



Kailua-Kona & the Kona Coast

808

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Umekes (p92)
- ➔ Da Poke Shack (p92)
- ➔ Annie's Island Fresh Burgers (p105)
- ➔ Sushi Shiono (p94)

Best Activities with Kids

- ➔ Learning to splash around at Kikaua Beach (p126)
- ➔ Swimming and beach-combing at Kiholo Bay (p123)
- ➔ Snorkeling in Ka'awaloa Cove (p112) or Two-Step (p117)
- ➔ Learning to paint at Donkey Mill Art Center (p102)

Why Go?

The main access point to the Big Island presents visitors with multiple destinations possessed of very distinct identities. Kailua-Kona is the urban heart of the west side, although you're free to place air quotes around 'urban.' Here you'll find tour offices, shopping centers and some very fine restaurants. Up the mountain, Holualoa is a breezy artists' enclave.

The Kona coast extends north and south of Kailua 'town.' To the north you'll find the edges of the great Hawaiian lava deserts, as well as hidden coves, Hawaiian ruins and resort communities. The South Kona Coast is a fascinating microcosm of Big Island ecosystems and cultural groups. Coffee farms tended by mainland transplants and generations-deep Japanese families stud the jungle hills, which smooth down to a coast studded with superlative snorkeling opportunities. Connecting the South Kona Coast to Kailua is Keauhou, a slice of mainland condo-country carved out of the Big Island.

When to Go

Jun A two-day festival at Pu'uhoehoe o Honaunau celebrates traditional Hawaiian culture.

Nov The Holualoa Village Coffee & Art Stroll showcases the region's produce and artistic output.

Mar Get your microbrew on with a cold beer on the beach at the Kona Brewers Festival.



Kailua-Kona & the Kona Coast Highlights

- 1 Night Dive** (p88) Plunging into the water with an otherworldly cast of angelic manta rays.
- 2 Kealakekua Bay** (p111) Hiking from the highway or kayaking to the cliffs.
- 3 Two-Step** (p117) Dipping into the coral canyons and multicolored reef panorama.
- 4 Kiholo Bay** (p123) Walking through the desert to sea turtles and crashing waves.
- 5 Kua Bay** (p126) Bodyboarding or snorkeling into teal waters that wash up on white sand.
- 6 Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park** (p117) Finding sanctuary and exploring Native Hawaiian history at the Place of Refuge.
- 7 First Friday** (p103) Soaking up the arts on a stroll through Holualoa.
- 8 Magic Sands** (p85) Bodysurfing as the sun sets over the beach.
- 9 Honokohau Beach** (p119) Trekking past lava rock and Hawaiian ruins to this sweep of sand.
- 10 Donkey Mill Art Center** (p102) Finding the perfect hand-crafted souvenir.

