



## **HALEKULANI OKINAWA AND BLUE ZONES™ ANNOUNCE 2026 LONGEVITY RETREAT**

*Weeklong Curated Well-being Experience to Honor the Spirit of Shuri Castle's Restoration and Traditional Artistry*

**Okinawa, Japan – April 22, 2026** – [Halekulani Okinawa](#), the only Double Five-Star luxury resort in Okinawa, today announces the return of the Blue Zones™ Retreat, now in its third year. Scheduled for Oct. 18-24, 2026, the immersive well-being program invites guests to experience the traditions and heritage of Okinawa – one of the world's original and most storied blue zones, renowned for its culture of longevity. Designed as a transformative journey for the senses, the retreat explores the centuries-old customs that have shaped Okinawan life and contributed to the region's remarkable vitality.

This year's retreat centers on the theme "The Wisdom of Living Heritage." The expanded program introduces newly curated, immersive experiences, including a private visit to Shuri Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site nearing completion of its restoration, and an intimate exploration of the Kakuman Shikki lacquerware studio, marking more than 120 years of craftsmanship. By engaging with traditions that bridge history, guests will discover how time-honored practices continue to shape daily life and well-being in Okinawa. The program includes specialized sessions led once again by certified Blue Zones facilitator Celine Vadam, which introduce the foundational principles observed in the world's longest-lived populations and offer practical ways to apply these insights beyond the retreat setting.

While the retreat provides an immersive introduction to these practices, its purpose is to help guests better understand how everyday environments and routines can support long-term well-being – and how elements of these conditions might be applied to their own lives.

"Each year, we aim to deepen the connection between our guests and Okinawa's cultural heritage," said Kenji Fukunaga, General Manager of Halekulani Okinawa. "This retreat offers a meaningful way to experience traditions that continue to shape the Okinawan way of life and inspire well-being."

### **Retreat Highlights: Arts & Culture**

- **Kakuman Shikki Workshop and Studio Visit:** A visit to a historic lacquerware maker, celebrating more than 120 years of heritage. Guests will experience a mindful moment of creative immersion through "tsuikun," a raised-relief technique that reflects Okinawa's craftsmanship traditions.
- **Salt Amulet (Maasu) Workshop:** Participants learn about the custom of carrying "maasu" (salt) for protection and well-being. Guests will weave "adan" (screwpine) leaves to encase the salt, creating a personal amulet while connecting with a cultural practice rooted in intention and tradition.

- **Karate Experience:** In the birthplace of karate, guests will practice fundamental forms (kata) and traditional breathing techniques to harmonize body and mind while gaining practical insights for daily health.
- **The Restoration of Shuri Castle, UNESCO World Heritage Site:** A guided visit to the final stages of the castle's reconstruction. Participants will explore the resilient spirit of "chimugukuru" (the spirit of the heart) and awaken inner resilience.

#### **Retreat Highlights: Culinary & Beverage**

- **Awamori Distillery Visit:** Guests will discover the spirit recognized as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage and learn about the role of black koji in subtropical climates and fermentation traditions.
- **Onigiri Bento Workshop:** Through the art of arranging ingredients in a bento style, visitors will rediscover a mindful, nourishing approach to eating that reflects everyday Okinawa habits.
- **Mocktail Workshop:** Participants will enjoy spirit-free drinks crafted by Halekulani Okinawa's mixologist using local plants and ingredients, learning about their natural properties while savoring refreshing, balanced flavors.

**Retreat Highlights: Blue Zones Workshops:** Visitors will experience sessions on the Power 9<sup>®</sup> principles – nine lifestyle habits shared by the world's longest-lived populations – and learn how these principles can be applied to guests' own environments and routines. *(Conducted in English)*

Available exclusively to guests of Halekulani Okinawa, rates for the six-night, seven-day retreat start at 816,000 Japanese Yen per person (approximately \$5,127 depending on exchange rates; includes tax and service charges). The rate includes accommodations, roundtrip airport transfers, all retreat programming, food and beverage credit of 78,000 Japanese Yen (approximately \$490 depending on exchange rates; includes tax and service charges), as well as two arranged lunches and dinners.

For the full itinerary and booking information, visit <https://www.okinawa.halekulani.com/en/events/bluezones/>.

#### **About Halekulani Okinawa**

Halekulani Okinawa, the second hotel from the leading Hawaiian resort of the same name, is a Forbes Travel Guide Double Five-Star beach resort and spa located in Onna Village on the main island of Okinawa. Featuring a variety of accommodations built to emphasize the geographic features of its surroundings, the luxury property sits on 32 acres of lush land within the Okinawa Kaigan Quasi-National Park and faces approximately one mile of coastline. Halekulani Okinawa is home to a diverse array of facilities including four restaurants and two bars. In addition, the property features the award-winning SpaHalekulani, a fitness center, a luxury boutique, over 2,550 ft<sup>2</sup> of meeting and convention space and five swimming pools, one of which is adorned with nearly 1.5 million mosaic tiles in the shape of Halekulani's signature Cattleya orchid. Halekulani Okinawa is the third property in Japan to join *The Leading Hotels of the World*, an exclusive collection of the world's most extraordinary luxury establishments. For further information, please visit <https://www.okinawa.halekulani.com/en/>.

#### **About Blue Zones<sup>®</sup>**

[Blue Zones](#) employs evidence-based ways to help people live better, longer. The company's work is rooted in explorations done by National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner to identify and research the blue zones regions around the world, where people live extraordinarily long and/or

happy lives. The original research and findings were released in Buettner's bestselling books *The Blue Zones Solution*, *The Blue Zones of Happiness*, *The Blue Zones*, *Thrive*, *Blue Zones Kitchen*, *Blue Zones Challenge*, and *Blue Zones American Kitchen*, and *Blue Zones Secrets for Living Longer* — all published by National Geographic books. A hit docuseries, *Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones*, was released on Netflix in 2023. Using original Blue Zones research, Blue Zones works with communities, neighborhoods, organizations and individuals to make healthy choices easier through permanent and semi-permanent changes to our human-made surroundings. Participating communities have experienced double-digit drops in obesity and tobacco use and have saved millions of dollars in healthcare costs.

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