



Contacts: Keliʻi Brown
Maui Visitors Bureau
808-244-3530 Ext. 716
kelii@mauivb.com

Waynette Kwon
Lānaʻi Visitors Bureau
808-565-7600
visitlanai@gmail.com

The Island of Lānaʻi– Getting There is Half the Fun

From Maui across the ʻAuʻau Channel, the island of Lānaʻi appears as a rounded hump, like a whale cradled in a calm and gentle sea. From Lānaʻi, the West Maui Mountains are powerful and purple, an extension of itself nine miles of ocean away. In prehistoric times, Lānaʻi was one of several islands joined to Maui. Now it's a small, graceful, sparsely populated destination with its own strong identity: Hawaiʻi's most enticing island.

Forgotten by time, an anachronism in modern Hawaiʻi, Lānaʻi is a singular escape, a former pineapple plantation that has evolved seamlessly into the ultimate vacation destination. Instead of high-rises, stoplights, traffic jams and shopping centers, there is one small town square and easygoing people whose way of life is centered outdoors. On Lānaʻi, 89,600 acres of countryside invite fishing, swimming, diving, hiking, hunting and riding horseback.

This means adventure coming and going, a journey of discovery even before you set foot on the island. You can fly a jet, take a ferry, or sail to Lānaʻi by catamaran. You can stay a day or a long time. However you choose to arrive, you'll find that getting there is half the fun, and staying there is a grand adventure.

Island Air and Mokulele Airlines collectively offer several flights daily between Lānaʻi and Maui or Oʻahu. On the ocean, the Expeditions ferry, certified by the U.S. Coast Guard, makes five 45-minute trips daily between Lānaʻi's Mānele Small Boat Harbor and Maui's Lāhaina Harbor, and two 75-minute trips daily between Lānaʻi and Maui's Māʻalaea Harbor. These trips are fun and purposeful, with thrilling views of humpback whales in the winter and spinner dolphins all year round—and behind Kahoʻolawe, the summit of Mauna Kea peeking through the clouds from Hawaiʻi's Big Island. On land or sea, Trilogy Excursions, Lānaʻi's premier recreation activities operator and Maui's oldest sailing company, offers a full menu of snorkel and scuba sails, plus land tours, private charters and special wedding sails in the waters between Maui and Lānaʻi.

Once you arrive, the adventures expand exponentially. Will it be golf, sporting clays, archery, the spa, meandering around town, water sports, or exploring the remote beaches and abandoned villages in a 4-wheel drive? Scheduled shuttle service is available between Lānaʻi Airport, the ferry terminal at Mānele Bay, the upland Four Seasons Resort Lānaʻi, The Lodge at Kōʻele and the seaside Four Seasons Resort Lānaʻi at Mānele Bay. An inter-hotel shuttle, for Four Seasons guests, runs every half-hour between the two resorts, stopping on the way at

Hotel Lāna`i in Lāna`i City.

If you plan to venture off the beaten path, Lāna`i City Service, an affiliate of Dollar Car Rental and Adventure EcoCentre Lāna`i offer either 4-wheel-drive Wrangler Jeeps or mini vans. Because Lāna`i has only 30 miles of paved road, 4-wheel drive vehicles provide the opportunity to explore the back roads, abandoned villages, and out-of-the-way points that are the historic landmarks of the island. And of course, there's nothing like a horseback ride, bicycles, mountain bikes, and a sturdy pair of walking shoes to help you hit the trails.

Everything in Lāna`i City is in walking distance, bringing a remarkable feeling of accessibility to the luxury of seclusion. Customized tours to the far corners of the island, such as Polihua Beach, Keōmuku village, Kaiolohia, and the historic Kaunolū, can be arranged through private tour companies with knowledgeable guides who enlighten you with fascinating history and culture.

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