

Editor's letter



Full disclosure: I absolutely adore Hawaiʻi. And apparently I am not the only one; there has been a 158 per cent increase in Australians flocking there of late, from a modest 121,482 in 2009 to a record-breaking 313,054 in 2014. I personally have a quorum of friends who return there each and every year to holiday and have fun (and shop).

It's the paradise effect – the allure of endless sun, sea and sand delivered to a lilting ukulele soundtrack that seems to permanently waft in the warm Pacific winds (OK, I could be over-romanticising that last bit a tad), as well as the fact that it's a really great value for money holiday option. But, with such a well-worn path being beaten to Hawai'i, is there anything left to see that hasn't been seen (and Instagrammed) by thousands before you? Absolutely!

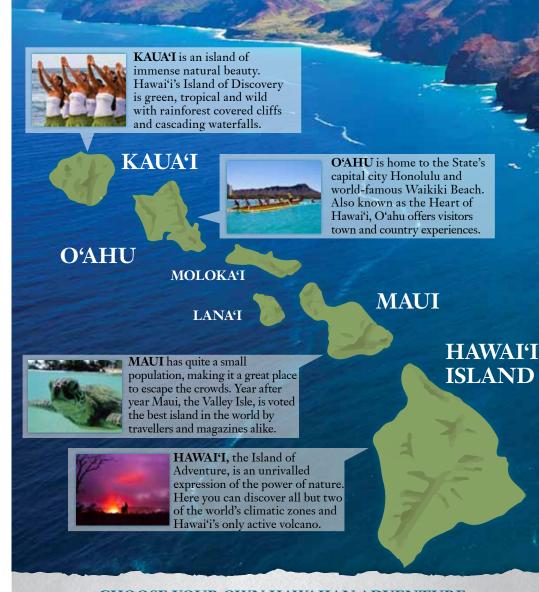
When we set out to put this little gem of a guide book together we decided to hunt down the bits that go largely unexplored by visitors ticking things like Waikīkī Beach and Pearl Harbor off their lists. And we were spoilt for choice. From exquisite museums dedicated to Islamic art (trust us, it works) to hamlets where the wonderful Hawaiian ethos of 'hang loose' still dictates the pace of life to the splendours of the less visited but no less compelling neighbour islands, there was so much to choose from – and so much more we could have included with a limitless page count and an open-ended ticket (now there's an idea).

So, we hope that you love reading about all the places that you never knew you were going to love – and when you get over to Hawai'i and discover some of your own secret gems, by all means let me know about them so I can add them to my own list. Enjoy!

dugh Ann Pow

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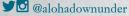


CHOOSE YOUR OWN HAWAIIAN ADVENTURE

Hawai'i's six islands offer an incredible range of unforgettable holiday experiences. The Hawaiian Islands offer something for everyone, from rest and relaxation, soft adventure and championship golf to incredible shopping, delicious cuisine and energising nightlife.

gohawaii.com/au

facebook.com/alohadownunder







VANS TRIPLE CROWN OF SURFING

Kind of like the triathlon of surfing, this ultimate test of wave-taming runs through November and December and combines the Reef Hawaiian Pro, the Vans World Cup of Surfing and the Billabong Pipe Masters for triple the thrills. vanstriplecrown of surfing.com



HAWAI'I FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

Hawaifi's volcanic soils and pristine waters ensure some of the best produce available: ripe tropical fruits, organic beef and the freshest seafood. Chefs then combine these with European and Asian flavours for a unique fusion. Over 100 chefs from around the globe descend to show off their skills each August/September. hawaiifoodandwinefestival.com

HONOLULU FESTIVAL

Celebrating the vibrant culture of the Asia-Pacific region, this three-day festival in March comprises talks, exhibitions and performances all of which are family-friendly and free of charge. The whole thing concludes with a massive parade through the streets.

