



Hawaii UPDATE.....

Whether you want a chic city experience, with luxe restaurants, galleries, and shopping, or an exclusive tropical beach hideaway, Hawaii has more—and better—options than ever. Here's a report on the latest and best Hawaii has to offer, on individual islands and statewide.

BY GAYLE KECK

Waikiki Beach, Honolulu

Body surfers,
North Shore,
Oahu



Oahu There's a new buzz on Oahu, fueled by over \$1 billion in development. More than 90 new stores and restaurants are debuting in Waikiki alone. The \$535 million **Waikiki Beach Walk** has turned a lacklustre area into a showplace, with 40 new shops and several galleries spread over eight acres.

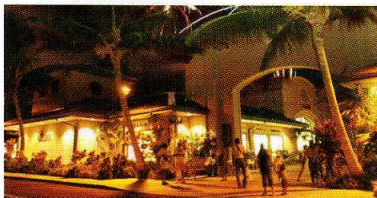
On the Honolulu dining scene, don't miss the long-awaited **Cassis by Chef Mavro**. Look for inventive dishes like warm Hawaii island goat cheese purse with eggplant marmalade or duck breast with faro risotto flavoured with Asian pesto (66 Queen Street; 808/545-8100). At **Stage**, "couture cuisine" is a magnet for local media celebrities who crave the cutting-edge cooking of Alan Wong protégé Jon Matsubara. His repertoire includes such dishes as a cunning eggshell filled with scrambled egg, caviar, and yuzu cream and a palate cleanser of Granny Smith-wasabi sorbet (Honolulu Design Center, 1250 Kapilani Boulevard; 808/237-5429). The new Hawaiian outpost of **Nobu** is a sleek magnet for beautiful people, with impeccable sushi and signature dishes like broiled

black cod with miso (2233 Helumoa Road; 808/237-6999).

For nightlife, look no further than **Pearl**, a stunning \$2.2 million lounge/restaurant, where you can sip the signature Pearl Martini (topped with a sprinkle of real pearl dust) among Honolulu's hippest (Ala Moana Center, Hookipa Terrace, 3rd Level; 808/944-8000). **Lotus Soundbar** draws a see-and-be-seen crowd with hip-hop and club classics; VIP tables and bottle service are available (2301 Kuhio Avenue; 808/924-1688). The restaurant **Indigo** turns into a trendy lounge at night, catering to a well-heeled, arty crowd, with three bars serving the signature lychee martini (1121 Nuuanu Avenue; 808/521-2900).

Fashionistas are heading to the renovated **Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center** for new top-label offerings from Fendi, Cartier, Hermès, and Kate Spade (2201 Kalakaua Avenue; 808/922-0588).

Be sure to make time for a lesson at **Hans Hedemann Surf School**, a favourite of celebrities like Prince Albert of Monaco and the Rolling Stones' Ronnie Wood (808/924-7778).



King's Shops,
Big Island

Big Island With its own organic produce farm, **Fujimamas** has garnered praise as the Big Island's best new restaurant. Dine on sushi and fusion dishes like Thai Caesar salad in a serene private tatami room (75-5719 Alii Drive, Kailua-Kona; 808/327-2125). **Merriman's Market Café** is a new, casual Mediterranean restaurant from Hawaiian Regional Cuisine icon Peter Merriman (his flagship is Merriman's); when browsing the King's Shops, take a break to lunch on a pizzetta (King's Shops, Waikoloa; 808/886-1700).

The island's cultural hub is **Kahilu Theatre**, where the social set gathers to see top Hawaiian and international music groups (67-1186 Lindsey Road, Parker Ranch Center, Waimea/Kamuela; 808/885-6868). One of the best local cocktail scenes is the **Lava Lounge**, with incredible views and a signature pineapple cosmo (72-100 Kaupulehu Drive, Kailua-Kona; 808/325-8000). The lounge at Fujimamas (above) attracts an elite crowd to quaff fresh fruit martinis. And for fans of the grape, **Mixx Bistro Bar** has an extensive wine list, with live music nightly on an outdoor patio (King Kamehameha Mall, Kona; 808/329-7334).

