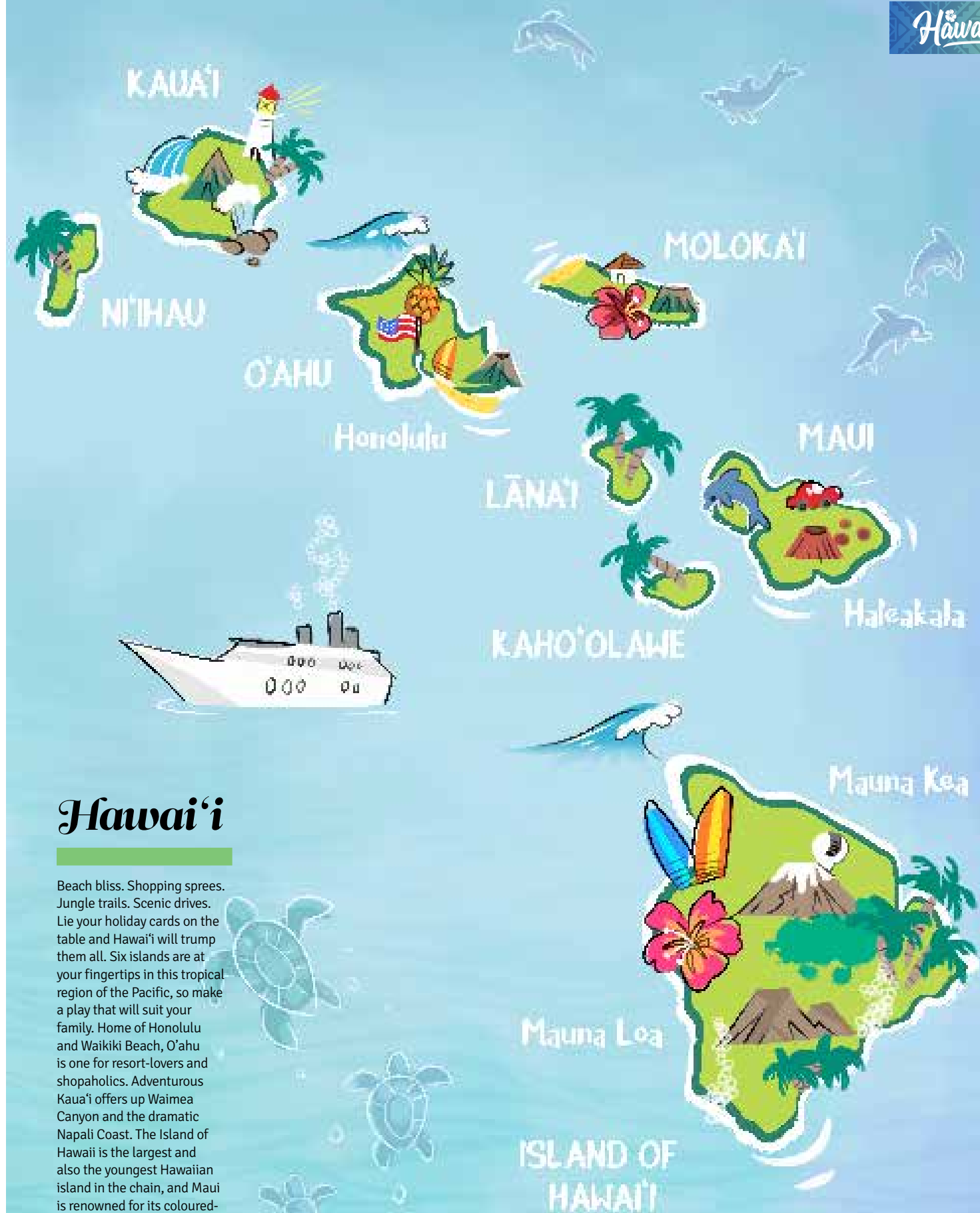


Hawaii

A FAMILY TRADITION

THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE IN THE WORLD THAT CAN
CATER TO ALL GENERATIONS' HOLIDAY INTERESTS

