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Aloha: This time, it's not a goodbye: LA trainer relocates, streams classes at request of students (/special-sections2/sections/your-health/60485-alo-ha-this-time-it-s-not-a-goodbye-la-trainer-relocates-streams-classes-at-request-of-students)

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Courtesy of Michelle Melendez

Michelle Melendez, appearing on-screen in the background as she livestreams from Hawaii, leads a Pilates class for students at Marti's Dance Studio in Los Altos.

Pilates Full Body instructor Michelle Melendez's move from the Bay Area to the Big Island of Hawaii in January was inevitable, she said.

"I had been there on and off for the last 20 years," Melendez said in a phone interview with the Town Crier last week. "Have you ever heard the expression 'Hawaii calls you'? The islands call people."

Although the move was a necessity for Melendez for personal reasons, curtailing her relationships with the classes she led at Marti's Dance Studio in Los Altos was not. Members of Melendez's Pilates program, many of whom had attended her classes for more than eight years, urged her not to quit.

Melendez saw a yoga or dance class online many years ago and thought the concept was something she could emulate; she always wanted an online fitness business, even prior to her move, she said.

"When I travel the world, I film workouts," Melendez said of her online venture, dubbed Get Fit, for which she began building a virtual library of classes in 2017. "I have created an online forum for that, but now, (in addition) I get to teach live classes and be there with my Los Altos clients, which is super fun."

Even Melendez's mother has gotten in on the action: The instructor now sees her mom during her longer-established Tuesday morning classes that livestream to parties across the globe.

"She has hardly worked out in her life," Melendez said of her mother, quiet laughter filling the receiver. "She told me she still doesn't like it, but her balance had waned."

LIVE, FROM HAWAII

After a month of working with various technologies, a new projector with better image quality has proven to be a game changer, and her live classes are coming together. Melendez called her first live Los Altos class April 15 "a huge success."

"It's been a challenge," she admitted about her Monday and Thursday morning classes. "Now I can see everyone in the room, and there is a trainer there who watches for form. I could allow other people to join in, but that's been my class for so long that I want to focus on just them."

Melendez believes her students favor her Pilates classes over others because they consider them more of a "fusion." During the workout, Melendez gives her students an added level of gratification by incorporating toning, interval and foam-rolling movements into her Pilates regimen.

"I used to teach boot camp and I realized people needed more – they needed Pilates (too) – so I put it all together," Melendez said, adding that she has been a trainer since 1996. "But then when I became a certified Pilates instructor, I found students still needed endurance toning and foam rolling."

Given the age range of most of her students – 40s and 50s, with one 70-year-old thrown in for good measure – that’s what the body needs, she noted.

Relocating was a seamless change, Melendez said. Finding a place to live wasn’t difficult and island living has been great.

After taking her clients up on their challenge and perfecting her virtual setup, Melendez seems to be riding the perfect wave.

For more information on Melendez’s program, Pilates Full Body, and how to get a free one-week trial, visit PilatesFullBody.com or call (866) 339-4438. YOUR HEALTH Aloha: This time, it’s not a goodbye LA trainer relocates, streams classes at request of students COURTESY OF MICHELLE MELENDEZ Michelle Melendez, appearing on-screen in the background as she livestreams from Hawaii, leads a Pilates class for students at Marti’s Dance Studio in Los Altos.