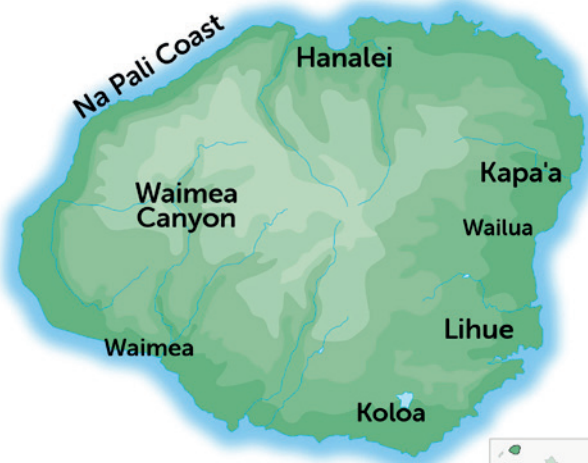


Kaua'i

2026
HIGHLIGHTS
VISITOR
PLANNER



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Hawaii-Guide.com offers personalized Hawaii travel advice and vacation tips on the top attractions and things to see and do within the Hawaiian islands.

This packet, along with our [website](#), features all of the best attractions on Kaua'i — plus you can explore our hand-picked Hawaii tours, activities, and accommodations - each vetted by our team of Hawaii experts.



Since 2002, our Hawaii website, guidebooks, and digital travel guides have assisted millions of visitors in the process of planning and booking the Hawaiian vacation of their dreams.

Our organization is dedicated to being the one-stop resource for all things Hawaii.





HAWAII TRAVEL GUIDE - 2026 VISITOR PLANNER

Kaua'i Highlights Edition

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Language Note: Hawai'i's two official languages are Hawaiian and English. It is the only state in the U.S. with two official languages. In this guide we used both the English and Hawaiian names of places when possible. There are only 13 letters in the Hawaiian alphabet: A, E, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, U, W and the 'okina ('). The okina is a glottal stop like the sound between the ohs in "oh-oh" and is considered a consonant. In order to clarify pronunciation, you will often see the glottal stop (') or 'okina used on words in this guide such as Hawai'i. Due to printing restrictions, we will not use the macron, which is found above stressed vowels in the Hawaiian language.

We have made our best efforts to ensure that the material found within this visitor guide is both useful and accurate. However, please be aware that we cannot completely guarantee the accuracy or description of any location, business establishment, accommodation, or activity found within this guide, and Guide of US, LLC makes no guarantees concerning the accuracy of the information found here or in the use to which it may be put. Guide of US, LLC does not assume and hereby disclaims any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

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HAWAI'I TRAVEL GUIDE

2026 Visitor Planner

Kaua'i Highlights Edition



**Researched &
Written by:**

**John C. Derrick
Victoria C. Derrick**



KAUA'I WEATHER

The weather on Kaua'i is pretty balanced throughout the year. Still, knowing about this balance and what weather to expect before your trip is very helpful when it comes to selecting a place to stay on the island.

If you're adamant about avoiding the rain, then, as you'll see below, the South Shore is certainly going to be your best bet. If a little rain doesn't bother you, then perhaps somewhere on the North Shore or East Shore would be better suited for you.

Kaua'i is known as the "Garden Isle" for good reason - it's lush, green, and wet (home to one of the top two wettest spots on the planet, actually). Many folks who love Kaua'i do so because they know its verdant appearance is thanks to a happy medium of both sunshine and rain. Plus, this means more rainbows. To date, we can certainly say we've seen more rainbows on Kaua'i than anywhere else in Hawai'i; often double and even triple rainbows depending on the location - it's a sight to behold!

