

OUTSIDE.

The Islands Of Aloha

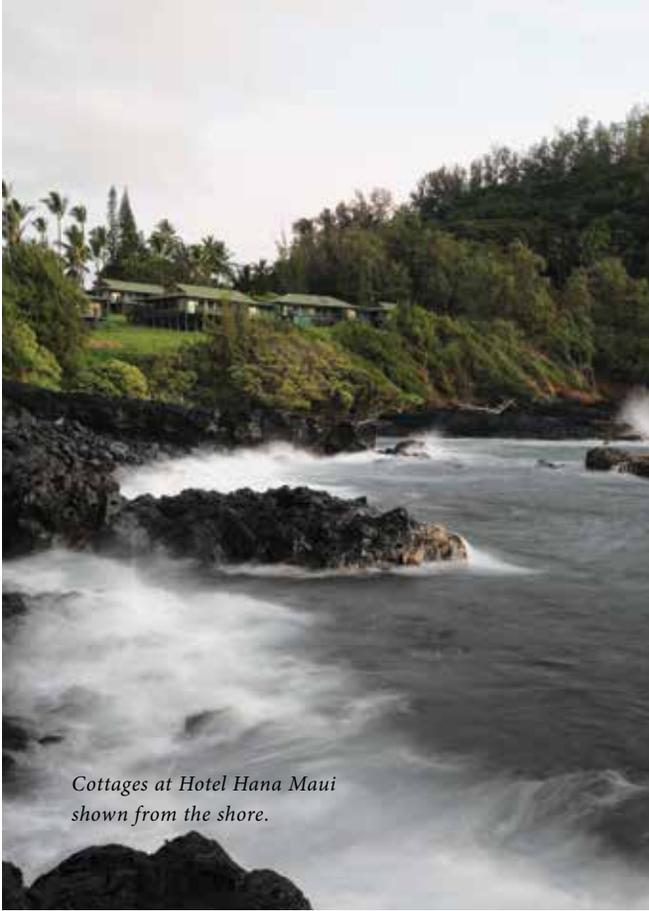
Adventure In Hawaii

Aloha. It has several meanings. Most visitors to Hawaii are taught to use it as a greeting, like a friendly hello. I was born and raised in Hawaii, and for a long time, that's how I used it. But I recall being taught that "aloha" is more than a word, or a greeting. A kumu, or teacher, told me that the literal Hawaiian translation of "aloha" means "deep breath" or "breath of life." The true meaning of aloha can be compared to seeing someone you're in love with after a long separation — your emotion is so strong that you begin to struggle to catch your breath before inhaling deeply. >>

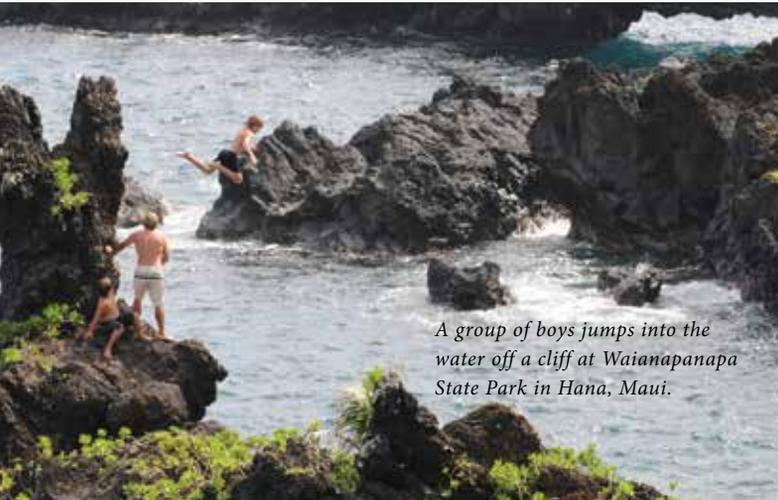
BY ETHAN CHUNG | PHOTOS BY JEFF HOBSON



Lava flows from Kilauea into the ocean, creating a plume of steam visible in the night sky miles away.



Cottages at Hotel Hana Maui shown from the shore.



A group of boys jumps into the water off a cliff at Waianapanapa State Park in Hana, Maui.



A cliff diver takes a plunge at Black Rock at Kaanapali, Maui.

<< I understood this concept at a pretty young age, but I vividly remember the first time I actually experienced it. I was 17, leaving home for college. I was excited to start my new life as an adult. As I left my family behind and looked out my airplane window at the brilliant green landscape surrounding my hometown, and the gigantic, looming volcanic peaks of Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea in the background, I took a deep breath, and knew then what aloha truly meant. Every time I fly back to Hawaii to visit family, this special place has the same affect on me.

I want you to have that same experience. Well, not maybe exactly the same, but close. I want you to stand at the top of a Haleakala, gazing down at the sun rising out of the misty clouds into the morning sky. I want you to be in awe of Kilauea, feeling the heat from perhaps the most-active volcano in the world, a volcano that's been erupting continuously for more than a quarter century.

I want you to look up from the ocean at the beauty of the sheer cliffs along the Na Pali coastline, the oldest landscape in Hawaii. I want you to have your own deep breath moments, whether it's from the genuine, friendly family operating a lunch stop on the road to Hana, or from one of Hawaii's many spectacular natural scenes.

Rich in Culture

Charles Ka'upu, kumu hula and Hawaiian cultural practioner, has been in the travel industry most of his life. He provides hula and Hawaiian chant training, and has consulted many resorts about Hawaiian culture. He says, "The most important thing for people to know about Hawaii before they visit is that we have a culture. If they come here, they need to learn about this place. It's the most important thing. If they get it, if they understand the heart of the Hawaiian people, that's the best thing tourism can ever do for us. That kind of education cannot be bought, you can't do a commercial on it, you just have to experience it."

