



Four Seasons Resort Hualālai



Umauma Falls Zipline & Rappel Experience

U.S. ISLANDS WINNER: HAWAII



When you think Hawaii, you might think first of popular tourist spots on Maui and Oahu. And they are undeniably fabulous. But for a blissful introduction to this destination's culture, landscapes, and natural wonders—not to mention dazzling beaches—the island of Hawaii itself is worth a spot at the top of your list. —Chrisanne Grisé

The Lay of the Land

Hawaii is the largest island in the chain by far (bigger than all the others combined!). All but four of the world's climate zones exist across the massive swath of land—including rain forest, desert, and mountains—and road-tripping from one to the next is a hard-to-beat newlywed bonding experience. The Kohala Coast, in the northwest, is home to stunning white-sand beaches and luxe resorts; the **Four Seasons Resort Hualālai** (from \$759 per night, fourseasons.com/hualalai) is the place to go for pampering. Try one of the five newly added outdoor Couples'

Nests—designed for cozying up in privacy between dips in the pool and spa treatments. Or visit the idyllic **Mauna Kea Beach Hotel** (from \$425 per night, maunakeabeachhotel.com): Aside from lounging on the secluded crescent beach, you can get a taste of local culture via the resort's new "aloha ambassador," who leads activities like morning sun-greeting chants and Hawaiian-language classes. The area around Hilo, on the eastern coast, has a less frenetic but charming tourist scene; located near rain forests, waterfalls, and jaw-dropping lava-formed coastlines, it's a great jumping-off point for excursions. Try the modern **Grand Naniloa Hotel Hilo** (from \$189 per night, grandnaniloahilo.com)—which has free hula lessons in the lobby on Mondays.

Go for the Thrills

If you like combining sightseeing with adventure, give the **Umauma Falls Zipline & Rappel Experience** (umaumaexperience.com) a go: It carries you over a breathtaking river gorge, lava tube, and 14(!) waterfalls. Or seek out the gentler

thrill of night snorkeling with manta rays: **Anelakai Adventures** (anelakaiadventures.com) will take you out in an outrigger canoe, then light up the water to attract the sleek creatures—you can float at the surface and watch them do backflips. Join a van tour from Hilo's **Arnott's Lodge and Hiking Adventures** (arnottslodge.com) to Mauna Kea, the world's tallest mountain from base to summit. Scaling it brings astounding above-the-clouds views of the sunset and, later, constellations in all of the Northern Hemisphere sky and 90 percent of the Southern, making it one of the world's best naked-eye stargazing spots. And of course, **Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park** (nps.gov/havo) remains a main attraction—although the Kilauea volcano's eruptions this year have closed significant portions. It's important to look out for safety notices, but fortunately, the current concern is limited to a small area of the island, far from most tourist destinations.

Give Back

The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii (nature.org/hawaii) offers opportunities to contribute to the preservation of this wondrous island. At Kiholo Preserve, for instance, volunteers can pitch in on projects like restoring fish ponds—removing invasive plants, rebuilding stone walls—before a shared potluck and an afternoon "talk story" with a local community member.

RUNNERS-UP

MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASSACHUSETTS

The larger of the two main islands in the Cape Cod region boasts six towns, picturesque views, and occasional celebrity guests. You'll get a warm welcome at the **Winnetu Oceanside Resort**—and you won't want to miss the Wednesday-night clambake.

FLORIDA KEYS

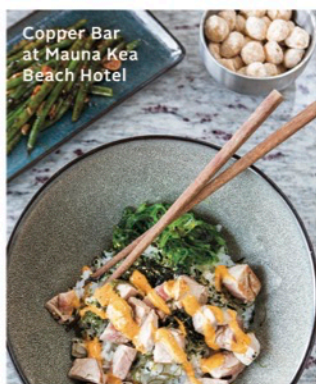
Much of this 125-mile arc of sunny islands is connected by the remarkable **Overseas Highway**. With two new restaurants and an adults-only tranquility pool, **Hawks Cay Resort** has got your romantic evenings covered.

NANTUCKET, MASSACHUSETTS

There's only one town, but the island has all the bike trails, beaches, and coastal New England charm you could ever need. The adorable **Lilly Pulitzer Cottage** at **White Elephant**, which opened in April, is practically made for newlywed selfies.

SANIBEL ISLAND, FLORIDA

In addition to sun and surf, the area offers plenty of birdwatching and wildlife. Fall asleep to the sound of waves at the **beachfront Island Inn**; for more space, check out its brand-new luxury suites.



Copper Bar at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel