ASK A LOCAL: AN UNCONVENTIONAL GUIDE TO THE ISLAND OF O'AHU

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Travel has the potential to be a wonderful vehicle for making global connections among human beings. It can facilitate our understanding of other cultures, peoples, places, and religions. In a time of increased global unrest, we can increase our respect for one another by traveling and listening to the opinions of people from other places. Naturally, we gravitate towards the places we’ve heard good things about, whether from word-of-mouth or advertisements. Word-of-mouth allows us to hear anecdotal evidence of a place’s appeal. The power of advertising, though, cannot be underestimated.

The tourism industry knows that we are all potential tourists. We see advertisements around us everyday: on billboards, in magazines, on television and the Internet. Many large newspapers devote an entire section to travel on Sundays. The lure of travel is inescapable; the images of fun and relaxation are omnipresent. But can we trust these images?

How can we tell if we are being presented with an accurate representation? We can’t. Unfortunately, tourism and its advertisements can distort our understanding of peoples and places by bombarding us with romanticized and idealized images of popular destinations. Travel guides, for example, are oftentimes guilty of such distortion. Guidebooks are usually good with directions and descriptions, but they sometimes marginalize the residents of a place or omit them from the text altogether. This omission devalues the precious, first-hand knowledge and expertise of residents and perpetuates erroneous images such as the ones that predominate our visions of Polynesia. If we could, however, merge these representations with the benefits of anecdotal evidence from
word-of-mouth encounters, we might just be able to extract the best of both worlds and more adequately represent the people of a place.

*Ask a Local* aims to connect the opinions of people who live on O‘ahu, Hawai‘i, with the images of the place. This guidebook is designed to provide you with a fuller account of the island through the eyes of the residents who live and work on O‘ahu—the people who make it the wonderful place it is. Therefore, this guide will give you a sense of O‘ahu while threading residents into its fabric. These individuals, along with their opinions and histories, are as important and integral to O‘ahu as the land and overall appeal of the island itself. The people whose recommendations are contained herein will share with you their knowledge of O‘ahu’s culture, history, traditions, and places of interest, including places to stay, restaurants, beaches, shopping areas, and places of cultural and/or historical significance.

Who exactly are these people, and what makes their opinions especially valuable? The questions asked of them are simple, but their answers are not. Although all profiles focus on knowledgeable residents who are very familiar with O‘ahu, a distinction must be made between residents and locals because you will inevitably encounter this distinction in an explicit or subtle manner while visiting O‘ahu. Unlike New York City where you only have to live in the city to be considered a local—a New Yorker, one is not automatically considered a “local” just by living on O‘ahu.

Given Hawai‘i’s tumultuous history, which is discussed below, local identity in Hawai‘i is a complex issue with historical, philosophical, political, sociological, and theoretical implications. People have been attempting for decades to define what it means to be local, yet a concrete definition remains elusive. Defining a local merely as
someone who was born on O’ahu trivializes the issue and is consequently avoided here. For most people, however, a local is someone who has a deep knowledge of the Hawaiian Islands. For the purpose of this guide, a local is someone who has gained knowledge of O’ahu through extended immersion in the culture. People who were born on the island as well as people who were not born there are included because they all have knowledge and opinions to share with you so that you may learn more about O’ahu.

You can also get a head start on your O’ahu vacation by learning a bit about the island before arriving. Being a knowledgeable traveler often leads to a better vacation. Below you will find some very important information on Hawai‘i and the island of O’ahu that is often omitted from other guidebooks and tourist brochures.

Hawai‘i Was Once a Kingdom

In 1893 the Kingdom of Hawai‘i was illegally overthrown by the United States. The ruler of Hawai‘i at the time, Queen Lilioukalini, was imprisoned, and, as Hawaiians lost their own government, the course of Hawaiian history was altered forever. In the years that followed, Hawaiians were further stripped of their land, their language, and their culture, including the hula. Their identity as an indigenous population began to deteriorate as a result of the newcomers.

Something began to happen in the 1970s, however, that brought Hawaiian culture back to the forefront. The Hawaiian Renaissance grew out of a yearning by many to recover Hawaiian culture through hula, traditional agriculture such as taro farming, music, the Hawaiian language, Pidgin (Hawai‘i Creole) English, voyaging, crafts, and politics. The effects of the Hawaiian Renaissance are still visible today: the Merrie Monarch Festival continues to celebrate hula; Hawaiian music, both traditional and
contemporary, is popular; the Hawaiian language has seen an increase in study and usage; traditional Polynesian voyaging is practiced; literature written by authors born in the islands is being produced at a steady rate; and the sovereignty movement is gaining a broader-based support.

Hawai‘i Is Ethnically Diverse

Hawai‘i’s population is comprised of many different ethnicities. According to the 2000 census, Hawai‘i’s population demographic is broken up as follows: 24.3% white, 16.7% Japanese, 14.1% Filipino, 6.6% Native Hawaiian, 4.7% Chinese, 2.5% Puerto Rican, 1.9% Korean, 1.8% black, 1.6% Mexican, 1.3% Samoan, 0.6% Vietnamese, 0.3% American Indian and Alaskan Native, 0.1% Cuban, and 0.1% Chamorro (the indigenous people of Guam). These statistics are a simple overview of a diverse and complex population. The history of the Hawaiian Islands allowed for people from various places around the globe to meet and begin relationships that resulted in this ethnically diverse culture. Immigrants came, among other reasons, to work the sugar plantations, to occupy jobs created by the increased military presence, and to live in a place they had discovered through tourism. The rich cultural diversity that has resulted from this marriage of different ethnicities is integral to Hawai‘i’s past, present, and future. As beautiful as this diversity is, however, Native Hawaiians, as shown above, make up less than 7% of the population. Moreover, the consequences of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i are still being felt today through the poverty, health problems, and dispossession experienced by many members of the Hawaiian community.
O‘ahu Is a Foodie’s Delight

Before visiting O‘ahu there is no need for you to fill up on airport food in anticipation of dull or tasteless island meal choices. For decades the island has had a variety of delicious cuisines: Hawaiian, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Italian, Japanese, and French, to name just a few. Recently, however, O‘ahu has also become the center of an exciting culinary explosion. Hawaiian Fusion Cuisine, created by Roy Yamaguchi, is a blend of fresh local ingredients and cooking techniques native to Europe. Pacific Rim Cuisine, which is similar to Hawaiian Fusion Cuisine, is available at many of the island’s restaurants. Hawaiian Regional Cuisine, which was created in the early 1990s by a dozen island chefs including Sam Choy and Alan Wong, is yet another reason you should explore O‘ahu’s exhilarating restaurant scene.

You Can Leave Your Beach Tags at Home

Although it is surprising to many people familiar with the dozens of teenagers who comb the shorelines of the continental United States in search of beach tag violators, all beaches on O‘ahu are free and open to the public with the exception of beaches located on military bases. Due to a state shoreline access law, all nonmilitary beaches, including those situated on the property of the island’s upscale resorts, must be accessible to the public. Until very recently, a housing subdivision called Iroquois Point was an anomaly as it was off limits to the public because it technically exists on Navy property even though it is being leased by a private company. Public disapproval of the terms of the lease helped pressure the company to grant access.
The Military Is Present on O‘ahu

The military presence on O‘ahu is undeniable. All four branches of the Department of Defense—Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines—have bases on the island, and the Department of Homeland Security is represented through the United States Coast Guard as well. According to a 2002 figure released by the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, there are close to 82,000 military and family members who call O‘ahu home. On an island of approximately 906,000 people, the military makes up about nine percent of the population. Unwelcome by some, but embraced by others, the military, according to Hawai‘i’s Chamber of Commerce, provides the state with its second major source of revenue, with tourism being the first.

A Final Note

The information contained herein is current as of 2002 because the people consulted for this guide were interviewed between 2001 and 2002. In the six years that have passed between then and now, many changes have taken place on O‘ahu. It is my hope and intention, however, that the concept of this guide will be as useful and interesting as the knowledge shared with you by the residents and locals of O‘ahu.
CHAPTER 1
PLACES TO STAY
Turtle Bay Resort

Nate Malczon knows better than to anger his family. "Family comes first," he says. "If you make the family mad you're screwed. So I try to keep in touch because distance doesn't go over well with them. Most of my family lives in Waianae. Since I live in Mililani I have to make sure I visit often."

When not visiting family members, Nate can usually be found surfing somewhere on the island. "I used to be a Waikiki Beach attendant," he says, "and I didn't really mind the crowd—the tourists. They just have a different perspective. With them everything is rush-rush. They can get angry if they don't get what they want when they want it. But I feel bad for them when I see them in Waikiki spending money. The Waikiki McDonald's charges $1.98 for a cheeseburger when the Mililani McDonald's charges only $ .99."