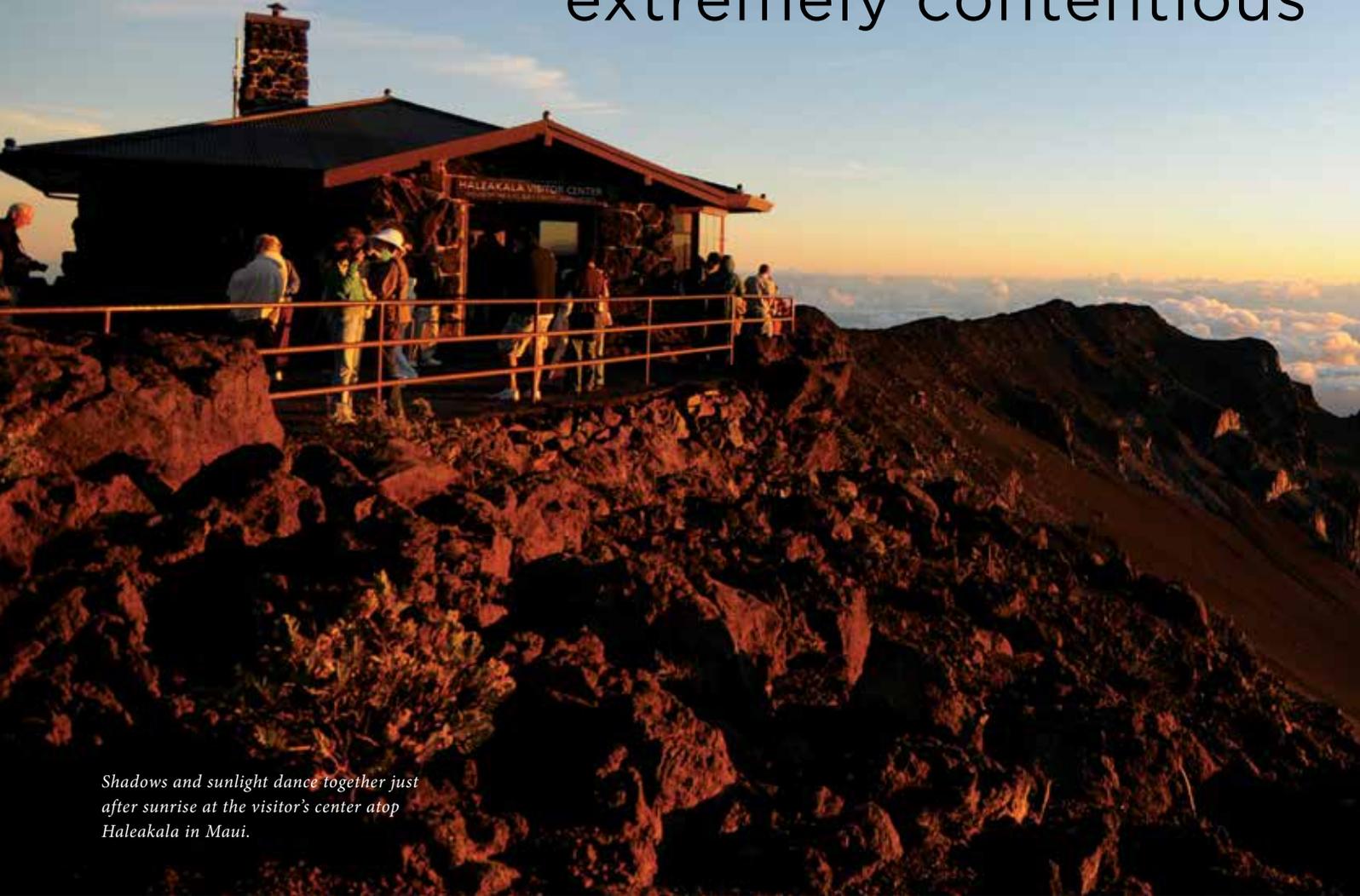
Hawaii is a sacred place with an extremely contentious history. Thousands of years ago, ancient Polynesians settled this then-unoccupied chain of islands. Over time, outside influences brought >>

A young girl with short blonde hair, wearing a bright yellow sleeveless dress and white shorts, stands in the shallow ocean waves. She is looking out towards the horizon. In the background, a man and two children are visible in the water, suggesting a family outing. The scene is set on a beach during the day, with gentle waves lapping at the shore.

Don't come to Hawaii
to just spend dollars.
Be a seeker of knowledge,
take a deep breath
and experience **aloha**.

*A little girl plays at the peaceful
shoreline of Wailea Beach in front of the
Four Seasons Wailea in Maui.*

Hawaii is a sacred place extremely contentious



Shadows and sunlight dance together just after sunrise at the visitor's center atop Haleakala in Maui.

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foreign diseases, ideologies and religions, leading to the downfall of a proud civilization and culture. Now, tourism is the driving force of Hawaii's economy. Ka'upu related a remark he once heard about the way some visitors have treated Hawaii — “like a high-priced call girl, people threw tons of money down, wham-bam, thank you, ma'am.” If you consider Ka'upu's subscription to understanding and education, you can help Hawaii and its culture instead of using it for simple entertainment. The lesson: don't come to Hawaii just to spend dollars. Be a seeker of knowledge, take a deep breath and experience aloha.

Maui

One of my most-vivid memories from childhood is visiting Hana on the lush eastern coast of Maui. I remember swimming in the freshwater cave at Wai'anapanapa State Park, and seeing tiny red

shrimp, so plentiful they turned the water blood red in some places. There is a legend of a Hawaiian king who murdered his wife as she hid from him in this cave. Every spring, the shrimp show up in these ponds, offering an eerie and vivid reminder of this bloody misdeed. Also at the park is a beautiful black sand beach, walking trails, picnic tables and a fantastic view of the vibrant blue ocean.