Style-savvy shoppers have embraced the tropical chic of **Tommy Bahama**, flocking to the new flagship store for casual separates, golfing clothes, and a range of furniture and accessories. There's also a café with a menu inspired by island cuisine (Shops at Mauna Lani, 68-1330 Mauna Lani Drive, Kohala Coast; 808/881-8688). **King's Shops** hosts Tiffany & Co. and six other jewellery stores—including Baron & Leeds, which carries an extensive selection of Rolexes (69-250 Waikoloa Beach Drive, Waikoloa; 808/886-8811).

Try "power" snorkelling or scuba diving with an easy-to-use "diver propulsion vehicle," also referred to as a torpedo. **Torpedo Tours** can help you explore the waters off the Kona coast, gliding along effortlessly with fish, dolphins, turtles, and manta rays (808/938-0405). Get a state-of-the-art briefing on the island's world-class observatories at the \$28 million **Imiloa Astronomy Center** in Hilo, a museum and planetarium housed in three dazzling titanium cones, which represent the island's towering volcanoes: Mauna Loa, Mauna Kea, and Hualalai (600 Imiloa Place, Hilo; 808/969-9700).

Maui To sample some of Maui's best Hawaiian Regional Cuisine, try **Mark Ellman's Mala Ocean Tavern**, with sophisticated small plates in a waterside location (1307 Front Street, Lahaina; 808/667-9394). The new **Lahaina Store Grille & Oyster Bar** is the only restaurant on Maui to offer rooftop dining, with sweeping views of ocean and coast; inside, don't miss the 47-foot raw bar (744 Front Street, #6, Lahaina; 808/661-9090). On the beachfront, a chic crowd graces **Io**, drawn by the modern décor and innovative, award-winning cuisine of chef James McDonald. Sample the creative martinis and chocolate pâté with passion fruit anglaise (505 Front Street, Lahaina; 808/661-8422).



unusual Hawaiian-reggae blend called **Jawaiian**, check with your concierge for a suggested performance during your stay.

For one-stop luxury shopping, **The Shops at Wailea** brings you Tiffany & Co., Louis Vuitton, Montblanc, Bottega Veneta, Gucci, and Fendi, as well as **Tori Richard**, the Honolulu-based resortwear shop with collections for men and women (3750 Wailea Alanui, Wailea; 808/891-6770). **Maggie Coulombe Studio** is a favourite of the Hollywood set, with daringly draped silk tops and asymmetrical dresses (505 Front Street, Lahaina; 808/662-0696; tops from \$110).

For avant-garde-movie buffs, the **Maui Film Festival** presents "CandleLight Café & Cinema" Wednesday nights at the Maui Arts & Cultural Center. The festival itself takes place June 11–28, 2008, presenting cinema under the stars in Wailea, with Hollywood stars in attendance (808/579-9244).

In paddle surfing, the latest Hawaiian sports trend, you stand atop a shorter, more stable surfboard while wielding a paddle, gondolier style. One of the few places to take a lesson is **Action Sports Maui** (808/871-5857).

The best spot for sunbathers is the private beach at **Hula Grill Kaanapali**, known as the Barefoot Bar, with tables set on the sand beneath palm-thatched umbrellas; nosh on snacks from a menu developed by Hawaiian Regional Cuisine chef Peter Merriman (2435 Kaanapali Parkway, Lahaina; 808/667-6636). After dark, a stylish crowd gravitates to **Paradise Bluz**, a live music venue with indulgences like an oxygen bar (744 Front Street, Lahaina; 808/667-5299). Some of Hawaii's top musicians are from Maui and play at various island venues; to get an insider's taste of the

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Kauai The "Garden Island"'s laid-back social scene is undoubtedly an attraction for part-time residents like Pierce Brosnan, Bette Midler, and Michael Crichton, who come to slow down and relax.



