



HAWAII

TOP SIGHTS, AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

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Welcome to Hawaii

It's easy to see why Hawaii has become synonymous with paradise. Just look at these sugary beaches, Technicolor coral reefs and volcanoes beckoning adventurous spirits.

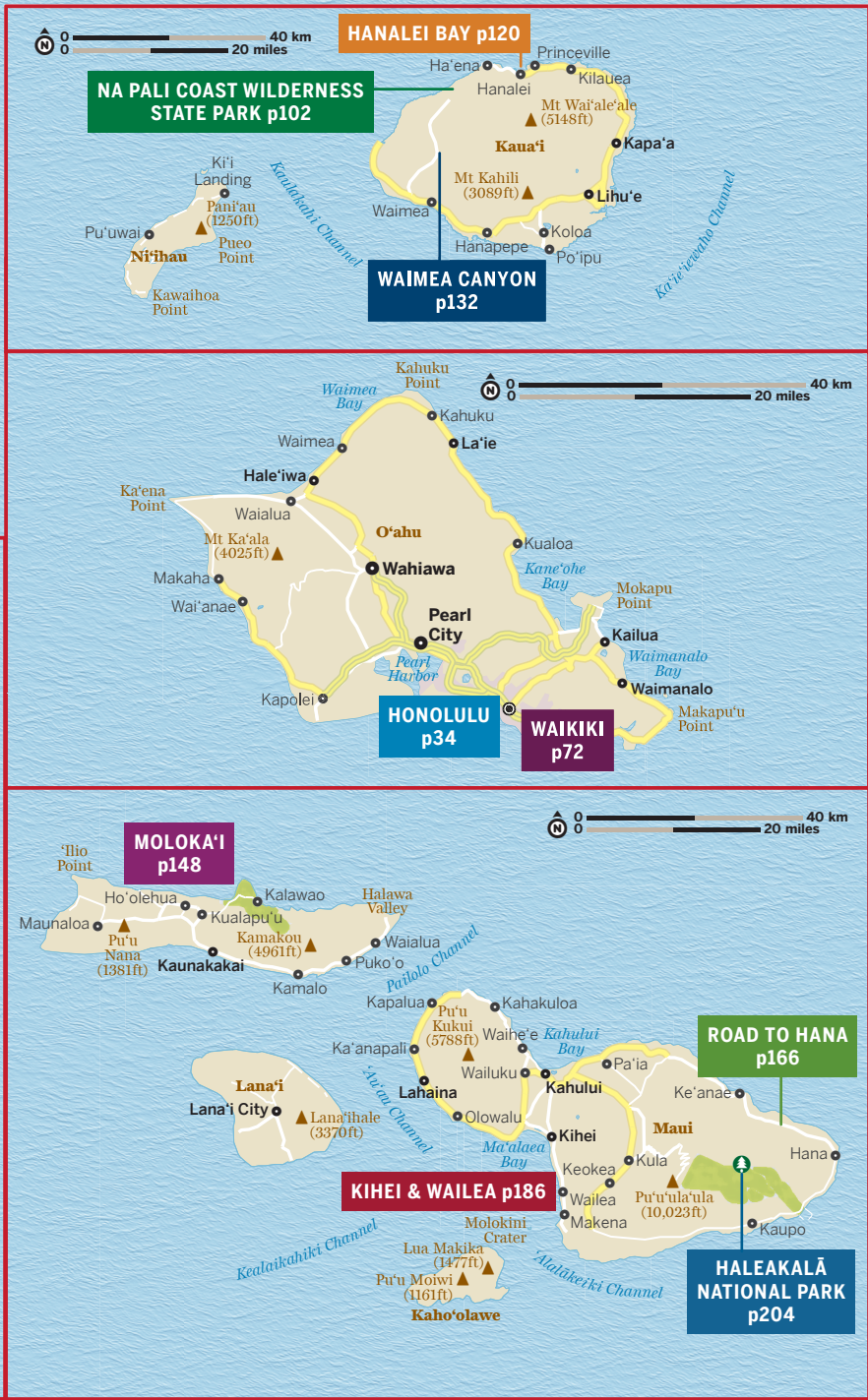
Snapshots of these islands scattered in the cobalt blue Pacific Ocean are heavenly, without the need for any embellishment by tourist brochures. Sunrises and sunsets are so spectacular that they're cause for celebration all by themselves.