Hana is less than 50 miles from the Kahului airport, but your drive might take you at least two hours. An extremely windy road can be hazardous if you're not cautious. But careful navigation has its rewards. The drive to Hana actually is part of the attraction. Rich and diverse flora, raw and rugged cliffs and valleys, and a number of places of cultural significance await you after your picturesque trip. Check out the Hana Cultural Center upon arrival. This former courthouse and jail has a nice collection >>

with an
history.



Bleary-eyed visitors wait in the cold to witness the stunning sunrise at Haleakala in Maui.

Learn More!
Before you experience
Haleakala go to nps.gov/hale

Take a Tour

You can certainly travel up to Haleakala on your own, but a guided tour can provide some useful cultural information. Most tour companies can arrange for pickup right from your hotel. Guides tell legends and stories about Hawaiian culture, and offer insights into the cultural significance of certain sights.

Plan accordingly for your trip to Haleakala's summit. Most tours (depending where your hotel is located), will pick you up before 3 a.m. Travel time to the summit from Kahului is about an hour and a half. Bring warm clothes, and maybe a blanket or two, because before sunrise at the summit, the temperature often sits below freezing. In my sleepy state at 2 in the morning, I managed to forget this little meteorological tidbit. Needless to say, my light sweater and shorts did not fit the bill for a typical sunrise viewing at Haleakala. The wind had a terrible bite to it, and I experienced a cold unlike anything I can remember in the Northwest. But then the sky started to change color. A thin, bluish-purple line developed between the black of night and a slowly growing thread of deep orange. It's as if the orange was pushing the blue upward, and the black began to disappear completely. When the sun peeks up through the layer of low-hanging clouds hovering right above the horizon, you will understand why this mountain is called Haleakala. It looks like the sun is literally rising from inside the crater. **Details:** Ekahi Tours, ekahi.com.



A group of people make their way across Black Rock in Kaanapali, Maui, just after sunset.





A sunset view from the open-air lobby lounge at the Four Seasons Wailea in Maui.



The infinity edge pools at Hotel Hana Maui will keep you cool.

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of historical documents and artifacts. Make time for Kahanu gardens while you are in Hana. Pi'ilanihale is a heiau, or temple, that is considered by most experts to be the largest man-made, pre-Western-contact structure in all of Polynesia. The heiau covers nearly 3-acres of land.

No trip to Maui would be complete without a visit to the dormant volcano Haleakala, which means “House of the Rising Sun” in Hawaiian. Legend has it that Maui, a Hawaiian demi-god, snuck up on the sun while it was asleep in Haleakala crater. The sun had been traveling too quickly across the sky, and its pace was preventing Maui’s mother, Hina, from preparing and drying kapa, a type of Hawaiian cloth woven from the bark of native trees. Maui lassoed the sun as it was rising, and struck a bargain with it to slow its journey across the sky, allowing his mother’s cloth to dry in the daylight. For six months of the year, the sun travels at a slower pace, and for the rest of the year, it travels as it pleases. >>