Cheeseburger prices at McDonald's won't be an issue, though, for those who choose to stay at the Turtle Bay Resort. The hotel, which is located on the island's North Shore, has seven restaurants to cater to hungry stomachs: Palm Terrace, 21 Degrees North, Hang Ten Bar & Grill, Bay Club, Sunday Brunch, Ola, and Lei Lei's Bar and Grill. Nathaniel likes the resort best for its location. "It's really peaceful up there," he says. "There's hardly anybody around." He gets to go once a year because his father's business sponsors the trip. They prefer to stay in the cabanas, which resemble town homes. They have two stories and most include a master bedroom, porch area, and kitchen. The cabanas back up to the resort's golf course, which is home to the Turtle Bay Championship.
Golf is just one of the many activities that one can participate in at the resort. There's also horseback riding, fishing, scuba diving, tennis, snorkeling, and carriage rides.

The Turtle Bay Resort is located at 57-091 Kamehameha Highway in Kahuku. For more information or to book a room call 1-800-203-3650 or 1-866-293-6000.

The Turtle Bay Resort
Mokule‘ia Beach Park and Campground

Celeste McCarthy was born and raised in Arlington, Washington where she loved to go camping and hiking. When she moved to O‘ahu she was thrilled to find the island full of several campgrounds and hiking trails. Before she discovered these campgrounds and trails, however, she had to adjust to a Hawai‘i she did not expect to find. “I wasn’t expecting Honolulu to be so built up. I was surprised at the diversity of towns. For example, you can’t compare Honolulu to Kailua,” she says. “I had only ever seen pictures of the other islands, so I expected O‘ahu to be green and lush everywhere too.” She certainly didn’t expect the traffic. When she first arrived on the

Celeste McCarthy and Kia
Editorial Assistant/Writing Tutor
Honolulu

“The campground is a beautiful spot to watch the sunset, and it’s close to Hale‘iwa and all of the beaches on the North Shore. It’s quiet and peaceful—a good place to get away from the city. And there’s even a natural rock formation that is fun and fairly easy to climb.”
island she spent a couple of nights in Waikiki before leaving to explore the island further in a rental car. "The traffic was horrible, and Waikiki doesn't resemble what the tourist guides describe at all: luxury hotels lining the beach with no unflattering back streets. Many of the hotels are on back streets with no ocean view rooms. I was surprised and very disappointed."

Celeste happily departed Waikiki and proceeded to search for campgrounds in some of the more rural areas of O'ahu. She was able to see much of the island that way, and it made her feel better about O'ahu. "I stayed in a tent in campgrounds all over the island. I spent time in Waimea (North Shore) and all along the windward side of the island, including Waimanao and Kane'ohi. Her favorite campground, though, is Mokule'ia Beach Park in Waialua (North Shore). "I saw my first really beautiful Hawaiian sunset there. Since it's on the North Shore there are so many beautiful beaches in the area. I would just lie down on the beach and relax with a book."

Celeste is an avid reader. She especially enjoys reading works written by Pacific authors such as Patricia Grace, Sia Figiel, and Keri Hulme. "I love Hawaiian mythology," she says, "and Pele and Hi'iaka and A Legendary Tradition of Kamapua'a: The Hawaiian Pig-God are two of my favorite texts."

When she isn't working or reading, Celeste can usually be found hiking or kayaking. "I hike all around Makiki. If you go to the Hawai'i Nature Center there are two trailheads that branch off to create five different trails. The Manoa Cliffs Trail is really fun too and so is the Lanikai Ridge Trail. Kia and I always hike together. Sometimes I go kayaking in Waikiki or to the Mokulua in Kailua."

Mokule'ia Beach Park has 15 campsites and is located at 68-919 Ka'ena Point Road, which is a very remote location on the North Shore. It has a picnic area and telephones. Permits are required to stay at the campground, and you must be at least 18 years old to retain one. Contact the Permit Section of the City and County of Honolulu at 523-4525. Hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. HST, Monday through Friday. Permits are free of charge. All campgrounds on O'ahu are closed on Wednesday and Thursday nights for maintenance.
ResortQuest at the Waikiki Banyan

Sally Dang
School Administrative Services Assistant
‘Aiea

“My family and I like staying at the Waikiki Banyan because it’s in a good location, you can get a room with a full kitchen, and it has a pool that the kids like to play in.”

Other family members, she volunteers at a booth during the Okinawan Festival, which is held at Kuhio Beach Park. If your Hawaiian vacation falls on Labor Day weekend, consider attending the festival to sample the Okinawan doughnut known as andagi, the pig’s feet soup, the tumai kuru (warm and tender purple sweet potato), or the nmuchu (rice cake made from fried yams). The festival also features traditional dancing, music, and drumming.

With all the celebrating going on, it is not surprising that Sally and her family like to be close to the festival grounds. Location, though, isn’t the Waikiki Banyan’s only attribute. Sally likes the hotel’s friendly staff and clean rooms, but she does admit that the fee for parking in the hotel’s garage is a bit annoying ($8 per day, which is not an unusual hotel practice in Waikiki). And when it comes noise levels, Sally feels that the hotel is too quiet for her taste. “We got in trouble for being too loud,” she confesses, “but I still would want to stay there again. They were very nice about the whole thing, and it really is an ideal location for us, just a five minute walk and we’re at the festival.”

After attending college in Colorado, Sally Dang returned to the island she has always considered home—O‘ahu. “My family is here, so I knew I’d be coming back no matter what,” she says. “I didn’t want to live apart from my family, friends, and extended family. They’re too important.” Now she is the busy mother of two daughters and one son. Once her day at the office is through she often finds herself attending the many school activities that her children take part in such as soccer and baseball.

Her familiarity with the Waikiki Banyan comes from an annual event that takes place over Labor Day weekend. Along with approximately fifteen
ResortQuest at the Waikiki Banyan is located on the eastern end of Waikiki at 201 Ohua Avenue. Its rooms are air conditioned, and its heated pool is located on the sixth floor. The hotel also has a sauna, spa, snack bar, restaurant, fitness center, and tennis court. To book a room call Royal Hawai‘i Condos toll free at 1-877-997-6667.
Ask A Local’s Picks

The Island’s Hostels

Known for their sparsely furnished rooms and dormitory-like atmosphere, hostels are affordable places to stay. They certainly aren’t award-winning luxury hotels with five star restaurants and suites with jacuzzis, but hostels serve their purpose well: For a minimal price they offer friendly service, free travel advice, and a place to sleep and shower.

Hostelling International operates two hostels on O’ahu, one in Waikiki and one just down the road from the University of Hawai‘i in Manoa. The hostel in Waikiki is located at 2417 Prince Edward Street, 926-8313. There are 63 beds and 5 private rooms within the hostel. A dorm bed costs $23 a night and a private room costs $54 a night and is reserved for couples only. The hostel is equipped with a communal kitchen, lockers, a laundry room, Internet access, and a TV room. Parking is available for $5 per day. Reservations are suggested, and payment can be made in cash or with VS, MC, and AMEX. Inquire about the hostel’s organized excursions. They can be a great way to see the island while meeting new and interesting people. The office is open from 7:00am until 3:00am.

The hostel in Manoa, located at 2323A Seaview Avenue (946-0591), is a bit smaller with 35 beds and 2 private rooms. Dorm beds run $18 per night, and private rooms are $46 per night. There is a communal kitchen here as well, along with lockers and a laundry room. Reservations are suggested, and payment can be made in cash or with MC, VS, and AMEX. Three free parking stalls are available.

Although the hostel can be accessed 24 hours, office hours are from 8:00am to 12pm and from 4pm to 12am. Arriving in the middle of the night is not a good idea as you can only book a room during office hours. A maximum stay of seven nights applies at both hostels.

If staying on the North Shore is what you had in mind then you will be delighted with Backpacker’s Plantation Village. Located at 59-788 Kamehameha Highway in Hale‘iwa, Backpacker’s is right across the street from Pupukea Beach, which means “white shell” in Hawaiian. For occupying such a great location, Backpacker’s is a good bargain. Dorm beds range from $27 to $30, depending on the season, but private rooms, suites, and cabins are also available. The cabins have as many as four bedrooms and cost between $160 and $290 per night. For that price you can bring your entire extended family on vacation with you. 638-7838.
Use caution if visiting the North Shore in winter as it is not an ideal time to enjoy ocean activities due to rough and dangerous surf. In the summer the ocean is often flat and calm, but when the winter rolls in waves can reach 25 feet or more, making ocean gazing a breathtaking experience but swimming a high-risk activity.

