

Snow? Sleet? No Problem. You Can Still Hang 10

Frigid waters and snow don't exactly make surfers want to scream, "Cowabunga!" Like the rest of us, they probably dream of escaping to a warm surf, thatched huts and palm trees. And they are finding it in ... Nashua. Yes, Nashua.

SurfsUp indoor surf park in Nashua provides the experience of ocean or river surfing in a 10,000 square foot indoor wave pool, without the sharks or hypothermia. The first of its kind in the United States and the largest indoor wavepool worldwide, Surfs-Up celebrated its one-year anniversary in December and is about to introduce its ninth new wave option.

Owners Laurie and Rob Greer say the park attracts around 200 people a day during the busiest days, or about 12 people for every 30 minute session, but declined to discuss revenue or revenue growth. Housed next to **SkyVentureNH**, a wind tunnel for indoor skydiving, the two attractions together draw thousands of visitors annually and fill 2,000 rooms a year at the nearby Radisson Hotel Nashua. People have traveled from as far away as California and Dubai to use the indoor surf park, with one surfer from South Carolina renting the surf park for a daylong private session. Corporate gatherings and birthday parties also bring in business.

For Laurie Greer, the park is a dream come true. Greer grew up water-skiing on a lake and loves surfing, but not in the icy cold ocean. "This is my island getaway for people who want to be somewhere warm in winter in New England. I have real palm trees, real thatched huts. Everything you see is authentic, all the way down to the [tropical wood] carvings. I



Robbie Goodwin expertly rides the waves at SurfsUp.

shipped those from Hawaii," she says. The multimillion dollar installation is covered by a glass roof that is retractable in nice weather.

The surfing is also authentic. The machine, which uses 100,000 gallons of fresh water, can create nine kinds of waves in the 32-foot wide surf area, including a 6-foot high barrel wave, a river rapids wave and a boogie boarding wave.

John Luff, head of business development for American Wave Machine in California, the creator of the technology used by SurfsUp, says there are now eight parks worldwide, including Peru and Montreal. The company developed two types of wave pools, Surfstream and Perfect Swell. "Surfstream is akin to river surfing. We essentially have a river we can turn on and off," Luff says, adding it can also mimic barreling ocean waves, the kind "I paddle out for even with no guarantee I'll catch it. For ocean surfers, barrels is what we aspire to."

The Nashua venue quickly attracted attention, and in August held the Eastern Surfing Association's first sanctioned indoor surf contest. The surfing area also includes a climbing wall and the fish pipe water ride, a huge ball filled with 10 gallons of water that spins at 45 revolutions a minute and mimics a 1,600-foot water slide. The fish pipe cost \$20 a person for a 90-second ride and 30-minute group surf lesson costs \$45 to \$60, with private sessions running up to \$1,000.

For more information, visit skyventurenh.com/surfsup_nh.php



Business NH Magazine Associate Editor Erika Cohen makes her surfing debut.