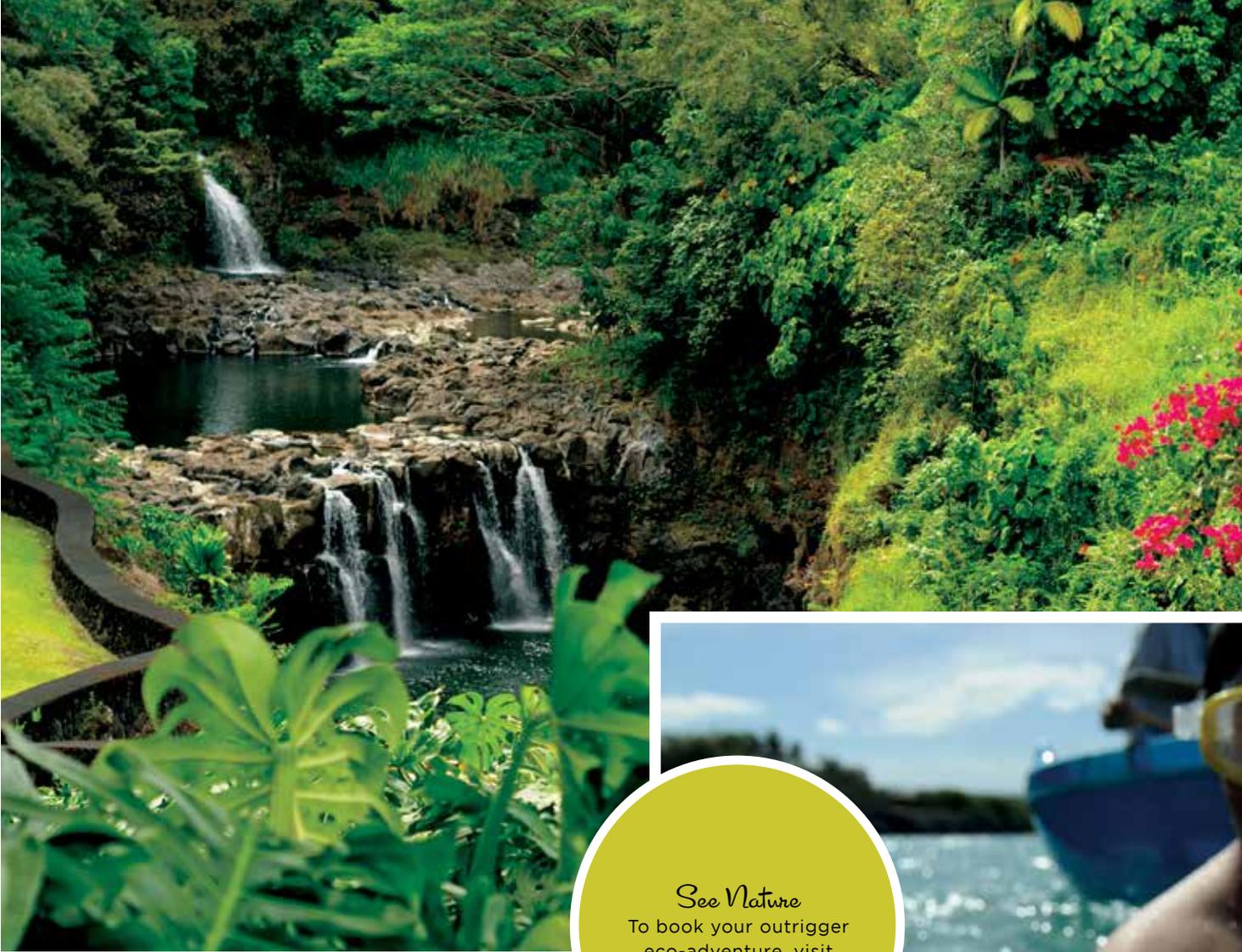
when you go

Hotel Hana Maui

This is the perfect place to stay if you want to make exploring Hana your priority or if you are simply looking for a tranquil lodging experience. Instead of your typical hotel rooms, the resort is comprised of quiet, private cottages. Enjoy the Honua Spa, which is located on almost an acre of Hotel Hana’s ground. The spa takes advantage of the amazing natural surroundings, offering guests a true tranquil retreat. Dine at award-winning Kauiki, the hotel’s restaurant. Kauiki serves Pacific Island and regional cuisine, including local fish caught minutes away and fresh, locally grown produce. **Details:** \$495 a night and up, hotelhanamaui.com.

Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea

If you are looking for luxury, stay at the Four Seasons Wailea. The resort recently completed an impressive room renovation, offering the island’s most-spacious guest rooms, plus wireless Internet access, sleek flat screen TVs, a beautiful spa bathroom, and luxurious amenities. Try the Mele Wailea at the Spa, the resort’s signature massage service, which features signature aromatherapy fragrances and is a blend of Swedish, Lomi Lomi and aromatherapy massage techniques. Wailea is well known for dry, sunny weather, and it’s the perfect place to experience a white sandy beach. Guests can enjoy complimentary scuba diving lessons and an outrigger canoe ride. This program provides guests with paddling instruction and lessons about the Hawaiian cultural significance of the outrigger canoe. Dine at Wolfgang Puck’s Spago, eat with an ocean view at Ferraro’s Bar e Ristorante, or enjoy a mouth-watering cut of beef at the Four Seasons’ new steak and seafood restaurant, Duo. Look for further renovations to the property, including a new adult pool complete with chaise lounges, super cabanas and an infinity edge pool. **Details:** \$395 a night and up, fourseasons.com/maui.



See Nature

To book your outrigger eco-adventure, visit skybluecanoe.com.

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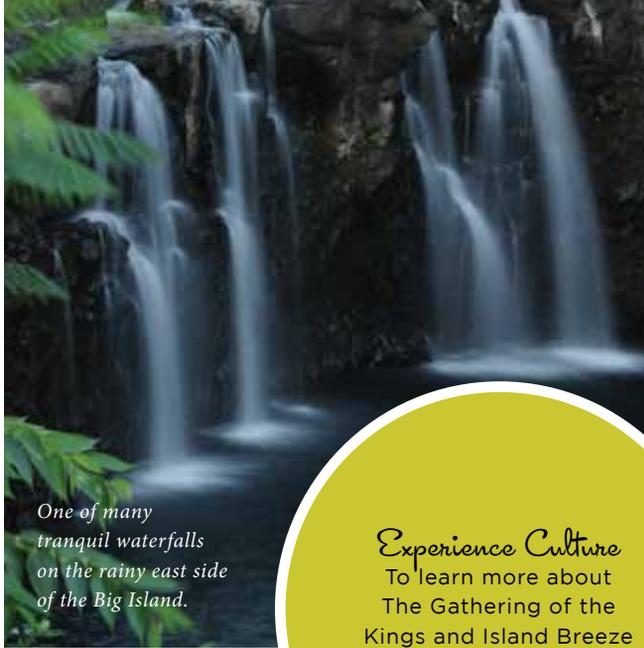
The Big Island

I was born on Maui, but grew up on the Big Island, which actually shares the name Hawai'i with the state (but most people refer to it as the Big Island). The Big Island is fascinating. A common guide-book fact is that the Big Island is so large, it can fit every other major Hawaiian island on it with plenty of room to spare, and that it's larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware combined. But did you know that the Big Island contains 12 major climate zones, including tropical rainforests in Hilo, arid desert in Kau and the snow-capped summits of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa? The diverse climate makes for a slew of agriculture opportunities, including macadamia nuts, coffee, vanilla, cacao beans and cattle (Parker Ranch in Waimea is one of the largest and oldest privately held ranches in the United States and covers hundreds of thousands of acres). The Big Island is divided almost in half by a dry side, the west, where Kona is the main city and a wet side, the east, where Hilo is the main city.

The west side is well known for the black lava fields and beautiful white sandy beaches. Most of the Big Island's resorts are located on the west side, and they all offer something special for everyone, whether you're looking for luxury, adventure or family fun.

An outrigger canoe tour is a great way to experience the beach and local sea life. Sky Blue Canoe Outrigger Adventures offers a great eco-tour. An experienced guide will take you around the beautiful and abundant >>





One of many tranquil waterfalls on the rainy east side of the Big Island.

Experience Culture
To learn more about The Gathering of the Kings and Island Breeze Productions, visit gatheringofthekings.com.



Guests enjoy the feast at the Gathering of the Kings luau at the Fairmont Orchid on the Big Island.