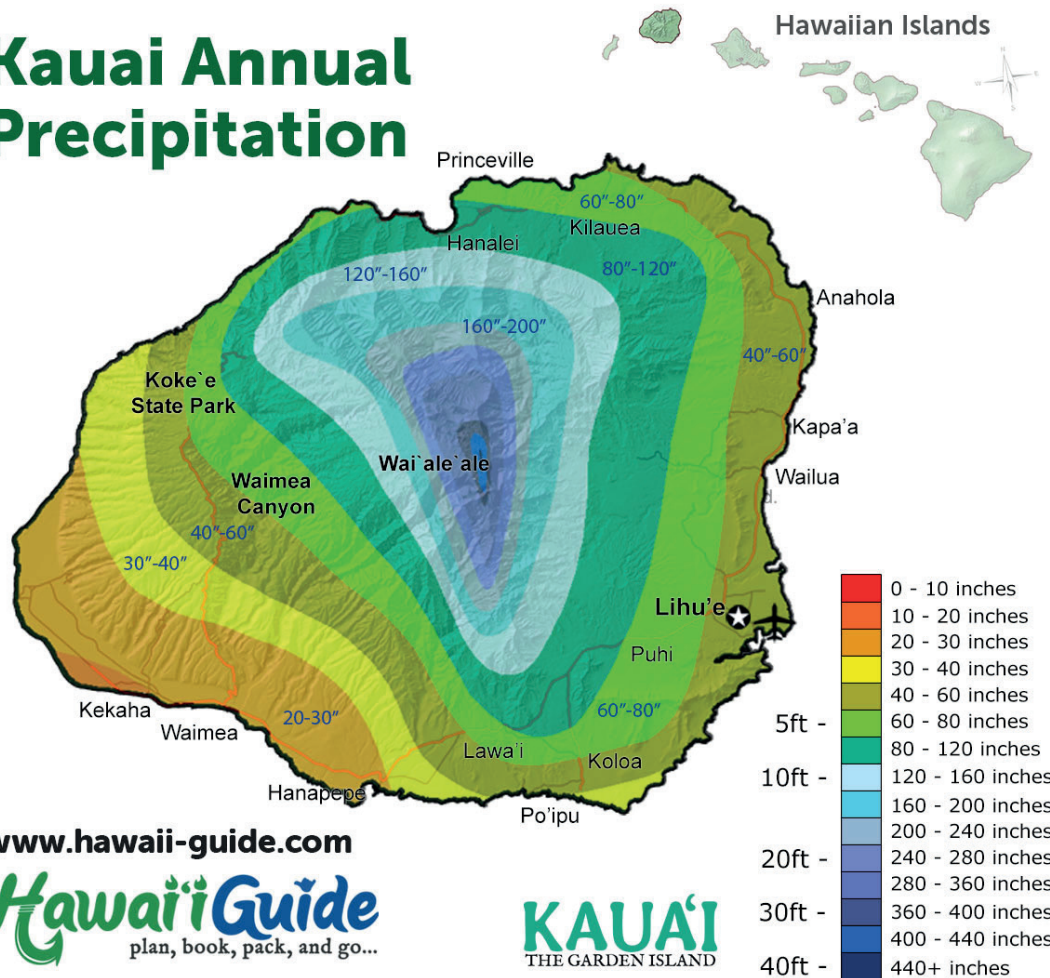
Here are a few things to keep in mind, summarized, about Hawai'i's weather:

- Check sources of reliable forecasts, like the [University of Hawai'i Weather](#), before you visit and during your stay, as they have the best and most accurate forecast in the islands.

- Don't listen to the Weather Channel or watch the NOAA forecast graphs, of course, they'll predict rain - it technically rains almost every day in Hawai'i... for about 10 minutes at a time. The only time it's really wet in Hawai'i for a prolonged time is during the winter months, usually from November until March.

- As far as temperature goes, plan accordingly for the island you're visiting. At sea level, it's usually about 76-85°F (24-29°C) all year-round. Temperatures at night are typically 12-18°F (7-8°C) cooler, but this can change dramatically depending on your altitude. Kokee on Kaua'i, can get quite chilly at night for example.

