The Hawaii Prince Hotel is not just another hotel in Waikiki; it has more to offer and has a lot more to the design than other hotels in Waikiki. This hotel presents a great achievement in architectural design, and has won a couple of awards since they have opened. This hotel is a unique high-rise building because of its International and Contemporary style. The guestrooms, ballrooms, meeting rooms, restaurants, and so on have been worked on carefully and included great designs. The Hawaii Prince Hotel was built successfully in spite of some challenges that were brought onto them, but still it stands today as either a four or five star architectural designed hotel.

The hotel is located on 100 Holomoana Street, which is at the beginning of the gateway to Waikiki. Before Hawaii Prince Hotel existed, the Old Kaiser Hospital was built in that exact location in the mid-1950s. It was demolished in 1986, and then the Hawaii Prince Hotel was built right over it and opened in September 1990. The Old Kaiser Hospital was one of the first major demolition projects in Hawaii. Some people who were born in this hospital were sad and upset that this new hotel was going to be built where their hospital was. However, not everyone was sad or upset with the destruction of the Old Kaiser Hospital. TV producers found this demolition project as an opportunity for them. The implosion was filmed for an episode of Magnum P.I., which used to be a popular TV series.

This hotel was a 150 million dollar contract and the building is consisted of two twin towers which are named Hawaii Prince I and Hawaii Prince II. Each of the 350 foot towers has
33 floors; the first 5 floors are created as a base which consists of restaurants, meeting rooms, banquet facilities, lobby, shopping area, etc. The other 28 floors are oceanfront guestrooms. There are 521 guestrooms and 57 luxury suites and every room that they have to offer are oceanfront and air-conditioned.

Ellerbe Becket who was not only the architecture, but Ellerbe Becket was also the Mechanical and Electrical Engineer for Hawaii Prince Hotel. This firm was founded in 1909 and their areas of expertise include architecture, construction, engineering, interior design, and environmental graphics. They worked with Architects Hawaii Ltd which has become one of the leading design and service consulting companies in the Pacific Basin. Unlike Ellerbe Becket who began somewhere in the States, the Architects Hawaii Ltd began here in Hawaii for over 5 decades now. The construction company was Hawaiian Dredging Co. and the structural engineer was Martin & Bravo Inc. The client of the Hawaii Prince Hotel is Myers Developing Company, but it is also known that the hotel was developed by Seibu Inc. of Japan. Upon completion of the hotel, it was sold to Seibu railway Company under its hotel brand Prince Hotels. Prince Resorts Hawaii, Inc. operates four hotels which are here in Hawaii; The Hawaii Prince Hotel Waikiki, Maui Prince Hotel, Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel, and Mauna Kea Beach Hotel.

In the year of 1992, the Hawaii Prince Hotel had the largest submerged basement in the state. The basement level of the hotel was built in 1990 and was also 21 feet below sea level, which was at an adjacent site to the ocean. Dewatering and excavation to 21 feet was required for the construction of this building. As they built the first 5 floors, they still continued pumping at the deepest portion of the basement. The structural engineering company, Martin & Bravo, used innovative hybrid mats and pile foundation systems so that water would not be able to
penetrate through. This company believed that if the underwater basement was not designed then this building may not have been economically feasible. There were some other issues with the development of the building due to its location. The harbor was very close to the hotel so many people were worried and had to put a lot more time and consideration with the construction of the building. Due to environmental and political issues, the Hawaii Prince Hotel had some challenges with the Shoreline Management Area of O‘ahu. Even though they struggled through some issues, Hawaii Prince Hotel was one of the first high-rise buildings in the state of Hawaii structurally designed to use wind-tunnel modeling techniques. The Hawaii Prince Hotel is a curved, non-symmetrical shaped building, and since wind affects these types of buildings it was a smart idea that they included this wind-tunnel technique.

Hawaii Prince Hotel is known for many reasons and also for a few awards. This hotel won two awards since they first opened, but I haven’t been able to find any recent awards. In 1991, Hawaii Prince Hotel won the Grand Conceptor Awards for Innovation in Engineering. Also, in the same year, the hotel won Best New Building in Honolulu Magazine. In Hawaii, Prince Resorts Hawaii, Inc. is known as one of the largest golf operators with a subtotal of 99 holes of golf in their 5 golf courses that they own. Arnold Palmer designed the Hawaii Prince Hotel’s golf course and it happens to be that Hawaii Prince Hotel is the only hotel in Waikiki to operate and own its own golf course.

