



Kihei & South Maui

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Best Places to Drink

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Why Go?

Sunsets are a communal affair in South Maui – just look at the throngs crowding the beach wall at Kama'ole Beach Park II in the late afternoon. It's a scene repeated up and down the coast here every day.

With miles of strip malls, condo complexes and upscale resorts, Kihei and Wailea look too commercial and overbuilt at first glance. But dig deeper. You'll find a mixed plate of scenery and adventure, stretching from Kihei to Makena and beyond, that's truly unique. You can snorkel reefs teeming with turtles, kayak to remote bays or sail in an outrigger canoe. The coral gardens are so rich you can dive from the shore. And the beaches? Undeniably glorious, whether you're looking to relax beneath a resort cabana or to discover your own pocket of sand. Add reliably sunny weather, quiet coastal trails and a diverse dining scene and South Maui's a pretty irresistible place to land.

When to Go

High season stretches from mid-December through mid-April, when crowds flock to Kihei and South Maui for the Christmas holidays and whale-watching. To avoid the heaviest crowds, visit in April and May or September through mid-December.

The best month for viewing humpback whales off the coast is February. The World Whale Day celebration is held in Kihei in the middle of February.

Movie stars arrive from the mainland in mid-June for the Maui Film Festival in Wailea. Visitors can watch a movie under the stars – and right on the beach – during this five-day extravaganza.



Kihei & South Maui Highlights

- 1 Keawakapu Beach** (p154)
Watching the sun drop below the horizon from a golden crescent of sand.
- 2 Kihei** (p154)
Digging into a heaping plate of *loco moco* on the patio of Hawaiian-style Kihei Caffe, or sampling four flagship beers at the Maui Brewing Co.
- 3 Big Beach** (p167)
Sunbathing on a remote stretch of gleaming sand tucked between wild forests and deep-blue waters in Makena State Park.
- 4 Monkeypod Kitchen** (p164)
Savoring a mai tai and wood-fired pizza during the convivial happy hour.
- 5 La Perouse Bay** (p150)
Hiking the Hoapili Trail through an eerie yet beautiful field of black lava.
- 6 Makena** (p166)
Snorkeling beside graceful green turtles at Turtle Beach, or paddling across Makena Bay in search of whales and marine life.