



Kaua'i

Includes »

Lihu'e	468
The Eastside	479
Wailua	479
Kapa'a	491
Hanalei Bay & the North Shore	499
Kilauea	499
Princeville	507
Hanalei	513
The South Shore	526
Po'ipu	530
Waimea Canyon & the Westside	541
Barking Sands	551
Koke'e State Park ..	554

Best Places to Eat

- » Tutu's Soup Hale (p488)
- » Red Hot Mama's (p522)
- » Kalaheo Café & Coffee Co (p541)

Best Places to Stay

- » North Country Farms (p501)
- » Kaua'i Country Inn (p495)
- » Bunk House at Rosewood Kaua'i (p486)

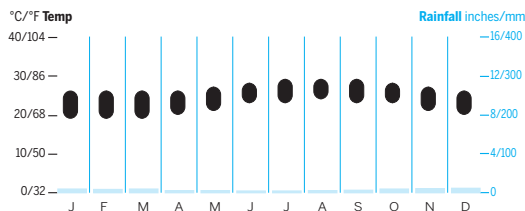
Why Go?

On Kaua'i, *'aina* (land) reigns supreme. While even a short stopover can offer a taste of aggressively lush landscape amongst which to 'cruise' or frolic about, an extended stay may suddenly metamorphose into a course-study of nirvana evading reality, leaving you spending your return flight home debating immediate relocation – if you go home, that is.

Or, you may just get sunburnt and have loads of fun. Redefining mellow, the pace of life on the least populated of the major Hawaiian Islands is forever in first gear, with nobody in too much of a rush to do anything. Though, if action is what's desired, rest assured that limitless potential for adventure is forever fixed into each square mile of this 5-million-year-old dormant volcano's gaping chasms, hanging valleys and velvety emerald flora. With a little willingness, thrill is just a snorkel, a pair of hiking boots, or a paddle stroke away.

When to Go

Lihu'e



Jun–Sep Sunshine abounds, a calmer ocean, longer days and paint-splattering sunsets.

Dec–Mar Whale watching, daily rainbows and sudden rain; don't leave unattended car windows open!

Oct/Nov & Apr/May Least crowds (fall); peak ahi-eating (spring); best deals; numerous festivals.

History

Like the other Hawaiian Islands, Kaua'i saw a sea change in all aspects of life with the arrival of Captain Cook, sugar plantations, statehood and tourism. While Kaua'i developed as a sugar town through the early 1900s, it became iconic as a tropical paradise after WWII, when Hollywood glamorized Lumaha'i Beach in Mitzi Gaynor's *South Pacific* (1958) and Coco Palms Resort in Elvis Presley's *Blue Hawaii* (1961).

The 1970s saw tourism replacing sugar as the island's economic driver and while today's biggest agricultural industries are coffee and seed corn, an earnest contingent of small farmers tries to steer clear of corporate monocropping and toward locally owned and eaten crops – hence commonly seen 'No GMO Kaua'i' bumper stickers.

Hurricane 'Iniki, which hit the island in 1992 and caused destruction upwards of \$1.8 billion, remains the most powerful hurricane to reach Hawaii in recorded history. See p537 for more.

The mid-2000s saw resort and luxury-end development going gangbusters, with over 5000 residential units and 6100 resort units set for development, including the massive Kukui'ula complex in Po'ipu.

Kaua'i people have always been staunch individualists. In ancient times, the locals defended themselves from King Kamehameha and spoke a distinct dialect of the Hawaiian language. Today the people con-

tinue to push back – fighting urbanization and commercialization.

Kaua'i attracts anti-urbanites, be they surfers, farmers, career-changers or nouveau hippies. Living in Honolulu guarantees access to nightlife, neurosurgeons, a university and an Apple Store. On Kaua'i, one forgoes all of that – by choice. With only one coastal highway, no town larger than 10,000 residents, no skyscrapers and a welcome lack of right angles, your attention will target what Kauaians hold sacred: the beautiful 'aina.

State & County Parks

About 30% of the island is protected by the state as parks, forest reserves and natural-area reserves. Must-see state parks include the adjacent Westside standouts, Waimea Canyon and Koke'e State Parks, for the awesome chasm, steep cliffs and native forests. Hiking trails abound, but some trailheads are accessible only by 4WD. Na Pali Coast State Park is another headliner, as the steep, slippery Kalalau Trail is now practically de rigueur. Ha'ena State Park is another favorite thanks to Ke'e Beach, a fantastic snorkeling spot. Most of Kaua'i's best and easiest-to-access beaches are designated as county parks, such as Po'ipu Beach Park, on the sunny South Shore; multiple parks at knockout gorgeous Hanalei Bay and serene 'Anini Beach Park, both on the North Shore; and family-friendly Lydgate Beach Park, on the Eastside.

KAUAI IN...

Two Days

Immerse yourself in glorious greenery at the **National Tropical Botanical Garden**, stop at the **Koloa Fish Market** for poke and plate lunches then segue into a lazy afternoon at **Po'ipu Beach Park** with a South Shore sunset. Day two, head up to **Waimea Canyon** and hike at **Koke'e State Park**.

Four Days

Day three, take the road trip of your life along the epic North Shore. Test your sure-footedness on the first leg of the **Kalalau Trail**. After, meet native flora at **Limahuli Garden** and then soak up that surf-town vibe in **Hanalei**. Day four, splash yourself awake with a **surf lesson**, grab a quick snack at **Pat's Taqueria**, and end your trip with a bike ride along the **Eastside coastal path**.

A Week

Make the remaining three days count. Join **Captain Don's Sportfishing** for a half-day excursion on Kaua'i's plentiful waters, spend an afternoon as a mai tai connoisseur at **Duke's Barefoot Bar** and don your favorite aloha attire for **Kilohana Plantation's Luau Kalamaku**. Get away from it all and camp for a night at **Polihale State Park** and spend your final evening on a sunset cruise with **Captain Andy's Sailing Adventures**.