Kauai Annual Precipitation

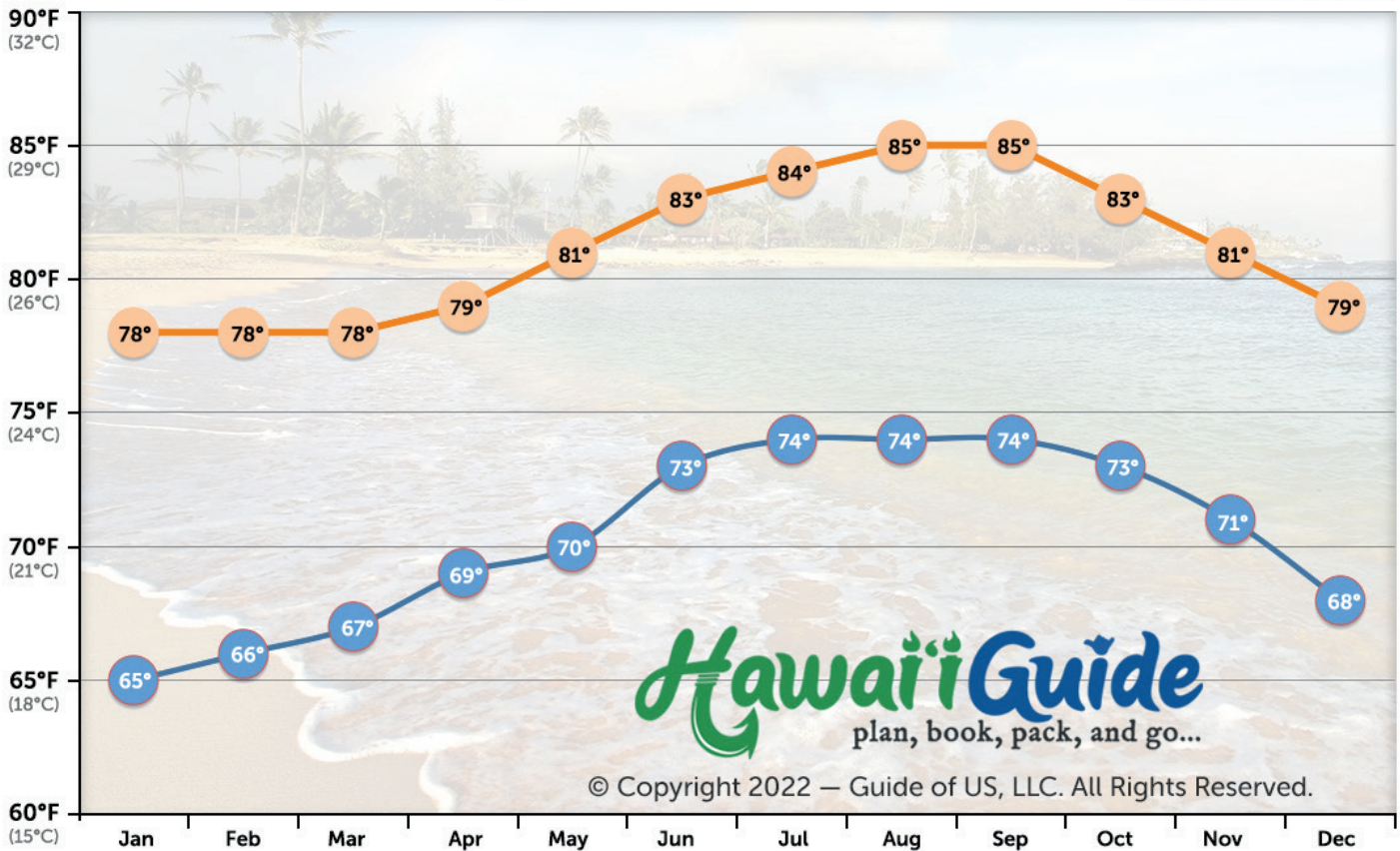


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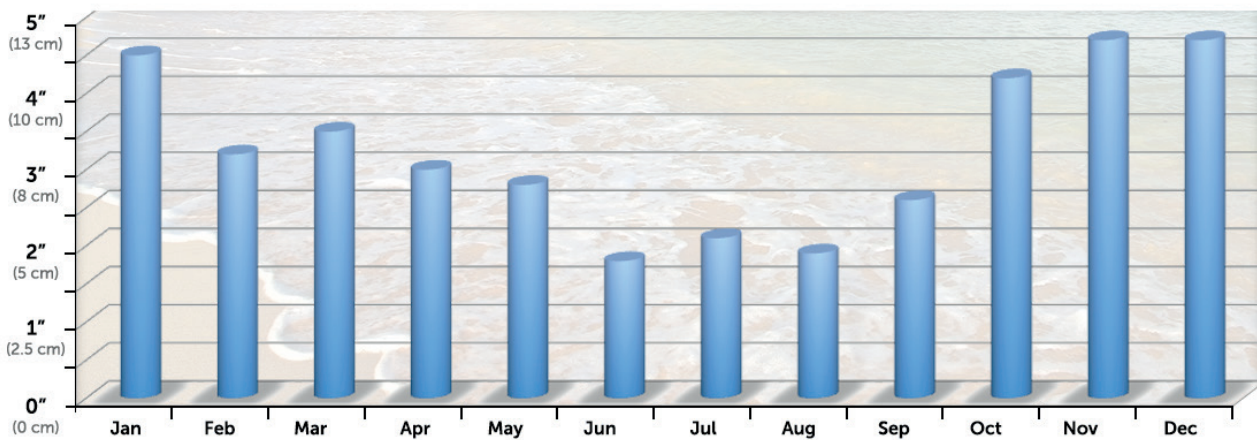
KAUAI
 THE GARDEN ISLAND

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Lihue Temperatures



Lihue Precipitation



Precipitation is based on average rainfall, measured in inches (*estimated metric measurements in parenthesis*), at Lihue airport and may vary based on geographic location.

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Makua 'Tunnels' Beach - North Shore Kauai