KONA COFFEE FESTIVAL

First started in the '70s and taking place each November on Hawai'i, the Big Island, this 10-day festival celebrates 200 years of coffee growing in the Kona district of Hawai'i Island. With over 40 events, sample the best coffee in Hawai'i. konacoffeefest.com

KAUA'I MARATHON

their salt will have this

list. Up there in stature

Any serious runner worth

marathon on their bucket

with the London and New

York events, the run takes

vou through the island's

beauty. If the full event

one of the top 10 halfs

World magazine.

in the world by Runner's

thekauaimarathon.com

is a bit much, there's always the accompanying half marathon – voted

spectacular natural

MASTERING THE INTRICACIES OF THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE

Hawai'i is the only State in the US with two official languages, Hawaiian, which is the native language and English, the most commonly used language.

There are 13 letters in the Hawaiian language (a e i o u h k l m n p w $^{\circ}$) including the $^{\circ}$ okina which is a glottal. It also includes a macron called the kahakō used to elongate vowels.

Useful words to know and use:

- Aloha used to say both hello and goodbye
- Mahalo thank you
- 'Ono good/tasty
- Keiki Child/children

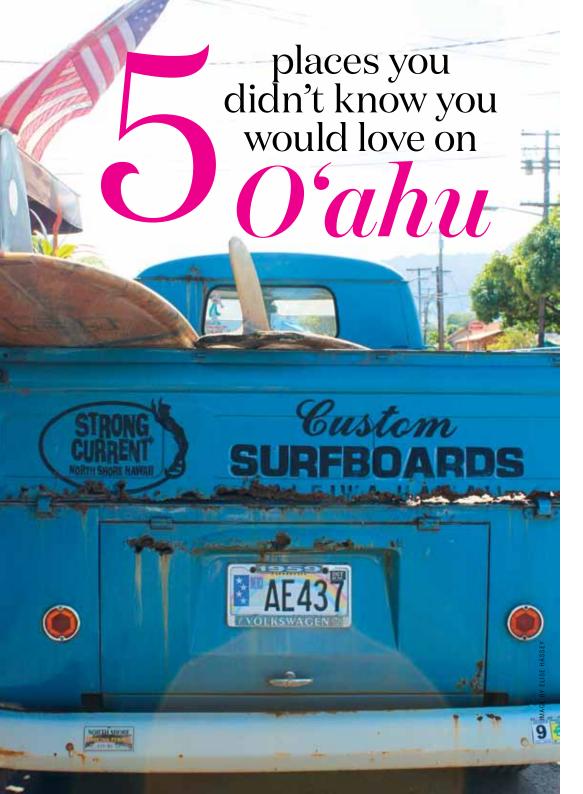
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ALOHA style

Relaxed and tropical, but oh-so-stylish, here's what to buy when you get there to ensure lots of fun in the Hawaiian sun.







Once you've swum at O'ahu's beautiful beaches, shopped up a storm and indulged in the fabulous culinary scene, here's some other must-dos.

If, like me, your misspent youth involved watching vintage Elvis Presley movies - most notably Blue Hawai'i - and The Brady Bunch re-runs, you probably imagine that O'ahu still exists in a 'hang loose' haze of happiness and hibiscus flower shirts. Yes and no: Honolulu is a modern and cosmopolitan city with all that that implies. Sure, there's a version of it on Waikīkī Beach, but is it authentic? Maybe not. In order to really experience the 'hang loose' ethos you are going to need to hire a car and search it out. The best place to do this? On the island's North Shore. Hugging the Pacific coastline, the North Shore is a collection of world-renowned surfing beaches - Sunset Beach, Pipeline and Waimea Bay - anchored by the relaxed, barefoot town of Haleiwa. The long main street here is lined with the hallmarks of a true beachside hamlet - food trucks doing a roaring trade in butterladen fried shrimp (Macky's and Giovanni's are famous), surf shops with deckchairs out front where locals sit and talk (Strong Current's T-shirts make cool souvenirs), cafés with screen doors and wide outdoor decks. On the weekend there's a traffic jam of locals

heading out to catch a wave, their surfboards sticking out of their cars' back windows, and on occasion the car park of the local hardware shop is given over to a mass BBQ, with countless chickens roasting. Stop for a coffee at Coffee Gallery in the North Shore Marketplace - they roast their own beans (roastmaster.com) - or join the line at Matsumoto Shave Ice to sample the local delicacy.