<< reefs off of Puako on the Kohala coast. You have a chance to see manta rays, large sea turtles and colorful tropical fish. The tour will stop so you have an opportunity to snorkel in the clear, shallow water. Poke around, and you can see some pretty amazing creatures, such as black brittle starfish, a common find in tide pools and shallow waters. Come prepared to do some work — the outrigger has zero horsepower. But no experience in paddling is necessary. The knowledgeable guides will offer a quick instruction about paddling mechanics while discussing the cultural significance of the outrigger canoe. Ancient Hawaiians used variations of this craft to travel long distances across the Pacific Ocean. Large sailing canoes with enough supplies for an epic journey brought the very first settlers to this island chain.

Speaking of journeys, take an evening to see a luau. These aren't half-hour-long fire-breathing shows with the occasional set of coconut-top clad dancers. Most luaus now have plenty of production value, employ an entire troupe of dancers and utilize special effects lighting. The Gathering of the Kings by Island Breeze Productions has been rated as the top luau on the

Big Island by many guidebooks. The production is a little different in that it explores the establishment of the major Pacific cultures, not just Hawaii's. The Gathering of the Kings uses traditional Polynesian and contemporary choreography to tell the story of the birth of Samoa, Tahiti, Hawaii and Aotearoa (New Zealand). This luau also offers dinner selections from each of those cultures. The Gathering of the Kings narrates the creation and survival of these ancient cultures. The use of some contemporary choreography demonstrates how these cultures have had to adapt in order to thrive in modernity.

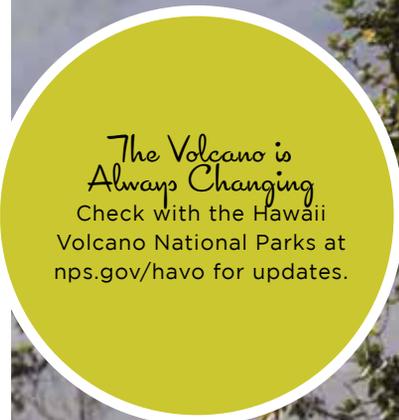
Your stay on the Big Island wouldn't be complete without the visit to Kilauea, the most active volcano in the world. If you are staying on the west side in Kona or on the Kohala coast, know that your trip will take at least three hours by car, accounting for sightseeing stops along the way. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, >>



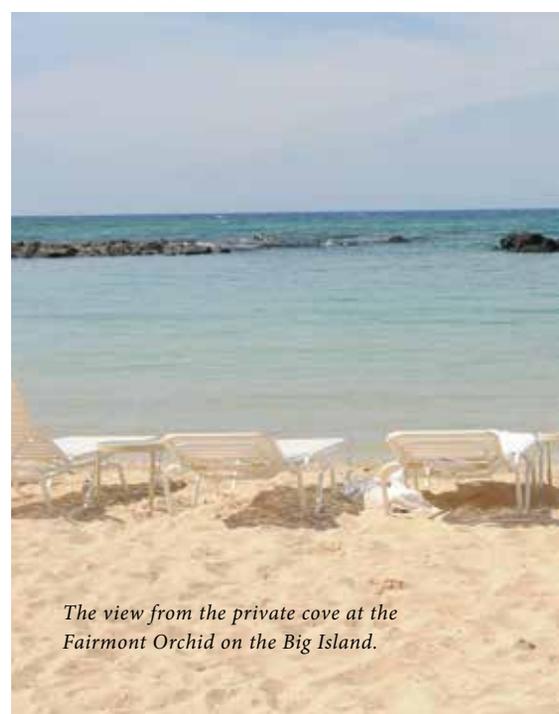
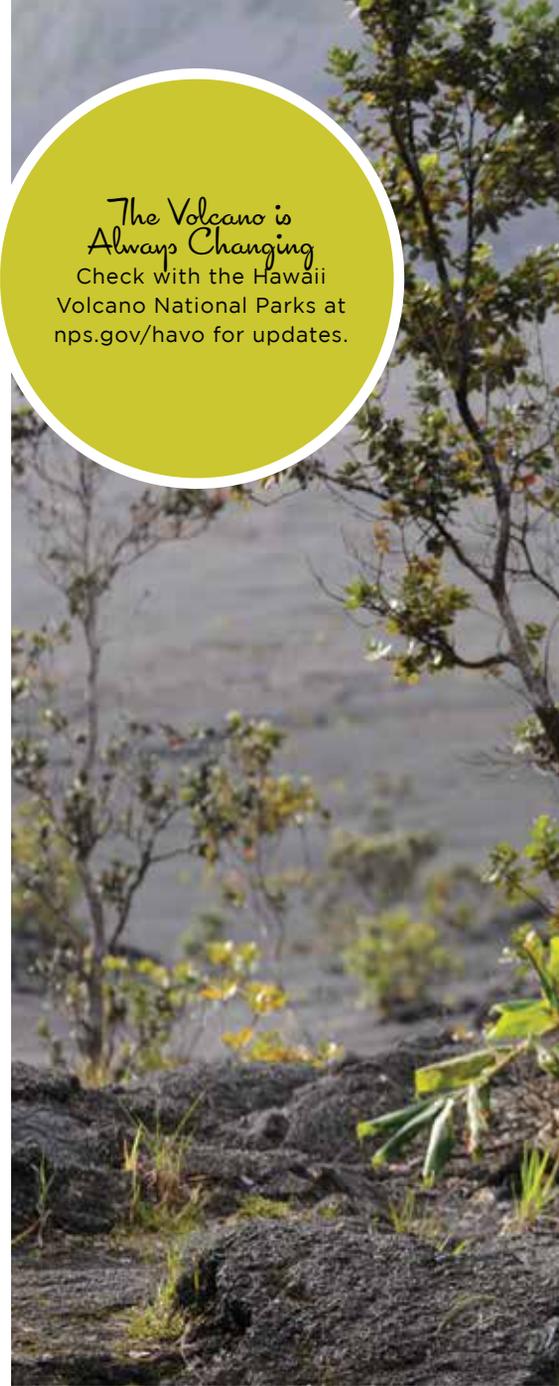
A performer plays with fire in front of a captivated audience at the Gathering of the Kings luau at the Fairmont Orchid on the Big Island.

the merriem monarch festival

This annual week-long festival is the best time to take in ancient and modern hula. Dancers of all ages from all over the world showcase their talents with the main goal of promoting the art of hula and Hawaiian culture through education. The power and beauty of these dancers often take the audience through a roller coaster of emotions, from tears of appreciation to screams of joy. **Details:** merriemonarchfestival.org.