Still, there's plenty to do. Foodies head to **Mediterranean Gourmet**, where Australian free-range lamb, fire-roasted artichokes, and crab cakes are served at oceanfront tables (5-7132 Kuhio Highway, Hanalei; 808/826-9875). **The Beach House**, a top destination for Hawaii Regional Cuisine, recently hired chef Todd Barrett, who is fashioning such cutting-edge dishes as layered risotto from local ingredients like Kauai asparagus, Kamuela tomatoes, Molokai watermelon, and Omao organic greens (5022 Lawai Road, Poipu; 808/742-1424).

A hip clientele frequents **Bar Acuda** on the North Shore. The stylish new bar and tapas restaurant is gathering raves for dishes like lobster-stuffed squid and short ribs with date-almond salsa seca from chef Jim Moffat, founder of San Francisco's Slow Club (5-5161 Kuhio Highway, Hanalei; 808/826-7081). Head to **Gaylord's at Kilohana** for classic tropical cocktails in the courtyard of a 1935 Tudor-style estate, once home to a sugar plantation executive (3-2087 Kaunualii Highway, Kilohana Estate, Lihue; 808/245-9593).

Shoppers seek out one-of-a-kind items at **Bambulei**, a boutique featuring collectables from the 1930s and '40s, displayed in two

restored plantation cottages. Finds might include vintage ivory and silver jewellery, bags, hand-detailed Mandarin dresses, and muumuus, as well as new clothing and retro-style bamboo and mahogany furniture (4-369D Kuhio Highway, Kapaa; 808/823-8641). Inside a 1922 stone building, **Kong Lung** exudes style, with a high-end, eclectic mix of clothing, jewellery, and home accessories that earned it a reputation as the "Gump's of the Pacific" (Kong Lung Center, Lighthouse Road, Kilauea; 808/828-1822).

For an afternoon excursion, take a helicopter trip to nearby **Niihau**, Hawaii's "Forbidden Island," where the public was prohibited until just recently (877/441-3500). Relax on a secluded beach, or purchase a coveted Niihau shell lei. Strung with intricate knots, they range from hundreds to thousands of dollars. Alternatively, shop for Niihau shell jewellery at **Hawaiian Trading Post** on Kauai, but be sure to request that they show you the highest-quality pieces, which aren't on public display (Junction of Highways 50 and 530, Lawai; 808/332-7404). Take the new **Kauai Plantation Railway** (3-2087 Kaunualii Highway, Lihue; 808/245-7245; \$18) through Kilohana Plantation's spectacular gardens and former sugar cane fields, now thriving with exotic tropical fruits and hardwood trees. At the elegant, historic manor house (which also houses Gaylord's at Kilohana), shop for tasteful crafts.

Lanai One of the most exclusive of all Hawaii's islands, Lanai is where the high-powered go to unwind and be pampered. You won't find a single traffic light; in fact, there are only 30 miles of paved roads on this paradise that was once home to the world's largest pineapple plantation. Plantation architecture from the 1920s still defines the island's one town, Lanai City, home to a handful of shops, galleries, and casual eateries.




To travel Lanai's approximately 400 miles of dirt roads, a four-wheel-drive vehicle is a must. Head for the famed **Munro Trail**, a 14-mile, three-hour round trip that delivers you to the island's highest point: 3,368-foot **Mount Lanaihale**, with views of up to five neighbouring islands. **Keahiakawelo**, nicknamed "Garden of the Gods," is an eerie sienna-coloured rock garden strewn with boulders and carved by the wind; it's best seen in the slanting light just after sunrise or before sunset. Roam the 590-acre **Kanepuu Preserve**, a rare dryland forest, to discover plant species found nowhere else on earth (808/537-4508).

For more active pursuits, hop an ATV (all-terrain vehicle), a four-wheeled cross between a jeep and a motorcycle, on a tour with **Adventure Lanai EcoCentre** (808/565-7373). Or hone your shooting skills at **Lanai Pine Sporting Clays**, where Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tom Selleck have been known to take aim (808/559-4600).