A haven of Moghul Indian and Middle Eastern art and antiquities is not something you'd assume to find in Honolulu. But that's what makes Shangri La, heiress Doris Duke's utterly sublime home, perched on the edge of the Pacific Ocean in the shadow of Diamond Head, such a delight. Duke was the original 'Poor Little Rich Girl' who inherited millions when her father died in 1925. At the age of 23 she set off around the world on her honeymoon; the marriage didn't last but Duke's adoration of Islamic art and architecture, first discovered in the palaces of Moghul India, endured a lifetime. As did her love of Hawai'i, the last stop on her honeymoon, where she eventually built her home in the late 1930s. Over the



vears Duke filled the house with a world-class collection of treasures: 900 Iznik tiles. entire carved and painted rooms shipped from Syria; marble screens from India; and an ancient hand-painted prayer nook from a mosque in Veramin, Iran. While it is now a museum, there are no signs trumpeting its proximity and no ticket booths to queue at: access can only be gained as part of a small tour which starts at the lovely Honolulu Museum of Art (another secret gem), before being driven by minibus along quiet suburban streets and through an unmarked gate. Volunteers guide you through the house and lush gardens: no free range roaming and absolutely no touching. But such limited access to something so beautiful makes the experience feel like a privilege. shangrilahawaii.org

The long main street here is lined with the hallmarks of a true beachside hamlet - food trucks doing a roaring trade in butter-laden fried shrimp.

China MAKING WAVES IN TOWN

Still up on the North Shore, Waimea Valley is off the Kamehameha Highway and a few minutes' drive up the Waimea Valley Road from the big surf waves of Waimea Bay. Having been awarded to the local Kahuna

Nui in 1090 by the ruler of O'ahu, the land here was lived on and cared for by the descendants of the high priests until 1886. The 758 lush green hectares that make up the valley are littered with sacred sites, wildlife and









Japan and Hawai'i will be forever linked in the collective conscious due to the events that took place at Pearl Harbor on the morning of 7 December 1941. But long before that infamous day, the Japanese had established a history of immigration to the islands to work in the sugar cane and fruit plantations. The intricate Byodo-In Temple, perfectly framed by the Ko'olau Mountains, in the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park, was dedicated in 1968 to mark the 100-year anniversary of the first Japanese immigrants arriving in Hawai'i. A more modest replica of the 950-yearold Byodo-In Temple in Uji, Japan, inside sits the stunning Amida Buddha, a gigantic gold

statue thought to be the biggest of its type outside of Japan. The lush temple grounds have a Meditation Pavilion, and the Bell House. with its three-tonne brass bell cast in Osaka with permission from the Japanese government. And endless tranquillity. You can feed the countless koi that crowd the Shinji-ike reflection pond (fish food can be bought in the gift shop) and the strutting peacocks make a perfect picture if you can catch them at just the right time, showing off their plumes in front of the temple entrance. And if a lei is too obvious a souvenir of your holiday, there's always a kimono from the the gift shop. byodo-in.com



Chinatown, minutes away from the legendary hotels and longboards of Honolulu, reveals a wave of activity. Start in Maunakea Street where fragrant plumeria or frangipani, tuber rose and exquisite orchids are woven into leis and gorgeous haku lei po'o or headdresses. The oldschool Maunakea food market reflects Hawai'i's rich ethnic diversity with Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese and other Asian nationalities selling a startling array of boat-fresh fish, buckets of blue swimmer crabs, neon-pink salted duck eggs and Chinese greens. For a fast meal, try the food hall (cheap and delicious) or nearby Pho 97 for Vietnamese soup.

The area's still a little edgy but some of the city's hippest new restaurants, channelling Hawai'i's burgeoning organic/

local/farm-to-table food, are found here. Lucky Belly, all raw brick and timber benches, leaps cultural cuisines in a single menu: tacos, soba, tempura, bao, kimchi. We loved the spicy shrimp tacos. A take-out window at the side caters to a late-night crowd until 2am.

At The Pig and the Lady, chef Andrew Le – inspired by his mum, his Vietnamese heritage, Hawaiian produce and who knows what else serves up seriously eclectic fusion food. Pork and seafood, betel leaves, wasabi greens, parmesan, purslane, hand-cut noodles, house-made pasta.