There are also many other hostel options on the island:

Waikiki

Banana Bungalow ~ 2463 Kuhio Avenue ~ 924-5074
Hawaiian Seaside Hotel ~ 419 Seaside Avenue ~ 924-3303
Island Hostel ~ 1946 Ala Moana Boulevard ~ 942-8748
Waikiki Interclub Hostel ~ 2413 Kuhio Avenue ~ 924-2636
Polynesian Hostel Beach Club ~ 2584 Lemon Road ~ 922-1340
Waikiki Beachside Hostel ~ 2556 Lemon Road ~ 923-9566

North Shore

Sharks Cove Rentals ~ 59-672 Kamehameha Highway ~ 638-7980
Brecks on The Beach Hostel ~ 59-043 Huelo Street ~ 638-7873

Some hostels, like those affiliated with Hostelling International, charge nonmembers more, so ask about possible surcharges. Frequent travelers may be interested in becoming members. Membership costs $28 annually and comes with worldwide privileges. Happy hostelling.
Hau Tree Lanai

Have you ever dreamed of going back to your high school as a teacher or principal? That's exactly what Elias Ali has done. After completing his degree at Pacific University in Oregon, Elias returned to Moanalua High School in Honolulu to become a Vice Principal. "I always planned on coming back to Hawai'i after college to find work," he says, "because my parents live here."

When important guests come to O'ahu to visit he takes them to the Hau Tree Lanai, which is named after the three huge Hau trees that function beautifully as the centerpieces of the outdoor restaurant, because "it has good food and a wonderful atmosphere." Contributing to the wonderful atmosphere are the Hau trees themselves. One of Hawai'i's few surviving indigenous plants, the Hau tree has heart-shaped leaves and yellow flowers that resemble the hibiscus plant, to which it is related.

Elias Ali
High School Vice Principal
Honolulu

"The Hau Tree Lanai is a nice place to have dinner because it's right by the beach and you can sit under the trees and enjoy the light from the torches. They have excellent seafood, but it's the atmosphere that always brings me back."
For the ancient Hawaiians the tree served many purposes: its bast was frequently used to make a cord that functioned as gourd handles, thread, sandal ties, and slingshots. Outriggers were once made from the tree’s light yet strong wood, and the flowers and sap were used medicinally. One Hawaiian myth identifies the Hau tree as the shape of the Manoa wind. Perhaps it is for these reasons that popular 19th century writer Robert Louis Stevenson chose to sit underneath one of these very Hau trees to write his novels.

Besides offering an up-close view of a majestic native tree, the restaurant is a fine location to enjoy dinner in Waikiki while experiencing the magenta glow of the setting sun. At high tide the water of the Pacific is a mere twenty feet away from the restaurant. The Hau Tree Lanai is a moderately priced romantic restaurant that provides a gorgeous view of Waikiki.

The popular establishment offers Pacific Rim Cuisine with a European touch. It is located at 2863 Kalakaua Avenue in the New Otani Kaimana Beach Hotel. Prices for breakfast range from $4 to $15; lunch entrees range from $12 to $19, and dinners range from $19 to $38. The restaurant accepts all major credit cards. 921-7066.
Born in California, Jayme Echada moved to Hawai‘i as a child with her mother and father when her father retired from the Navy. Fortunately for Jayme, it was her first and only military move.

Now that she's graduated from high school, Jayme works part time while attending college. When she's not working she can usually be found at home watching television. “I like watching movies, especially comedies, but my favorite movie is Dirty Dancing,” and her favorite TV program is Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

Don’t be fooled into thinking that this Pearl City High alumna is a couch potato, though. “I'm really into photography. I enjoy taking pictures, and I used to be a photographer at Sears.” Currently, Jayme is happy taking pictures for her friend’s online magazine.

After a full day of work, school, and helping friends, she loves going to get a sandwich and fries at Kua ‘Aina Sandwich Shop. “They have two locations, but I prefer the one in Hale‘iwa because it's more relaxing, and it has that country feeling.” The other location, in Ward Center, is fairly new and close to the heart of Waikiki. The food is delicious at both locations.

Jayme does have some advice for those who decide to give Kua ‘Aina a try: “Make sure you’re really hungry because the sandwiches are huge and the portions are big!”

The original Kua ‘Aina Sandwich Shop is located at 66-160 Kamehameha Highway in Hale‘iwa. 637-6067. The opened-by-popular-demand Kua ‘Aina is located at 1200 Ala Moana Blvd., building 6 in Ward Center. 591-9133. A burger and fries will cost about $9. This may seem expensive, but patrons wait in long lines to feast on Kua ‘Aina burgers and sandwiches, proving that these meals are worth every cent. Cash and checks only.
Kua 'Aina Sandwich Shop has won the 'Ilima Award for "Favorite Hamburgers."

Kua 'Aina Sandwich Shop
Hale'iwa

Kua 'Aina Sandwich Shop
Ward Center
Honolulu
Seoul Inn and Hy's Steak House

Prior to savoring dinners together at their favorite O'ahu restaurants, Brad and Channa Markham spent their evenings socializing in the City Mill parking lot, which, as Channa explains, "used to be known as a hangout for teenagers after the store closed. And it's there that we met." Two years after meeting the couple got married, and three years after they said their vows, Kalene joined the family.

Besides going out to eat, the Markhams enjoy spending family time together at Makena beach, which is located about one mile east of the Turtle Bay Resort on the North Shore. They also love eating shave ice at Matsumoto's in Hale'iwa. Shave ice, which is similar to snow cones, comes in a variety of common as well as exotic and local flavors such as lychee and lihing mui, but Channa prefers the vanilla because it's blue, and she likes anything that's blue.

Brad prefers the Hawaiian Special, which is a blend of pineapple, coconut, and banana. If you ask residents of O'ahu where the best shave ice on the island can be found, 9 out of 10 people will smile and say "Matsumoto's."

When the family isn't out visiting their favorite spots on the island, they can usually be found in their back yard. "We barbeque a lot," Brad says. "We grill everything on the cow and pig, chicken too."

The Markhams obviously know food. They describe Seoul Inn as a Korean mom and pop restaurant that has been around for years. Entrees average $5, and the restaurant is located at 410 California Avenue in Wahiawa. 621-9090. Seoul Inn accepts cash only.

Brad, Channa, and Kalene Markham
Gas Turbine Mechanic~Teacher~Baby
Pearl City

"We go to Seoul Inn for the hot bbq pork and the best rice on the island."

"Hy's has good steak and live music. It's on the main strip in Waikiki, so the location is good for visitors. It's a good place for special occasions, either romantic or business in nature."

Brad, Channa, and Kid
Hy's Steak House, conveniently located in central Waikiki, is a beef lover's haven. Dinners average $40.00 a person, but the restaurant serves only USDA Prime cuts. It is hard to believe that anyone would be disappointed with the chateaubriand or Hy's New York steak glazed with Madagascar peppercorn sauce. And those fond of dessert will surely be delighted with Hy's crème brulee or cherries jubilee, among other after dinner sweets that will make your taste buds dance.

For couples celebrating special occasions, Hy's deep red walls, dim lighting, and soft, live music are perfect mood setters. For business occasions, Hy's sophisticated elegance evident in the restaurant's ornate woodwork lends itself well to important company dinners.

Hy's accepts VS, MC, AX, DC, DS, and JCB and is located at 2440 Kuhio Avenue. Reservations are recomended. 922-5555.

Hy's Steak House is often recognized in the 'Ilima Award's fine dining category.
Casual Dining

The Olive Tree Cafe

Just east of Waikiki near the Kahala Mall stands an incredible little Greek restaurant known as the Olive Tree Cafe, and it shouldn’t be overlooked. This small and intimate restaurant operated by Savas Mojarrad cooks up the most delicious souvlaki on O'ahu. Served with a small greek salad, the souvlaki can be made with chicken, lamb, or fresh fish. The chicken is especially good and consistently made with tender chicken breast chunks. The chicken pieces are placed on a warm piece of pita bread and accompanied by sweet Maui onion slices and the cafe’s delectable souvlaki sauce, the traditional Greek tzatziki, which consists of yogurt seasoned with dill, garlic, and cucumber.

You can easily leave the restaurant without spending more than $10, and sharing an order of the delicious, garlicky hummus served with pita triangles as an appetizer won’t send you running to the nearest ATM.