Cast for marlin and other trophy fish with **Spinning Dolphin Charters**, which offers dolphin-spotting tours as well (808/565-7676). You may also spy dolphins off idyllic **Hulopoe Beach**, where you can search tidepools and snorkel the marine preserve.

If you crave a retail moment, head to **The Local Gentry**. Men can pick up 1960s-inspired board shorts from Surfline and Tiki silk aloha shirts; women, Loco-Lindo patterned skirts (363 Seventh Street, Lanai City; 808/565-9130; \$60–\$100). If you take a treasure hunter's approach to shopping, wander the funky establishments around **Dole Park**, keeping an eye out for local crafts and food products, including island-made jams, which can also be found at the park's Saturday-morning market.

A dramatic, low-angle photograph of a surfer riding a massive barrel wave. The surfer is silhouetted against the bright, white water of the wave's tunnel. The wave's face is steep and textured with white foam. In the background, a dark, forested coastline meets a cloudy sky. A horizontal line of seven white dots is visible in the upper left quadrant of the image.

A surfer rides in a barrel at the Banzai Pipeline at Oahu's Ehukai Beach Park.

Opposite, from top:
Mountains at sunrise
from Wailea, Maui;
asparagus salad at The
Beach House; Manele
golf course, Lanai.



Hana Highway along the
Maui Coast, one of
Hawaii's great drives

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Island Style

Ease into a tropical mood by looking the part. Men in the know choose luxe silk Hawaiian shirts by local designer **Anne Namba**. Only 50 of each fabric design are created (324 Kamani Street, Honolulu; 808/589-1135; \$250). Women can opt for a *holoku*, a flowing, floor-length dress with Victorian-era details. The holokus at **Princess Kaiulani Fashions** come in tropical prints and are popular for weddings (1222 Kaumualii Street, Honolulu; 808/847-4806; custom orders only, from \$350). For a more modern take, try a fitted, bustier-style sarong dress by hula dancer and model **Mamo Howell** (1050 Ala Moana Boulevard, Honolulu; 808/591-2002; from \$150).

Tropical prints from Princess Kaiulani Fashions

Pick up a tote at the **Kimura Lauhala Shop**. It carries masterpieces from 20 locals who practice the nearly lost art of handweaving pandanus leaves. Each bag is unique (some even have two-tone weaves); they range from 8 to 12 inches wide, with curved bamboo handles and fabric lining (Mamalahoa Highway and Hualalai Road, Holualoa, Big Island; 808/324-0053; from \$56).

For island cachet, nothing beats Hawaiian Heirloom Jewelry. These heavy, engraved gold bangles are favourites of trendy locals. Jewellers will translate your name into Hawaiian and engrave it on the bracelets, decorated with intricate carvings of native flowers. From \$1,065 (most in the \$2,000–\$3,000 range) at **Philip Rickard** (Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center, Honolulu, and other locations; 800/548-2616).

Engraved gold bangle at Philip Rickard



Island Arts

To give your home a touch of Hawaii, visit **Hawaiian Quilt Collection**. Each handmade quilt holds nearly a million stitches, taking more than 1,000 hours of craftsmanship. The bold designs, evoking Matisse's vibrant paper cutouts, are stylized Hawaiian plants and flowers, typically in a single colour over white (Ala Moana Shopping Center, 1450 Ala Moana Boulevard, Honolulu; Kapalua Shops, 102 Bay Drive, Maui; 800/367-9987; \$1,800–\$3,400).

Take in the cutting-edge art scene in Honolulu's Chinatown, where insiders flock to **Nuuanu Gallery**, which features contemporary works by local and international artists. A recent exhibition included Jonathan Busse's shimmering ocean watercolours (1161 Nuuanu Avenue; 808/536-9828). **Thirtynine-hotel** is a multimedia venue featuring live music, film screenings, fashion shows, and art (39 North Hotel Street; 808/599-2552). On the first Friday of the month, area galleries are open late and the art world turns out, ending the evening in the neighbourhood's trendy lounges and restaurants.

