

SECTIONS

ANOTHER Democrat Sex Cult Exposed: 'sexual servitude' at San Francisco- based 'orgasmic meditation' company

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By **Michelle Robertson**,

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 Nicole Daedone, former CEO and founder of OneTaste, is seen in her Russian Hill home office on Wednesday, May 18, 2011 in San Francisco, Calif. Photo: Russell Yip, The Chronicle

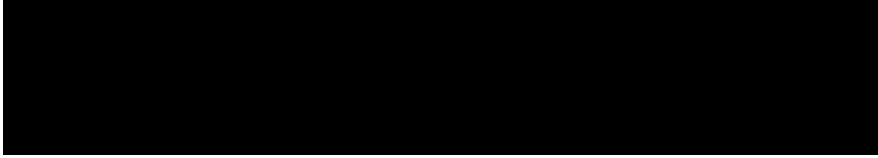


Photo: Russell Yip, The Chronicle

IMAGE 1 OF 18

Nicole Daedone, former CEO and founder of OneTaste, is seen in her Russian Hill home office on Wednesday, May 18, 2011 in San Francisco, Calif.



Former employees of OneTaste say the San Francisco-based wellness company encouraged them to spend thousands of dollars on orgasmic meditation classes and, in some cases, engage in sexual servitude, according to a report.

Bloomberg Businessweek interviewed 16 former OneTaste employees, some of whom compared it to "a kind of prostitution ring" that sometimes used its teachings to justify sexual exploitation and abuse. Some said they were coerced into sexual acts they did not want to perform. The report says OneTaste settled out of court with a former employee who filed a lawsuit over alleged sexual assault and harassment in 2015.

READ ALSO: A night out at OneTaste's Museum of Awkward

Michal, another former employee, said she and her husband left the organization with \$20,000 in debt, having spent \$150,000 combined on OneTaste's costly classes and retreats, which range in price from a \$199 introduction course to \$16,000 "intensives." Multiple interviewees said staffers encouraged them to open additional credit cards to cover the cost, and they acquired serious debt in the process.

Dr. Danielle Roberts is based out of New York where the alleged cult operated, but she holds a Wisconsin medical license and traveled to the Badger State to treat patients. According to a federal

indictment, the accused ringleader of the group, Keith Ranier, founded a company -- NXIVM -- in which women were recruited, branded with his initials and used for sex.

Media: WISN

On its website, OneTaste touts itself as a lifestyle brand intended to increase "health, happiness and connection through proven methods combining meditation and conscious sexuality."

Those methods include "orgasmic meditation," or OM (pronounced ohm) for short. OM is a trademarked practice that typically involves a clothed and gloved man stroking the genitalia of a woman, who is naked from the waist down, for 15 minutes. There is no goal "other than to feel the sensation," the OneTaste website says. A container on the site describes the organization as a "consciousness-based clit stroking community."

OneTaste denied allegations of sexual coercion and abuse in an email to SFGATE on Monday. The company said the Bloomberg story paints the company in a "false light, hand-picking the sensational allegations of a few while ignoring thousands of satisfied and happy customers," a spokesperson said.

"Moreover, all of the allegations are more than two years old from before OneTaste transformed, under new ownership and leadership, into a traditional company with strong corporate governance, clear-cut sales policies and practices, and strict HR policies."

Bloomberg Businessweek said some of the employees interviewed were involved with OneTaste "as recently as last year."

FROM THE ARCHIVE: Nicole Daedone's mission of orgasmic meditation

The OneTaste spokesperson said it is against sales policy to "pressure" potential customers to take out multiple credit cards, and those who ask for a refund typically receive one.

Since its founding by Robert Kandell and Nicole Daedone in the early-2000s, OneTaste and its clitoris-centric wellness practices have appeared in the pages of **The San Francisco Chronicle** and the New York Times.

In its 2009 profile, the **Times** cited former members saying Daedone, the former CEO of OneTaste, possessed "cultlike powers over her followers" and "sometimes strongly suggested who should pair off with whom romantically." Daedone, who previously ran San Francisco's 111 Minna art gallery, stepped down as CEO in 2017, a departure that coincided with the purchase of the company by new owners, the OneTaste spokesperson said. Daedone taught four courses in 2018, but is not scheduled to teach additional classes at this time.

Over the past decades, the company expanded from its mid-Market San Francisco headquarters — next door to Uber HQ — to Los Angeles, New York and London. It plans to open in four additional cities over the next two years.

Read the full Bloomberg report **here**.

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