The cafe is charmingly decorated with mini white lights, bistro chairs, and tables richly adorned with tiles. Much of the charm, however, comes from the tables located outside, around the perimeter of the restaurant. Finding a table seems to be the only drawback to dining at the Olive Tree Cafe. Especially during peak hours, the restaurant is busy, but waiting for a table, which usually takes no more than ten minutes, is worth the experience.

The Olive Tree Cafe, located at 4614 Kilauea Avenue, is a BYOB establishment (the shop the restaurant operates next door sells wine along with Greek specialties), and the staff will provide you with glasses for your alcoholic beverages. The shop the restaurant operates next door also sells wine. The restaurant can be reached at 737-0303, and is open Monday through Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Friday through Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Cash and local checks only.
Fine Dining

3660 On the Rise

Even before 3660 On the Rise renovated its interior in 1999, the restaurant was a wonderful place to eat. Although the food is just as delicious as it was when the restaurant opened in 1992, the interior is now complemented by crisp white table linens; soft, suspended lighting; and private booths as well as large family tables.

Located far enough away from Waikiki to escape the crowd but close enough to ensure that visitors won't get lost, the restaurant is never disappointing. The grilled portabella mushroom with mushroom and garlic confit served over mesclun ($9.50) and the potato crusted crab cake with 'Nalo baby greens, which are grown locally in Waimanalo, and Creole remoulade sauce ($10.75) are wise choices for an appetizer. For the main entree the grilled medallions of beef tenderloin with butter braised king crab leg, black truffle hollandaise, and roasted shallot demi sauce ($29.50) and the Chinese steamed fillet of seasonal island snapper simmered in a Chinese black bean broth ($27.50) are both quite good. The Harlequin Crème Brûlée ($8.00), which is the restaurant's signature dessert, is a delicious way to end dinner.

The wine selection here is superb enough to have earned the establishment a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence, and the servers at this Euro-Island cuisine inspired restaurant are friendly, competent, and well-informed. Prices for entrees range from $22.50 to $45.00, but many of the dinners are available in smaller portions for less. 3660 Wai'ala Avenue. 737-1177. The restaurant accepts VS, MC, AX, DS, and JCB and offers validated parking. Reservations are recommended. Closed on Mondays.

Nick's Fishmarket

The atmosphere at Nick's Fishmarket is only one of its many positive attributes. The large, black, semi-circular booths offer an intimate setting, and the small candles placed on every table provide a tranquil and romantic glow.

The service is among the best that O'ahu has to offer. Your wine glass will never be empty, your flatware never dirty, your server never rude or misinformed. Every patron who walks into Nick's is treated like royalty.

The menu is extensive, and the quality of the food is impressive. The Caesar salad prepared tableside ($13.95 per person) and the petite Tristan lobster tails and filet mignon served with green peppercorn sauce and oven roasted tomato and basil mashed potatoes ($52.95) are wonderful together. The lobster, caught in the waters surrounding the most remote inhabited island in the world — Tristan da Cunha, imparts a sweet and tender yet firm flesh that upstages the hard-to-beat tenderness of the filet. If you're celebrating a special occasion, let Nick's know, and dessert will be on the house.

Entree prices range from $33.95 for various dishes to $79.50 for the Pro-Bowl Special, which includes a 12 oz grilled New York steak served with wild mushroom port wine sauce and a matching 12 oz Caribbean spiny lobster tail. Nick's is child friendly, offering an inexpensive children's menu ($9.95 per meal). The restaurant is located at 2070 Kalakaua Avenue in the Waikiki Gateway hotel. 955-6333. VS, MC, AX, DS, and JCB.
The Olive Tree Cafe has won the 'Ilima Award for "Favorite Mediterranean Restaurant," and 3660 has won the 'Ilima Award for "Best Desserts," "Favorite All Around Restaurant," and "Hawaii's Best Restaurant." Nick's Fishmarket is regularly recognized in the 'Ilima Awards' fine dining category.
CHAPTER 3
SHOPPING
Ala Moana Center

Oliver Cajala
Retail Sales/Student
Honolulu

"Ala Moana is a nice place to shop because it's different from all the other shopping malls in that it's an outdoor mall. It also has a center stage where a lot of performances take place, so it's a good place to shop while having entertainment on the side to listen to or watch."

even high concentration of karaoke bars, often has a difficult time deciding which one to visit.

Music and karaoke bars are not the only things that interest Oliver, however. Graduating from high school 15th out of a class of 420, he now majors in chemistry at The University of Hawai'i at

This future doctor is not just a passionate shopper: he is a passionate music lover and academic as well. Oliver is an accomplished drummer and pianist, and he has now found a love for singing too. "I like going to karaoke bars," he says. Fortunately for Oliver, O'ahu has a plethora of karaoke bars, and if you choose to visit one while on the island it should comfort you to know that it doesn't matter if you carry a tune or not. Nobody minds when a first-timer takes hold of the microphone and bravely belts out a song.

Even bars not designated as karaoke bars often have special weekly or monthly karaoke nights. The substantial number of karaoke bars on O'ahu seems to be a unique aspect of the island and is probably due to the island's strong Korean influence. There's at least one karaoke bar in just about every town, and Oliver, who lives in Honolulu where there is an
Manoa because he wants to go into medicine. "I wish to become either a pediatrician or a veterinarian," he says.

Yet another interest of Oliver's is shopping. Although many of the area malls house the stores he likes to shop at like Gap, Old Navy, and Banana Republic, Oliver prefers Ala Moana, which just happens to be the largest outdoor shopping mall in the world. "I used to go to Liberty House too," but since it converted to Macy's I really don't go there any more. It's just not the same. You can't replace Liberty House." His feelings about Liberty House have been echoed throughout the community. Founded in 1849 as Hackfield's Dry Goods and eventually renamed Liberty House, the department store was an island institution for 152 years before it became Macy's in 2001. For many island residents the closure brought about feelings of sadness and even sickness for some. "It was an island tradition," recalls Kaleolama T.O. Bento from Wahiawa. "It was part of the old Hawai'i."

In an article written for the Honolulu Advertiser, playwright and former KHN anchorwoman Lee Cataluna speaks fondly of the department store exclusive to Hawai'i, Guam, and California. "In a place where people develop fierce brand loyalty over the smallest kindness, Liberty House came through for so many," she writes. "Liberty House did us favors. Liberty House cut us some slack. If you lived on a Neighbor Island, Liberty House clerks would call all the other stores in the state to find the exact item you needed and have it shipped to your store. You could buy a present for your cousin in Lih'ue at the Ala Moana store, and they'd ship it to Kaua'i for you, free of charge. Nonnette in fashion jewelry got to know your taste and would give you a call when new stuff came in. And then there was the policy on returns. Stories of people buying shoes from LH, wearing them for two weeks, deciding they didn't fit right, and taking them back for a full refund. Not only merchandise credit, but cash. Same with prom dresses. Same with stuff you bought and forgot in your closet for a year. No questions asked."

Even though Liberty House is no longer opening its kama'aina (native-born) doors every morning, Ala Moana Center is still a nice place to spend your shopping day. With 260 shops, kiosks, and eateries, Ala Moana has a variety of well-known stores such as Macy's, Sears, Neiman Marcus, and Nordstrom, as well as lesser known, Hawai'i inspired boutiques such as Crazy Shirts, Elephant Walk, Hilo Hattie, Hawaiian Quilt Collection, The Islands' Best, and Hawaiian Island Creations. Get a bite to eat in the food court. Check out a performance. Buy something Hawaiian. And in the spirit of Liberty House, be friendly and kind to the people around you.

Ala Moana Center is located at 1450 Ala Moana Boulevard in Honolulu. 955-9517. The Center is open Monday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Scott M. Nagamine holds bachelor's degrees in political science and economics from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, but he prefers to work with tourists as a bartender because he loves getting to know different people. “I never get bored with my out-of-town patrons,” he says, “because they have so much to teach me.” Born and raised on O’ahu, Scott has been bartending now for six years and concedes that “it’s easier to relate with people who are having a good time, like vacationers.”

Even though he’s traveled quite extensively and has even lived in other places, he never wants to leave Hawai‘i permanently. “No matter what, this is home,” he says.

When visitors sit down at Scott’s bar he makes them feel as at home on O’ahu as they are in Seattle, or Portland, or Philadelphia. “I’ve actually been to places like Washington and Oregon to visit some of the people I’ve met working as a bartender,” he says proudly. “I even have people who come back to visit me.”

Kindness is in Scott’s blood. He stresses that the most important advice he can give to tourists is to explore O‘ahu in its entirety. “I tell my guests to get out of Waikiki. And one good way of getting out is to go to the swap meet. Plus, local people also shop at the swap meet, so you know you’re not paying Waikiki prices.”

