

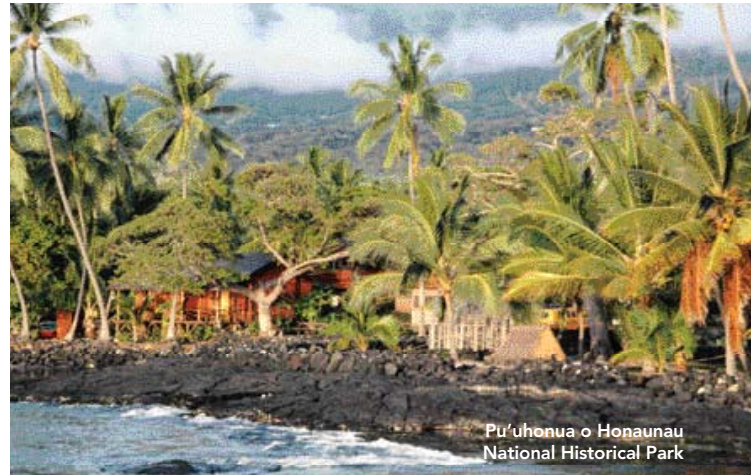
Luxury for Less

Your first-class Hawaiian vacation doesn't have to cost a lot — splurge on accommodations, then save with these inexpensive activities

By Bekah Wright
Special Advertising
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Dream about a tropical paradise and visions of the Hawaiian Islands spring instantly to mind: five-star accommodations overlooking white sand beaches, afternoon massages in a poolside cabana and a dinner of regional cuisine from a renowned local chef — the scene lit by tiki torches that highlight the restive bubbles in a nearby flute of champagne. Yes, it seems that even in daydreams the place is expensive.

But it doesn't have to be. Splurge on the luxuries you love and offset the cost with these priceless-but-not-pricey experiences — activities that, like cabana massages, are the stuff real memories are made of.



➤ Sand and Surf

Those seeking nothing more than quiet repose broken up with occasional forays into sandcastle construction will be in heaven on the islands' outstanding beaches. Especially breathtaking are Kauai's Hanalei Bay Beach, the Big Island's Hapuna Beach State Park and Oahu's Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve.

The islands' beaches are also destinations for high action. Case in point: Oahu's Ehukai Beach Park, home of the world-famous Banzai Pipeline. Settle in on this notorious North Shore beach to watch some of surf-

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ing's elite conquer the area's infamously gnarly waves.

On Lanai, treasure hunting is the prime objective at Shipwreck Beach. Over the years, Kaiolohia Bay's harsh currents have caused many sailing vessels to meet their end here. Who knows, maybe you'll pay for your vacation in gold doubloons.

➤ Communing with Nature

Often a good set of wheels is all it takes to see the best of the islands. Unforgettable drives like Maui's Road to Hana or Lanai's Munro Trail whet an appetite for photography you never knew you had.

On Maui, catch sunrise from the 10,023-foot summit of the volcano Haleakala, aptly named "House of the Sun." Later, explore the flora and fauna along Haleakala National Park's 38 miles of public trails.

And check out Oahu's own famous volcanic crater, Diamond Head. Visitors can enjoy the exquisite panoramic vistas from the crater's summit by following a historic hiking trail.

A destination for learning about the islands' history and culture is the ancient ruins of Pu'uhonua o Honau-nau National Historical Park. Centuries ago, the area garnered the name "Place of Refuge," and for good reason: Anyone who had broken a law could escape a penalty of death by reaching the walls of this sacred locale.

➤ Arts and Cultural Immersion

Though the great outdoors is rife with happy diversions, Hawaii boasts countless indoor activities that are equally inviting. Oahu's Bishop Museum feels like several museums rolled into one, with a planetarium and Science Adven-

ture Center included on its campus.

On Fridays, the night comes alive with art in the "biggest little town on Kauai": Hanapepe. The quaint art galleries lining the town's main thoroughfare keep their doors open late for the weekly Friday Night Art Walk.

Another authentic monthly event not to miss is the Big Island's Twilight at Kalahuipua'a. When the moon is full, guests unfurl blankets on the lawn of the Eva Parker Woods Cottage at the Mauna Lani Hotel and Bungalows and take in two hours of stories, chants, songs and hula dances. Best of all, like many of Hawaii's greatest assets, it's totally free.

Bekah Wright is a freelance writer based in Sherman Oaks.



Watching the pros navigate the Banzai Pipeline is enthralling (and free!).

Exquisite Escapes

A few of our favorite places to call home base as you take in all Hawaii has to offer.

OAHU: The Royal Hawaiian

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MAUI: Wailea Beach Villas

Breathtaking villas overlooking world-famous Wailea Beach. www.waileabeachvillas.com

KAUAI: The Westin Princeville Ocean Resort Villas

Gorgeous accommodations perched above Hawaii's famous 'Anini Beach. www.westinprinceville.com

THE BIG ISLAND: Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort & Spa

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