Livestock Tayern, with its urban warehouse look feels an ocean away from Waikīkī. The seasonal 'American eatery' menu spans harvest, sea, swine and fowl, but the Tavern Burgers are always on offer.

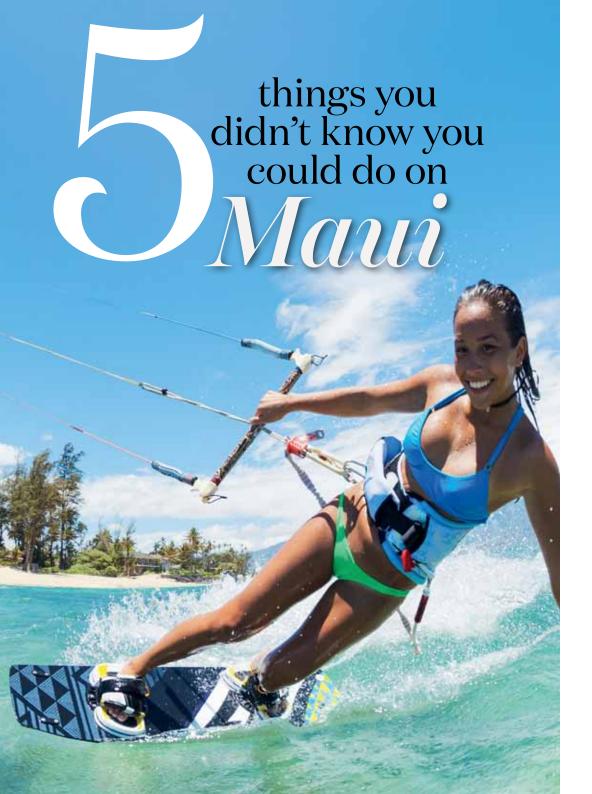




Grondin serves French-Latin fare with an Hawaiian accent (crazy but delicious!); Kan Zaman does Moroccan and Lebanese (and check out the cute outdoor dining deck); Scratch Kitchen is about simple, rustic and made from scratch food. The breakfast musttry is the pound cake French toast with lemon curd and berries. Calories? Who cares?

Enough of food: browse the edge-to-edge 'old Hawai'i' tchotchkes and collectables at Tin Can Mailman for that funky gift. Pop into Roberta Oaks for modern Aloha dresses, hats, bags and a chat with Roberta herself, then scoot across the road to sample Madre Chocolate's bean-to-bar chocolates.

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Hawai'i's second-largest island boasts pristine beaches, lush green scenery, volcanic landscapes... but that's just the beginning.

Paia is an old sugar plantation town-turned-↓ trendy surfie pitstop, and while celebs also call this place home (local resident Willie Nelson is a regular at Charley's Restaurant & Salon) the town's vibe is very chilled. It may be a hot spot for top-tier windsurfing and kite-surfing, but it's also filled with quaint, single-storey clapboard buildings, board shops, surfie-chic boutiques (we loved Tamara Catz and Letarte for swimwear), little galleries and hip cafés. If you're en route to Haleakalā National Park stock up at Mana Foods, a health food super-store in an

old warehouse chock-a-block with organic, vegan and other healthy stuff; it's brilliant. At Café des Amis Mediterranean meets Indian meets Maui - try the fetta and spinach breakfast crêpes with a side order of Bombay potatoes, tropical juices and Lavazza coffee (really!). Stroll around to see yoga studios, a Buddhist temple, no huge resorts, no shopping malls and no one in a real hurry. Perfect. The water at Ho'okipa **Beach** is best left to the surfing/ windsurfing pros (it can be dangerous) but it's a beautiful beach and green turtles are often spotted on the rocks.





On the mid-slopes of the dormant volcano, Haleakalā, lies a rolling landscape of ranches and so-called gentlemen's farms, cloud forests, eucalypts, purple jacarandas and island-wide vistas. Historic Makawao is renowned as a paniolo or cowboy town. Yes, Hawaiian cowboys - that's something to get your head around. Cattle first arrived here in 1793 and cattle properties sprawl across the island. There's even a rodeo in July! You can saddle up at Pi'iholo Ranch, a nearby working cattle farm. At the rustic and organic Surfing Goat Dairy

they milk 70 goats twice daily. Their artisanal quark, chèvre and fetta are on many Maui menus, and their goat's cheese chocolate truffles are divine. At the family-owned Ocean Vodka Organic Farm, sugar cane is grown, distilled into vodka, blended with deepocean mineral water and bottled on site. You can taste-test and even pick herbs from the Martini Garden for your vodka cocktails. Or for an afternoon tea of lavender scones, visit Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm. Perched at around 1200 metres it has a rambling garden with more than 30 lavender varieties, and sweeping views.



The whole of Maui may be one big Zen retreat for some, but at Lumeria you can 'retreat, recalibrate and restore' to the next level in the 1910 residence built by Hawai'i's pioneering Baldwin family for its former plantation managers and staff. There's colonial-style furnishings and a fab location on the way to Haleakalā, with a serenely beautiful garden of tropical

fruit trees, scented plumeria, heliconias, coconut palms and native herbs. Yoga, meditation, massage, aromatherapy classes and even water sports such as windsurfing or stand-up paddling can fill your days, or you can just meditate by the pool. Food is local, organic and very Maui. If you fancy a little me-time away from the big resorts, this is definitely an option.



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The highway to Hana is a serpentine route through swathes of jungly rainforest, with spectacular seascapes where surf pummels rocky shorelines and sandy beaches, and waterfalls tumble into roadside pools. Mountain

streams spill past ferns, tulip trees, mango, guava, avocado and vast bamboo stands. Taro is still cultivated and church spires pop up through the greenery. All in all there are 620 curves, 46 one-lane bridges to cross (plus a few two-lane bridges), and countless local stalls where you can stop for shave ice, mountain apples or a slab of fresh-baked banana cake. The true secret, however, is at the end of the road - in the tranquil township of Hana. Stay at least a night to wake to the birds and feel the pace of old Hawai'i. Here, traditional ways are still strong, reflected in the deep respect for 'ohana

(family) and 'aina (the land). Travaasa Hana, a low-key, luxury retreat, is at the heart of the town. With tranquil gardens, an excellent restaurant, and a spa with a black stone pool, koi pond and ocean views. The simple Sea Ranch bungalows, with their generous decks, tap into the local spirit. Wander over to the 'mom-and-pop' Hasegawa General Store, started in 1910, to fossick amongst the stock, and don't miss the Cultural Center. Better still, take a hike or ride on horseback through the valleys and along the coastline (pack a picnic), to explore the secluded red sand beach of Kahailulu.



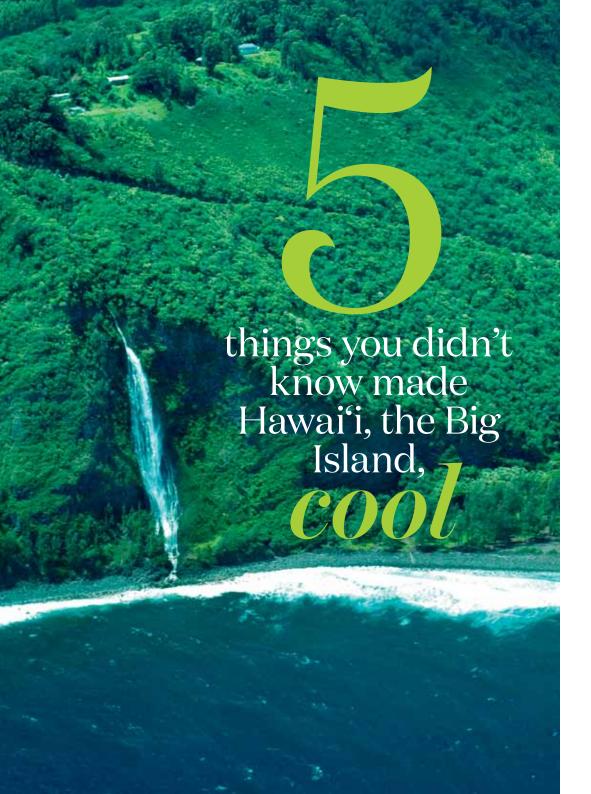
In the 1850s and '60s,

Lāhainā was the whaling capital of the South
Pacific, a wild town of bars, saloons and brothels, where
American whalers took their shore leave. With New
England-style buildings, the

1901 Pioneer Inn (still in business), and the 1859 Old Lāhainā Courthouse, there's heaps to see and heaps of tourists. The harbour is also the jumping-off point for cruises, whale-watching, diving and ferry trips to the islands of Moloka'i and Lāna'i.