Getting out of Waikiki to explore the rest of the island might just be the best advice this book has to offer. So please, take Scott’s advice to heart and rent a car, book a circle island
tour, or hop on a bus. For $2 one way (including transfers) you can get around the whole island by utilizing O'ahu's popular and award-winning public transportation system: The Bus. $20 will get you a four day unlimited visitor's pass.

If you want to hear what O'ahu residents talk about, The Bus is a great place to listen to locals discuss politics, education, food, sports, and so on. It's also a great place to hear Hawai'i Creole English, or pidgin, spoken. Hawai'i Creole English, which was developed by the multiethnic sugar plantation workers of the late 19th to early 20th centuries, has a fluidity that makes the language sound almost musical. It's a language rarely heard by visitors, but it is a real part of today's Hawai'i. Given its popularity and the many movements created to raise its status from "broken" English to a bona fide language, it should remain a vital part of Hawai'i's future as well.

The Bus has numerous stops on the island, including several dozen in Waikiki (to get to the swap meet from Waikiki take the number 20 or 42). For a complete list of routes and maps log onto thebus.org.

If you rent a car and want to experience O'ahu fully, don't just go to the tourist hot spots: consider driving through some of O'ahu's neighborhoods (while exercising caution, of course).

The swap meet is a good place to begin your exploration. Shop in the morning and then take the H-2 to the North Shore or the H-3 to Kaneohe. Just get out and explore.

The swap meet is open on Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays. Admission is $1.00 per person but free for eleven and under. Vendors begin setting up their booths around 6:00 a.m. and by 3:00 p.m. most of them are already packed up and headed out. Go early if you want to avoid the harsh afternoon heat. 99-500 Salt Lake Boulevard (the parking lot of Aloha Stadium). 486-6704
Pearlridge Mall

When this highly successful businesswoman isn’t working at the local bank, she’s spending time with her two children, Chloe and Jonah. Besides window shopping, Paz likes to take Chloe and Jonah to Pearlridge for ice cream. “The kids enjoy the time we spend at the mall,” she says, “and they love getting ice cream.” The mall has a Dippin’ Dots, a Coldstone Creamery, and a Holotta Ice Cream to delight taste buds on especially hot days.

Paz also likes Pearlridge for other reasons: “Pearlridge seems to be more tailored to local people,” she explains. “You can be more relaxed. Ala Moana can be overwhelming because they’re trying to hit more of the high-end market. I don’t dislike Ala Moana Center. It’s especially great for holiday shopping because they have entertainment for the kids, but for everyday shopping I prefer Pearlridge Mall.”

You won’t find Chanel, Versace, or Christian Dior at Pearlridge Mall, but you will find “everyday” shopping stores such as Sears and Macy’s. Local shops such as Hawaiian Island Creations, Town and Country Surf Shop, and Royal Hawaiian Heritage Jewelry are also excellent reasons to visit the mall.

Pearlridge Center is a neighborhood mall. It’s where people from Western Honolulu, ‘Aiea, Pearl City, and Ewa Beach go to shop. It’s less...
crowded and much quieter than Ala Moana Center. It also has several cozy seating areas where
tired shoppers can rest their feet and arms, which are undoubtedly tired from carrying those
heavy shopping bags. Conveniently placed side tables allow you to relax with a drink, and the
chairs are comfortable and upholstered in material with bright geometric patterns. The seating
areas are also a great place for people watching. If you want to get away from the tourists for a
while and shop with the locals, head over to Pearlridge.

Pearlridge Center is located at Kamehameha Highway at Pali Momi, across from Pearl
Harbor. 488-0981. The mall is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
and on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Ask A Local's Picks

The Gallery at Ward Centre

The Gallery at Ward Centre captures the beauty of the islands through many different mediums. Roger Whitlock, Mark Norseth, Barbara Edelstein, Cynthia Wiig, Michael Lee, Bud Spindt, Chuck Davis, Roy Tsumoto, Debbie Young, Doug Young, Cindy Conklin, Steve Martin, Susie Anderson, Helen Iaea, Charlene Tashima, and Joel Park produce some of the most exquisite original art on the island. Prints are also available, but original pieces can sometimes be purchased for as little as $45. The sweeping, intense brushstrokes of watercolorist Roger Whitlock will captivate you. The elegant curves of Michael Lee's koa wood vessels will have you wondering how something so graceful can be created from a tree trunk. The optical beauty of Bud Spindt's colorful glass vessels will hold your gaze.

The gallery is a co-op, which means that the artists run the shop themselves. If you have questions about any of the items, the artists, not commissioned salespeople, will be able to provide you with answers, perhaps even demonstrate their talent for you. If you have questions about particular artists who aren't working on the day you visit, they're only a phone call away. The artist in residence will be happy to make the call for you. The entire staff of artists is knowledgeable and friendly. If Roger Whitlock happens to be there during your visit, ask him to talk about his paintings and sketches while he's creating. He demonstrates often. Cynthia Wiig enjoys explaining how she creates her unique reticulated silver jewelry. Steve Martin likes to talk about his ceramics and the little fishes he hand forms from clay. Any artist, any day. They're all excited about what they do, and they love sharing their excitement with other people.

The Gallery at Ward Centre is located at 1200 Ala Moana Boulevard and is open from 10:00 to 9:00 Monday through Thursday, 10:00 to 10:00 Fridays and Saturdays, and 10:00 to 5:00 on Sundays. 597-8034. Major credit cards and personal checks are accepted. Layaway is available.
CHAPTER 4
BEACHES
Albert Fernandez knows water. He spends every day either watching people in it, working with it, traveling on it, or playing in it. He probably even has a water bed to sleep on at his home in Ewa Beach.

He has chosen many beaches to share with you because he spends time at each one for different reasons. "Lanikai is a great place to go kayaking," he says. "You can kayak out to The Mokes (the Mokuluas), which are located about a half mile off shore, jump off the rocks, and have a picnic before heading back to shore. It's like going on a vacation for free."

Once voted the most beautiful beach in the nation, Lanikai beach ("sea heaven, marine heaven" in Hawaiian) is still lovely, but it has suffered a great deal from beach erosion, leaving very little space at high tide to lie down and get a suntan. It is located on the windward side of the island, just southeast of Kailua.

Albert prefers Diamond Head Beach, which is located east of Waikiki, and Shark Country for windsurfing because "the wind direction is good, and there's usually nobody around, no crowd factor." Part of the reason people avoid Shark Country in particular has to due with the sharks. "There are a lot of sharks out there," Albert says, "and you have to paddle out far to reach the break due to the coral shelf."

If you have Selachophobia it's probably best to stay away from Shark Country. But don't worry. There are many other beaches on O'ahu that aren't known for their sharp-toothed fish.
A View of the Mokuluas from Lanikai Beach
“There’s a lot of things going on in life, and I like going to Waikiki to think about things, resolve things, release burdens and stress. It also reminds me of my birthplace, Samoa, because you see a lot of families spending time together at Waikiki.”

Caroline Pua‘alanimera Meyer Jasco
Waikiki

Waikiki. Just hearing the name immediately fills the mind with images of white sand and swaying palm trees, tropical drinks and deeply tanned surfers. It is considered by some to be the world’s most famous beach. Elvis sang on its soft sand. Duke Kahanamoku rode its foamy waves.

A couple of centuries ago, long before the luxury hotels, Waikiki beach was frequented by Hawaiian royalty. Hawaiian mythology tells of Waikiki being the ruling seat of chiefs of O‘ahu while under the rule of Mālikūkahi.

Today, millions of tourists visit the relatively small area of beach each year. Millions. O‘ahu receives about 4.5 million visitors annually, and many of them want to see “the world’s most famous beach.” So don’t be surprised if it takes you awhile to find a place to lay down your beach mat.

Honeymooners who desire a quiet place to relax on the beach might want to visit one of the other beautiful beaches on the island. Some spots are virtually empty during the week. For suggestions, read what other residents have to say about O‘ahu’s beaches in this chapter. Locals know the locations of the island’s best beaches. More importantly, they know when the best beaches are safe. Some beaches can become very dangerous during certain times of the year, and many of these beaches do not have lifeguards. Always check conditions before you enter the water.

If, on the other hand, you’re here with your five children, Waikiki is perhaps the best beach for you. There is a police station, plenty of lifeguards, beach activity stands, snack shops, and
bathrooms at Waikiki beach. You can also rent snorkel sets, boogie boards, kayaks, volleyballs, life vests, rafts, and surfboards right on the beach. You can even take surfing lessons.

