

MOON

HANDBOOKS

MAUI

Including Molokai & Lanai



KYLE ELLISON

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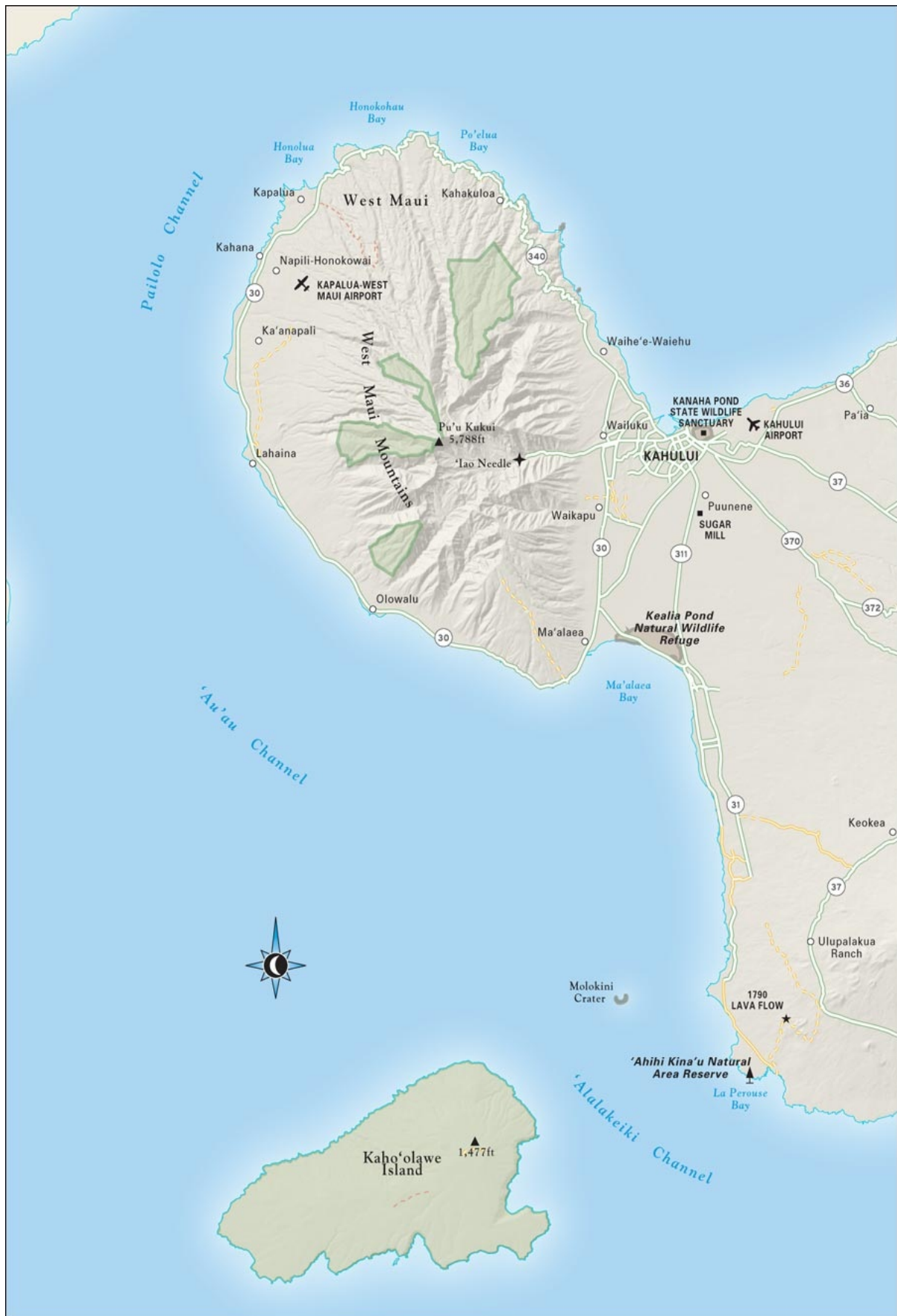