*The Volcano is
Always Changing*
Check with the Hawaii
Volcano National Parks at
nps.gov/havo for updates.



*The view from the private cove at the
Fairmont Orchid on the Big Island.*



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located about 45 minutes outside of Hilo. A \$10 fee gets your car and all its passengers into the park. Head straight to the visitors center to get a sense of place. You have several options, but it all depends on how much time you have devoted to your visit. The more time, the more you get to see. The entire park is more than 200,000 acres, and there are plenty of trails to explore. The visitor center will also have postings and advisories about air quality and any extra safety precautions or road closures in place.

Make time for hiking the Kilauea Iki trail. The trail starts with downhill switchbacks. A canopy of tropical rainforest flora sets the scene. Once you get to the bottom, the environment changes completely. The crater floor has amazing texture, shifting from smooth, black lava rock to jagged gray lava rock at the walls. Look closely, and you will see new life developing in this barren landscape — ohia trees, a native tree important to the tropical rainforest ecosystem, and other plant life have begun to sprout again. This crater was a lake of lava only 50 years ago, and the ground is still warm to the touch.

Hawaiian legend associates Kilauea and all volcanoes on the Big Island with Pele, the fire goddess. Do not take anything she produces, including lava rocks. Not only is it illegal, but it's commonly held kapu, extremely taboo in Hawaiian culture. Violators are said to be cursed with bad luck, ranging from financial ruin, to the end of relationships and tragic accidents. The only way to rid yourself of this curse is to return what you have taken and offer something of yours in forgiveness. >>

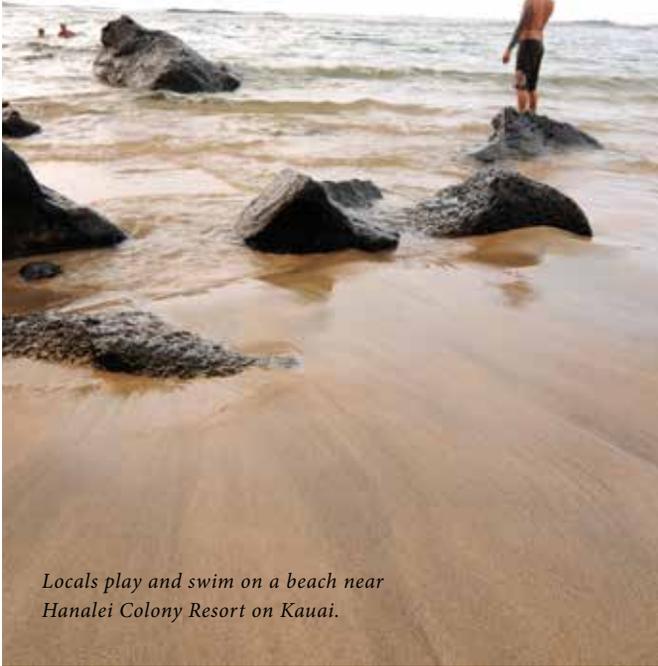
when you go

Fairmont Orchid

The Fairmont Orchid on the Big Island's Kohala coast is like an oasis in the desert, almost literally if you look out at the stark, lava field landscape. Built on 32 acres, this luxury resort has everything you need, whether you're visiting as a newlywed couple or large family. If you're looking to relax, The Spa Without Walls is an innovative spa concept that draws from the resort's beautiful natural surroundings. The resort also has a natural white sand lagoon where visitors can snorkel or pull up a beach chair and sit in the sand, cooling off as the tide slowly creeps up underneath you. It's common to see large green sea turtles make their way onto the beach to take a rest. The Orchid's Beachboys are staff members charged with creating fun cultural programs at the lagoon, everything from paddling an outrigger to weaving baskets out of coconut leaves. Dine at the award-winning Brown's Beach House (I once had a summer job here, and I served drinks and food both in the restaurant and along the beach. Nice work, if you can get it), Norio's Japanese Restaurant and Sushi or try the three-day rotating breakfast buffet at Orchid Court, which has an amazing selection of local foods and fresh produce. Don't forget the Gathering of the Kings luau. If you have the opportunity, ask about the Fairmont Orchid's Gold experience. Gold guests have a special wing of the resort, personalize concierge, and a beautifully adorned lounge that includes an honor bar, coffee and tea throughout the day, and complimentary light appetizers in the afternoons. **Details:** \$450 a night, packages available, fairmont.com/orchid.

