



Hawaii

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HISTORY



The Hawaiian Islands are of volcanic origin. They were created by a so-called hot spot on the ocean floor about 70-million years-ago. The oldest Hawaiian island is Kure Atoll and the youngest one is the Big Island of Hawaii, which rose to the surface about one-million years-ago.

In the Beginning

It is believed that the first settlers, who were originally from the Marquesas Islands, arrived in Hawaii some time around the 4th or 5th century AD. They crossed 2,500-miles of ocean in double-hulled voyaging canoes and used the stars to guide them. With them they brought some crops, such as taro and breadfruit, as well as animals. Archaeologists believe that a second wave of Polynesian voyagers arrived around 1000 AD, who were from Tahiti.

King Kamehameha the Great

King Kamehameha the Great (1758–1819) was Hawaii's most powerful king. Born and raised on the Big Island of Hawaii, Kamehameha participated in numerous battles in his early years. After he became ruler of the Big Island, his next goal was to rule all the other islands as well. In 1795 his warriors arrived on Maui, Lanai, Molokai and Oahu and later Kauai, defeating the local rulers of these islands. In that year Kamehameha conquered and unified the Hawaiian Islands. Shortly after his death, the kapu system was abolished.

Pearl Harbor and World War II

When World War II began, the United States did not join in the fighting. The hope was that the U.S. could stay out of the war. However on December 7, 1941, a surprise attack was launched on Oahu's Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Many U.S. ships were sunk including the USS Arizona and around 2,500 people were killed, launching the United States of America into WWII. Four years later, Japan unconditionally surrendered to USS Battleship Missouri and in 1959, Hawaii officially became the 50th state of America.



MONEY



As Hawaii is a state of the USA, the official currency used in Hawaii is the U.S Dollar (USD). This is represented by the dollar symbol (\$). The USD comes in 18 denominations of coins and bills. There are six denominations in coins; the penny (one-cent), the nickel (five-cents), the dime (10-cents), the quarter (25-cents), the half dollar (50-cents) and the dollar (100-cents). While there are 12 denominations of bills that are technically considered legal tender, only seven are still being printed. The seven bills in print are: \$1, \$2, \$5, \$20, \$50 and \$100.

Credit Cards

Credit cards are the most widely used form of payment in Hawaii and include Visa (Barclaycard in Britain), MasterCard (EuroCard in Europe, Access in Britain, Chargex in Canada), American Express, Diners Club, and Discover. They also provide a convenient record of all your expenses and offer relatively good exchange rates. You can withdraw cash advances from your credit cards at banks or ATMs, but high fees make credit card cash advances a pricey way to get cash.

Debit Cards

ATM cards with major credit card backing, known as debit cards, are now a commonly acceptable form of payment in most stores and restaurants. Debit cards draw money directly from your checking account. Some stores enable you to receive cash back on your debit-card purchases as well. The same is true at most U.S. post offices.



Visitors from the USA

Tipping is standard practice in Hawaii, and it's a social faux pas if you fail to do so. In New Zealand, the minimum wage is around \$15.75 per hour. In the USA, minimum wage is at about \$11 per hour (US\$7.25), but, legally employers are allowed to lower their wage to as little as US\$2.13 per hour. Therefore, tipping substantially supplements workers income.

ATM

The easiest and best way to get cash away from home is from an ATM (automated teller machine), sometimes referred to as a "cash machine," or "cashpoint." The Cirrus (tel. 800/424-7787; www.mastercard.com) and PLUS (tel. 800/843-7587; www.visa.com) networks span Oahu: ATMs are everywhere in Hawaii, at banks, supermarkets, Longs Drugs, and Honolulu International Airport, and in some resorts and shopping centers. Check your bank's website for exact locations.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

Generally speaking, the state of Hawaii is tropical, but the temperature and climate can vary dramatically depending on where you are located on a particular island. Most of Hawaii has only two seasons – summer, from May to October, and winter, from November to April. Temperatures at sea level in Hawaii range from highs of 85-90°F (29-32°C) in the summer to 79-83°F (26-28°C) in the winter. The temperature rarely rises above 90°F (32°C) or drop below 60°F (16°C) except at higher altitudes.