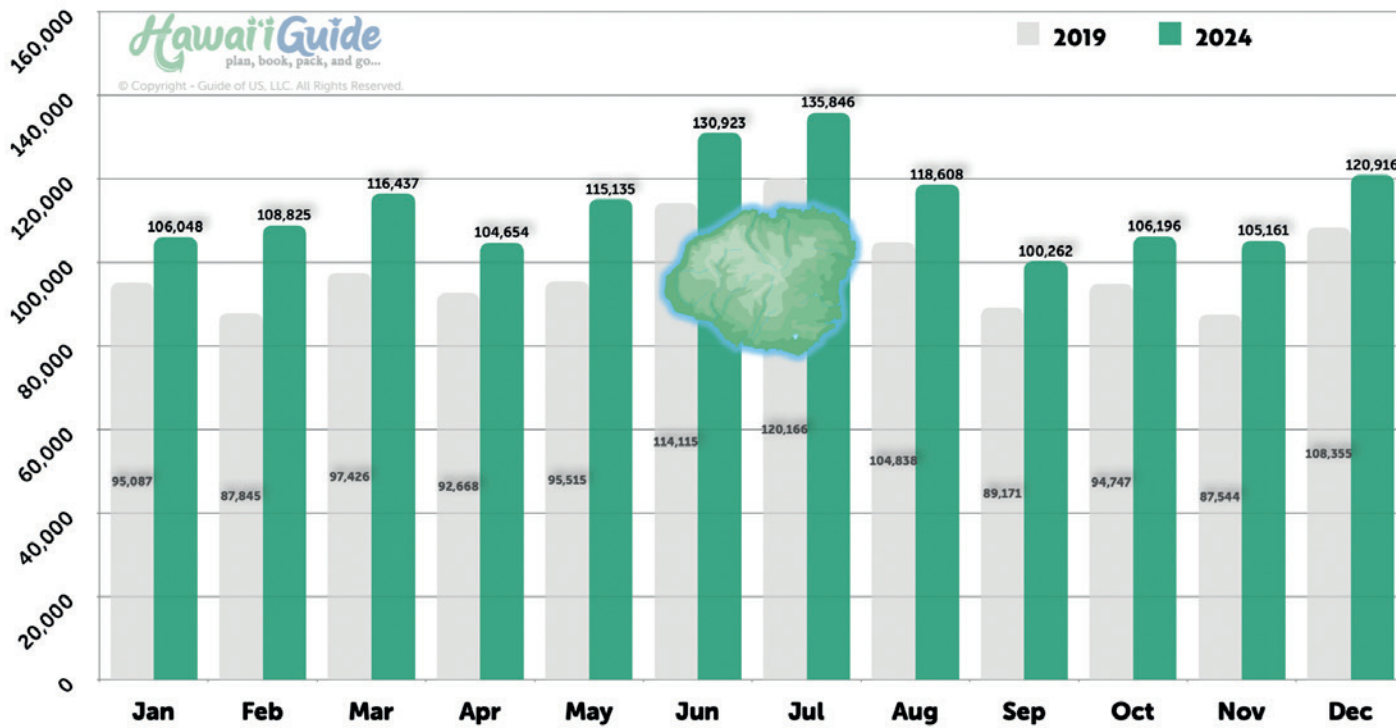
WHEN TO VISIT

There honestly isn't a 'bad time' to go to Hawai'i. Visiting Hawai'i is a dream come true for many visitors, and who can blame them? It's a remarkable, unique, & beautiful paradise.

In general, the best months to visit Hawai'i are in April (avoid holidays, when applicable), May, September, or October for the best overall weather, lowest statewide rates, and fewest visitors on-island.

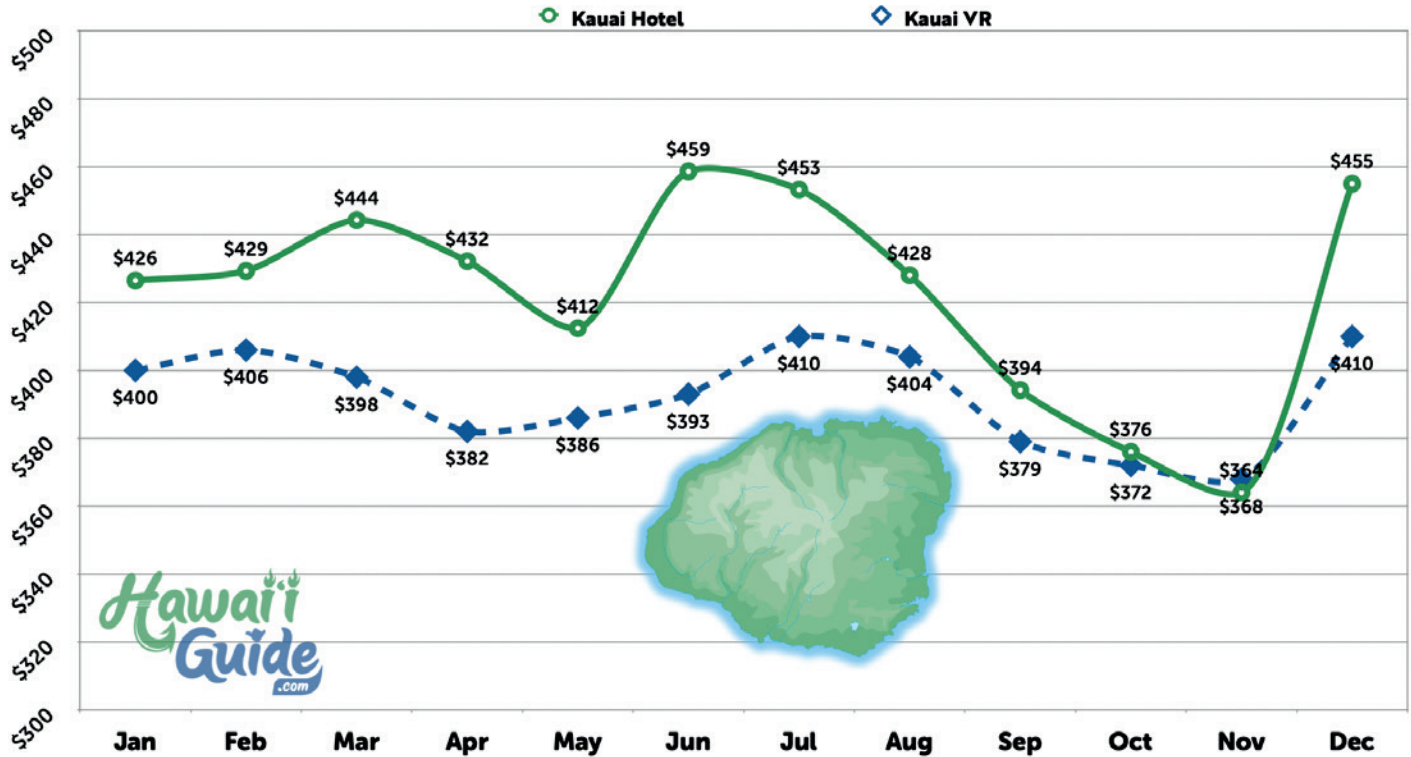
Let's go over a few additional topics that'll make deciding when to visit easier. First here's an overview of visitor arrivals on the islands by month. As you can see, there's an increase at three times of the year - Spring Break in March, Summer, and Christmas/New Year's.

