



# 'Iao Valley & Central Maui

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Geste Shrimp Truck (p136)
- ➔ Farmacy Health Bar (p140)
- ➔ Ichiban Okazuya (p140)
- ➔ Sam Sato's (p140)

## Best Nature Spots

- ➔ 'Iao Valley State Monument (p141)
- ➔ Kealia Coastal Boardwalk (p146)
- ➔ Maui Ocean Center (p144)
- ➔ Maui Nui Botanical Gardens (p132)

## Why Go?

Welcome to the flat bit. Central Maui is the isthmus connecting the West Maui Mountains to mighty Haleakalā, giving the island its distinctive three-part shape. This odd wedge of topography, Maui's most arable piece of land, was once known only for its fields of waving sugarcane, but it now boasts a potpourri of attractions. To the north, the island's commercial center, Kahului, contains windswept Kanaha Beach, a hub for water sports. Sister-city Wailuku is a funky up-and-comer with the best lunch scene, and the gateway to the lush 'Iao Valley. On the southern coast, Ma'alaea is home to a top-notch aquarium and its harbor is the launchpad for a Molokini cruise.

## When to Go

Central Maui is a beacon for kiteboarders and windsurfers who take advantage of the windy north shores. The strongest winds happen during the summer months, while surfers prefer the big swells of the winter months.

Kahului is predominantly warm and dry year-round, as it sits in between Maui's two giant mountainous regions. Meanwhile, the lush 'Iao Valley and Wailuku Town get daily precipitation.

The best flight and accommodation deals for Central Maui can be found in the fall, or between mid-April and mid-June. The most expensive flights into Kahului and coastal hotel rooms are during the whale-watching winter months.

In late November and early December a celebration of Hawaiian culture named Na Mele O Maui takes place in Kahului.



## 'Iao Valley & Central Maui Highlights

**1 Kanaha Beach Park** (p132) Kite- and windsurfing this beautifully blustery stretch.

**2 Blue Hawaiian Helicopters** (p135) Taking an unforgettable aerial trip through the West Maui Mountains to Molokai.

**3 King Kamehameha Golf Club** (p142) Teeing off at the island's only 18-hole course where the club house is a stunning Frank Lloyd Wright design.

**4 'Iao Valley State Monument** (p141) Exploring

Maui's lush interior and soaring emerald peaks.

**5 Maui Swap Meet** (p137) Browsing tent after tent of local arts, crafts and food.