Life in Hawaii is lived outdoors – a boon for adventurers. Whether it's surfing, swimming, fishing or picnicking with the *'ohana* (extended family and friends), encounters with nature are infused with the traditional Hawaiian value of *aloha 'aina* – love and respect for the land. Hike across ancient lava flows. Learn to surf. Snorkel with sea turtles. Kayak to an island or join a whale-watching cruise. On land, ride horseback with *paniolo*, Hawaii's cowboys.

Another draw? Hawaii proudly maintains its own distinct identity apart from the US mainland. Spam, shave ice, surfing, ukulele and slack key guitar music, hula, pidgin, aloha shirts, 'rubbah slippah' (flip-flops) – these are touchstones of everyday life.

Even better, everything here feels easygoing and casual, bursting with genuine aloha and fun. Hawaii is proud of its multicultural heritage, with the descendants of ancient Polynesians and various immigrants coexisting with ease. Come here to enjoy what the future of the USA could be. And catch a few sunsets while you're at it.

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Plan Your Trip

Hawaii's Top 12

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Honolulu

Shares an island-style mixed plate of experiences

In this boisterous Polynesian capital you'll eat your way through the pan-Asian alleys of Chinatown, gaze out to sea atop the landmark Aloha Tower, and explore Victorian-era brick buildings, including the USA's only royal palace. Browse at the world's largest open-air shopping center at Ala Moana, then poke your nose into the city's impressive art museums.

Left: Downton Honolulu; Right: Pho, Pig & the Lady (p68)

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BILL FLORENCE/SHUTTERSTOCK ©

Waimea Canyon

Lush, rugged and divine for exploring

Formed by millions of years of erosion and the collapse of the volcano that formed Kaua'i, the 'Grand Canyon of the Pacific' stretches 10 miles long, 1 mile wide and more than 3600ft deep. Reached via a serpentine scenic drive, roadside lookouts provide panoramic views of rugged cliffs, crested buttes and deep valley gorges. Steep hiking trails drop into the canyon floor to survey its interior. It's a bounty of amazing sights.

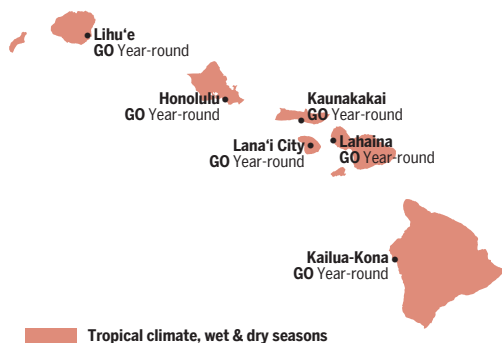
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Plan Your Trip

Need to Know



When to Go



High Season (Dec–Apr & Jun–Aug)

- Accommodations prices up 50–100%.
- Christmas to New Year's and around Easter are the most expensive and busy.
- Winter is rainier (but best for whale-watching and surfing), summer slightly hotter.

Shoulder (May & Sep)

- Crowds and prices drop slightly between schools' spring break and summer vacation.
- Temperatures mild, with mostly sunny, cloudless days.

Low Season (Oct & Nov)

- Fewest crowds, airfares to Hawaii at their lowest.
- Accommodations rates drop – around 50% less than in high season.
- Weather is typically dry and hot (not ideal for hiking).

Currency

US dollar (\$)

Language

English, Hawaiian

Visas

Visitors from Canada, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and many EU countries don't need visas for stays of less than 90 days. Other nations see <http://travel.state.gov>.

Money

ATMs are available in cities and larger towns. Credit cards are widely accepted (except at some lodgings) and are often required for reservations. Tipping is customary.

Cell Phones

Foreign phones that operate on tri- or quad-band frequencies will work in Hawaii. Or purchase inexpensive cell phones with a pay-as-you-go plan here.

Time

Hawaiian–Aleutian Standard Time (GMT/UMC minus 10 hours)