



## **The Many Faces of Maui**

Maui is second in size among the Hawaiian Islands, but first in people's hearts. Repeatedly at the top of the "best island" surveys of consumer travel magazines, Maui possesses a magic that lingers in the heart and grows. That is why, for 13 of the 14 years of its existence, *Conde Nast Traveler's* top honor for "Best Island in the World" went to Maui.

Why do people love Maui? It's neither too big nor too small – it's manageable. It has remote wilderness and glamorous resorts, 21st-century comforts and rural neighborhoods, and people who melt your heart. It's endowed with staggering natural beauty. And it's culturally diverse.

### **Fast Facts**

- It's the second largest Hawaiian Island, 48 miles long and 26 miles across. Its 729 square miles encompass the fullness of nature's gifts: long sandy beaches, tropical rainforests, rolling pasture lands, dryland forests, and steep rocky cliffs formed by volcano, wind and water.
- Maui's weather is inviting. Temperatures average 75 to 85 degrees, and ranges from a 40-degree sunrise atop Haleakalā Crater to a sun-kissed afternoon on the sands of Wailea or Kā'anapali.
- Prehistoric Maui was once a large island called Maui Nui, "Big Maui." Volcanic eruptions broke up the island into Moloka'i, Lāna'i, Kaho'olawe and the goddess-shaped Maui as we know it today. Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i, each visible to the other across a channel, make up the cozy triad of islands called Maui County – the modern Maui Nui.

### **Adventures Aplenty**

The proximity of these islands to each other conjures up adventures aplenty. You can hop on a ferry, small plane or catamaran on Maui and spend the afternoon snorkeling on Lāna'i or hiking the lush valleys of Moloka'i with a Native Hawaiian guide.

Encircling the island are the pearls of Hawai'i: the beaches of Maui. Maui's shoreline gems have consistently appeared on "Dr. Beach" Stephen Leatherman's annual list of the best beaches in the U.S. Maui's Kapalua, Kā'anapali and Wailea beaches have ranked among his top 40 choices as the "healthiest" beaches in the country based on water quality, amenities, safety and environmental factors.

At West Maui's Kapalua Bay, the white-sand crescent is a favorite for picnics, snorkeling, swimming and diving. A few minutes south, Kā'anapali Beach stretches for miles between fun-loving Lāhaina and historic Pu'u Keka'a, a volcanic cinder cone known for its Technicolor snorkeling. South Maui has its



own allure, a string of white-sand beaches and welcoming coves along Kīhei, Wailea and Mākena.

In East Maui's Hāna, home to the largest heiau (pre-western stone temple) in Hawai'i, the beaches range from red to black to white. Wai'anapanapa's black-pebbled shore and white-sanded Hāmoa Beach are a study in contrasts, each brilliant in its own way. While West and South Maui are the glamour centers of the island, East Maui's character is casual and rural. The laptop and wristwatch come off and stay off, and you may spend more time on a horse than in a car. In Central Maui's Wailuku, hike and picnic in 'Āao Valley and dine where the locals do, at mom-and-pop restaurants, noodle shops and cafes.

Hikers, naturalists and birdwatchers have their own vast universe to explore. From coastal wetlands to upland forests, from sea level to 10,000 feet, Maui's natural world is textured and immense, accessible on your own or with expert naturalist guides. Maui's protected habitats and wilderness areas are the last frontier for many plant and bird species found nowhere else on earth. During the winter months, annual migrations of humpback whales turn Maui into Hawai'i's foremost whale-watching venue.

### **For Foodies and Culturati**

Glitter and the good life thrive on Maui, too. Enlightened farmers, fertile soil, and brilliant, world-renowned chefs give Maui a cachet that has circled the globe. From Makawao and Kula to Central, South and West Maui, from rubber-slipper casual to elegantly chic, restaurants of all stripes draw an international and local clientele. The top resorts offer food and wine festivals that are signature events every year: Kapalua Wine & Food Symposium; Taste of Lāhaina; Taste of Wailea; the Maui Onion Festival in Kā'anapali.

The culinary world has borrowed and benefited from Maui's resident population, an ethnic mix of Caucasians, Japanese, Filipinos, Hawaiians, Chinese, Hispanics and other ethnic groups – a human rainbow that creates a rich cultural foundation and diverse attractions. Cultural activities and festivals, open to everyone, occur throughout the island year-round. During summer weekends, the Japanese population holds colorful, lantern-lit Obon dances to honor ancestors. Each fall during Aloha Festivals, Maui joins the rest of the state to offer dozens of events including Hawaiian entertainment, a royal court, food, and ceremony. There are Filipino barrio fiestas, a Fourth of July rodeo, and church feasts in the primarily Portuguese communities of the Upcountry slopes. A historic tribute to Maui's diversity resides at the Kepaniwai Park in 'Āao Valley, where park-goers can wander among heritage gardens that honor Maui's Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Caucasian, Filipino and Hawaiian roots.



Where to stay? Take your pick: luxury hotels with sunset views, intimate bed & breakfasts clinging to upland slopes, or spacious condominiums for the family with all the amenities of home. While luxury resorts line Maui's south and west shores, moderately priced accommodations abound in neighboring resort areas, and in Upcountry and Central Maui.