Estimated Kauai Visitors by Month



Data Source: Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

Kauai Hotel vs Vacation Rental Rates in 2024



Data Source: Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

Kauai Hotel Rates Average Accommodation Prices

As is to be expected, when more people are 'on-island' visiting the Hawaiian Islands - accommodation, rental, and flight costs will increase as well.

To avoid the crowds and keep rates lower, you can always try visiting during non-peak visitation periods (i.e.; spring and fall are both much quieter).

When preparing for your trip, the graphic above should help provide a general idea of the average rates during different times of the year.

The rates can and will fluctuate by island and by year, but these figures still allow you to prepare accordingly.



Hawaii Demand Forecast

Estimated High & Low Periods for 2026

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Key

- Higher Demand
- Average / Neutral
- Lower Demand



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Na Pali Coastline

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Experience the Na Pali coast

The glorious Na Pali Coast... a truly breathtaking experience either by air, land, or sea.

Explore Kokee State Park

Some of the best hiking in the world can be found within Kokee State Park. Even if hiking isn't your thing, the views of the Na Pali coastline from various lookouts are amazing.

Visit Waimea Canyon

No visit to Kauai would be complete without at least one visit to Waimea Canyon State Park.

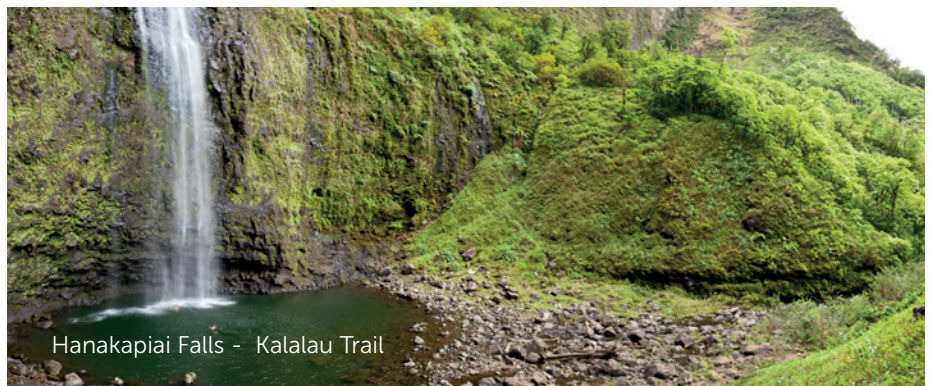
Discover South Kauai

Kauai's south shore is popular due to its abundance of sunny weather. Poipu and Lawai offer a wide array of accommodations, fine dining, and shopping.

KAUAI

Kauai is the fourth most visited island, at 1.2 to 1.3 million visitors annually. It is also the fourth largest landmass in the Hawaiian Island chain that includes eight major islands and 124 islets.

The island is defined by its amazing scenery and laid back persona. The island also boasts more coastline filled with beaches than any other island in the chain. Kauai is full of uncrowded and secluded beaches all around the island; you're sure to find one that's just right for you.



Hanakapiai Falls - Kalalau Trail

KAUA'I - The Garden Isle

Like all of the Hawaiian islands, Kaua'i's scenery is ever changing as you head around the island's coastal roads. Your surroundings are certainly never boring ranging from sugarcane fields to rainforests, pristine beaches to ranch lands. Though the island is small by mainland standards, you can find desert plateaus, tropical rain-forest, verdant valleys, fertile farmland, and sea cliffs along the Na Pali that will make your jaw drop.