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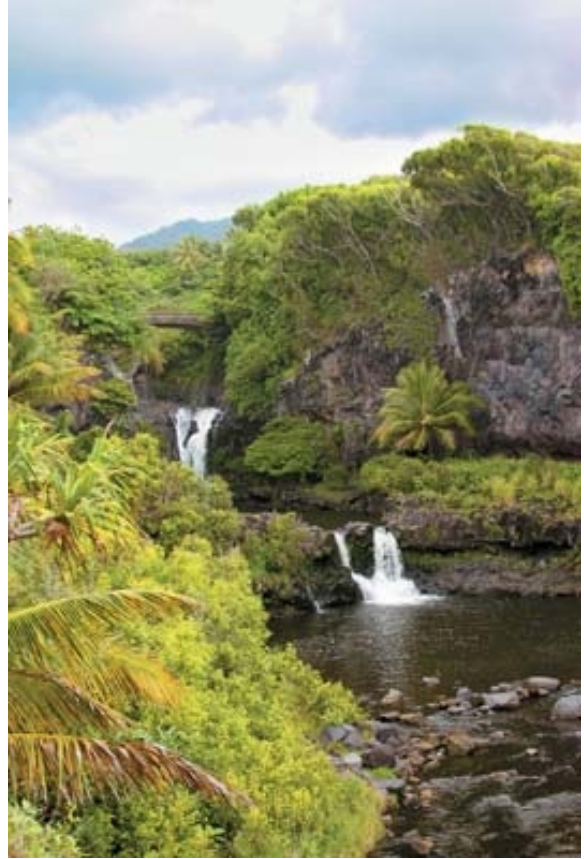




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DISCOVER **Maui**

Planning Your Trip

Best of Maui in 10 Days

Best Beaches

Best Snorkeling and Diving

Best Surfing

Best Hikes

Best Outdoor Adventures

Best Historical and Cultural Sites

Best for Honeymooners



There is a prominent Hawaiian saying about Maui: *Maui no ka oi*. “Maui is the best.” Residents and visitors alike can agree that there is something special—even magical—about Hawai‘i’s second largest island. Yet it’s hard to pinpoint exactly one thing that places Maui among the most dreamed-of vacation locations in the world.



The endless stretches of golden sand are an obvious and noteworthy draw, but sand alone doesn't entice millions of visitors to flock to a 727-square-mile dot in the middle of the Pacific. Perhaps it's more than just the image of yourself in a lounge chair on the sand with a mai tai in hand and the soft breeze rustling the palm trees overhead. Maybe it's also the way the trade winds blow across a beach of black sand at Wai'anapanapa State Park, stirring up waves on the sparkling blue waters. Or it's the hope of a close encounter with a giant green sea turtle while snorkeling off the coast of Napili Bay. Or maybe it's the way the setting sun reflects in the waters off Makena, creating an atmosphere that's both fiery and calm in the same fleeting moment.



There's a good chance the secret to Maui's allure lies in the *many* moments that stick with you long after you've left the island behind. Hiking through a bamboo forest so thick it nearly obscures the sun and finding yourself at the base of a 400-foot waterfall cascading down a rocky cliff. Riding your first wave and feeling the thrill of the surf as you glide across a silky blue break. Waking at 3am to drive up a dark mountainside in the freezing cold to see the first rays of light illuminate the rich colors of Haleakala Crater.

These are the moments that make a trip to Maui truly *no ka oi*.





Planning Your Trip

Where to Go

West Maui

West Maui pulses with a unique coastal vibe. The historic town of **Lahaina** was once the capital of the Hawaiian kingdom, and it retains a port town atmosphere. Warm weather and mostly dry conditions make this region a spectacular place for outdoor adventure. Snorkel with sea turtles at **Napili Bay**, lounge on the beach in **Kapalua**, ride the zipline above **Ka'anapali**, or hike to **Nakalele Blowhole**.



Nakalele Blowhole

Central Maui

Central Maui is the island's population center and the seat of county government. Most

visitors blow through town en route to their beachfront resort, but Central Maui has its own set of sights off the regularly worn trail. The twisting road into **‘Iao Valley** is the region’s most popular attraction. **Kepaniwai Heritage Garden** exhibits Maui’s multicultural heritage, and down on the shoreline at **Kanaha Beach Park**, windsurfers and kitesurfers take to the waves along the stretch of Maui’s north shore.

South Maui

From the celebrity-laden resorts of **Wailea** to the condo-dwelling snowbirds of **Kihei**, South Maui is all about worshipping the sun and enjoying the procession of beaches. **Makena** remains South Maui’s most adventurous venue with snorkeling, scuba diving, hiking trails, kayaking, and some of the island’s most photo-worthy beaches. Just offshore, **Molokini Crater** offers 100-foot visibility and the chance to snorkel with up to 250 species of fish.

Upcountry

Rural, laid-back, and refreshingly cool, Upcountry is Maui’s most underrated zone. Agriculture and produce dominate **Kula**, and everything from vegetables to vineyards, coffee, and goat cheese can be found in this rural and relaxing enclave. **Polipoli** is the island’s little-known adventure zone, where mountain biking, paragliding, and hiking take place in a forest shrouded in mist. Watch the dramatic sunrise from the frosty peak of towering **Haleakala**, the sacred volcano from which the demigod Maui famously snared the sun.

