

whole life times

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2012

APOCALYPSE OR AWAKENING? beyond the hype

Grammy Winner

MICHELLE BRANCH

off the tour bus and into the garden

HEALTHY HAWAII

recharge on the big island

EAT, DRINK and BE LOCAL

gourmet chefs host in the 'hood

MSG IN DISGUISE

new names for an old toxin

Holiday GIFT GUIDE

Contributors



George Fuller

Author James A. Michener once referred to those of us irresistibly drawn to flecks of land in distant seas as nesomaniacs, "mad about islands." I must admit to being so afflicted. I've lived in Hawaii for 10 of the last 25 years, the past 12 months on the Big Island. Here, we are surrounded by traditional Hawaiian culture, but also have easy access to everything from organic produce to dozens of yoga studios to swimming with dolphins and sea turtles in a warm ocean. The Big Island restores, renews and amazes me every day.



Nicole Pajer

With the rise of hormones and chemicals in our food, I've become increasingly concerned with learning where my meals come from and have been making a conscious effort to support organic/local farming. After learning that Michelle Branch grows her own fruits and vegetables, had a chicken coop installed in the backyard of her Los Angeles home, and does daily yoga to keep her grounded, I was excited to learn more about her healthy habits.



Dan Eldridge

Independent travel culture and the self-improvement scene have both played hugely influential roles in my life, and yet it isn't every day that I stumble upon a story idea in which those two themes are combined. And that's exactly why I find Leon Logothetis, the driver of the Kindness Cab, so endlessly fascinating: Not only has he managed to spread good karma and goodwill throughout the world, but he's created a fantastically unusual career for himself in the process. What could possibly be better than that?



Azeen Ghorayshi

When I moved from LA to Berkeley in 2006, I was immediately awed by the area's renegade food culture. Rooted in ideas of sustainability and ethical food sourcing, the movement also aims to shift concepts of conventional dining environments, leading to the increasing popularity of underground supper clubs. This story was a perfect chance to see how a particularly unconventional supper club got started right here in the Bay (and how it could eventually migrate to my very own LA).



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Cool to Be KIND

The Kindness Cab delivers a goodwill message

Rush hour in midtown Manhattan has just shifted into full gear, and a sea of bright-yellow taxicabs streams down Fifth Avenue. But on the corner of East 52nd Street, two New Yorkers—Katie and Allie—are climbing into an entirely different sort of cab. It's a vintage British taxi painted dark forest green, driven by author and reality TV star Leon Logothetis, who relocated to L.A. from London six years ago. Over the next 20 minutes, Katie and Allie will traverse west in the green taxi, then head south in bumper-to-bumper traffic through the neon-lit heart of Times Square and down Seventh Avenue.

It's a ride that's worth about \$12 in Manhattan, but when the cab finally arrives at its downtown destination, neither woman pays. Instead, Logothetis gives them each a hug before posing for pictures, and then offers up two free copies of his new autobiography, *Amazing Adventures of a Nobody*.

Unusual? Without a doubt. And that's because this particular vehicle—officially known as the Kindness Cab—is anything but a typical New York taxi.

Manhattan was the launch point for a three-week cross-country trip to L.A. in the Kindness Cab, offering free rides in 11 cities along the way. Logothetis set out October 24 to spread a bit of altruistic goodwill throughout the United States, a

country that had been particularly kind to him during the filming of his reality TV show, also titled *Amazing Adventures of a Nobody*, back in 2007.

Of the show, he explains, "I was required to travel across the country on a budget of just \$5 a day. And so of course I had to rely on the kindness of strangers for things like food, shelter and transportation."

Logothetis claims the experience literally transformed his life. And in an effort to repay the positive energy and selflessness he encountered, he came up with a philanthropic angle: The taxi's meter ran whenever passengers were onboard, and Logothetis donated the total amount—around \$11,500—to two nonprofit organizations.

"The Kindness Cab touched so many lives," Logothetis says, cruising down an L.A.-area freeway on the tour's final day. "I connected with so many people, and the Cab put lots of smiles on lots of people's faces. To me, that's what it's really all about."

—Dan Eldridge



Leon Logothetis with passenger David Arquette



Photos: Inset, Steven Privolos; Bottom, Dan Eldridge

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