

Welcome to Na Pali Coast State Park. We believe Hawaii's parks are among the earth's best resources. Please enjoy your visit and help us protect this fragile resource. If you observe damage to the park, please inform the office of the Chairperson, Department of Land and Natural Resources at (808) 587-0400.

### Directions & Tips

**Getting There.** The trail begins in Ha'ena State Park at the northwest end of Kuhio Highway (Route 56) about 41 miles, a 1½-hour drive, from Lihue Airport. Leaving vehicles overnight at the trailhead is not recommended. Taxi service is available from Princeville Airport.

**KNOW YOUR LIMITS.** The Kalalau Trail is suitable for expert hikers in good physical shape only. The trail is steep, slippery and narrow with sheer drop-offs in places. Serious injuries are regular occurrences along the route, requiring challenging rescue efforts. Novice hikers, those who are not fit, and anyone who has a fear of heights should probably not attempt hiking beyond the first two miles.

**Climate/Seasons.** Throughout the year, temperatures seldom drop below 60°F. Summer weather (May to October) normally brings steady tradewinds and occasional showers while winter weather (October to May) is less predictable. Trade-wind showers are more frequent during the night and early morning. Infrequent widespread storms cause flash floods.

**Gear.** Travel light. Lightweight hiking shoes with good traction are popular. Camping gear should include a lightweight sleeping bag or blanket, sleeping pad, tent or tarp, cooking stove and fuel, water purification tablets or iodine, first aid kit, mosquito repellent, sunscreen, rain gear, and biodegradable soap.

**Permits required.** Obtain all permits from the State Parks District offices. There are fees for camping.

**Day-use hiking permits** are required when continuing beyond Hanakapi'ai Valley, even if overnight camping is not planned.

**Camping permits.** A maximum stay of 5 nights is allowed in Na Pali State Park. Within the 5-night maximum, no 2 consecutive nights are allowed at Hanakoa.

**Facilities.** The 2 authorized camping areas along the trail at Hanakoa and Kalalau do not have tables or drinking water. Composting toilets are available at Hanakoa, Hanakapi'ai and Kalalau. All camping areas are located on shaded terraces near streams.

### Health Concerns

- **Stream Water.** Boil or treat all drinking water. While swimming in streams, or drinking untreated stream water, it is possible to contract leptospirosis. This potentially fatal disease invades the body through cuts and other openings and is often mistaken for hepatitis.
- **Sunburn/heat exhaustion.** Beware of the midday tropical sun. Avoid strenuous exercise during hot periods, drink plenty of water, and use sunscreen to protect against ultraviolet radiation, even when the sky is overcast.
- **Harmful plants and animals.** Never taste or eat unfamiliar plants or use them for food skewers. Keep your area clean to avoid attracting pests. Spiders, scorpions, centipedes, and other harmful insects like hidden areas such as under leaf litter and rocks.

### Safety Concerns

- **No Emergency Services.** Someone must hike out for help or signal a passing helicopter or boat.
- **Trail.** In places the trail is narrow with steep drop-offs, uneven because of protruding roots and rocks, or slippery because of mud or loose rocks. Wear appropriate footwear.
- **Crossing Streams.** Never cross a flooded stream. Hawaii's gently flowing, clear streams can quickly become deep muddy torrents. Avoid crossing swift flows when the water level is above your knees. Wait—the water level may recede as quickly as it rose.
- **Ocean swimming.** Swimming, wading, and bodysurfing are not recommended unless you are an experienced swimmer familiar with local conditions. Surf and currents are variable and can be treacherous even during summer. There are no lifeguards.
  - **Mountain climbing.** Hawaii's volcanic mountains are too crumbly for roping or climbing and plants are easily uprooted.
- **Rock slides and falling rocks.** Avoid the base of steep cliffs, narrow canyons, and waterfalls whenever possible. Fallen rocks—particularly in areas such as the beach fronting the Kalalau sea caves—indicate the hazards.
- **Tsunamis (tidal waves).** Tsunamis are an infrequent, but great hazard on low-lying coastal areas such as Hanakapi'ai and Kalalau beaches. A few hours warning may be given, unless the waves are locally generated. Evacuate immediately to high ground and do not return until given official clearance. Tsunamis are often preceded by an unusual drop in sea level prior to the first waves.
  - **Hunting.** Goat hunting may be permitted on weekends in August and September. Most hunting occurs in Kalalau Valley or above the trail between Hanakoa and Kalalau. Safety zone signs are posted during hunting season. For your safety, hike only the main trails.