But there are secrets to be discovered: if you want to eat, head to the edge of town. Mala Ocean Tavern may look beachshack basic, but it's perfectly sited right on the water. When the water's still, turtles feed on the mossy rocks. Location, location, location! Weekend brunch is a favourite with locals but you need to book.

Ahi (yellow fin tuna) bruschetta is a signature dish, but eggs hollandaise with fresh island fish of the day, amazing flax seed bread and sticky macadamia-nut bun are fantastic too. Next door stands Honu. All white and blonde wood, it offers dress-circle water views, a raft of seafood options (chowder, octopus, clams, ahi) and Maui salads (think kale, shiso, quinoa and pomegranate). Next again is Frida's Mexican Beach House, with splashes of hot pink, Barragan blue, iron chandeliers, a Maui-Mexican menu, an ocean-view and a maxi bar serving 40-plus tequilas.





Hawai'i Island, or the Big Island to its loyal devotees, is the ultimate combination of history, nature and an irresistible laidback lifestyle.

As you lay face down on the water's surface, gently Inapping your flippers, staring into the light-flooded night ocean, vast, spaceship-like manta rays glide up then turn, virtually belly-to-belly with you, their cavernous mouths agape as they filter feed. It's definitely up-close and personal - at once hypnotic and adrenalin inducing. The mantas swim in a mesmerising balletic dance, swooping and turning as they feed on microscopic plankton. Although one of the largest creatures in the ocean - even

small reef rays have wingspans up to four metres – they're gentle giants, with no stingers or teeth. The Hawai'i Island's Kona Coast is the best place in Hawaiii for snorkelling with manta rays. Professional divers put lights on the ocean floor at night to illuminate the plankton and attract the mantas. And it's beyond incredible. If you prefer to watch from a distance, Sheraton Kona Resort & Spa at Keauhou Bay has a special viewing area where mantas can be seen most evenings. You can have a drink at Ray's on the Bay.







It seems Madame
Pele, the Hawaiian
goddess of fire, likes
to stay busy. Kīlauea, her
favoured home and one
of the world's most active
volcanoes, has been oozing
out molten lava consistently
since 1983, creating more than
200 hectares of new land,
not to mention destroying
181 houses in the process.

As we fly over it in a helicopter, a surreal lunar landscape unfolds: pitch black and silvery-sheened lava, patches of red, liquid rock and burning trees trapped by the lava flow. After sunset, a glow lights the sky as

volcanic gas plumes out of Halema'uma'u crater. When the molten lava is most active, it spills into the ocean in a fiery, hissing act of creation.

In Hawai'i Volcanoes
National Park, south of Hilo,
visitors can follow the Crater
Rim Drive (almost 18km)
through misty, fern-filled
rainforest, past the volcanic
ash-cloaked Ka'ū desert, steam
vents, sulphur banks and pit
craters. There are hiking trails

and even camping, with the best view of Halema'uma'u crater from Jaggar Museum. Evening views are spectacular (there are night helicopter flights too). Mauna Loa, which is considered the world's largest volcano and last erupted in 1984, is also in the park.

Check the Visitor
Centre and park website
for excellent information
and activity updates: nps.
gov/havo/index.htm

Black sand and rock pools, calm waters, tilting palms, Chinese pines and stilt-rooted hala (or pandanus) - Hilo's Richardson's Beach has all the elements of a truly Hawaiian east-coast beach. Locals come here to relax, sit in the cool spring water-fed pools or the warmer ocean, and 'talk story'. You'll likely see sea turtles swimming, basking in the sun or feeding on the rocks. It's also good for snorkelling and lots of families come with their keiki (children).

Further north, the legendary 'Akaka Falls is easily accessible, and while it may be busy it is magnificent. Enveloped

in a jungle of flowering ginger, orchids and giant bamboo it plunges 135 metres into a gorge. Further north at Hawai'i Tropical Botanical Garden, paths meander through coconut groves, past hibiscus, bromeliads, heliconias and orchids, waterfalls and gushing streams.