WORDS EMILY CHANTIRI



Hawai'i

Beach bliss. Shopping sprees. Jungle trails. Scenic drives. Lie your holiday cards on the table and Hawai'i will trump them all. Six islands are at your fingertips in this tropical region of the Pacific, so make a play that will suit your family. Home of Honolulu and Waikiki Beach, O'ahu is one for resort-lovers and shopaholics. Adventurous Kaua'i offers up Waimea Canyon and the dramatic Napali Coast. The Island of Hawaii is the largest and also the youngest Hawaiian island in the chain, and Maui is renowned for its coloured-sand beaches. Jump off the beaten track onto Molokai or Lanai for encounters with local tradition.



Waikiki Beach is inviting from every angle.

I have a confession: my family and I are addicted to Hawai'i. For the past decade we have been travelling there almost every year. We take our yearly Hawai'i holiday seriously and it can take months to organise, particularly when we can have anywhere up to 13 family members on one trip.

In 2018 we broke the record when not only was the usual cast of family members there, but another two families as well; friends of my siblings joined in too. Word about the Chantiri family holiday had spread.

Hawai'i has proven time and again to be a terrific family holiday for each member of my extended family, from in-laws to babies. I fell in love with Hawai'i almost 20 years ago, when my sons were 6 and 2; watching them experiencing this beach-world has been etched in my memory. Now, they are young men in their 20s, and what makes my heart swell is the fact that Hawai'i is still a destination they are willing to visit on a family holiday. Anyone with teens or young adult children knows how challenging it can be to get them to join.

ALL ABOARD!

A Hawaiian convert, my sister Rhonda has travelled to Hawai'i more times than she can remember, and is our official family organiser.

At the beginning of each year, planning for Hawai'i goes a little like this: emails are sent out to see who's in. Next, we keep our eyes out for the best flights and then lock in flights to coincide with each other. Normally we travel around June or July, although one year we travelled in March to celebrate Rhonda's birthday (Hawai'i Four-0).

As a large group, we try as much as possible to book activities beforehand. There is an understanding among us to remember we are on island time, as it is the ideal place for chilling out as much as it is for family activities. And chilling out is always guaranteed.



Emily with sister Leila at Buho Cantina.



Dad and son fun time in the sea.



EATING OUT

Eating out American-style is always fun. Get used to large servings, regardless of whether it's a cup of coffee or a steak. One of the benefits of eating out is that most restaurants accept split bills – a blessing when several families, like mine, dine together and we don't have the tedious chore of who had what. Here are some of our favourites places to have a feed. We usually book in advance, weeks before we arrive, so we are assured of a table.

BUHO CANTINA

Mexican-themed restaurant with large tables, and, again, split bills make dining here so easy. They have a kids' menu as well as some authentic Mexican meals that you can only find in the USA. I went for the fish tacos served on a soft taco and full of flavor and spices. Cool music adds to the Latin vibe.

DUKE'S

By far the most famous of the island's restaurants is Duke's, named after Hawai'i's famed surfer. Situated on the beach with views across Waikiki, the setting for dinner is ideal. While it's a little on the expensive side, an ocean-view meal is worth experiencing for one night. At dinner we are serenaded by some Hawai'ian ladies who actually met the Duke. These lovely old-timers in Hawai'ian dress sang songs with their ukuleles. They take requests, so I asked for 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' and the cute Hawai'ian Christmas song 'Mele Kalikimaka'. We all joined in with

them; while ahead, I can see the tranquil view, complete with calming sea breezes and swaying palm trees. Duke's is famous for its Hula Pie – do not leave the premises without trying it!