Waikiki Beach is definitely a good place for children. "It's beautiful to see the family life there," Caroline says.
Makaha Beach

Playing the 'ukulele is not just a hobby for Dayton Galindo. "It's the most important thing in my life," says this young man from Wai'anae.

Born and raised in Hawai'i, Dayton is proud of his Hawaiian ancestry, which he inherited from both his mother and father. Strangely, being part Hawaiian makes Dayton a minority in Hawai'i. It seems to be the ultimate irony. According to the 2000 United States Census, only 6.6% of the population of Hawai'i is Hawaiian. Even when part Hawaiians like Dayton are accounted for, they are still a minority in their own homeland. For some answers to this enigma pick up a copy of Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea La E Pono A'i? by Liilikala Kame'elehiwa or From a Native Daughter by Haunani-Kay Trask.

Dayton keeps Hawaiian tradition alive through his music and surfing. Ancient Hawaiians enjoyed and were highly skilled at both. Besides playing the 'ukulele, Dayton plays the guitar and bass as well.

When he's not playing music, Dayton can usually be found hunting, hiking, or surfing. When he goes surfing, he prefers to ride the waves at Makaha, which is north of Wai'anae on the Wai'anae Coast. "It's a great place for experienced body boarders and surfers, but it's also a family beach like Waikiki," he says, "and the local people are friendly at Makaha."

If you want to spend a day at the beach but away from Waikiki, try Makaha. It takes about an hour and a half to get there from Waikiki, but the scenery along Farrington Highway is worth the time in your car.

Dayton Galindo
Beach Boy
Wai'anae

"It's always, always sunny at Makaha Beach. It only rains like twice a year, so you get 363 days of sun. And it's out in the country, so you don't have the traffic hassles like you do in Waikiki. It's also an incredible place to watch the sun set. Every day there's a great sunset."
The Wai'anae Coast Viewed from Ka'ena Point
The Lagoons at Ko Olina

The lagoons at Ko Olina are the perfect beach location for families with small children, weak swimmers, those with tired bodies, and those who prefer calm, pool-like water as opposed to more active seas. The lagoons are protected by a manmade reef that takes the brunt of the ocean’s force by allowing waves to crash some 100 feet away from the shoreline against precisely placed rocks. Parking is sometimes difficult, especially on weekends, but most people wait no more than fifteen minutes or so for a space to open up. There are four lagoons, but the first one is often crowded because it is the one that Ko Olina hotel guests use most often.

To get to the lagoons take the H-1 west until the freeway turns into a two lane road. Keep driving until you come to the exit for Ko Olina. When you reach the guard shack tell the guards (who are always very friendly) that you are headed for the lagoons. Then simply follow the main road and make a right into the lagoon of your choice.
Lanikeha Beach

In Hawaiian, *lanikeha* literally means “lofty heaven,” and according to Pukui and Elbert’s *Hawaiian Dictionary*, Lanikeha is a “legendary part of heaven,” and “the frequent name for residences of high chiefs,” including Kamehameha III, or Kauikeouli, who died in Honolulu in 1854.

On most days, however, it would seem appropriate to call this North Shore beach “turtle heaven” due to the high number of honu, or Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles, that frequent the area for the abundance of green algae that grows on the rocks at the edge of the beach. It’s a wonderful place to get a close-up view of the majestic and ancient reptiles. But please avoid temptation, and do not touch the turtles. Placed on the threatened species list on July 28, 1978, *honu* are protected by the federal Endangered Species Act and Hawai’i state law. If you see anyone harassing the turtles please call (808) 541-2727.

If you get to the beach and see some turtles that aren’t green, don’t worry: the turtles actually have a mottled dark brown shell. They get their English name from the color of their fat, which is green from the *limu* (algae) they feed on.

The turtles’ sex can be identified by their tails. The females have tails like rottweilers: short and stubby. The males have tales like German shepherds: long and thick.

These graceful swimmers saw the dinosaurs evolve and become extinct. Let’s make sure the species survives for another 180 million years.

Lanikeha is located east of Waimea Bay on the North Shore. It is not marked, but as you drive east along Kamehameha Highway you will eventually see a bunch of cars parked in the sand on the right-hand side of the road. You’ll have a good view of the ocean to your left, unobstructed by plants and trees. This is Lanikeha.
CHAPTER 5
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
Diving

Michael Hubbard
Security/Retired Navy
Pearl City

"There are a lot of good spots on O'ahu to go diving. The waters are clear when you get off shore, especially around the North Shore and the windward side of the island."

weather is nice, and I like the slow pace of life," says Michael. "The air is cleaner here, not congested like in Los Angeles. This is also a good place to raise children. Crime is nothing here. There's crime, but not like in other places such as where I'm from--South Central Los Angeles. And people keep their traditions here. In my opinion, people here are raised with better morals. There's a better sense of family here."

To immerse himself in the beauty of Hawai'i, Michael goes diving. He likes going to Black's Point, Diamond Head, Shark's Cove, and the leeward side overall, but his favorite diving spots are Chinaman's Hat (known to ancient Hawaiians as Mokoli'i--"little lizard") and Ka'ena Point. "The water is clear, and there's a lot more game for spear fishing, especially at
Chinaman's Hat. Even on a cloudy day you can have good visibility to 100 feet. Both areas aren't as messed up as places like Hanauma Bay. Too many people go there, so the reef suffers." Michael says that both Ka'ena Point and Chinaman's Hat are relatively safe in the daytime, but he cautions people to use common sense. "There aren't any lifeguards, and you can get ripped off, especially tourists driving rental cars, so bring only what you need including a minimum amount of money, preferably travelers' checks."
Beach Volleyball

Adam Ogan
Intramural Sports Worker
Kaka’ako

“Ala Moana Beach and Fort DeRussy Beach in Waikiki are my favorite places to play beach volleyball. To play at Ala Moana you must provide your own net, lines, and volleyball. Fort DeRussy is better for tourists because it’s right by the hotels. It’s convenient, and you only need to provide your own volleyball.”

Beach volleyball area has two sets of poles and is located at the Ewa (western) end of the beach, right by the dolphin sanctuary. According to Adam, weekdays are the best days to play a game because the weekends can become crowded and players might have to wait quite awhile for a court to open up. “Late afternoon is always the best time to go. Sometimes even the weekdays can be crowded in the middle of the day.”

The Fort DeRussy courts are located next to the Hale Koa Hotel on Waikiki Beach. There are two courts: one 4 to 6 man and one strictly 2 man. Adam warns that there are drawbacks to
the courts' convenient Waikiki location. "There's usually a waiting list, and sometimes the wait time reaches two hours. Plus, if you don't win your first game when you do get on the court, your play time is over and you have to get back on the waiting list."

Fortunately however, there is a lot to do while one is waiting. Waikiki Beach has many activities that one can participate in such as swimming, sunbathing, and surfing. It's better than waiting in line at the grocery store!
Hiking

Born in Samoa, Tee moved to Hawai‘i when he was seven years old. Although he misses Samoa, his entire family moved to Hawai‘i, so he considers Hawai‘i home now. “You can’t beat Hawai‘i,” he says. “It has the best food, the best people, and the best climate. There are a lot of good, friendly people here. And even people who are not family are family in Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i no ka o‘i (Hawai‘i is the best).”

Tee includes tourists as the people in Hawai‘i and believes that tourism is always good for the economy. “God bless the tourists,” he says.

Other than being a strikingly warm and friendly human being, Tee is also a talented guitar player. “Playing guitar is an outlet for me. It’s a good way to be creative, and it’s also a good excuse to get together with friends and drink beer. Plus, the girls like it.”

To keep in shape and get away from the noise of the city, Tee goes hiking at least five times a week. “St. Louis Park is a good gradual hike: not too easy, not too hard,” he says. “It’s an escape from reality. You can still see the city from up there, but you can’t hear it. It’s a good place to watch the sun set too. I like watching it because for me it symbolizes the beginning of a new day.” The park’s amenities include a picnic area with tables, barbeque grills, and bathroom facilities at the trailhead. The trailhead, which is right next to the parking area, offers a good view of the valley and downtown area.