There are fantastic coastal views, waterfalls, ravines and villages as you drive to the sacred, and beautiful, Waipi'o Valley. You can overlook the inky black-sand beach and cliff-rimmed valley, but if you want to access it you will need a 4WD or be ready to commit to an extremely strenuous hike.





Downtown Hilo has a wonderfully indie flavour to it – part low-key local, part hippy – with a mix of Hawaiian and plantation history and a multicultural mélange in a tropical outpost. It's balmy and wet and blessed with an abundance of plumeria, hibiscus, ginger flowers, banyans and coconut palms.

Downtown is peppered with heritage buildings, such as the splendid 1932 Art Deco cinema, museums (the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center is well worth a look), cafés and hole-in thewall take-outs. For authentic local fare, try one of the okazuya, Japanese-cum-

Hawaiian take-aways. Various fried morsels with sticky sauces nori-wrapped fried chicken, shrimp tempura, crumbed and fried ahi - are packed into bento boxes to to go. Hilo Lunch Shop is a favourite. A little more upmarket, Café Pesto taps into the town's plantation heritage – a 1912 building with palms and rattan chairs. The menu is mainly Italian, but covers most bases. And Conscious Culture Café serves fresh, organic food and home-brewed kombucha, while to sample super-fresh poke (pronounced poh-kay), the cubed and marinated raw fish Hawaiians love, try the Suisan Fish Market on the river.



Step into a world of sacred peace and tranquility and connect with Hawai'i's ancient past. A path weaves through a grove of palm trees with pale sand and spring-fed water pools; fierce, carved wooden images, or ki'i, guard a temple. A massive wall 300 metres long, built around 1550, separates the former royal grounds from the pu'uhonua or 'place of refuge', one of Hawai'i's most sacred historic areas within Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau National Historical Park on the Hawai'i Island's west coast. This was a place for

ancient Hawaiian royalty, with fresh drinking water and a safe canoe-landing spot.

If a commoner broke a kapu, or taboo (many taboos were punishable by death) and was able to reach this 'place of refuge', a kahuna pule or priest could absolve the person. A genuinely spiritual feeling pervades the park and the royal grounds with its impressive carvings, canoes and cultural artefacts are still considered sacred. Note - bring your swimmers and snorkelling gear; the adjacent 2 Step Reef is one of the best near-shore snorkelling spots in Hawai'i.

 $18\,$ hawaii travel guide $19\,$



On the oldest island of Kaua'i, many places are only accessible by boat, helicopter or serious hiking. Discover a world of hidden caves, endless waterfalls, remote beaches, primeval rainforest and ancient myth.

Nothing can prepare you for what's packed into this little island. The oldest of the Hawaiian Islands, Kaua'i is a Jurassic park of primeval rainforest, endless waterfalls, sheer cliffs and valleys, emerald ravines, canyons and palm-fringed beaches. If time's short - actually, even if time is not short - a helicopter tour is a must. You won't be disappointed.

As our helicopter swoops around a corner and Waimea Canvon comes into view, I am literally speechless. The rusty-red lava rock, partially cloaked in jade green, forms a gaping chasm with crags and gorges. As our pilot explains in his whispery, southern drawl, it's more than 1.5km wide, 1km deep and 22km long - the Grand Canyon of the Pacific. We can just make out the two roads. Waimea Canvon Drive follows the rim and leads to the cool, cloudforested upper slopes. There

are hiking trails too. The pilot zigzags in and out for more eye-popping views - silvery waterfalls (everywhere!), knife-edged ridges and ever-changing colours.

Then we leave the canyon and soar over the Na Pali Coast, where fluted cliffs rise more than 1200 metres above the sapphire waters on the island's north-west. This coast, only accessible by air, boat, kayak or serious hiking, remains a world of hidden caves, pristine waterholes, remote beaches, secret valleys and ancient Hawaiian myth and legend.

Ordering a Mai Tai and settling in at the Mahikō Lounge in sugar baron Gaylord Wilcox's heritage residence, Kilohana Plantation, offers an insight into life as a plantation owner during Hawai'i's sugarcane golden era (oh, yeah... I could live like this).