HARD ROCK

While Hard Rock offers pretty standard menu, the venue itself has plenty on offer. Music and memorabilia from decades past create a great atmosphere for a dinner, and, again, cater for large groups. Going to a Hard Rock always feels like a pilgrimage, a desire that needs to be filled.

THE CHEESECAKE FACTORY

Oh, gosh, where do I start here? Firstly, the name is deceiving in that it's not a factory, it's a restaurant right in the heart of Kalakaua Avenue. The list of 30-plus cheesecakes is overwhelming (in the best way) – some of our favourites include Fresh Banana Cream, Reece's Peanut Butter Chocolate, Salted Caramel, Coffee & Cream Chocolate Supreme and Oreo Dream Extreme. This eatery not only offers cakes, but has a to-die-for cobb salad, out-of-this-world fish tacos, Mexican delights and burgers.

If you're not up for restaurant dining, there are many other options on Kalakaua Avenue and beyond, such as bakeries, supermarkets, noodles and famous poke, and the street food and restaurants in the International Market Place are plentiful.



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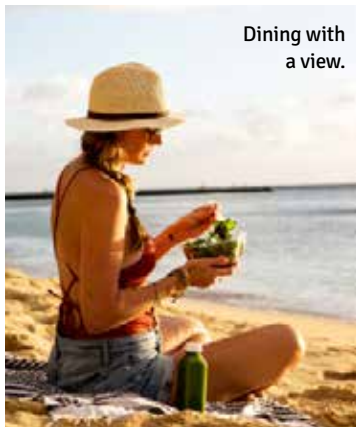
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There's no place like home. Away from home.

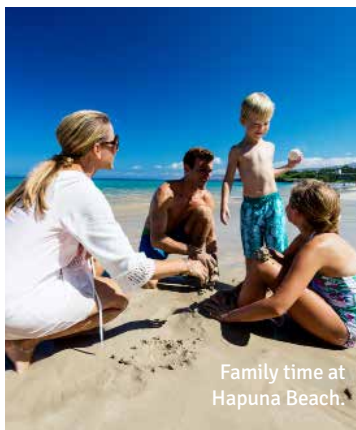
Honua Kai Resort & Spa on Maui's Kaaupali North Beach is known for its incredibly spacious studios, one, two and three-bedroom suites with all the comforts of home. A full gourmet kitchen, in-room washer/dryer. Large lanai (balcony). And a private bath in each room. But unlike your home, there's a 3-acre aquatic playground with towel service. A luxurious spa. Housekeeping every other day. And assistance from the front desk or concierge is just a phone call away. If only home was this amazing.



A green sea turtle swims close to shore.



Dining with a view.



Family time at Hapuna Beach.

SAND, SUN AND FUN

Nothing is more gratifying than seeing Waikiki Beach after a few months of Sydney winter. Racing down to take in the ocean smell, sand and sun is usually our first port of call, then comes the challenge of who will be first to see a turtle. It is a wonderful treat to spot a turtle swimming in its natural home. They are easy to find, even on Waikiki. I've seen them swim past with ease, happily sharing the water. Over the years, the kids have loved seeing the turtles swim where they're playing, and the adults love it to. We have even seen an octopus swimming among the bounty of rainbow-coloured fish close to the shore, even a mother seal and her babe. One of the highlights of our family trip in 2017 was when my two young and very excited nephews grabbed their GoPros and captured some amazing close-up photos of turtles swimming near the beach. The kids beamed with pride showing off their marine biology photography.

This year, we hired two four-wheel-drive cars and headed to Waimea Bay, on the island's north shore. Along the road we hit a traffic jam. What? A traffic jam in Hawai'i? How could this be? We were frustrated with the logjam; we had, after all, left

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Enjoy ample room for friends and families travelling together, as each suite opens-up to a generous lanai with gorgeous views. Suites feature top-of-the-line appliances, washer and dryer, wireless Internet and flat-screen TVs. Housekeeping is provided every other day, as well as a full-service concierge.

