



Hawaii

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Best Beaches

- ➔ Kailua Beach (p1108)
- ➔ Malaekahana State Recreation Area (p1108)
- ➔ Anaeho'omalua Beach Park (p1111)
- ➔ Kapalua Beach (p1114)
- ➔ Pali Ke Kua (Hideaways) Beach (p1119)

Best Small Towns

- ➔ Hale'iwa (p1109)
- ➔ Hilo (p1112)
- ➔ Pa'ia (p1117)
- ➔ Hanalei (p1119)
- ➔ Hanapepe (p1120)

Why Go?

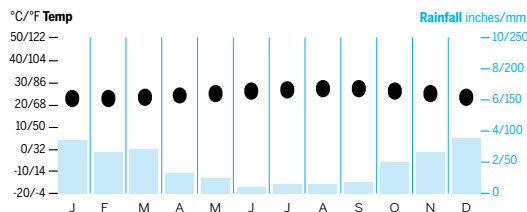
Truth: this string of emerald islands in the cobalt-blue Pacific, more than 2000 miles from any continent, takes work to get to. And besides, aren't these beaches totally crushed by sun-baked tourists and cooing honeymooners? Cue the galloping *Hawaii Five-O* theme music, Elvis crooning and leoparded beauties dancing hula beneath wind-rustled palms.

Hawaii, as tourist bureaus and Hollywood constantly remind us, is 'paradise.' Push past the hype and you may find they're not far wrong. Hawaii is diving coral-reef cities in the morning and listening to slack key guitar at sunset. It's biting into juicy *liliko'i* (passion fruit) with hibiscus flowers in your hair. These Polynesian islands are an expression of nature's diversity at its most divine, from fiery volcanoes to lacy rainforest waterfalls to crystal-clear aquamarine bays.

Locals know Hawaii isn't always paradise, but on any given day it can sure feel like it.

When to Go

Honolulu



Dec–Apr Slightly cooler, wetter weather; peak season for tourism, surfing and whale-watching.

May–Sep Mostly sunny, cloudless days; summer vacation keeps beaches and resorts busy.

Oct–Nov Hotter, extremely humid weather; fewer visitors mean cheaper accommodations.

Hawaii Highlights

1 Exploring multicultural **Honolulu** (p1104), with its eye-popping museums and ethnic eats.

2 Snorkeling with tropical fish and sea turtles in **Hanauma Bay** (p1108).

3 Watching prosurf the monster winter waves on O'ahu's epic **North Shore** (p1109).

4 Witnessing the eruption of a living volcano inside **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park** (p1113).

5 Stargazing atop Hawaii's highest mountain, **Mauna Kea** (p1111), on the Big Island.

6 Catching dawn over Maui's 'house of the rising sun' at **Haleakalā National Park** (p1118).

7 Driving Maui's twisting seaside **Hana Highway** (p1117) past black-sand beaches and jungle cascades.

8 Trekking the sculpted sea cliffs of Kaua'i's epic **Na Pali Coast** (p1119).

9 Kayaking Kaua'i's sacred **Wailua River** (p1118) to secret waterfall swimming holes.