Traditional handmade quilt



Dinner and cocktails at Lahaina Store Grille & Oyster Bar, Maui

Island Cuisine

For the latest in food trends, seek out chefs serving Hawaii Regional Cuisine, which uses fresh, island-grown ingredients to create dishes that draw on the many Pacific cultures that have put their stamp on Hawaii. George "Mavro" Mavrothalassitis, Alan Wong, Peter Merriman, Bev Gannon, and Roy Yamaguchi are some of the superstars, and they've trained a new cadre of chefs who are pushing the boundaries even further (see dining suggestions for each island on pages 199–200).

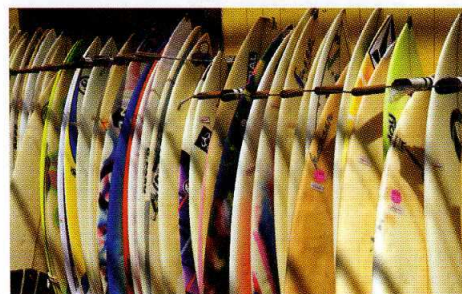
The Best Drives

Drive through a scenic slice of paradise on these three routes. Allow plenty of time, because roads are often narrow or twisting, and there abundant stops along the way for views and photos. On Maui, take the curvaceous Hana Highway about three and a half hours from Kahului to Hana for spectacular ocean views, a famous black sand beach (Waianapanapa State Park), and plentiful waterfalls. If you have several days, it's possible to circle the Big Island on the Belt Road, but for a stunning 50-mile (80.5 km) segment, drive Highway 19 from Hilo along the Hamakua Coast to Parker Ranch, to see dramatic waterfalls (one cascades 420 feet at Akaka Falls State Park) and lush jungle gorges filled with tropical trees and palms. Finish with a tour of the ranch's lavish 19th-century residence, which houses one of the state's finest private art collections. On Kauai, take Waimea Canyon Drive (Route 550) from Waimea town north through Waimea Canyon. The drive (20 miles each way) climbs to an elevation of almost 4,000 feet, with spectacular views of the "Grand Canyon" of Hawaii, as well as 800-foot Waipoo Falls and dazzling views of the Kalalau Valley and the Na Pali Coast.

For Volcano Lovers

The chances of an eruption on the Big Island (home to Hawaii's most recently active volcano, Kilauea) vary from day to day. Helicopter tours offer the best views of Kilauea, since current activity is well away from road access. Hollywood filmmakers have used **Blue Hawaiian Helicopters** for many productions, including *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and *Pearl Harbor* (808/961-5600; from \$169.20 per person for a 45–50-minute tour). For the latest information on eruptions, check volcano.wr.usgs.gov/hvostatus.php.

Surfboards in Kauai



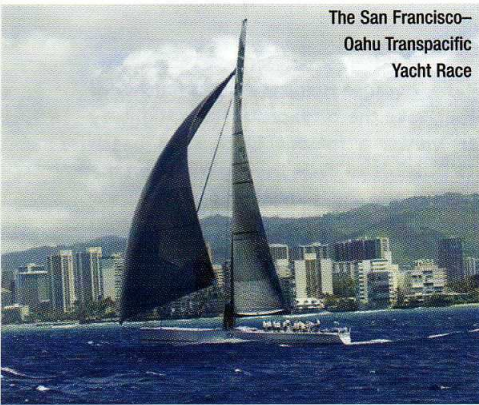
Surf Scene

A timeless mecca for the surfing set, **Waikiki Beach** on Oahu still has it all, drawing beginners as well as pros. But to see big waves—up to 20 feet high in winter—head for Oahu's North Shore, and legendary locations like the **Banzai Pipeline**, **Sunset Beach**, and **Waimea Bay**. On Maui's north shore, **Hookipa Beach Park** is considered the windsurfing capital of the world; in winter, an international cadre of windsurfers and kite surfers flocks here for professional competitions.