On-property dining includes the casually elegant, oceanfront Duke's Beach House and 'Aina Gourmet Market, offering a relaxed environment for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.

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Experience a new **Golden Age of Waikiki** at the freshly reimagined Queen Kapi'olani Hotel. Choose from 315 newly transformed guest rooms, including 36 suites, with spectacular, unobstructed views of Kapi'olani Park, Diamond Head, Waikiki Beach, and infinity views of the Pacific Ocean.

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A FAMILY GETAWAY

The Queen Kapiolani Hotel is the perfect destination for family travel. A place with something for everyone.

Return to the golden age of Waikiki

Return to the golden age of Waikiki at the freshly reimagined Queen Kapiolani Hotel. Choose from 315 newly transformed guest rooms, including 36 suites, with spectacular, unobstructed views of Kapiolani Park, Diamond Head, and Waikiki Beach.

An entirely new QK

The Queen Kapiolani Hotel's \$35 million renovation plan, with significant property wide upgrades include the guest rooms and corridors, lobby and all other interior public spaces.

Taste & tech

Dine on fresh seafood at DECK., splash in the new pool, or catch up on emails for the afternoon with our free guest wi-fi as you relax on our poolside lounge chairs.

Shop or stop

Walk through the lobby and check out Hans' Kaimana Surf Shop for the latest

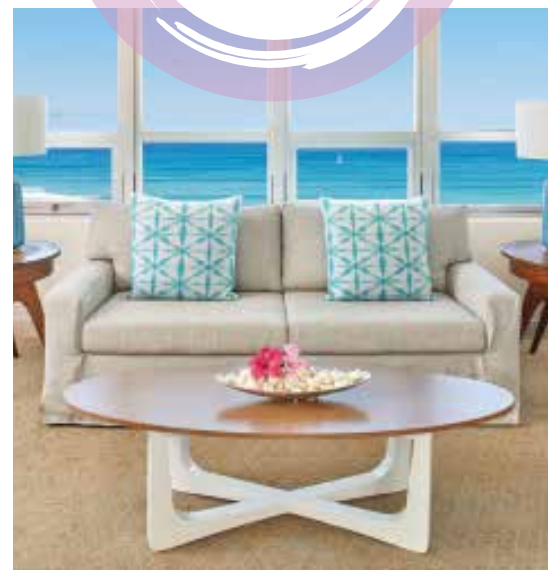
surf apparel, equipment and boards, or just grab a freshly pressed juice and sandwich from the lobby café, Knots Coffee Roasters.

Activities at your doorstep

Directly overlooking Queen Kapiolani Park and the best surf break in Waikiki, Queen Kapiolani rests on lands once reserved for Hawaiian royalty. You can walk through the 300-acre Kapiolani Park to reach Diamond Head's summit, ride a bike to Kahala, or turn right and dive into Honolulu's surf, shopping, and nightlife.

Something for everyone

The Queen Kapiolani Hotel is filled with onsite activities to make your family holiday memorable, such as on-site haku making, cocktail-making classes, coffee tasting, yoga, running classes, hula fitness and more. Immerse yourselves in Hawaiian culture and fun.
queenkapiolani.com



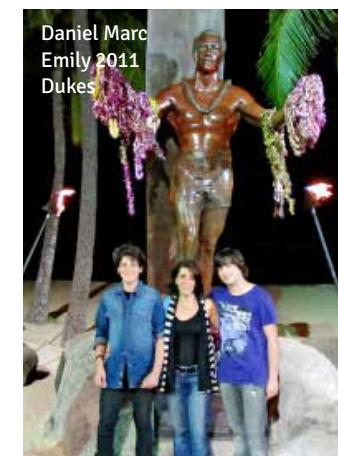
the big city to escape this sort of thing. Cars were backed up. There were people, mainly tourists, crowded along the coast. When we came close to see what was going on, our frustration dissipated into delight as we realised what the fuss was about: a family of happy turtles swimming and sunning themselves freely on the shoreline. The jam was worth it.