The rooms are slightly expensive for one night, but the guests are paying for the convenient location and for only oceanfront rooms. The room rates range from $340 to $2,500 for one night, but starting in 2007, every room except for the Royal Suite which is $2,500 will be going up an additional $35. Each room is air-conditioned and most of the rooms have been renovated in 1997. Some guests found the Hawaii Prince Hotel as a great place to stay and a few
complained about the results after the renovation. They’ve mentioned that a four or five star hotel should have better shower heads, especially if they had just renovated the bathrooms and bedrooms. They complained that everything else seemed new except for that.

The Hawaii Prince Hotel takes up 13,000 square ft of indoor space and 7,000 square ft of outside functional space. This hotel is not like any other hotel; most hotel entrances are right on the main street but when you are heading towards the entrance of Hawaii Prince Hotel it has a secluded and scenic entrance, which is very unique compared to many hotels in Waikiki. When driving down the strip of Waikiki, the hotel structure and design of this building is breathtaking, but in order to get in the front of the entrance, you have to go around the hotel and to the back by the harbor side. Out of the many hotels that I’ve stayed at, this hotel has a beautiful and welcoming entrance. I enjoyed how the entrance is away from the busy and noisy street and when you turn around as you enter the hotel there is a great scenic view of the harbor right in front of you.

This is not only a hotel, but it is more than just a business or commercial building. It has been recorded that they had about 650 employees since they opened. Of course, it may have increased, but today’s amount of employees at the hotel is unknown. The staff members at Hawaii Prince Hotel try to create a cultural atmosphere when they give an “oshibori” upon checking in. It is a traditional Asian culture to hand out hot-hand towels to the guests. Hawaii is a popular place for visitors, but mainly for Japanese, so the Hawaii Prince Hotel expected to be busy with Japanese visitors from the day they opened. The hotel had an 80-day process which they had to put their guests through some inconveniences. They had to replace the cooling towers on the roof top of its Diamond Head Towers on every working day. It started on September 18th, 2006 and lasted until recently November 16th, 2006. A helicopter had to be used
in order to lift or remove heavy equipments, so for the guests' safety they closed the pool, spa
tub, and snack shop. During that time of inconvenience, they had a complimentary shuttle to Ala
Moana Beach Park. Hawaii Prince Hotel's reason for replacing the cooling towers was because
they were trying to minimize the hotel's impact on the environment.

The exterior of the building is very unique and interesting, but it is the interior of the
building that is much more breathtaking than the exterior. The hotel has glass-sided exterior
elevators with floor-to-ceiling windows in all rooms but the upper portion of the windows can
still be opened up. The exterior of the hotel is simple and elegant but is mainly contemporary. It
has a bit of International style but they built it in the early 1990s, so it has a lot of contemporary
designs to it. The hotel has an expansive, marble-bordered lobby with glass walls which are 60
ft wide and 22 ft high. These glass walls are on both sides of the lobby which opens up to the
harbor and street side. The building was built in the early 1990s, so they used a lot of Art Deco
furnishings in the lobby and so on. There were other fine materials including Fine English Slates
which distinguished the walkways of hotel grounds. Other materials that they used for the
interior consisted of Norwegian and Italian marbles and granites, green English slates, Rare
African and Malaysian Mahogany woods, and etc.

The meeting rooms are greatly appreciated by business travelers due to its dedicated
rooms with office amenities, conference rooms, and staffed business centers. Throughout the
entire hotel, the ballroom seemed to be the most involved portion of the work in the hotel. It's
not like the other hotels, where the ceiling is just plain and flat. There is a 44 ft diameter round
ceiling beam in the center of the ballroom ceiling, which was pre-assembled by Artek and
shipped to Hawaii. It was placed into position and designed to form a continuous circle. The
Hawaii Prince Hotel also has many different restaurants which have been built on the third floor
for the sunset and marina views; some are Prince Court, Hakone, Marine Front Café, and Bird of Paradise.

There are so many amenities available at this hotel, but it is not the amenity that makes it interesting and extraordinary. The feeling from the design and the experience that you receive from the hotel staff creates a great image of the Hawaii Prince Hotel. Although it did have some challenges as it was being constructed, it still stands today as one of the most spectacular places to stay in Honolulu.
Pictures of Hawaii Prince Hotel

Full View

Entrance

Up Close View

Lobby
Works Cited