Electricity

On Hawaii the power plugs and sockets are of type A and B. The standard voltage is 120-V and the standard frequency is 60-Hz.



Technology & Communication

Most accommodations, many coffee shops and a few bars, restaurants and other businesses offer public WiFi hotspots (sometimes free only for paying customers). In-room internet access at Hawaii's hotels is increasingly wireless, not wired. Cities and larger towns may have cyber cafes or business centers like FedEx Office offering pay-as-you-go internet terminals (typically \$12 to \$20 per-hour) and sometimes WiFi (free or fee-based). Hawaii's public libraries provide free internet access via computer terminals if you get a temporary non-resident library card (\$10). A few library branches also offer free WiFi (library card and PIN required). International travelers need a multiband GSM phone in order to make calls in the USA. With an unlocked multiband phone, popping in a US prepaid rechargeable SIM card is usually cheaper than using your own network. SIM cards are available at any telecommunications or electronics store. If your phone doesn't work in the USA, these stores also sell inexpensive prepaid phones, including some airtime. Otherwise, check with your service provider about using your mobile phone in Hawaii. Among US providers, Verizon has the most extensive network. Cellular coverage is best on O'ahu, but sometimes spotty outside major towns (especially on Neighbor Islands) and nonexistent in many rural areas, including on hiking trails and at remote beaches.

Infrastructure & Transport

The Department Of Tourism currently provides, operates, and maintains eleven (11) commercial service airports; four (4) general aviation airports; nine (9) commercial harbors; and two thousand four hundred fifty (2,450) lane miles of highway. Four of the five major airports now serve domestic overseas carriers. We have transportation facilities and infrastructure on all of the six major islands.



In Case Of An Emergency

The Police Department's emergency 911 number is text telephone accessible. The Department's non-emergency number, 935-3311, is also text telephone accessible, although it is recommended that deaf and hearing impaired persons use the 911 number for non-emergency as well as emergency calls.

Language

The Hawaiian language was developed from an unknown South Pacific Polynesian language closely resembling regional languages like Tahitian, Marquesan and Samoan. Named after the largest island in the archipelago, Hawaiian is the native tongue of Hawaii and was established by King Kamehameha III in 1839. Despite its history and breadth (once spoken by 500,000 people), the Hawaiian language has been almost completely taken over by English. In fact, on 6 of the 7 islands of Hawaii, the number of Hawaiian native speakers is less than 0.1% of the national population. Much of the disappearance of Hawaii language can be attributed to its acquisition by the USA in 1959, becoming America's 50th state.



LGBT Travel

Hawaii's tourism industry fuels the local economy, so locals are accustomed to all types of visitors. Even among local crowds, however, people tend to be open-minded and relaxed in Hawaii, so LGBTQ travelers are unlikely to face problems. Same sex marriage was legalized in Hawaii in 2013 and Hawaii has become increasingly attractive as a destination for gay travelers.

Religion

About half of Hawaii's current population practices a form of Christianity. Catholics make up the highest percentage of Christians, but Protestants aren't far behind. Almost any denomination which exists can be found here, as well as a fair number of non-denominational churches. There's even a Mennonite church, with the state's smallest congregation with less than 100 members.

With Hawaii's large Asian population, religions from the Far East play an important role, too. Buddhism has the largest following among these religions, but Shinto, Hinduism, and other spiritual practices from the region can be found on the islands as well.

A surprisingly large number of Mormons live in Hawaii. Jehovah's Witnesses also represent a notable percentage. Several synagogues serve Hawaii's relatively small Jewish population, while one mosque serves a smaller Muslim following. A few pagan groups also exist;



Getting There

For the most part, your options are pretty limited on how you get to Hawaii. You can come by boat or by air, and that's just about it. While airliners can take just hours to get to Hawaii from just about any other point on the globe, a cruise liner may take anywhere from five days to weeks. Perhaps the most popular mode of travel for those going to the Hawaiian Islands for a vacation is to travel by plane. Because many major international airlines offer trips to Hawaii, it's easy to find a flight to the islands from practically any other international airport. Aside from international airliners, many of the United States domestic airlines have flights going to Hawaii. Most of the flights heading into and out of Hawaii are handled by the major international airport of the state, Honolulu International Airport. It also handles flights to and from most of the domestic airports on the other islands.