Wilcox built the rambling timber shingle Tudorstyle manor in 1935 at the centre of his 10,500-hectare sugarcane farm and filled it with furniture and fine art from San Francisco, Hawai'i, the Pacific Islands and the Orient. Today, it's handsome yet homely with its timber wainscoting, historic photos and arts and crafts 'shops' scattered through the rooms.

Gaylord's restaurant (with a seafood focus and an addictive Banana coconut cream pie) spills out into the courtyard and cloud-draped Mount Wai'ale'ale (one of the wettest places on Earth). By day there's a train tour of the 43-hectare property with its tropical fruit, flowers and farm animals and Koloa Rum Company has a distillery and store on Kilohana Plantation too.





Heading up Kauaʻi's east coast, just past Princeville, pull in at Hanalei Lookout – it's stunning. Patch-worked taro paddies fill the valley, sliced by the Hanalei River and backed by mist-shrouded mountains.

Hanalei has a mellow, endof-the-road kind of charm with
its ramshackle shops, cafés and
food trucks. Surfies, hipsters,
hikers, Hawaiians, wealthy
locals and tourists alike are all
sharing the Aloha – the love.
There may be multi-million
dollar homes here, and on
nob hill (Princeville), but
they're surprisingly discreet
and un-showy, just taking
the vernacular timber style

up a notch or two. Most people are too busy heading barefoot to or from the beach – any beach – to be worried.

For a taste of traditional Hawai'i, try Hanalei Taro & Juice Co van - taro burgers, taro hummus, taro smoothies, taro everything. To feast on fresh seafood, including terrific sushi, Dolphin Restaurant overlooking the river is the best venue and pulls a big crowd. Stylish Bar Acuda has a lively buzz and tapas menu, and to see a spectacular sunset, head to the St. Regis Princeville Resort's bar. It's a little bit pricey, but welcoming, and the view is breathtaking.







Kaua'i's more than 60 beaches means there is something for everyone. On the North Shore, between Kīlauea and Princeville, 'Anini Beach has some of Kaua'i's best snorkelling. Hawai'i's longest offshore reef protects the water, and you may even find yourself swimming with sea turtles. Tunnels is another great beach here. Also on the North Shore, near Princeville, steep stairs and a short walk lead to **Pali Ke Kua** or Hideaways Beach; it's petite, usually quiet, with shady big-leafed kamani trees and golden sand.

Beautiful Hanalei Bay has relatively benign surf in summer, but in winter legendary breaks can see waves up to nine metres barrelling in – strictly for pros. In summer Black Pot Beach, part of Hanalei Bay, is the place to launch yourself for a spot of stand-up paddle-boarding (SUP) on the Hanalei River. The eastern end, near Hanalei pier, is fine for beginner surfers, paddle boarders and picnics.

The sunnier South Shore is also sprinkled with golden beaches and resorts. Families like the wide Poʻipū Beach, where you can snorkel, swim, paddleboard, surf or watch for Humpback whales offshore in winter.

Kayaking the Nā Pali
Coast is the pinnacle
of kayaking in Hawai'i,
a 27km ocean journey past
towering pleated cliffs, sea
caves and waterfalls, remote
beaches and hanging valleys.
Dolphins and sea turtles will
often swim alongside as sea
birds whirl overhead. You
can paddle in to explore caves
and rock pools and pull in
to a remote beach for lunch.
In all there's around five
to six hours of paddling.

If that seems a little strenuous, another option is kayaking up the tranquil **Wailua River**, said to be one of Hawai'i's two most sacred places, weaving past waterfalls and jungle-clad riverbanks.

Kaua'i also offers myriad hiking and walking trails, but again, the wild Nā Pali Coast presents the ultimate challenge: the Kalalau Trail, a challenging 18km trek through magnificent yet wild countryside. The trail is rugged and steep, along jagged sea cliffs, but walkers are rewarded by emerald valleys, misty waterfalls, sparkling pools and astonishing views. Note - if you are walking beyond Hanakāpī'ai Valley you must have a permit to camp and these are often booked out months ahead.





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Island



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