

Hawai'i in Full Motion

by Bekah Wright

Travel to Hawai'i and the anticipation of undertaking island activities from surfing to snorkeling causes excitement to build. Certain endeavors definitely seem to go hand-in-hand with vacations to the islands. A pleasant surprise – there are Hawaiian adventures to be had that surpass even the wildest of dreams.

HAWAI'I ISLAND

People are familiar with California wine country's cycling tours to local vineyards. Hawai'i Island's Bikevolcano.com has its own take on this pastime with their "Bike Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park & Wine Tasting Tour." Rather than rolling grapevine-studded hills, there's verdant rainforest. Another obvious difference – lava. Cyclists are outfitted with bikes at the starting point of the five-hour tour, Kilauea Overlook in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, where there are views of the Summit Caldera's first eruption since 1924. From here, an off-road trail leads along the rim of the Caldera to Steam Vents; then through a native Hawaiian rainforest and the Chain of Craters Road to view cinder cones and pit craters. Next, is a scheduled stop at Pauahi Crater to check out "lava trees." Something the tour does have in common with its California counterparts – wine tastings at the Volcano Winery and toasting the end of the perfect day.



Cyclist on the Bike Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park & Wine Tasting Tour.

KAUA'I

Resort pools and the ocean aren't the only ways to get wet on the island of Kaua'i. Indeed, Kaua'i Backcountry Adventure's mountain tubing expedition takes guests on an historical "waterslide" of sorts. The three-hour tour commences with participants and inner tubes loading into 6X4s. Their destination – the Lihue Sugar Plantation. Set amongst towering trees and lush forest is the launch site where inner tubes take off down a series of irrigation ditches hand dug in 1870. Though a veritable history lesson is imparted during the journey, tubers are busy taking in the passing landscape as they move through open canals



Rifle Range Station at the Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay.

and flumes. Soon, some of the five tunnels en route appear, prompting a favorite command of, "Headlamps on!" Spinning through the semi-darkness there's no question – this is one heck of a thrill ride.

LANA'I

Tales of Hawai'i's brave warriors are impressive, spurring one to wonder how they might have fared in that role in days of yore. Would a fearless leap from Lana'i's Kahekili's Leap have been made without hesitation to prove loyalty and fearlessness? Though jumping from a sea cliff isn't recommended and there aren't, thankfully, any armies on the island to defeat, one can still practice their "warrior" skills at Lana'i Pine Sporting Clays in the Koele highlands. The facility offers everything from a 14-station sporting clay course and skeet field to a six-station rifle range and 12-station archery range. A visit begins with a 45-minute lesson from a National Sporting Clay Association-trained instructor. The result – bull's-eye.

MAUI

Surfing has been associated with the islands of Hawai'i for more than 1000 years. Over time, surfers have found numerous ways to use surfboards to ride waves from windsurfing to kitesurfing. Recently regaining popularity is an ancient surfing technique – stand-up paddle surfing (SUP). Teaching this Zen-like sport are the career instructors at Alan Cadiz's HST Windsurfing and Kiteboarding School on Maui. Lessons are relayed at Kanaha Beach Park with one-bladed paddles and surfboards serving as equipment. One of the sport's many perks beyond improved balance and core fitness – becoming one with the waves.

MOLOKA'I

Those who find dizzying heights exhilarating will want to visit Kalaupapa National Historical Park on Moloka'i. The only way to reach this restricted-access park is by plane, foot or mule. Those who prefer life in the saddle can make reservations through Moloka'i Mule Ride, Inc.. Traveling via mule to the park is no small feat. There are 26 switchbacks along the narrow 2.9-mile trail to the park. The views

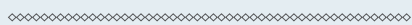


Stand-up paddle surfer, riding waves off the shore of Maui.

during the 1,700-foot descent call for holding on tight to the reins. Once in the park, riders trade mules for a bus and are led by a Damien Tours guide to two historic settlements where people afflicted by Hansen's Disease, or leprosy, were forced into isolation between 1866 and 1969. Along the tour route is St. Philomena Church, the parish of Father Damien, the Belgian priest who devoted his life to the settlement. Giving perspective to the return trek up the mountain – panoramas over lunch in Judd Park of the nearby North Shore Cliffs National Landmark, at 2,000-feet the world's tallest sea cliffs.

O'AHU

Scuba and snorkel adventures on the islands give visitors an up close look at Hawai'i's marine life. A more "formal" introduction can be had at Sea Life Park Hawai'i. Located on O'ahu's Makapu'u Beach, the facility is chockfull of exhibits that allow for feeding sea turtles, watching live shows with penguins and checking out 2,000 reef species in their Hawaiian Reef Aquarium. Even more exciting – getting to swim with some of the park's residents – dolphins, sea lions and stingrays. Several programs are available from "snuba walking" in an 18-foot reef tank amongst the sea life, to getting a dolphin dorsal fin ride. As for the promise of dolphin kisses – pucker up. It's gonna be a wet one.



Bekah Wright is a travel and lifestyles contributor to *Orange Coast* magazine.



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