

"The biggest gift that you can give yourself is a yoga practice – a practice that is your own, that's m, that's not dependent on a studio or a teacher, it's just you. All it takes is you and your attention."

- Schulyer Grant, Kula Yoga Project founder and Wanderlust co-founder

Wanderlust

By Nicole Cheslock

Thousands of people will immerse themselves in yoga and music at the Wanderlust Festival in the Village at Squaw Valley USA from July 28 to 31.

"MINDFUL LIVING," a focus on conscientious consumption ... all things we stand for used to be marginalized, hippie, lefty ideals, but over the past 10 years they've been accepted by mainstream culture," explains Jeff Krasno, who founded Velour Music Group with good friend Sean Hoess. Together they created Wanderlust with Schulyer Grant, the director of Kula Yoga Project and Krasno's wife.

It's difficult to imagine better founders than this accomplished trio. Krasno loves music. Years ago, he convinced Hoess to leave a high-paying job at an elite law firm to launch the record label and management company. Grant, Krasno's sweetheart since they were students at Columbia University, opened her first New York studio in 2002, and Krasno says he followed her to yoga retreats around the world. He observed the yoga movement "expand and explode" and came up with the concept that guides Wanderlust, a festival that combines his lifelong passion for "music with soul" and the escalating, widespread interest in yoga and wellness.

The first Wanderlust festival took place in Olympic Valley in 2009 across the country from their home in Brooklyn, N.Y. Fast forward to this year and there are more than a dozen Wanderlusts events from coast to coast including Yoga In The City, a seven-city tour celebrating the modern day culture of yoga.

With a nod to the adage that all who wander are not lost, Wanderlust offers a chance to deepen your understanding of yourself, your surroundings and the world. Of course, there is yoga (taught by some of the best instructors in the world) and music (an equally inspiring line up), but that is not all. There are opportunities to discuss ideas and shared passions with entrepreneurs, yogis and film producers, as well as an assortment of guided meditations, thought-provoking art including the Spiritual Cinema, five inspiring films including "Yoga Woman," "Kumaré," "Wake-Up," "Connected" and "Heart of Transformation." Stand out hikes include Hoof It To Heaven with Schulyer Grant and Nikki Vilella, Take Me To The River meditation with Shiva Rea and hikes with naturalist David Lukas who will focus on birds, flowers, trees and rocks.

Yoga

The instructors at Wanderlust are one of the biggest draws. Some are storytellers and writers. Others are dancers and acrobatics, and some have developed new forms of yoga based on guiding ancient principles. Renowned instructors including Grant, John Friend, who developed Anusara (a yoga practice with a strong emphasis on physical alignment and positive philosophy derived from Tantra), and Shiva Rea, teach many of the classes.

Bend, twist, turn, laugh, jive and reflect at Wanderlust California, the festival's flagship event in Olympic Valley. With more than 60 instructors and a range of yoga classes from meditative to strenuous, the challenge is choosing which classes to attend (there are even classes with Hoopa Hoops).

You don't have to be a yogi to take full advantage of the opportunities to learn. So, even if terms like savasana, the relaxed, corpse pose intended to rejuvenate mind, body and spirit, or prana (breath or life force) and pranayama (the practice of breathing) are unfamiliar, Wander-

lust offers a welcome introduction to a variety of poses and styles. It's a great time to discover.

Anusara, Ashtanga, Hatha, Vinyasa and variations like Corepower yoga and AcroYoga, which incorporates Thai massage and acrobatics, will be featured this weekend. In yoga, flow refers to constant movement from one pose to the next (so when you see class descriptions on the Wanderlust Web site that mention flow, you'll be moving).

Ashtanga, a fast-paced yoga including a series of poses, is generally a more physically demanding experience than something like Hatha, which tends to be slow-paced, gentle and focus on basic poses. Hot Yoga, true to its name is done in the heat – expect no less than 95 degrees.

The emphasis in Kundalini is on the breath with movement for the purpose of freeing energy in the lower body and allowing it to move upwards. In Kundalini, the exploration of the effects of the breath on the postures is key. Vinyasa, the term for breath-synchronized

movement, is used to describe many different types of classes. In general, Vinyasa is a more vigorous yoga style. Grant developed Kula Flow, a deeper, challenging Vinyasa practice with an emphasis on creativity and alignment. Shaelah Morris, founder of Studio Tahoe in Truckee, blends love, passion and play into her classes. She'll be teaching an energetic and challenging Vinyasa class with live beats by DJ Hyfi in her 2 p.m. Bhakti Bliss Class on July 29. Find your bliss as you flow through sun salutations, standing postures, arm balances and inversions.

"Wanderlust is an incredible way to bring together the yoga community and music in nature. It's about creating awareness in a positive, fun, multi-dimensional way for all levels and with people from all over the world," Morris says. "There are all kinds of positive people experiencing nature, the mountains and the beauty around us. It's so amazing to have a world-class festival right in our own backyard. It's healthy ... people get a natural high."

Music

Get down with amazing performers including the headline show with Michael Franti and Spearhead on Saturday night. Wanderlust also brings extraordinary talent like MC Yogi, a full-time yoga teacher and performing artist who blends his love for hip hop music with yoga. Like Wanderlust, he brings the ancient and modern together, and it's bound to be powerful with the wildflowers and granite walls of Olympic Valley as a backdrop.

Wanderlust's first release (from newly founded Wanderlust Records) is "Flying" by Garth Stevenson, a bassist who will perform during yoga classes and on morning meditation hikes.

With more than two dozen performances including vocalists, one-person jam bands, hip-hop, jazz, dub and electronic, big bands and so much more, it is worth a day trip to the Village at Squaw Valley just to get your groove on in an incredible venue with a passionate bunch of people. See the Entertainment feature in this issue for details on the live music.

Food & Wine

Wanderlust also offers some good eats. There will be a food co-op with organic produce and prepared meals and snacks on site every day, as well as a Farm To Table dinners at 7 p.m. on July 29 and 30. Start off with Caprese Skewers, Portobello Truffle Fries and an Organic Mixed Greens salad. Entrées include Herb Roasted Free Range Chicken with Wild Mushroom Quinoa, Crispy Citrus Brown Sugar Crust Striped Bass Brûlée, Heirloom Bean Cassoulet with White Polenta Cake and Grilled Vegetables and, to top it off, an assortment of Farm Fresh Desserts. The total cost, including two glasses of wine, is \$55.

Wanderlust celebrates local, organic and biodynamic wineries at Uncorked from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Enjoy wine from more than a dozen vineyards each day for \$20.

Find your bliss. Participate one day or all four days. Hikes and yoga begin at 8 a.m. and the festival continues into the wee hours. The Web site has it all – schedules, bios and tickets. If you haven't already scheduled your classes, you'll need to arrive early and schedule classes on-site. Visit www.wanderlustfestival.com.



DETAILS

July 28-31
Village at Squaw Valley
 One day **\$99.50-\$134.50**
 Three days **\$375**
 Four days **\$450**
 Music only passes **\$24.50-\$34.50**

www.wanderlustfestival.com