Kaua'i is the oldest of the major Hawaiian islands and the fourth largest. With over 110 miles of shoreline, you're sure to find your perfect beach. All said and done, Kaua'i boasts nearly 70 beaches for you to select from on your trip. Nowhere else in Hawai'i will you get that kind of selection. Tunnels Beach, on the north shore, and Poipu Beach, to the south, are two of the most popular and scenic beaches on the island.

If you want selection heading inland, Kaua'i has eight state parks awaiting your adventurous side, not to mention a plethora of trails that crisscross the island. In fact, the vast majority of Kaua'i can only be seen by foot or air - the roads only cover about 10% of the island. Waimea Canyon is a popular choice on the western side of the island, offering expansive views into what Mark Twain dubbed, 'The Grand Canyon of the Pacific.'

Kaua'i is also home to three of the worlds National Tropical Botanical Gardens - Allerton, McBryde, both on the south shore, and Limahuli, on the north shore.



Wailua Falls - Lihue Region

Kaua'i Fun Fact

Kaua'i is home to the world's wettest location, Waialeale, which receives over 450 inches of rain annually - that's almost 40 ft (12 m)!

All of that water leads to the most navigable rivers of any island in the chain, the most popular being Wailua on the east coast.

Kaua'i Top Places To Know

Waimea Canyon – Waimea Canyon is the largest canyon in the Pacific and truly a dramatic sight to behold at ten miles long, one mile wide, and more than 3,500 ft (1,927m) deep.



Kokee State Park – Kokee and Waimea State Parks are two of the premier parks on the island of Kaua'i. Inside these adjacent state parks exist some of the most stunning trails in all of Hawai'i, and the diversity of the trails is unmatched. All visitors will need to pay a \$5 entrance fee to visit the Kokee & Waimea State Park in addition to any parking fees.



Haena Beach Park – This beautiful, golden sand beach alone is popular for many reasons: Stunning views, plenty of water activities, camping, surfing, or simply lounging and relaxing are a great way to spend some time here - along Kaua'i's famed North Shore.



Kilauea Lighthouse – Kilauea Lighthouse is the northernmost point of the main Hawaiian Islands. The lighthouse is open to look around on the ground level, and remains one of Kaua'i's most popular attractions.



Kalalau Valley - West Kaua'i



KAUAI REGIONS

Na Pali Coast

Kee Beach, Kalalau, Polihale Beach

North Kauai

Kaena Beach Park, Kilauea Lighthouse

East Kauai

Kapa'a Town, Nounou, Opaeka'a Falls

Lihue

Lihue Town

South Kauai

Poipu, Spouting Horn, NTBG

West Kauai

Waimea Canyon, Polihale, Kalalau Lookout, Kokee State Park

Kauai is home to the lushest scenery and beholds the most unique natural beauty of all the major Hawaiian Islands. There's a magic to the island that draws in people from all over the world. The sheer amount of outdoor activities on the island is remarkable, everything from backwoods hiking through Waimea Canyon to kayaking up the Wailua River. Kauai is a mecca for all things outdoors and all persons looking for adventure. Kauai is impressive by land, water, or air - and ideally, all three.

Na Pali Coast

When it comes to scenic areas, Na Pali may very well be the top on the list here in Hawaii. Miles of rugged coastline more beautiful than anything imagined. It truly feels like another world.

So whether you fly over it, hike it, or take a boat around the edges of it... Na Pali is something that must be experienced. These sea cliffs begin at Ke'e Beach in North Kauai and continue around the north and west portion of Kauai, ending at Polihale Beach bordering West Kauai.



Kalalau Trail - Na Pali Coast

KAUAI - The Garden Isle

North Kauai

The North Shore has a mild average temperature in the mid to low 70's °F (21°C), but much of it receives a lot more rain - up to 120 inches a year in some places. This makes it green, lush, and very tropical. One of the most popular resort areas is also located on the north shore of Kauai, Princeville. Other towns you'll find include Kilauea, Ha'ena, and Hanalei with its beautiful bay and beaches.



East Kauai

There are many people who will call East Kauai the Coconut Coast, and once you visit you'll see why. For miles along the shoreline there are hundreds of coconut trees. The east coast is very likely the second most popular part of the island, and most of the resorts are along this stretch, especially in Kapa'a. Plus, there are plenty of attractions gracing the region, from Wailua Falls and Opaeka'a Falls to the Fern Grotto, all near the Wailua River. Other towns you'll find on the east coast include Wailua, Hanamaulu, and Anahola.



Lihue

Lihue is the county seat of Kauai and is the location of the government offices, a museum, and several other potential resources to visitors.