Then we reached Waimea. There was a race between young and old – a run across the piping-hot sand and into the crystal waters of the bay.

We also stopped in the old town of Hale'iwa, which proved to be a wonderful experience away from the main drag of Waikiki. I felt a deep respect, as it served to be a reminder of the history and culture that defines the Hawaiian people.

On several family trips we have climbed up the extinct Diamond Head volcano. The children all got a kick out of it, but some had to be piggybacked down by their parents.

This year we visited Dole Plantation and took on the world's largest maze, the aim was to see who would make it out first. We are still dreaming about the Pineapple Whip!



HAWAI'I'S OTHER FAMILY FRIENDLY ISLANDS



MAUI

I first visited Maui when I was newly married, and it's where I fell in love with the Hawaiian island. Friends who joined us this year spent 10 days on Maui with their three children. They hired a large home with ocean views and spent most of the time on the water. Activities include watching manta rays and sharks swim overhead at Maui Ocean Centre. A lot of the hotels offer many keiki (children's) programs so the little ones experience everything from lei-making to hula lessons. I find these tactile experiences the ones



KAUA'I

Wildlife and the natural environment are key attractions in Kaua'i. Learn about Kaua'i's fascinating natural environment at Kokee Natural History Museum in Kokee State Park. The kids might like to snorkel in the shallow tide pools at Poipu Beach on the south shore. Don't forget to catch a hula show at Smith Family Garden Luau. Another fun activity is a ride on the Kauai Plantation Railway at the Kilohana Estate, or head over to Lydgate State Park, where kids can climb and play on the wooden play structures.



MOLOKA'I

Head to Papohaku Beach, one of Hawaii's largest white-sand beaches, or tour a macadamia-nut farm. You can even send a real coconut from Hoolehua Post Office in Central Moloka'i – the kids would love that! Another one is a visit to Big Wind Kite Factory in Maunaloa.



THE ISLAND OF HAWAI'I

Think Jurassic Park and spend time exploring the lava fields at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park or the ancient petroglyphs carved into rocks at Kohala Coast. Or, go for a horseback ride and get a unique perspective of Lanai's Vast Terrain. Everyone loves exploring the tide pools of Hulopoe Bay. And while you're there it's worth a visit to the beautiful Liliuokalani Gardens.



SHOP 'TIL WE DROP

Another activity everyone looks forward to is midnight shopping at Walmart. My shopping-princess nieces are the first to jump up in excitement at the mere mention of the chain. Our Walmart experience happens at the end of a day, after we've had dinner – and, no, the late visit does nothing to deter the youngsters. Young and old grab trolleys to see who finishes first; we have an hour to get the shopping done. It's a fun activity and generally we stock up on American biscuits and treats we cannot find back home.

As for clothes, the long-standing Ala Moana Center is another shop-stop tradition, as is Waikale Premium Outlets, where the more upmarket designers sell their brands. This year we became fans of the US designer Tommy Hilfiger. My son Marc was the biggest convert; most of the clothes he purchased bear the designer's name. There is also Waikiki's main drag, Kalakaua Avenue, which has dozens of mainstream and individual shops for every age.

Hawai'i has given my family wonderful memories across the years and generations. At the end of the holiday, we always leave Hawai'i with a heavy heart. But what makes things a little easier is that there is always next year! **ft**



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Long Exposure city street



Keiki find shell while snorkeling

NEED TO KNOW



STAYING THERE

Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort is ideal for families, thanks to its proximity to the beach and Kalakaua Avenue. Plus it's home to famous Duke's and 'Hawai'i's best live-music venue', Blue Note Hawaii.



THE BEST TIME TO VISIT

Hawaii's dry season runs from April to October, so if you visit then, it's unlikely rain will ruin your plans for adventure.



BEST FOR KIDS AGED...

Kids of all ages and every family type.