East Maui: the Road to Hana

The New Age town of **Pa‘ia** is as trendy as it is jovial. Surfers ride waves along undeveloped beaches, patrons shop in locally owned boutiques, and the town is home to some of the island’s best restaurants. Along the famous, twisting **Road to Hana**, tumbling waterfalls and rugged hiking trails await. The **Pools of ‘Ohe‘o** spill down cliffs to the sea. The hike through a bamboo forest to the base of **Waimoku Falls** is considered the island’s best trek.

Lana‘i

Home to 3,300 residents and two large resorts, this island is a playground of outdoor adventure. Whether you are staying here or making a day trip from Maui, everything from **hiking** to **scuba diving**, **golfing**, and **surfing** can be enjoyed readily without the crowds. Learn about the island’s history at the **Lana‘i Culture and Heritage Center**, and make the journey down to **Kaunolu** to see an ancient village settlement essentially frozen in time.

Moloka‘i

Taking time to explore this island offers a chance to experience the roots of native Hawaiian culture. Take a guided tour into historic **Halawa Valley**, one of the oldest settlements in Hawai‘i, or ride on the back of a friendly mule as you visit the former

leper colony of **Kalaupapa**. Watch the sunset from **Papohaku Beach**, one of the state's longest most deserted stretches of sand, or climb your way high into the mists of the **Moloka'i Forest Reserve**.

When to Go

Maui isn't postcard-perfect every day of the year. It might not have four distinct seasons, but it definitely has two—summer and winter. During the **summer (May-October)**, areas such as Kapalua, Kahului, North Kihei, and Ka'anapali are prone to trade winds which blow most afternoons. While Hana and Kapalua can see rain during the summer, Lahaina and Kihei can go six straight months without a single drop.

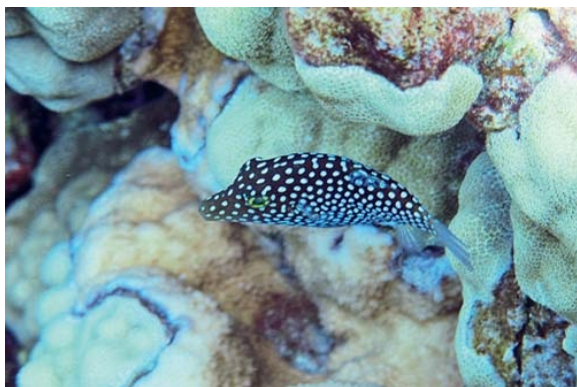
During the **winter (November-April)**, there can be plenty of rain. A winter day on Maui can mean light breezes, sunny skies, and a high of 78°, but it can also mean cloudy skies and rain. Experienced surfers will have the best chance of finding **big surf** in winter.

The **best, most affordable times** to travel to Maui are **January 15-30, April 15-June 5**, and **September 15-December 15**. Airfare is cheaper, occupancy rates are lower, and many activities are discounted. The two busiest weeks of the year are over Christmas and New Year's, and the two slowest weeks are the first two in December. **Whale season** runs December 15-May 15, with peak whale-watching January 15-March 30. Visiting Maui during May and September gives you the benefit of summer weather with **lower prices** and **fewer crowds**.

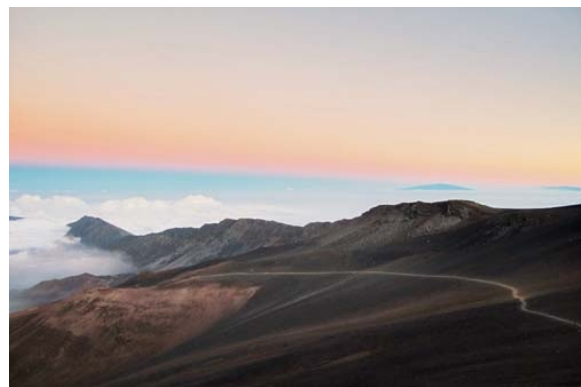
Best of Maui in 10 Days

Day 1

Given Hawai'i's time zone, you may wake up before dawn. Take advantage by catching **sunrise at Haleakala**. Allow two hours of travel from Ka'anapali or Wailea and plan to arrive 30 minutes before sunrise. Spend an hour hiking into the crater. On your way down, have breakfast at **Kula Lodge** or **La Provence**. Spend the rest of the day relaxing poolside.



a white spotted toby at Molokini Crater



Keonehe'ehe'e Trail descends 3,000 ft. to the floor

Day 2

Tackle another early-morning activity such as a **snorkeling tour**. **Molokini** tours depart from Ma'alaea Harbor, while boats leave Ka'anapali Beach for **Olowalu** or **Honolua Bay**. Finish by 2pm and spend the afternoon relaxing on the beach.

