

Oahu



+hans hedemann surf school

New Otani Kaimana Beach
Hotel, Park Shore Waikiki,
Outrigger Reef on The
Beach, Sheraton Waikiki,
Kahala Hotel and Resort,
Turtle Bay Resort (North
Shore) (808) 924-7778
www.hhsurf.com

How much: Two-hour group
lesson, \$75. Private lessons
available.

Little Surfer Girl

By Sherie Char and Jenny Quill

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO LEARN HOW TO SURF. BEING FROM ARIZONA, WHERE WATER and water sports aren't exactly plentiful, and not being the most athletic person to begin with, I've been somewhat hesitant to take up the sport. Still, I'm not getting any younger, so, after living on Oahu for two years, I figured I'd give it a try.

There are countless surf schools, but the Hans Hedemann Surf School stands out, with 17-plus years of experience and a roster of celebrity clients (Adam Sandler, Cameron Diaz and Justin Timberlake, to name a few). The school, founded by the former pro surfer of the same name, has six locations on Oahu.

I signed up for the two-hour group lesson, which began with a 20-minute introduction to paddling, safety and the proper stance. Once each student had demonstrated how to stand up on the board, we set off for the beach, 12-foot-long boards in tow.

After paddling through the throngs of swimmers, we reached the inside break, and each waited our turn with the instructor. Once in position, he gave the command to paddle, followed by a gentle nudge into the wave. With a shove, I felt the rush of white water behind me. Despite my initial fear of watery death, I managed to stand up—and stay standing. I'd caught my first wave. I was in love.

I caught several more waves; I wiped out on a few, too. At the end of the day, I had exhausted all of what little upper-body strength I had. My only regret? That I hadn't done it sooner.

—JQ