

Honolulu

Honolulu – one of the most remote cities in the world – has lured the intrepid to its glorious sandy shores for centuries. But peel back the picture-postcard images of hula girls, tiki cups and floral garlands and you'll find a dynamic urban centre nestled in one of the most beautiful landscapes on Earth. Its contemporary-art galleries, fine examples of mid-century architecture and vibrant farm-to-table dining scene is waiting to be discovered.

Need to know

Get to grips with the basics

- 01 Sign of the times:** The Shaka hand gesture is made by extending the thumb and pinky, curling the fingers in between and turning the back of the hand towards the recipient. It can mean “hello”, “goodbye”, “thank you” or any number of feel-good expressions.
- 02 Standing guard:** The Aloha Ambassadors patrol the streets of Waikiki and help anyone in need. This cheery band will take your photo or even point you in the direction of the best fresh-fruit smoothie.
- 03 Talk the talk:** You will probably hear “aloha” and “mahalo” more than “hello” and “thank you”. It's common for kama'aina (Hawaii-born) to sprinkle their speech with words from Hawaiian.
- 04 So to speak:** Da kine? Howzit? Shoots? It takes a trained ear to follow the islands' creole: Hawaiian Pidgin English, which is spoken by about half of Hawaii's population of 1.4 million.
- 05 New leaf:** Honolulu is a city of enormous trees. With their giant canopies, monkeypod and banyan varieties offer protection from pelting rain or the heat of the sun.

Hotels

Tropical retreats

- 1** The Royal Hawaiian, Waikiki
Pink palace

Book an oceanfront room in the Mailani Tower. Higher rooms are more peaceful and have the grandest views.
2259 Kalakaua Avenue
+1 808 923 7311
royal-hawaiian.com

- 2** Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club, Waikiki
Arty retreat

The Surfjack has a director of experience who can connect visitors to artists, musicians and makers on O'ahu, or arrange a tour of the island.
412 Levers Street
+1 808 923 8882
surfjack.com

- 3** Halekulani, Waikiki
Step back in time

Guests staying at Halekulani get complimentary entry to a number of cultural venues, including 'Iolani Palace and the Honolulu Museum of Art.
2199 Kalia Road
+1 844 288 8022
halekulani.com

Food and Drink

Island dining

- 1** Livestock Tavern, Downtown
Meat-centric meals

Co-owners Dusty Grable and Jesse Cruz opened Livestock Tavern in 2014, turning a former dive bar into one of the city's most acclaimed dining spots. Mains include osso buco, pork cheeks and a stuffed herb-roasted chicken.
49 North Hotel Street
+1 808 537 2577
livestocktavern.com

- 2** Kaimuki Superette
Market values

The name of this small deli diner implies a mini-mart, which is ideal because many of the ingredients in the dishes can be purchased to take home. Try the chia-seed pudding and the sausage sandwich with choi sum.

3458 Wai'ala'e Avenue
+1 808 734 7800
kaimukisuperette.com

- 3** Pioneer Saloon, Diamond Head
Japanese twist

Owner-chef Nori Sakamoto's creations are a Japanese take on the Hawaiian plate-lunch and the product of unusual cooking methods: *ahi* (tuna) or scallops breaded and fried, and chicken cooked in *shio-koji*, an umami-rich seasoning.
3046 Monsarrat Avenue
+1 808 732 4001

- 4** Bar Leather Apron, Downtown
Elite squad

Tom and Justin Park have recreated the service and cocktails they enjoyed on trips to Japan with this intimate space. The best seats are at the bar facing the bartenders, led by Justin. Reservations are vital.
Suite 127A, 745 Fort Street
+1 808 524 0808
barleatherapron.com

- 5** Shaka Pressed Juice, Diamond Head
Juice on the loose

Co-owners Juri and Keegan Edwards opened their takeaway cold-pressed juice shop in 2015 on a popular running route. They turn organic produce from Hawaii and the mainland into more than a dozen drinks and use no artificial additives.
3118 Monsarrat Avenue
+1 808 200 0921
shakapressedjuice.com

Retail

The goods

- 1** Bailey's Antiques and Aloha Shirts, Kapahulu
Get shirtly

For anyone even remotely interested in the state's famed attire, David Bailey's shop is the holy grail. He has amassed a collection of more than 15,000 aloha shirts – some dating back to the 1930s – in every hue and pattern imaginable.
517 Kapahulu Avenue
+1 808 734 7628
alohashirts.com

- 2** James After Beach Club, Diamond Head
Japanese style

The first US shop for Kamakura-based James & Co designer Masayoshi Shioya sells wardrobe basics with universal appeal: unisex chambray, plaid and Oxford shirts, linen shorts and ultra-soft T-shirts, all made in Japan. You will also find handmade surfboards.
3045 Monsarrat Avenue
+1 808 737 8982
james-hawaii.com

- 3** Leather Soul, Downtown
If the shoe fits

Selling high-class shoe brands such as Alden and John Lobb in the tropics can't be easy. But regulars at Leather Soul's shops (there is a second in Waikiki) are thankful for owner Tom Park's dedication to raising Hawaii's sartorial standards.
Merchant Street
+1 808 523 7700
leathersoul.com

- 4** Kamaka Hawaii, Kaka'ako
First family of ukuleles

Hawaii's oldest ukulele manufacturer was founded by Sam Kamaka in 1916 and is now owned by his sons, and managed by his grandsons. The company is known for its bulbous four-string pineapple-shaped ukulele (patented in 1928).
550 South Street
+1 808 531 3165
kamakahawaii.com

Vocabulary

Local lingo

- 01 A hui hou:** Until we meet again
- 02 Aloha:** Hello, love, regards
- 03 Choke:** A lot of something
- 04 Da kine:** A thing, a whatchamacallit
- 05 Grinds:** Food
- 06 Hana hou:** Do it again!
- 07 Mahalo:** Thank you



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