Driving

Driving in Hawaii is relatively straightforward as roads are well signed and in good condition, particularly on the island of Oahu. Home to the tourist mecca of Honolulu, Oahu's roads are the busiest and as such you'll find several freeways here as well as the most developed roads in Hawaii. Just like in mainland America, Hawaiians drive on the right hand side of the road and speed limits are expressed in miles-per-hour.

Driving in Hawaii can be done by tourists as long as you have a valid International driver's license or a foreign driver's license written in English. Cars and motorbikes can be hired from a number of reputable rental agencies for around US\$28-\$35 a day and are usually between 5 and 10-years old. Extended periods of rental also generally attract a discount so don't be afraid to rent for the entire time of your holiday. Petrol does tend to be a bit more expensive. Incidentally, car hire is in rather high demand in Hawaii so if you're thinking of renting a car during your holiday you should make arrangements well in advance. As a guest in Hawaii, you should observe all the road rules and local customs and drive with caution and courtesy. For example, the Hawaiians are a laid back people and as such, are also quite calm on the roads.

Honking your horn is considered exceptionally rude by the local people, unless it is absolutely necessary for safety's sake.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

The culture and tradition of Hawaii are actually reflections of the land's innate beauty. The graceful Hawaiian dances, the meaningful and religious songs, and the various interesting art forms seem to be created with only one purpose, and that is to serve as instruments through which the beauty and the mystery of the place is expressed. The traditional dance of Hawaii are as vibrant as the rolling waves in its beaches.

The moves are actually expressions of what Hawaii is, a land of beauty, grace, and spirituality. Music has also grown to be a familiar and popular part of Hawaiian culture. Ever evolving from a beginning of simple drum beats and chants, music today is filled with a multitude of artists and genres. Another facet of the culture lies in legends. Ancient Hawaiians were known to be storytellers. Legends were a way of documenting history, knowledge, facts and beliefs from generation to generation. Some of the more popular legends include the story of the demi-God Maui, who pulled the island up from the bottom of the sea, the wicked, deceptive and jealous volcano goddess Pele and her snow god sister Poliahu. There are legends about the Kumulipo, which tell about the creation of the Hawaiian Islands and others that tell fishing stories about the shark gods. The Hawaiian culture also has many superstitions and omens, which are widely known and still observed today. Rain and rainbows are considered blessings from the gods.

Bucket List

Hike Chinaman's Hat

Doors off helicopter flight

Try stand up paddle board yoga

Leap into the ocean at China Walls

Get sprayed by Halona Blowhole

Skydive on the North Shore

Jump off the plank at Alan davis

Surf at world famous Waikiki beach

Family Travel Highlights

Ziplining at Kualoa Ranch

Enjoy Dole Whip at the Dole Plantation

Swim with Seals and Turtles at Poipu Beach

Walk through a tunnel surrounded by manta rays and sharks

Road Trip To The North Shore

Trip to Ala Moana shopping centre

Tourism Authority

The Hawaii Tourism Authority is the state agency charged with managing tourism for the benefit of the Hawaiian Islands. From the Maemae tool kit to the AutoCorrect tool, HTA provides a variety of resources to help everyone improve and enhance their knowledge about the Hawaiian Islands.



Foods To Try

Poi : A staple and traditional filler starch dish

Laulau : Made with pork wrapped in layers of taro leaves

Kalua pig : Pork dish cooked in an underground oven

Poke : bite sized hearty fish cubes

All-Natural Shave Ice : Hawaii iconic frozen treat

Saimin : an iteration of a Chinese egg-noodle soup

Taro Ko Farm Chips : uala(sweet potato) and potato chips

Drinks To Try

Mai tai

Blue Hawaii

Chi chi

Hawaiian Lemonade

Hawaiian Island Surfer



Photography Hot Spots

Laniakea Beach

Sunset Beach

Spitting Caves

Pali Lookout

Haleiwa Street Photography

Valley of the Temples

Kaena Point

Maunawili Falls

Souvenirs To Buy

Hawaiian Shirt

Hawaiian Heirloom Jewelry

Hawaiian Quilting

Island Jewelry

Koa Wood

Lauhala

Ukulele





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