

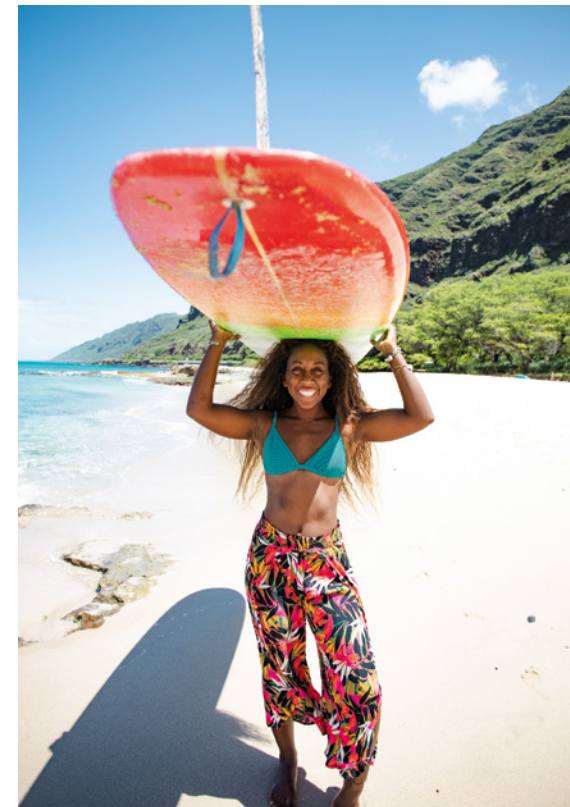


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01 In Hawai'i, where Nique now calls home, she says she's never felt more like herself.

02 Parallel to her playful spirit, Nique approaches every session with competitive strategy.

03 Nique has excelled on the World Stand-Up Paddleboard Tour.



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Although she has fond memories of swimming in the Atlantic and combing the beach for shells with her family, Nique admits that it was moving to Hawai'i—for a cross-country and track scholarship at the University of Hawai'i—that allowed her to finally feel a deep sense of belonging. "I have never felt more like myself than here in Hawai'i. It was the first time in my life that I felt accepted for my skin color and wild hair. Growing up on the mainland, it wasn't that cool or great to be the dark kid, but here the darker the better!"

Nique couldn't resist the magnetic pull back to the ocean. The birthplace of surfing culture swept her up with its barefooted, easy-going island time and rich cultural diversity. She got on her first surfboard in Waikiki when she was 18 and learned by eyeing the best surfers in the line-up and mimicking their style, positioning, and maneuvers.

Today, Nique has a style all her own. The goofyfooter is only 5'2", but her graceful longboarding approach creates a queenly perch. She hangs ten with nimble shifts of weight, both powerful and statuesque, and her ability far exceeds the relatively few years she has called herself a surfer.

Nique entered her first surf contest with just a couple of years experience under her belt—and placed in multiple disciplines. She favors her two 9'0" high performance noseriders and a heavier 9'2" log for the rolling rights of Pops, Threes, and Kaisers—her favorite waves in Waikiki. She's been

Nique Miller



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especially successful competitively on her 6'10" high performance stand-up paddleboard, on which she finished fifth in the world in 2018.

Despite identifying as a "mellow person," Nique says that she approaches her surfing with focus and ambition. Most days, she is in the water twice a day. "I take surfing very seriously, even though I do it for fun and relaxation. I try and make every surf session a training session. I like being fully focused when I'm in the water and trying to catch a lot of waves and perform high quality maneuvers" to prepare for competition. Her goal is to win a world title. "I would really love to be the first AfroLatin woman of color to win a world title. I think it would be really inspiring to young girls to see that it is possible, even in a sport that is mainly white."

Nique lacks in neither talent nor drive, but funding her competitive schedule has been the most frustrating hurdle to date. In professional surfing, sponsorship provides the majority of funding to help aspiring surfers pay for the expensive travel costs of getting to contests around the world. This is especially true in longboarding and stand-up paddle boarding, where the competitive tours are less established and provide minimal prize purses.

Like many up-and-coming competitive surfers, Nique holds down a full-time job to fund her competitive travels. She managed to find a job that allows her to blend her love of the ocean