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Harmony and hook-ups at Feng Shui

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How could one's curiosity not be aroused by the quirkiness of a party called Feng Shui daring to assume a one-week-only Mardi Gras theme?

The 400-plus post-midnight revelers who showed up in force for last week's special edition of the Saturday weekly were certainly curious. They overflowed from the roomy interiors of Ciao Mein restaurant into the equally accommodating expanse of the Hyatt Regency Waikiki's fourth-floor outdoor pool deck.

The large turnout was a nice surprise on a evening filled with other intriguing after-hours Waikiki parties to choose from (Twilight at the Hanohano Room; Rebel Girl Underground's first birthday at Chuck's Cellar, The Goodness at The W). But even without the multicolored bead necklaces handed to us upon entering and the near-invisible Mardi Gras theme, it's not difficult to decipher why Feng Shui has been doing well since going from monthly to weekly late last year.

Feng Shui is blessed with a great location and inventive layout. Want to dance? Explore the restaurant interior, where two dance floors and a handful of side rooms ideal for hidden conversations offer a range of music volumes. Want to check out the action on Kalakaua Avenue, chat with music as a background, or have a smoke? Chill outside on the pool deck with its two bars and enough deck chairs to spare.

Hardly a fan of parties whose hosts simply don't know when to stop letting people through the doors, I was pleased that Feng Shui managed to keep an impressively roomy feel about it despite drawing a large crowd. Inside or outside, there was always a place where one could get away from the masses for some privacy.

The crowd was nicely diverse, as well — a mix of patrons that, based on fashion choices (hip-hop, dressed-up and Gap culture were duly represented), looked as if they could've stumbled out of any one of the other Waikiki parties. Another Feng Shui reality impossible not to notice: the serious amount of very serious macking going on.

"Are you both married?" an eager male asked of two women apparently bent on taking him for all the cash he could spend on drinks for them. Both women answered affirmatively.

"Good ... 'cause so am I," he purred, proudly displaying the wedding ring to prove it. Yuck.

Another bonus for yours truly, as a former Hyatt Waikiki employee: watching mid-level managers I still recognized nervously eyeing the club crowd as it traipsed carefree (but quite well-behaved) through every nook of Ciao Mein's well-appointed environs.

That would've been entertainment, beads or no beads.

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Jessica Eji of Kahala, Brenda Bauer of Kane'ohe and Jonathan Wilson of Kane'ohe chat on the Hyatt Regency Waikiki's outdoor pool deck.

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Dancers have a choice of two dance floors at the Feng Shui weekly party.



The weekly party really packs 'em in at the Ciao Mein restaurant. At right in the foreground, that's Chris Knoot and Ashley Freeman, dancing with the rest of the crowd.

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