

HOT DAYS, SIZZLING NIGHTS

MAUI — SUNRISE TO SUNSET
AND BEYOND

BY JUDI ROTHENBERG

From dawn to dusk and well into the night, Maui is the destination for wonderfully lazy days, low-key adventure, heart pounding thrills and culinary treats. Whether you greet the day watching the glorious sunrise with yoga on the beach or biking down the Haleakala volcano, you're sure to find an activity all day long that fits your mood.

You can spend the afternoon having high tea amid a blooming lavender field, go whale watching or try something a little more challenging, like ziplining or surfing. At day's end, treat yourself to a soothing spa treatment, a farm-to-table dinner or an authentic luau.

And, of course, don't forget to reserve some time to lounge on the beach with a tropical drink in hand.

LOW-KEY ADVENTURE

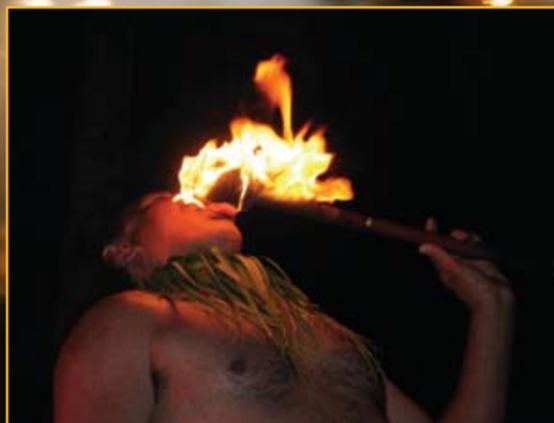
WHALE WATCHING

Getting a glimpse of a "breaching" humpback whale is one of the most sought-after experiences in Maui. While operators can't guarantee you will see a breach — a whale propelling itself out of the water — you'll be able to view these magnificent creatures at the surface, see the vapor from their blow holes and playfully slap their tails. Trips are on all sorts of vessels, from rafts to luxury cruisers. We boarded one of Trilogy Excursion's catamarans from Ka'anapali Beach and tracked a mother and calf. Keep in mind: Peak season is mid-January to mid-April. sailtrilogy.com, 1.888.225.MAUI

UPCOUNTRY

A leisurely drive through Upcountry, the area surrounding Haleakala Crater, is full of wonderful places to visit. Start in the cowboy town turned artists' colony, **Makawao**, and explore quaint shops, galleries and restaurants. At the **Surfing Goat Dairy** in Kula,

Far left, Humuhumunukunauapua 'a restaurant, Grand Wailea; insets, The Waiale Luau, Westin Maui Resort and Spa. Inset photos/Richard Rothenberg





Alii Kula Lavender Farm

you can enjoy homemade goat cheese samples, take a tour and milk a goat. Nearby, the **Alii Kula Lavender Farm** welcomes visitors to fragrant blooming fields with a variety of tours (some need reservations) and should be capped off with delicious lavender tea and lavender scones. A small gift shop offers a lovely array of goods, including body products and gourmet food items made with lavender. From here, you can wind your way up to the top of the world's largest dormant volcano, the **Haleakala Crater** (10,023 feet above sea level) and enjoy a spectacular sunset. makawaotowncenter.com; surfinggoatdairy.com, 808.878.2870; aklmaui.com, 808.878.3004; nps.gov/hale/planyourvisit

GOLF

If a vacation is not a vacation without a round of golf, Maui has 17 courses to satisfy all types of golfers. Serious players will enjoy tackling the **Plantation Course** at Kapalua, which is home to the season-opening event of the PGA Tour. The course also has an award-winning restaurant, The Plantation House, which features Hawaiian-Mediterranean cuisine with panoramic ocean views.

The **Emerald Course** in Wailea, voted one of the best new courses by Golf Magazine and Golf Digest and considered a very women-friendly course, is lush with a huge variety of tropical flowers. Golfers can tailor the course to their level of play by choosing from four to six tee boxes at each hole. cms.kapalua.com, 808.669.6299; theplantationhouse.com; waileagolf.com, 888.328.MAUI

HEART-POUNDING THRILLS

ZIPLINING

Skyline Eco Adventures will set you up in Indiana Jones-style gear and harnesses and so you can sail over tree tops and waterfalls. No special physical ability is needed, just a willing-

ness to jump off a cliff. Don't worry, you start out low and your guides help you conquer your fear with patience and humor. Two locations, Ka'anapali (eight ziplines, some over streams and waterfalls) and Haleakala (five ziplines and a swinging bridge). zipline.com, 808.878.8400



HANA BY HARLEY

What better way to experience the twists and turns on the legendary **Road to Hana** than on the back of a Harley? Recommended for experienced riders only — the 52-mile stretch from Kahului is very narrow, has 620 curves and passes over 59 bridges, 46 of which are one-laners. If this sounds a little too scary, you can also experience the jagged lava coastline, scenic ocean vistas and natural waterfalls by car or tour bus. EagleRider Motorcycle Rentals, eaglerider.com, 808.662.4877; islandriders.com, 808.661.9966, hanamaui.com

HALEAKALA VOLCANO DOWNHILL BIKE RIDE

A 28-mile downhill ride that starts at the 6,700 foot level of the volcano. Although you can do this on your own, it's highly recommended to join an organized tour. The sunrise journey is the most popular trip and includes a guide and hotel pickup. adventuremaui.com, 800.876.7777

ENCHANTING EVENINGS

RELAX

Before heading out for the evening, schedule a treatment at **Grand Wailea's Spa Grande** (even if you're staying elsewhere). "Grande" is no misnomer. The elegant spa covers 50,000 square feet and is adorned with inlaid Italian marble, original artwork and Venetian chandeliers. Be sure to arrive an hour early to enjoy The Termé Wailea hydrotherapy circuit, a series of five specialty

baths with healing properties including moor mud, limu (seaweed), aromatherapy, tropical enzyme and a Hawaiian salt bath.