Tee Chanel
Retail Management
Kalihi

“St. Louis Park and Diamond Head are both good places to go hiking. The St. Louis Park trail goes on for many miles, but, depending on how you feel, you can make your hike as short or as long as you want. Diamond Head offers great 360 degree views of the city.”
Known as Le‘ahi (brow of the tuna) by the ancient Hawaiians, Diamond Head Crater is one of the island's most popular tourist attractions. It is the world's most famous volcanic crater. Visitors and residents alike hike the crater for the exercise as well as the view that awaits hikers at the top. Some common descriptions of the hike are rather misleading, however. The 1 3/4 mile hike is often described by various travel guides as being relatively easy and for beginners, but it is actually a long (1 1/2 hours), steep, and even dark hike at times. Many people, especially older adults, have been airlifted from Diamond Head to nearby hospitals because they could not continue the hike or they were too fatigued at the end to hike back down. This guide is not attempting to dissuade tourists from hiking Diamond Head; it is just being cautious in its description. The admission fee is $1 per person for pedestrians or $5 per car. There is no fee for parking. Wear comfortable shoes, bring sunscreen, and don't forget to bring water. The park opens at 6:00 a.m. and closes at 6:00 p.m.
Ask A Local’s Picks

Snorkeling at Shark’s Cove

Pack up your fins, snorkel, and mask and head for the North Shore, but only in the summer. It’s much too dangerous to snorkel at Shark’s Cove in the winter due to the high surf. In the summer, however, Shark’s Cove is a snorkeler’s heaven. Marine life of all colors and hues decorates the sea in a brilliant display of nature’s diversity. Honu (Hawaiian green sea turtles), humuhumunukunukuapua’a (Hawaii’s state fish), angel fish, butterfly fish, needle fish, trumpet fish, triggerfish, parrot fish, surgeon fish, tangs, and ornate wrasses are commonly spotted at Shark’s Cove.

The beach, though, is really small. Between rocks there are spots of sand where you can sit down and suit up, but this coral coastline isn’t a place for sunbathing. There’s even less room at high tide.

Getting to Shark’s Cove is a bit tricky too. You have to climb down a small rocky hill, so be sure to wear appropriate shoes. Wearing flip-flops is not a good idea.

Shark’s cove is also a scuba diving spot, but you don’t have to be a diver to fully enjoy the marine life. The water is clear and visibility is good. To get there take the H-2 to the North Shore. Make a right onto Kamehameha Highway. Pass the town of Hale’iwa and Waimea Bay, and keep driving until you pass the forestation. Shark’s Cove will be on your left-hand side. Park wherever you can find a spot. Bathroom facilities, including outside showers, are on site.
CHAPTER 6
PLACES OF
CULTURAL/HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Nuʻuanu Pali Lookout

Before moving to Oʻahu, Brendan McCarthy lived on Kauaʻi for two years. The change in scenery was drastic. “Oʻahu has lost a lot of its spirit due to urbanization, political corruption, disregard for the environment by the people who live here, and a lack of competent city planning,” he says. “The spirit of the ‘aina (land) is so visible on Kauaʻi. On Oʻahu you have to go looking for it. There just doesn’t seem to be much aloha here. It’s sad to realize how much Hawaiʻi has lost.”

Yet Brendan loves Hawaiʻi. Born and raised on Long Island, Brendan moved to Hawaiʻi seven years ago. He received his acupuncture degree from a school of Chinese medicine in ‘Aina Haina. He plans to attend medical school in the near future.

The Nuʻuanu Pali Lookout is important to him because it has such great historical significance. In the late 1700s, King Kamehameha was attempting to unite the islands of Hawaiʻi. The island of Oʻahu was the last to be conquered, and the king of Oʻahu did not give in easily. In 1795 King Kamehameha and his warriors from the Big Island battled Oʻahu’s warriors until they drove approximately 500 of Oʻahu’s men off the Pali (cliff). This horrific battle and victory for Kamehameha resulted in the unification of the Hawaiian Islands.

To reach the Nuʻuanu Pali Lookout from Waikiki take the H-1 east until you reach the Pali Highway exit. Drive until you see signs for the lookout on your right-hand side. There is plenty of parking and admission is free. The

Brendan McCarthy
Acupuncturist, L.A.C.
Honolulu

“The Nuʻuanu Pali Lookout is interesting because when you go up the lookout you have this amazing view of windward Oʻahu. It’s also the site of a decisive battle between invader King Kamehameha from the Big Island and the troops from Oʻahu. There’s a lot of history there.”
lookout is open from 9:00am to 4:00pm daily. Bring a sweater or jacket as it can get chilly up in the mountains.

A View of O'ahu from the Nu'uanu Pali Lookout
Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve

Maricar Maniti was born in the Philippines, moved to South Philadelphia at the age of eight, and then moved to San Diego before settling in Hawai'i several years ago. Prior to moving, Maricar expected O'ahu to be a "heaven," so she was excited. "When I actually got here I was surprised by its small size and appearance. But now I see it more as a small place but with a lot of places to go to. I was used to traveling long distances on the mainland, and you can't do that here, but I've gotten used to it, and now I love it."

For some people, living in the world's most isolated island chain (the nearest landmass is over 2,000 miles away) is too confining. Many people come down with what has come to be known locally as "rock fever." Sufferers decide that they just can't live so far away from the rest of the world. Maricar Maniti has chosen one of O'ahu's most popular tourist destinations as her favorite place with cultural significance.

To reach Hanauma Bay take the H-1 eastbound until it turns into Kalaniana'ole Highway. Follow Kalaniana'ole Highway for several miles until you see the sign for Hanauma Bay on your right-hand side. Once an active volcano, the bay is now home to several species of fish and coral, so snorkeling or diving here is a must. The bay's large beach is also ideal for sunbathers. Snorkel gear is available to rent, and shower and restroom facilities are also on site. Parking costs $1 per vehicle and is limited, so get to Hanauma Bay early (before 11:00 a.m.). The park
opens at 6:00 a.m. and closes at 7:00 p.m. Admission is $5 for persons 13 and up. 7455 Kalaniana'ole Highway. 396-4229. Closed on Tuesdays.
Bishop Museum and ‘Iolani Palace

Jerry Keahi Ka‘ehu
Federal Water Safety Officer/Beach Boy/Musician
Waimanalo/Waikiki

“A lot of people in the world like to dance hula. At The Bishop Museum visitors can learn about the meles (chants) and stories behind the dances. The museum will also show you how Hawai‘i has grown and changed.”

“‘Iolani Palace is the only royal palace in the United States. It tells about the Hawaiian royal family and royal lineage from the ali‘i nui to chiefs. It also tells how Hawai‘i went from being a monarchy to a provisional government and then to a territory annexed by the US, and finally, to statehood.”

Jerry Keahi Ka‘ehu does not believe in greed or bitterness. He believes in giving aloha to all people regardless of their background. He enjoys playing the ‘ukulele, guitar, and steel guitar, and although he prefers to play Hawaiian music, he likes listening to all kinds of music. He shares his musicality by teaching beginning through advanced students the ‘ukulele. He also teaches people how to surf and canoe. Sharing is in his nature. He even flies to Japan to donate his time to the ‘ukulele festival that is held there every year.

For a man who shares everything he knows with everyone, the avarice that seems to surround Hawai‘i today saddens and angers him. “I want Hawaiians to get back what is rightfully theirs,” he says. “Hawaiians should have their land returned to them.” He doesn’t mind that Hawai‘i is a progressive state, but he doesn’t believe that dollars are being spent wisely. “Tax money should go to institutions like the Department of Education and not into projects like beautifying Waikiki or the
short-lived, expensive, and ridiculous van cams," he says. "The kids are the future of Hawai‘i. We gotta use money in the right way like providing schools with more computers, better facilities, and better teachers. We need health insurance for all of Hawai‘i’s people."

Jerry’s passion extends to his feelings for visitors. “Go to every historical place,” he implores, “and learn the history of Hawai‘i. Get to see how talented, spiritual, and creative the Hawaiian people were and still are. If you only see Hawai‘i as ‘paradise,’ you don’t really see Hawai‘i at all.”

The Bishop Museum and ‘Iolani Palace are great places to learn about Hawai‘i, Jerry believes. The museum is located at 1525 Bernice Street in Kalihi. It’s open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is $15.95 for adults, $12.95 for adults 65 and over, $12.95 for children (4-12), and children under 3 get in for free. 847-3511.

‘Iolani Palace is located at King and Richards Streets in downtown Honolulu. It’s open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Guided tours lasting 90 minutes cost $20 for adults and $5 for children (5-12). Children under 5 are not permitted to take the guided tour. Self-guided tours cost $6 for adults, $3 for children (5-12), and children under five get in for free. 538-1471.
Ask A Local’s Picks

Pu‘u O Mahuka Heiau

Although all that remains of Pu‘u O Mahuka is its stone-paved floor and rock walls, its lasting magnificence commands great reverence for the Hawaiian people’s history and culture. Designated as a Registered National Historic Landmark on August 21, 1935, Pu‘u O Mahuka served as a luakini heiau (sacrificial temple) for success in war until 1819 when the Hawaiian religion was abolished. Known as a place of creation and sacrifice, Pu‘u O Mahuka is a heiau where chiefesses gave birth, but it is also one of the few Hawaiian heiaus where human sacrifices are believed to have taken place.