South Kauai

The southern side of Kauai is warm, dry, and generally arid averaging about 35-40 inches (89-102 cm) of rain a year. The average temperature is 78°F (25.5°C), but don't be surprised if temps get into the high 80's or even 90's °F (27-32°C) in this region. Though far from the popular North Shore and scarcely populated, the South side has a lot to offer. The biggest attractions here are the perfect beaches around the Poipu area and Spouting Horn. Other towns you'll find on the south side include Kalaheo, Koloa, Lawai, and Omao.

West Kauai

For the most part, West Kauai is impassable, filled with mountainous terrain and valleys that make roads impossible to build here. This side of Kauai is most famous for the Na Pali coast (which we've split into its own region) and the trails and hikes that stretch far and wide across this part of the island. Visitors will also find Kokee State Park and the majestic Waimea Canyon in this region.

TOP ATTRACTIONS ON KAUA'I

Kalalau Valley - West Kaua'i

Be prepared to be wowed by Kaua'i! Whether you're looking to tour jaw-dropping waterfalls, hit some of Hawai'i's best hiking trails, or snorkel and spot fascinating marine life, the Garden Isle is the place to be for outdoor adventure.

Those with more cerebral interests will love stopping by artsy Hanapepe town or touring the Grove Farm Sugar Plantation Museum in Lihue- a treasure trove of Kaua'i history. And how could we forget the Na Pali Coast, one of Earth's true gems? That's a lot of exploring, so get ready to relax on a soft swath of sand... did we mention Kaua'i has some of the world's best beaches?

Browse our handpicked Kaua'i attractions; whether by land, by sea, or by air, we know you'll find your perfect adventure!

Kalalau Lookout

West Kaua'i Region



The Heart of Kalalau Valley

Something look familiar?

- The valley and surrounding coast have served as the backdrop for countless films including "King Kong" (the original), "Mighty Joe Young," "Jurassic Park," and "Six Days Seven Nights."

Kalalau Lookout isn't just another Waimea Canyon lookout, as many first-time visitors often believe. It's a view into the heart of the Kalalau Valley- one of the most-photographed and well-recognized valleys in all of Hawai'i. Kalalau Lookout is also the highest elevation most people reach in Kaua'i by road, at 4,000 ft (2,204m). Kalalau Valley is the largest valley on the island at two miles wide. Interestingly, it was inhabited up until as recently as 1919.

Makua 'Tunnels' Beach

North Kaua'i Region



Parking Tips

- Two roads provide beach access- the first is located 0.4-mile past mile marker 8 and the second is 0.6-mile past mile marker 8 (the latter is the better of the two). Please show Aloha and do not park in spots marked 'No Parking' by residents.

Best Snorkeling on Kaua'i

If you're looking for one of the best North Shore snorkeling beaches, look no further than Tunnels Beach- a North Kaua'i gem that has a coral reef so massive it can be seen from space. If SCUBA diving is more your style, the amazing coral reef and generally calm conditions mean you, too, will have a spectacular dive. The beach itself is located nearly directly across from mile marker 8 on Highway 560 going east from Hanalei towards Ha'ena. Parking spaces are limited, so it's best to arrive as early as possible.

Waimea Canyon

West Kaua'i Region



Driving Directions

- Take Hwy. 50 west from Hanapepe toward Waimea. Waimea Canyon Drive (Hwy 550) is on the right just past mile marker 23. The road travels through the canyon area and ends at Pu'u o Kila Lookout overlooking Kalalau Valley.

'The Grand Canyon of the Pacific' - Mark Twain

Waimea Canyon is the largest canyon in the Pacific and truly a dramatic sight to behold at ten miles long, one mile wide, and more than 3,500 ft (1,927m) deep. Carved thousands of years ago by rivers and floods that flowed from Mount Waialeale's summit, the canyon is home to the Waimea River. The river was named for the red hue of the water, as Waimea means 'red waters.' The red tint is caused by several natural processes that break down the ancient rock inside the gorge. From space, you can even see the rust tinted runoff making its way into the ocean. You can buy your own 'Red Dirt' T-Shirt on the island, as a souvenir.

KAUAI

THE GARDEN ISLAND

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Kauai Drive Times

From Lihue Airport (LIH) to...

Anahola	30 min	15 miles
'Eie'ele	35 min	17 miles
Haena	75 min	40 miles
Kalaheo	25 min	15 miles
Kapa'a	25 min	10 miles
Kekaha	60 min	28 miles
Kilauea	45 min	26 miles
Koloa	25 min	11 miles
Poipu	30 min	14 miles
Princeville	60 min	30 miles
Waimea	15 min	7 miles
Waimea Canyon	45 min	25 miles
Waimea Canyon	75 min	36 miles



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Wailua Falls

Lihue Kaua'i Region



+ Added Bonus

- Visit when the sun hits at just the right angle you'll get a beautiful rainbow extending out from the base of the falls in the mist, which is nothing short of spectacular.



