironwood trees," says Fred. "When we saw the room for the first time we felt there was such a connection to the land and the ocean. It felt like a really special place."

The connection is one that DeAngelo and his wife Cheryl take seriously. Ola means "healthy, living, alive," and the two are determined to feed guests with as much healthy, "alive" food as possible.

Eggplant comes from Matsuda Farms just across the road from the resort. Tomatoes are from Terry Shintaku's wonderful Hauula farm. Bread is baked locally. Beef comes from the North Shore Cattle Company.

"A lot of people haven't had the opportunity to try some of these local products," says Fred, "and this is one way to help introduce them to the community."

As well as serving local fruits, vegetables and meat, Ola has great access to local fish.

"We have fishermen going past the restaurant every day," says Fred. "The bay here is a great spot."

Go for lunch and you'll find an incredible menu that offers everything from great salads, grilled fish, pasta, sandwiches and some truly tasty specials.

"Lunch on the beach is fun, and it should be great and quick and good and healthy," says Fred. "So we put together a whole pile of great sandwiches, salads and pupu with an emphasis on local ingredients."

There are vegetarian and even a couple of vegan dishes on the menu (Hamakua Mushroom Risotto, for example) that are so delicious they'd satisfy even the hungriest carnivore.

Try the bruschetta salad if you want some laid-back, beachside dining that tastes wonderful. On grilled foccacia

bread, Fred has roasted eggplant, fresh garlic-herbed oil, fresh mozzarella, local asparagus, basil, pine nuts all topped with a balsamic drizzle. It's just bursting with color and flavor - and really gives a good idea of Fred's contemporary island cuisine. The food is worth the trip, the view across the bay is outstanding, and at night, the room transforms itself into a perfectly romantic hideaway. All done with a refreshingly casual approach.

"Everyone here has a passion for Hawaii," says Fred of the Ola team. "We believe in this place and this vision, and we want to share it with the local community - not just the tourists. When people come to Ola we want them to feel like they're coming to our home."

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