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Black sand at Punaluu Beach Park



The San Francisco-Oahu Transpacific Yacht Race

YACHTING SCENE

The **Waikiki Yacht Club** is the destination of choice for visiting megayachts, with the only private dock in Hawaii able to accommodate 100-foot-plus boats, at \$2.50 per foot per day (1599 Ala Moana Boulevard, Honolulu; 808/955-4405; availability varies, so book at least two weeks in advance). For boat delivery, liaison services, and charters, locals recommend **Pacific Yacht Management** (808/226-3496). Upcoming on the racing scene, the 15th **Pacific Cup** (pacificcup.org) from San Francisco to Kaneohe Bay, on the north side of Oahu, takes place in July 2008, and the 45th **Transpacific Yacht Race** (transpacificyc.org) from Los Angeles to Honolulu, a biennial event, sets sail in July 2009.

ISLAND CONNECTIONS

For private air travel between islands, contact **Marjet** (808/833-1631), serving ten airports on six islands, or **Pacific Wings** (888/575-4546), serving all Hawaiian airports. **Blue Hawaiian Helicopters** (808/961-5600) and **Sunshine Helicopters** (808/270-3999) also offer private charters and transfers.

Interisland hydrofoils were tried a few years back but scrapped, because Hawaii's notoriously rough waters made for an unstable and unpleasant ride. A ferry service, operating catamarans with water jet propulsion and ride-motion stabilizers, began last summer, but soon halted in the face of protests and court challenges by environmentalists. At press time, service had not resumed; for current status, check with Hawaii Superferry (877/443-3779). If you're able to book passage, be sure to upgrade to the deluxe Hahalua Lounge, with oversized leather seats and complimentary refreshments.

Coloured Sands

Hawaii's beaches offer a rainbow of sand colours. At some, there is dangerous surf, so be sure to heed any warning signs.

The Big Island

Black On Highway 11, Punaluu Beach Park (near mile marker 55) and Hookena Beach Park (entrance near mile marker 101, then 2.2 miles) are the best black sand beaches on the south coast.

Green Papakolea Beach (also known as Green Sand Beach), with volcanic olivine sand, is just northeast of South Point, off Highway 11, reached by a three-mile hike.

Oahu

Salt-and-pepper Kahana Bay Beach Park (about 30 miles north of Honolulu on Highway 83) has safe swimming and a lush tropical backdrop.

Golden Just 30 minutes north of Honolulu (via Highway 61), Lanikai Beach offers a mile of powder-soft sand.

Maui

Black Honokalani Black Sand Beach in Waianapanapa State Park is just past mile marker 32 on the Hana Highway.

Red For Kaihalulu Beach (Red Sand Beach), veer left off Hana Highway/HI-360 to Uakea Road for 0.7 mile, then turn left onto Keawa Place. Koki Beach is right off Hana Highway at mile marker 50.

Golden On western Maui, Kapalua Bay Beach (off Honoapiilani Highway South) is one of Maui's best beaches, with calm waters and palm trees. On the southwest coast, Wailea Beach takes the honours (from the end of Honoapiilani Highway, take Wailea Iki, then left on Wailea Alanui and look for park entrance).

Kauai

"Barking" On Barking Sands Beach (south of Polihale State Park), footfalls sound like a barking dog. The sand grains are perforated with tiny echo chambers, which "bark" when they rub together.

Golden Polihale State Park (off Polihale Road on the western shore, with dirt road access) is Hawaii's largest beach, 17 miles long. Haena Beach (about 6 miles west of Hanalei on Highway 560) has been featured in numerous movies. Hanalei Beach (in the town of Hanalei) has rolling waves and a wide beach. Anini Beach County Park (on Anini Road, northeast of Princeville Airport) is shielded by the longest, widest fringing reef in Hawaii.

Molokai

Golden Papohaku Beach (off Kalua Koi Road on the west shore) is nearly three miles long.

Lanai

Golden Hulopoe Beach (on the south shore off Manele Road) was ranked best beach in the U.S. by Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, known as "Dr. Beach" (drbeach.org).

DOUGLAS PEEBLES/CORBIS; LUCY PEMONY/AP PHOTO; OPPOSITE: TONY ROBERTS