Take a soak in the Roman whirlpool followed by a cold plunge or luxuriate beneath a cascading waterfall shower. Guests are also treated to a complimentary loofah scrub before their spa treatments. grandwailea.com, 808.875.1234

ENTERTAINMENT

What better way to immerse yourself in the culture and customs of Polynesia than at a luau? **The Waiale Luau**, presented oceanside at the Westin in Ka'anapali Beach, presents a colorful celebration of songs and dances from Samoa, Tahiti, Fiji and Tonga. Traditional Hawaiian fare — from pupus to kalua pua'a (pork) — is brought to the table and served family style. The grand finale is a spectacle of fire-knife dancers who toss flaming swords to each other as casually as frisbees. westinmaui.com/dining/waiale

GOURMET DINNERS

MAMA'S FISH HOUSE, PAIA

Wind your way down to this converted beach house nestled in a coconut grove along a secluded beach and you half expect Gilligan to pop out. The menu is printed daily and not only tells you where the fish is from, but who caught it! Whether you choose ono caught by "Shawn Conners trolling in the Alenuihaha Channel" or "opakapaka caught by Kelly Becker bottom fishing near Molokai," you are sure to enjoy the freshest seafood possible, prepared in wonderful style. mamasfishhouse.com, 808.579.8488

HUMUHUMUNUKUNUKAUAPUA'A, GRAND WAILEA

No, it's not a typo, Humuhumunukunukauapua'a is also the name of Hawaii's state fish and loosely translated means "fish with a snout like a pig." The open-air dining room sits beneath a thatched roof and floats on a saltwater lagoon stocked with tropical fish. Pacific Rim cuisine includes the delicious starter of Japanese Hamachi Carpaccio served with Hawaiian Black Salt, Yuzu, Chili and Celery Ginger Granite and entrees like

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LAHAINA GRILL, LAHAINA



Seared ahi tuna and foie gras

Dedicated foodies will not want to miss the taste temptations conjured up by chef/owner Jurg Munch. Signature dishes include a pairing of seared ahi tuna and foie gras with fresh fig compote and Maui onion duck demi-glace (yes, it's as good as it sounds and be sure to ask sommelier, Richard Olson III to recommend an ice wine to accompany it) and a center cut veal chop with pommeroy mustard, wild mushrooms and truffle risotto. lahainagrill.com, 808.667.5117

HEAVENLY VIEW SUNSET DINNER, WESTIN

No restaurant can match the romance of a champagne dinner for two served in a private cabana overlooking the Pacific. The four-course meal replete with butler service is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and perfect for celebrating an anniversary, whether it's a week or 50 years. Contact the Westin's "Director of Romance," westinmaui.com

WHERE TO STAY

Maui lies 80 miles east of Oahu and is almost 50 miles long. The major hotels and resorts fan out along the western and southern shores and are easily accessed from a modern two-lane highway. A few smaller inns are dotted along the east and north coast, where driving is a bit more rugged.

SOUTH MAUI



Spa Grande, Grand Wailea

Apple has meetings here, Oprah loves it and you will too! **The Grand Wailea Resort Hotel and Spa** is pure luxury and a lot of fun. From the moment you're welcomed with an orchid lei, you sense the attention to detail. The luxe lobby is

studded with nine Botero sculptures (part of the \$30 million art collection) and there's a stable of concierge desks waiting to help you plan your activities. The Grand Wailea Resort Hotel and Spa is spread out on 40 acres of prime beachfront property and is lavishly landscaped with lush tropical vegetation and koi ponds. Guest rooms are elegantly appointed with tropical decor and private lanais.

The heart of the hotel — and the fun — is the amazing assortment of pools and water features. From Baby Beach, a shallow pool with a sandy bottom, to slides, waterfalls, grottos and a lazy river,

there's a way to keep the whole family cool. The Wailea Canyon activity pool also has a whitewater rapids slide, a Tarzan Pool with rope swing, the world's only water elevator, three whirlpool tubs and a swim-up bar. The adults-only Hibiscus Pool is for those seeking peace and quiet. If you can tear yourself away from the pools, the beach beckons with a multitude of activities as well as golf, tennis, Camp Grande (for kids five to 12), a state-of-the-art fitness center and the incredible Spa Grande (see page 24) grandwailea.com

WEST MAUI



Westin Maui Resort and Spa

The golden sands of Ka'anapali Beach started the first wave of tourism to Maui and remains a favorite destination because of its proximity to premier snorkeling, the old town of Lahaina and a myriad of beach activities. Settle in at the **Westin Maui Resort and Spa** and delight in quick access to the beach and the 87,000-square-foot aquatic playground that's the heart of the resort. Snorkeling, scuba diving, sailing and whale watching excursions are all offered on premises.

Other diversions include fitness classes, yoga on the beach, model canoe building, lei making and even Wii under the stars. The spa offers a variety of treatments from the Lau Lima "many fingers" massage (two therapists work in unison) to the 7th Heaven Pure Facial that clarifies your skin with fruit enzymes while your hands are cocooned in warmed lavender paraffin. Two championship golf courses, an 11-court tennis center and the Whalers Village shopping center are just a short walk away. The Westin Kids Club allows children to join a fully-supervised daily program. westinmaui.com

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