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6 of the best Hawaii holidays for the perfect island escape

From coastal cities to volcanic villages and rich rainforests, Hawaii has destinations to suit every kind of holidaymaker

Natalie Wilson • Tuesday 16 July 2024 15:32 • [Comments](#)



Hawaii's diverse coastal landscape is a holiday hotspot (Getty Images)

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The tropical gem of **America's** west coast, **Hawaii** offers holidaymakers a chance to experience the laid-back lifestyle, diverse landscapes and dynamic environment of isolated islands. Dubbed the 'Aloha State', its active volcanoes, sapphire seas and towering cliffs allow for a whole host of bucket-list adventures.

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Worlds away from a beach holiday in **Florida's Miami** or Fort Lauderdale on the mainland, the **US's** 50th state invites visitors to don a Hawaiian shirt and head to a luau. The traditional Hawaiian parties with music, lei flower garlands and lessons in hula dancing are a must-try, whether travellers stay in a five-star hotel or a seafront hostel.

The archipelago of six main paradise islands in the **Pacific Ocean** has ancient, rugged landscapes and black and white sandy swathes. Each presents its own version of a Hawaiian holiday, from expeditions to waterfalls to relaxing beach hotspots.

Choose one to explore in-depth, or island hop around our top holiday picks for the full Hawaii experience.

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Kauai



Lush green vegetation blankets the 'Garden Island' (*Waimea Plantation Cottages, Kauai*)

Kauai, the oldest of Hawaii's islands, has an undeniable allure.

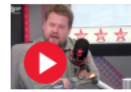


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Nicknamed the “Garden Island” thanks to the thriving jungle vegetation that blankets its surface, it’s no surprise Kauai is one of the wettest places on earth. The landscape is home to rainforests packed with rapid rivers and cascading waterfalls to rappel down or take to the sky to see the sights of Waimea Canyon on a helicopter tour.

Where to stay

Waimea Plantation Cottages

The serenity of Kauai Island is best enjoyed during secluded stays on its tropical coastline. Waimea Plantation Cottages feature plantation-period furniture, tropical artwork and floral accents. The homes were built in the late 1880s but are now fully equipped with self-catering kitchens and a breezy lanai patio.

Rooms available from

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Rates provided by Booking.com

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Maui



Take the Hana Highway to explore Maui (Getty Images/iStockphoto)

Hawaii’s “Valley Island”, **Maui** is aptly named for its deep rock formations and dense gardens in ‘Iao Valley State Park. Home to Haleakala, an active volcano, 30 miles of golden coast and the waters of Ohe’o Gulch’s Seven Sacred Pools, the famous Hana Highway is the ultimate road through Maui’s tropics. Avid surfers can savour the taste of a Hawaiian poke bowl before riding the huge swells of Honolua Bay – some of the best waves in the world.

Where to stay

The Mauian Hotel

On the popular gold sands of Napili Bay, The Mauian is a slice of paradise with ocean views, poolside barbeques and shuffleboard courts. Spacious studios with floral accents, private lanais and full kitchens are designed in 1950s-style tropical architecture for laidback dining at your leisure.

Rooms available from

\$319 per night

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Hawaii Island



Big Island was once the home of Hawaiian royalty (Getty Images/iStockphoto)

Get a taste of small-scale Hawaiian city life on Hawaii Island, otherwise known as **Big Island**. The seaside town of Kailua-Kona, once home to Hawaiian royalty, is the primary western city of the Aloha State's largest island, offering restaurants, nightlife and souvenir shops, while Hawaii Island's Volcano National Park is known for hiking trails, dramatic vistas and two active volcanoes: Kilauea and Mauna Loa.

Where to stay

Volcano Village Lodge

In the thick of the Big Island's rainforest 4,000ft above sea level, Volcano Village Lodges feature creature comforts, a fireplace and a hot tub within beamed walls. Garden waterfalls and koi ponds garnish the property, and in contrast to the active lava flow of Kilauea just 15 minutes away, hotel itineraries promote relaxation on massage beds, lei making and hula classes.

Rooms available from

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Oahu





Honolulu is home to the majority of Hawaii's cosmopolitan population (Getty Images/iStockphoto)

“The Gathering Place”, Oahu is home to the state capital of **Honolulu** and the majority of Hawaii's cosmopolitan population. Here, visitors will find a fusion of cultures and indigenous traditions, a dynamic food scene with culinary hotspots in Chinatown, and historical landmarks such as Pearl Harbour and the Punchbowl Crater – a cemetery for American veterans on the site of an extinct volcano. Relax and decompress on the iconic Waikiki beach with a surf lesson or embrace the nightlife in the high-rises behind the sand.

Where to stay

Embassy Suites by Hilton

Embassy Suites by Hilton in Kapolei offers spacious rooms with Hawaiian-inspired décor and a palm-lined rock pool. On the menu – free daily breakfasts and a sushi restaurant fuel laid-back adventures to the North Shore and Paradise Cove Luaus, both within an hour's drive of the hotel.

Rooms available from

\$315 per night

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Hotel Amenities 

Lanai



Watch the sun rise over Maui from the cliffs by Sweetheart Rock (Getty Images/iStockphoto)

If utter seclusion, lava cliffs, pristine dive sites and pineapples are what draw you to Hawaii, Lanai's mountain peaks and lively underwater scenery – complete with green turtles and a WWII shipwreck – is likely to fit the bill. From the Garden of the Gods' red desert landscape to the low-rise Lanai City, peace is practically promised to holidaymakers on Hawaii's smallest inhabited island.

Where to stay

Four Seasons Resort Lana'i

One of the island's only hotels, direct beach access, dolphin sightings and jungle-themed interiors make this clifftop Four Seasons a special one. Add snorkelling coves, lagoon-style pools, koi ponds and a rooftop Nobu restaurant bursting with fresh seafood, and you have a glamorous slice of Hawaiian paradise.

Rooms available from

\$1,260 per night

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Molokai



For a slow tempo Hawaii holiday visit Molokai (Getty Images/iStockphoto)

Hawaii's fifth largest island, Molokai, is a landscape of cattle ranches, seacliffs and fine white sands like those on Papohaku Beach. Deemed the "Friendly Island", this is where authentic Hawaiian culture and laidback living thrive – Molokai is known as the birthplace of hula after all. Hike the island's Kalaupapa Peninsula for must-see views of the Kalaupapa National Historical Park, the isolated former leper colony on Molokai's northern cliffside.

Where to stay

Hotel Moloka'i

To escape to serenity, Hotel Moloka'i on Kamiloloa Beach is a Polynesian-style village of breezy bungalows and sea view pools on Hawaii's only barrier reef.

Rooms available from

\$259 per night

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