STATE OF HAWAII

# KALALAU TRAIL

NA PALI COAST STATE PARK

The Na Pali Coast is a very special place. The *pali*, or cliffs, provide a rugged grandeur of deep, narrow valleys ending abruptly at the sea. Waterfalls and swift flowing streams continue to cut these narrow valleys while the sea carves cliffs at their mouths. Extensive stone walled terraces can still be found on the valley bottoms where Hawaiians once cultivated taro.

KAUAI, HAWAII



For further information or permits contact:

[www.hawaii.stateparks.org](http://www.hawaii.stateparks.org)

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# THE KALALAU TRAIL

Ke'e Beach  
Ka Uiu & Poono Hwy

HANAKAPI'AI BEACH  
NO CAMPING

HANAKOIA VALLEY

KALALAU BEACH

The Kalalau Trail provides the only land access to this part of the rugged coast. The trail traverses 5 valleys before ending at Kalalau Beach where it is blocked by sheer, fluted Pali. The 11-mile trail is graded but almost never level as it crosses above towering sea cliffs and through lush valleys. The trail drops to sea level at the beaches of Hanakapi'ai and Kalalau.

Originally built in the late 1800s, portions of the trail were rebuilt in the 1930s. A similar foot trail linked earlier Hawaiian settlements along the coastline.

For most backpackers in good condition hiking the 11 miles will take a full day. Get an early start to avoid overexertion in the midday heat.

For experienced swimmers knowledgeable in local sea conditions, nearshore waters offer limited opportunities for swimming and bodysurfing. Naturalists will find a number of plants of interest, but most of the rare native plants grow on the inaccessible cliffs. Wild goats are often seen.

## Ke'e Beach to Hanakapi'ai (2 MILES)

This section offers a popular day hike for able-bodied hikers. Walking the first 1/2-mile will reward you with excellent views of the coast.

The summer sand beach at Hanakapi'ai is a popular destination for day hikers. Swimming or wading can be dangerous, however, and is not recommended. The surf and rip currents are variable and often extremely

strong, but worst in winter when high surf conditions prevail.

An unmaintained 2-mile trail into Hanakapi'ai Valley leads to a spectacular waterfall. After crossing the stream about a mile up the valley, the trail becomes more difficult as it meanders over rocks and fallen trees. The upper half of this trail should be hiked only in good weather to avoid dangerous flash floods and falling rocks.

## Hanakapi'ai to Hanakoa (4 MILES)

More strenuous hiking begins as the steep switchback trail climbs 800 feet out of Hanakapi'ai Valley. The trail traverses the Horio O Na Pali Natural Area Reserve in the small hanging valleys of Ho'olulu and Waihuakua before entering Hanakoa Valley. The reserve harbors a variety of native lowland forest plants.

Near the Hanakoa Stream crossing, a camping area offers an overnight stop for weary backpackers. The campsites are on old agricultural terraces where coffee plants, introduced in the late 1800s, are still growing. The unmarked 1/2-mile trail up the east fork of the valley to Hanakoa Falls has hazardous, eroded sections but affords a spectacular view of the falls.

## Hanakoa Valley to Kalalau Beach (5 MILES)

After leaving Hanakoa Valley, the trail enters drier, open land which offers little shade from the midday sun. Tired hikers may be urged on by the panoramic view of Kalalau Valley's fluted cliffs and the coastline beyond.

The trail crosses Kalalau Stream near the Valley mouth before ending at Kalalau Beach and a small waterfall.

Camping in Kalalau is allowed only by this sand beach. During summer, sea caves just beyond the waterfall provide popular camping shelters, but winter surf removes much of the beach and enters the caves. Shaded camp sites are available beneath the trees behind the beach. Ocean swimming is not recommended for those unfamiliar with local sea conditions.

Do not loiter beneath the waterfall or near cliff faces as there is constant danger of falling rocks.

An easy 2-mile trail into Kalalau Valley ends at a pool in the stream. This trail passes through extensive agricultural terraces where Hawaiians grew taro, the staple crop, until 1920. These terraces are now overgrown with Java plum, guava, and occasional large mango trees.



LEGEND		
Kalalau Trail	Secondary Trails	Streams
Camping Area	Mileage Post	Vistas