The Falls at Reeds Island

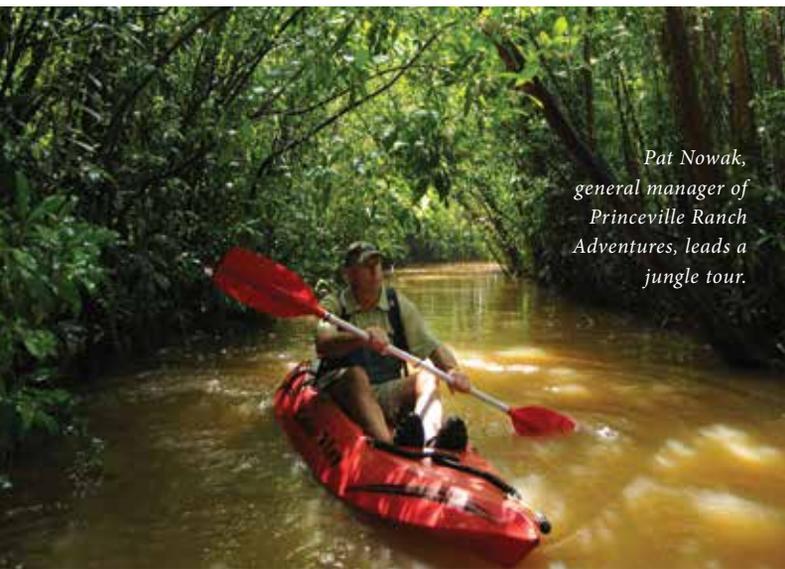
If you're looking for a different type of lodging experience when you visit the Big Island, look into booking a stay at The Falls at Reed's Island in Hilo. It's not a resort, it's a vacation home that's been featured in both The New York Times and Fine Living magazine for its stunning architecture, appointments and backyard view of a freshwater waterfall and pool. With its three bedrooms, plus a spare with a bunk-bed, this home is perfect for a large family or multiple families. Amenities include all the comforts of a home, like a Weber grill, bath robes, towels, toiletries, plus boogie boards, snorkel gear and other fun beach equipment. The home is just a 5-minute drive from historical Downtown Hilo, 45 minutes from Hawaii National Volcanoes Park, or an hour and a half from the Kohala Coast. **Details:** Two nights, \$365 per night, price decreases if you book more nights, reedsisland.com.



Locals play and swim on a beach near Hanalei Colony Resort on Kauai.



Eco adventurers trudge through one of Princeville Ranch's many streams.



Pat Nowak, general manager of Princeville Ranch Adventures, leads a jungle tour.

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Kauai

Kauai is the oldest Hawaiian island and fourth-largest in the island chain. It's a place I'd never visited before this trip. The pace of life is quite slow here compared to Maui and Oahu, and even the Big Island. The island is less populated and the whole place holds small-town charm. Visitors are quick to chuckle at the occasional chicken running around the main roads. The island's stunning landscape, white sandy beaches, and tranquil atmosphere make Kauai one of Hawaii's most-desirable destinations. In fact, Hollywood producers consider Kauai a favorite place to shoot. The Waimea Grand Canyon, which is 1 mile wide, 10 miles long, and 3,657 feet deep, is a major attraction. Poipu beach is regularly rated one of the world's best beaches.

But what I wanted to see most was the Na Pali coastline. The Na Pali cliffs are almost a vertical 3,000-foot drop. Access to Napili is cut off to cars, but there is access to some local hiking trails. The best way to see the coastline, however, is by boat. Captain Andy's Sailing Adventures in Eleele offers an opportunity to experience this sight via 55-foot sailing catamaran. The boat tour takes a few hours, and along the way to the cliffs, captains share history and legends of the coastline. The boats also make stops to allow for great snorkeling right off the boat. If you are prone to seasickness, bring Dramamine. Sometimes the boat trip can get a bit bumpy. We faced some fairly large swells the day we were there, but in the end it was all worth it. The view of the cliffs was spectacular to say the least. And on the way back to shore, we ran into an unexpected, but pleasant, surprise. A very large pod of 100 or so spinner dolphins surrounded our boat, basically begging for playtime. >>



Explore!
To book your Jungle Valley Adventure or one of many other eco-tours at Princeville Ranch Adventures, visit adventureskauai.com.



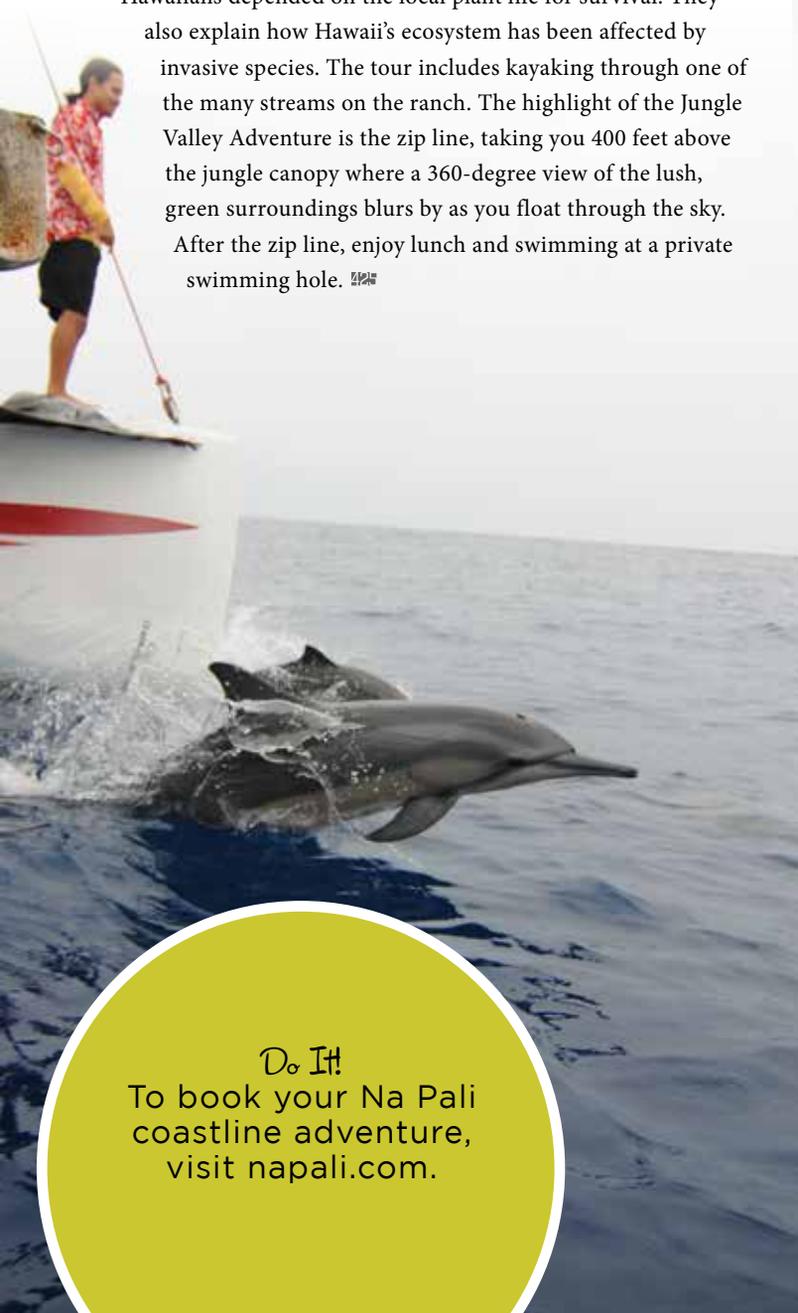
425 magazine assistant editor Ethan Chung zips over the rainforest at the Princeville Ranch.