Famous Double-Tiered Waterfall

If you've ever fantasized about seeing a double-tiered waterfall, then at the gorgeous Wailua Falls. And speaking of fantasy, Wailua Falls is so scene of the long-running TV show *Fantasy Island*. Wailua Falls is easily accessible, as no hiking is needed to reach it and appreciate its beauty up close. In fact, the parking lot basically overlooks the falls. But the main reason the falls is so special is its beauty; it has certainly earned its place as an international representation of Kaua'i's enchantment.

get ready to turn your fantasy into reality lovely that it was featured in the opening

Limahuli Garden & Preserve

North Kaua'i Region



Tours Available

- Limahuli Garden is open Tuesday through Saturday, 8:30 am – 4 pm. Last check-in is 2:15 pm when they close the entrance gate, as of this writing. There is an admission fee. <https://ntbg.org/gardens/limahuli/>

National Tropical Botanical Gardens

The 1,000-acre garden is now part of the National Tropical Botanical Gardens after being donated to the society in 1976. In 1995, the garden was opened to the public and as of 1997 was rated by the American Horticultural Society as the best natural botanical garden in the United States. The garden, nestled in the mountains, is unique and a real treasure to visit. Today, 17 acres of the garden and rainforest provide visitors a chance to view both the natural beauty of the island and the cultural history behind it.

Kee Beach



The Start of Na Pali

Kaua'i's glorious Na Pali Coast begins at one of the most popular beaches on Kaua'i, Kee Beach. This beach marks the end of Highway 560 and the portion of Kaua'i that can be seen by car. The rest of North Kaua'i is occupied by the Na Pali Coast, a series of rugged seaside cliffs stretching along the northwest shore that is not navigable by vehicle. Reservations are now required as of this writing. Please visit <https://www.gohaena.com> for more information.

North Kaua'i Region



Photography Tip

- The best time for photographs is early morning (on a clear day) or right at sunset. Thanks to the stunning views and photographic opportunities here, this is also one of the popular Kaua'i wedding beaches.

Kilauea Lighthouse & Refuge



Historic Lighthouse & Wildlife Refuge

Kilauea Lighthouse is the northernmost point of the main Hawaiian Islands. The lighthouse was built in 1913 with the largest hand blown clamshell lens in the world. It was later replaced with a beacon in the 1970's. The lighthouse is open to look around on the ground level. Today the lighthouse remains one of Kaua'i's most popular attractions. Native vegetation and an informative visitor center attracts thousands of tourists to this site to bird watch, view the sweeping cliff and ocean vistas, and revel in Kaua'i's past.

North Kaua'i Region



Lighthouse Directions

- Take Hwy 56 until you come to Kolo Road shortly after mile marker 23. The road will be on your right. After you have turned onto Kolo Road you are going to want to take Kilauea Road makai (towards the ocean) to the lighthouse & refuge.

HAWAI'I SAFETY

The islands of Hawai'i could each easily be described as paradise. But even paradise has its hazards and we'd be foolish not to educate you on at least a few of them. The truth is simple, Hawai'i isn't Disneyland; it is often wild, rough, and natural law prevails. The more you know, the better prepared you are to avoid the hazards of the beautiful Hawaiian Islands. We've put together some tips online, and we highly recommend reviewing them before your trip.

Visit: hawaii-guide.com/hawaii-travel-tips/hawaii-safety

PACKING YOUR BAGS

What to pack & What NOT to pack...

Regardless of how much you've traveled in the past and where you've been, there is one good rule to follow when coming to Hawai'i, leave as much as you can at home!

Seriously, bring only what you'll need during your stay and nothing more. Chances are a pair of shorts, and a nice Aloha shirt is all you'll need for even some fine dining. Leave the formal wear back home. And please don't bring your passport if you're a U.S. citizen (you'd be surprised how many folks do).

A light jacket and a long pair of pants might also be helpful for those visits to higher elevations around the islands. You'd be surprised at how many "chilly" people there are in Hawai'i each day. Sure it's tropical, but not every thing's at sea level either. On the other hand, don't overdo it and bring your winter coat to Hawai'i

With the motto, 'less is more' in mind, here are a few other items to bring:

Sunblock (the UV on Hawai'i is typically 14+ in the spring, summer, and fall), a **backpack** (for any hikes) and a **water bottle**, **slippers** (flip flops, shower shoes, zoris), **snorkel mask and fins** (or rent locally instead), **two bathing suits** (one to wear while the other dries) and a cover-up, **camera or phone**, **lightweight raincoat**



or poncho (it's tropical here), **bug spray** with DEET (for any forest hikes), **flashlight** (for just in case), **hiking boots** / hiking rods (even if you're not a hardcore hiker, it's not a bad idea to bring proper footwear for some trails), and most importantly a **list of all your troubles to leave behind**.

For more tips and suggestions, we suggest reading through our [What to Pack](http://www.hawaii-guide.com/what-to-pack) page online: www.hawaii-guide.com/what-to-pack



www.hawaii-guide.com

Kaua'i, Hawai'i Highlights Planner

