

PONSONBY NEWS⁺

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VIVE LA FRANCE

LONG-TERM LOCAL RESIDENT DAVID PARKER

Landlord, entrepreneur, husband, dad & supporter of sustainable development, pictured with his wife Corrina and daughters Ava & Tallulah at Frank Parker House, Brown Street, Ponsonby



WELLNESS & WELLBEING WEEKEND @ HUKA LODGE

Join three locals Megan May of Little Bird, Lucy Vincent of Sans and yoga expert Nikki Ralston for a fabulous weekend. **Diary Date: Friday 15 & Saturday 16 September. Ponsonby News talked to Nikki Ralston about the event.**

For those not familiar with your style of yoga, can you let us know what to expect at the Wellness Weekend at Huka Lodge in September?

I developed The Ralston Method from my love of movement, the tradition of yoga and my deep understanding of the physical body. We use the body as a vehicle to explore the mind, develop a deeper understanding of the self and challenge our perceptions. Each day will start with a dynamic class to build heat and open the body and we learn to focus the mind by finding a deeper sense of alignment within the practice. Over the weekend guests will gain valuable insights and understanding into their own bodies, beliefs and patterns, through workshops with me where we break down key principles and experience. Our energy will be sustained throughout by Megan May's exceptionally nourishing cuisine. The evenings will conclude with breath (Pranayama) sessions and meditation, setting guests up for deep restful sleeps.

How important is the connection of this setting to the yoga you will practice with guests?

There is something about being surrounded by nature that helps to bring us back to our own true nature. We get so caught up in the busyness of life, its easy to forget what is truly important. At Huka Lodge you are emerged in the abundance of the natural environment, so you can't help but slow down and breathe a little deeper, taking in the beauty of the land. This retreat is all about regaining balance



and nature is a key part of that. We will practice yoga in my favourite part of the lodge with the view to the river; I could happily just sit there all day!

Do you think it's possible to balance some of life's indulgences with wellbeing in general?

I feel that mindset is of key importance when it comes to general wellness. If your daily habits are eating clean, nutrient-dense foods, exercising in a way that makes you feel good and taking the time to clear out the clutter from your mind, you are bound to make better choices. Once you commit to this, you feel so good that you don't really want to feel anything less than amazing and your choices start to come from an informed place rather than a deprivation or excess mind state. If you do choose to indulge once in a while, then don't waste your time feeling guilty about it or beating yourself up, just get back on to what makes you feel good inside and out.

When you travel, do you always make time for yoga and where is one of the most memorable places in the world you've done this?

When my partner and I travel we basically yoga, workout and eat our way around new places! I've been fortunate to practice in some epic places but my top two have to be Hawaii while looking out to humpback whales playing. The other was doing an outdoor class in Squaw Valley together, under the clear blue mountain skies. I am so grateful to have a partner that loves to do yoga with me; it's great time for us to bond and both be in a happy, calm state together afterwards.

Many of our readers lead busy lives and would like to simplify things. Do you have any tips for achieving this on a daily basis?

We are all busy, but for most of us the greatest busyness is in our minds. If we want to start enjoying our life more and feel good, we need to consciously create the time to do more of what feeds us. Carving out time every day to do something that strengthens you, whether that is quiet time to meditate, read or draw or whether it's getting your feet on the earth, walking or dancing, spending time with friends... whatever it is that recharges your soul do it! If you're short on time and can't get out in nature for a walk, then at least go outside and stand barefoot on the earth. After all, life is for living, if we slow down and learn to appreciate the small moments, we might one day realise that they were in fact the most memorable. PN

www.hukalodge.co.nz/occasions/events/huka-lodge-wellness-retreat-2017