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The captain slowly sped up the boat, increasing the speed little by little. The dolphins leapt and spun out of the water, racing alongside the boat as we cruised along. Watching these beautiful, playful creatures was a mesmerizing experience.

Another way to escape into the rich landscape of Kauai is to take one of the many zip line adventures. The only zip line adventure on the north shore of Kauai is put on by Princeville Ranch Adventures in Princeville. Princeville Ranch's roots date back to 1831 and it is one of the oldest working cattle ranches in the United States. The company offers many tours, but one of the best is the Jungle Valley Adventure. This eco-adventure takes you through the private lands of the Princeville Ranch. Along the moderately strenuous hike through streams and sometimes thick jungle, guides explain in great detail how native Hawaiians depended on the local plant life for survival. They also explain how Hawaii's ecosystem has been affected by invasive species. The tour includes kayaking through one of the many streams on the ranch. The highlight of the Jungle Valley Adventure is the zip line, taking you 400 feet above the jungle canopy where a 360-degree view of the lush, green surroundings blurs by as you float through the sky. After the zip line, enjoy lunch and swimming at a private swimming hole. 🌴🌊



Do It!
To book your Na Pali coastline adventure, visit napali.com.



The grounds of the beautiful Grand Hyatt Kauai as the sun sets.

when you go

Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa

With 602 guestrooms, 12 restaurants and bars, 5 acres of saltwater swimming lagoons offering kayak and flotation rentals, two fresh water outdoor pools with connecting "river pools," and a wrap-around sundeck (the kids will love the waterslide), the luxurious Anara spa, and the 18-hole Poipu Bay Golf course, the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa has something for everyone. The resort offers a variety of cultural activities, including a traditional luau, lei making instruction and hula classes. The unique Anara spa, renovated and expanded to 20,000-square-feet in 2007, offers 16 indoor and outdoor treatment spaces and a full-service salon and spa boutique. And if the beautiful beach that's steps from the Grand Hyatt's pools aren't enough for you, Poipu Beach, consistently rated as one of the top beaches in the world, is just a few minutes away by car. **Details:** \$550 a night and up, kauai.hyatt.com

The Hanalei Colony Resort

If you're looking for something a little more tranquil, consider the Hanalei Colony Resort, an intimate condominium resort tucked away at the end of the road in Haena, the quiet, northernmost town on Kauai. The resort's secluded location, beachfront access, and mountain and ocean views make it a great place for romance. The condominium units all have two bedrooms, plus a full kitchen, making an extended stay feel like you have the comforts of home at your fingertips. But don't expect to be entertained by the Internet, phones, or TVs — the units are technology deficient to help promote a restful stay. The Hanalei Day Spa is on site and offers a variety of wellness treatments. The Mediterranean Gourmet restaurant next door serves fine local seafood and dishes, but all with a Mediterranean twist. The small town of Haena doesn't offer much as far as shopping or restaurants, but that's what makes the area such a unique and appealing getaway. You can take in all the amazing natural surroundings Kauai has to offer with minimal distractions. The Hanalei Colony Resort is just minutes away from amazing snorkeling at Tunnels Beach. Some of the best hiking you will see in all of Hawaii also is a short drive away — the Kalalau Trail, a challenging 11-mile hike that follows along the Na Pali coast. **Details:** \$240 and up, seventh night free, hcr.com.



*The beachfront view
from the Hanalei Colony
Resort in Kauai.*

resources

Air Hawaiian Airlines (trans-Pacific and inter-island travel), hawaiianair.com

Car Alamo, alamo.com, Avis, avis.com

Accommodations

Maui Hotel Hana Maui, hotelhanamaui.com, Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea, fourseasons.com/maui

Big Island Fairmont Orchid, fairmont.com/orchid, The Falls at Reed's Island, reedsisland.com

Kauai Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa, kauai.hyatt.com, Hanalei Colony Resort, hcr.com

Activities

Maui Ekahi Tours — Haleakala guided tours and adventures, ekahi.com

Big Island Sky Blue Canoe Outrigger Adventures — Outrigger canoe eco-tours on the Kohala coast, skybluecanoe.com, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, nps.gov/havo

Kauai Captain Andy's Sailing Adventures — Na Pali coast catamaran adventure, napali.com Princeville Ranch Adventures Jungle Valley Adventure, adventureskauai.com