Day 3

Enjoy **Lahaina**, ancient capital of the Hawaiian kingdom. Schedule a **surf lesson** or explore the town's **historic sites**. Grab lunch at **Aloha Mixed Plate** or **Cool Cat Café**. Then head north to world-famous **Ka'anapali Beach**, where you can snorkel, cliff jump, play in the surf, or rent a cabana. Explore the shops in **Whalers Village**, dine at **Hula Grill**, and catch a showing of **'Ulalena**.



view of Moloka'i from Ka'anapali Beach

Day 4

Catch the 6:45am ferry to the island of **Lana'i**. Book a Jeep ahead of time and spend the morning exploring. Pick a remote beach such as **Polihua**, **Lopa**, or **Kaiolohia (Shipwreck Beach)**. Then head back to **Lana'i City** for a plate lunch at **Blue Ginger**.

If you'd rather be **hiking**, catch the resort shuttle to the **Lodge at Koele** and spend the morning walking the **Koloiki Ridge Trail**. Explore Lana'i City before catching a shuttle down to the harbor. Then make the short walk to **Hulopo'e Beach**. Snorkel along the reef or relax in the shade with a book. Hike around the corner to the **Pu'u Pehe Overlook**, keeping an eye out for the **spinner dolphins**. Rinse off at the beach shower, grab a drink at the **Four Seasons**, and get back to the harbor to catch the 6:45pm ferry back to Maui.

Day 5

Sleep in before grabbing a late breakfast. Those staying in the West Maui should dine at the **Gazebo**, followed by a stroll along the **Kapalua Coastal Trail**. Drive to **Kahakuloa**, stopping en route at the **Nakalele Blowhole** or **Mokulei'a Beach**. If the conditions are calm and you can't get enough snorkeling, head to **Honolua Bay**. End the day with happy hour at the **Sea House** restaurant.

If you're staying in South Maui, brunch at **Kihei Caffé** before making the drive to **Makena**. Spend the day at **Maluaka Beach**, exploring to the end of the road, and walking the length of **Big Beach** just before sunset.

Day 6

Drive to **Pa'ia**. Grab a coffee from **Anthony's** and stroll down **Baldwin Beach**, followed by breakfast at **Café des Amis**. Enjoy the **Road to Hana** at a leisurely pace, taking time to hike to **Twin Falls** and explore the **Ke'anae Peninsula**. Check into your accommodations in Hana and enjoy sunset from **Hamoā Beach**.



Day 7

Catch the sunrise from **Wai'anapanapa State Park**. Visit the popular **Pools of 'Ohe'o** before day-trippers arrive around 11am. Spend a couple of hours exploring the pools and hiking the **Piipiwai Trail**. If the weather is nice, wrap around the back side of the island on the narrow and **rugged "back road."** Hike to **Alelele Falls**, grab a cold drink at the **Kaupo Store**, and experience a coastline that feels like the end of the earth.

Day 8

Downtime: **Sleep in** as late as you'd like, lounge by the **pool**, get a **massage**. Breathe deeply.

Day 9

Spend the day in the rural **Upcountry**. Enjoy brunch on the lanai at **Grandma's Coffee House**, accompanied by slack key guitar. Stroll down **Thompson Road**. Drive to **Ulupalakua** for a midday wine tasting. Double back the way you came to the town of **Makawao** for some **shopping** and lunch at **Polli's Mexican Restaurant**. Spend the afternoon in hippie outpost **Pa'ia**. Don't linger too long; you need to make it to the **Old Lahaina Lu'au** by 5pm to celebrate your last night on the island.



spinner dolphins



Ulupalakua Ranch Store

Day 10

Gradually make your way toward Kahului Airport. Stop in at the **Maui Ocean Center** for one last glimpse of marine life. Continuing on to **Wailuku**, make the short drive into **‘Iao Valley** to see the famous needle. At **Kanaha Beach Park**, watch the windsurfers. Think about how you’ll miss Maui—and plan your next visit. You’ll be back.



‘Iao Needle

Best Beaches

D.T. Fleming Beach

Fleming’s offers some of the island’s best **bodysurfing**, **beachcombing**, and **coastal hiking**. Public restrooms, showers, lifeguards, and parking make this a **family-friendly** beach. **Surfers** flock here in winter to tackle the **large swells** ([click here](#)).

Ka’anapali Beach

Whether you’re looking for **snorkeling**, **stand-up paddling**, **cliff jumping**, or **scuba diving**, you’ll find it down at Ka’anapali Beach. This resort district is the see-and-be-seen shoreline for the island’s West Side ([click here](#)).

Napili Bay and Kapalua Bay

These two northwestern beaches offer **protected snorkeling** during summer. **Swim with sea turtles** at Napili and watch the sun go down from the deck of the Sea House restaurant with a drink in your hand ([click here](#)).

Mokulei’a Bay