Today, wild grasses grow in the heiau’s middle enclosure and the upper, or ceremonial, enclosure, although intact, is empty of the many buildings that were once used by the kahuna (priests) of ancient Hawai‘i.

While you walk around the stone wall now covered with lichens and moss, imagine a time when the heiau contained many wooden statues of the god Ku, buildings to hold sacred water, offerings of food, ceremonial objects, drums, and its lele (altar) where sacrifices were placed.

Take the H-2 to the North Shore and make a right onto Kamehameha Highway. Drive past Waimea Bay Beach Park and the Church of Saint Peter and Paul. Make a right at the Foodland onto Pupukea Road. Stay on Pupukea Road until you see the sign for the heiau on your right-hand side. Follow this road until it dead ends. Parking is free.
Kukaniloko Sacred Birthing Stones

Imagine you are a successful woman who can afford the finer things in life and you just happen to be in labor. When you reach the hospital and step into your reserved luxury hospital room, you gasp. Instead of a comfortable looking bed with crisp white linens, fluffy pillows, and fuzzy cotton blankets you find a long, semi-rectangular boulder complete with dirt. Your anesthesiologist cannot be found. No epidural for you. A nightmare, perhaps? For many it would be.

Beginning in the 12th century, pregnant Hawaiian women of chiefly or royal rank who lived on O‘ahu were brought to an outcropping of more than 80 boulders in Wahiawa to give birth to future ali‘i (chiefs). The boulders are thought to have been used until sometime in the 17th century. Highly consecrated, Kukaniloko is one of the most important places in all of Hawai‘i. According to a plaque at the site, “it is said that Wahiawa (place of rumbling) was where thunderstorms, the voices of the ancestral gods, welcomed an offspring of divine rank. Being the center of the island, Kukaniloko was also symbolic of the pīko (navel cord) and thus, birth. Birth at Kukaniloko assured a child high-ranking status and the privileges of this status. It also maintained the purity of the royal lineages which gave chiefs their godly status and the right to be leaders.”

The site induces a sense of awe and reverence. Such an ancient place beckons us to look inside ourselves and into our own histories. Kukaniloko symbolizes procreation and the magnificence of life. It is a reminder of how ancient, eternal, and beautiful life is.
Take the H-2 and get off at the Wahiawa exit. Drive through town and go over a small bridge. At the next traffic light make a left. It will appear as though you are driving into an empty field with just a few trees clumped together. When the dirt road ends park your car. The sacred stones will be straight ahead.

Offerings
ASK A LOCAL: AN UNCONVENTIONAL GUIDE TO THE ISLAND OF O'AHU

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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I would like to thank Dr. Valerie Wayne for her constant support and guidance, Randall Honaker for his technical assistance, and my mother for assisting me in my research.
someone who was born on O'ahu trivializes the issue and is consequently avoided here.

For most people, however, a local is someone who has a deep knowledge of the Hawaiian Islands. For the purpose of this guide, a local is someone who has gained knowledge of O'ahu through extended immersion in the culture. People who were born on the island as well as people who were not born there are included because they all have knowledge and opinions to share with you so that you may learn more about O'ahu.

You can also get a head start on your O'ahu vacation by learning a bit about the island before arriving. Being a knowledgeable traveler often leads to a better vacation. Below you will find some very important information on Hawai'i and the island of O'ahu that is often omitted from other guidebooks and tourist brochures. Most importantly, however, while you are visiting O'ahu be sure to explore the entire island and learn as much as you can about Hawaiian culture. As Jerry Keahi Ka'ehu explains later in this guide, “if you only see Hawai'i as ‘paradise,’ you don’t really see Hawai'i at all.”

Hawai'i Was Once a Kingdom

In 1893 the Kingdom of Hawai'i was illegally overthrown by the United States. The ruler of Hawai'i at the time, Queen Lilioukalani, was imprisoned, and, as Hawaiians lost their own government, the course of Hawaiian history was altered forever. In the years that followed, Hawaiians were further stripped of their land, their language, and their culture, including the hula. Their identity as an indigenous population began to deteriorate as a result of the newcomers.

Something began to happen in the 1970s, however, that brought Hawaiian culture back to the forefront. The Hawaiian Renaissance grew out of a yearning by many to recover Hawaiian culture through hula, traditional agriculture such as taro farming,
music, the Hawaiian language, Pidgin (Hawai‘i Creole) English, voyaging, crafts, and politics. The effects of the Hawaiian Renaissance are still visible today: the Merrie Monarch Festival continues to celebrate hula; Hawaiian music, both traditional and contemporary, is popular; the Hawaiian language has seen an increase in study and usage; traditional Polynesian voyaging is practiced; literature written by authors born in the islands is being produced at a steady rate; and the sovereignty movement is gaining a broader-based support.

Hawai‘i Is Ethnically Diverse

Hawai‘i’s population is comprised of many different ethnicities. According to the 2000 census, Hawai‘i’s population demographic is broken up as follows: 24.3% white, 16.7% Japanese, 14.1% Filipino, 6.6% Native Hawaiian, 4.7% Chinese, 2.5% Puerto Rican, 1.9% Korean, 1.8% black, 1.6% Mexican, 1.3% Samoan, 0.6% Vietnamese, 0.3% American Indian and Alaskan Native, 0.1% Cuban, and 0.1% Chamorro (the indigenous people of Guam). These statistics are a simple overview of a diverse and complex population. The history of the Hawaiian Islands allowed for people from various places around the globe to meet and begin relationships that resulted in this ethnically diverse culture. Immigrants came, among other reasons, to work the sugar plantations, to occupy jobs created by the increased military presence, and to live in a place they had discovered through tourism. The rich cultural diversity that has resulted from this marriage of different ethnicities is integral to Hawai‘i’s past, present, and future. As beautiful as this diversity is, however, Native Hawaiians, as shown above, make up less than 7% of the population. Moreover, the consequences of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i are
still being felt today through the poverty, health problems, and dispossession experienced by many members of the Hawaiian community.

**O'ahu Is a Foodie’s Delight**

Before visiting O'ahu there is no need for you to fill up on airport food in anticipation of dull or tasteless island meal choices. For decades the island has had a variety of delicious cuisines: Hawaiian, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Italian, Japanese, and French, to name just a few. Recently, however, O'ahu has also become the center of an exciting culinary explosion. Hawaiian Fusion Cuisine, created by Roy Yamaguchi, is a blend of fresh local ingredients and cooking techniques native to Europe. Pacific Rim Cuisine, which is similar to Hawaiian Fusion Cuisine, is available at many of the island’s restaurants. Hawaiian Regional Cuisine, which was created in the early 1990s by a dozen island chefs including Sam Choy and Alan Wong, is yet another reason you should explore O'ahu’s exhilarating restaurant scene.

**You Can Leave Your Beach Tags at Home**

Although it is surprising to many people familiar with the dozens of teenagers who comb the shorelines of the continental United States in search of beach tag violators, all beaches on O'ahu are free and open to the public with the exception of beaches located on military bases. Due to a state shoreline access law, all nonmilitary beaches, including those situated on the property of the island’s upscale resorts, must be accessible to the public. Until very recently, a housing subdivision called Iroquois Point was an anomaly as it was off limits to the public because it technically exists on Navy property even though it is being leased by a private company. Public disapproval of the terms of the lease helped pressure the company to grant access.
The Military Is Present on O’ahu

The military presence on O’ahu is undeniable. All four branches of the Department of Defense—Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines—have bases on the island, and the Department of Homeland Security is represented through the United States Coast Guard as well. According to a 2002 figure released by the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, there are close to 82,000 military and family members who call O’ahu home. On an island of approximately 906,000 people, the military makes up about nine percent of the population. Unwelcome by some, but embraced by others, the military, according to Hawai’i’s Chamber of Commerce, provides the state with its second major source of revenue, with tourism being the first.

A Final Note

The information contained herein is current as of 2002 because the people consulted for this guide were interviewed between 2001 and 2002. In the six years that have passed between then and now, many changes have taken place on O’ahu. It is my hope and intention, however, that the concept of this guide will be as useful and interesting as the knowledge shared with you by the residents and locals of O’ahu.