



Big Island Visitors Bureau Media Contact:

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HAWAI‘I’S BIG ADVENTURE ISLAND

Land, sea and sky adventures await Big Island explorers

Hawai‘i’s Big Island – Outdoor adventure is practically everywhere you look on Hawai‘i Island. Hikers can walk in sand and snow and across a steaming volcanic crater—all in one day. Campers can pitch their tent on a beach, in a lush rainforest or on a high-desert lava plain where the rocks are actually purple. Snorkelers can float among sun-spangled reefs teeming with a rainbow of reef fish, and scuba divers can go deep for a meeting of the minds with manta rays—at night. And those who love the bird’s-eye view can board a helicopter or flight-seeing plane and cruise above this incredible landscape.

And all that is just for starters. Hawai‘i Island is overflowing with untold adventure stories.

Lava Love – Kīlauea, the world’s most active volcano, is home to **Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park**, (www.nps.gov/havo) which is such a natural and cultural treasure that it is **the only UNESCO World Heritage Site in the state**. More than 150 miles of trails take trekkers through lava tubes, fern rainforests, lava fields carved with ancient petroglyphs, and to remote campgrounds down by a rugged seashore or up the sometimes snowy summit of the world’s most massive mountain, 13,677-foot Maunaloa.

Kīlauea is also home to Pele, Hawai‘i’s tempestuous volcano goddess. Since March 2008, visitors to Halema‘uma‘u Crater at the summit of Kīlauea have stood in awe at the voluptuous plume of steam that suddenly appeared, rising in a seductive hula from a small (but growing) vent in the crater floor. And at night, sometimes an orange glow from the vent hints at what passionate Pele may bring. Park rangers at the crater-side Jaggar Museum are a fountain of knowledge about the eruption.

Meanwhile, miles away down-slope, molten lava continues to pour into the sea in a dramatic show of steamy fireworks. Visitors can watch it all at a viewing area that requires only a short stroll.

How long will the eruption last? No one knows but back up near the summit, at the park visitors’ center, rangers can tell explorers all about trails, campgrounds, guided hikes and Hawaiian cultural activities. Respected tour companies also offer interpretative drives and hikes through the park.

And down the road, visitors can explore the Kazumura lava tube system—the deepest, longest, tallest known lava tube system on Earth, on a guided trek.

Ocean Commotion – Hawai‘i Island has 266 miles of coastline—more than double that of any other Hawaiian Island—and there are many ways to explore the warm, clear ocean that surrounds us. Start with charter boats—traditional Hawaiian outriggers for paddling or sailing, cush catamarans for snorkeling and scuba expeditions to tucked-away bays, sturdy craft for close-up views of lava exploding into the sea, **even a real submarine** with very big windows. And don’t forget the stalwart yachts that cruise Kona’s famous deep-sea fishing grounds, hooking some of the world’s most spectacular fighting fish. Adventurers can also rent kayaks to discover hidden coves on their own for snorkeling and secluded picnics.

But you don’t need a boat to enjoy the ocean around Hawai‘i Island.

Surfing (*he‘e nalu*) was invented by Hawaiians, and the Big Island **surf breaks are so treasured** that songs and chants have been written about them. Surf lessons are a perfect way to learn where to go and what to do. Two local favorites are Honoli‘i Beach Park outside of Hilo, and Kahalu‘u Beach Park just south of Kailua Village.

Scuba guides will lead newbies or old salts out into the sparkling blue right from shore along the Kona and Kohala coasts, swirling through arches and caves, racing green sea turtles and flying weightless underwater. Or just **put on your mask and snorkel** and float in the shallows at one of the many beaches around the island where families love to gather. Or don’t even get your face wet—tip-toe among the tidepools and see a whole miniature world you never knew existed.

Star Struck – The ocean is pretty deep, but not compared to the heavens. At the 13,796-foot summit of Maunakea stand the planet’s most powerful astronomical observatories. From here, telescopes peer billions of light-years into the universe. Before going to the summit, cosmos-oriented dreamers will want to stop at the 9,300-foot visitors’ center and **peer through portable telescopes** to the rings of Saturn and beyond. Then they can drive or take a tour to the summit, be dazzled by a sky shimmering with more stars than they’ve probably ever seen, and stand next to the giant observatories that, at that very moment, might be discovering extraordinary new truths about our universe.

History and Mystery – The story of this island is chiseled into the very stone, but it is not always an open book. Prehistoric petroglyphs hint at the cycle of life. Stacked-rock ruins of *heiau* (temples) whisper chants of human sacrifice. Hula dancers’ hands and hips evoke the gods’ desires. No true adventurer can hope to understand **the deeper meaning of Hawai‘i Island** without exploring places like Pu‘uhonua O Hōnaunau, (“the place of refuge,”) the relic of a fishing village at Lapakahi State Park, or the commanding *heiau*, Pu‘u Koholā. And to explore the ancient coastal trail known as the *Ala Kahakai* (King’s Highway) is to feel the *mana* (power) of all the warriors who marched this way before, in another lifetime.

Pedal Power – With two wheels singing beneath them, cyclists find the Big Island’s **good roads and trails, temperate weather, and sweeping scenic views** to be a biker’s dream. Cycling fanatics can pedal their mettle along the famously grueling Ironman route, or enjoy a peaceful glide through a former sugar plantation town to Waipi‘o Lookout, or get off the pavement and face the challenges of Mana Road on the slopes of Maunakea. They go it alone on their own bikes or rented ones, or hook-up with a bike tour company. One tempting tour goes through Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park and culminates in wine tasting at Volcano Winery. The Big Island’s campgrounds also make it a great place for touring bikers with a tent lashed to their saddlebags. And the valets at our resorts are happy to park your bike too!

Horse Power –*Paniolo*, or Hawaiian cowboys (and cowgirls), have worked the livestock pastures along the mountain slopes of Maunaloa, Maunakea, Hualālai and Kohala since the 1800s, and continue today. Adventurers who want to ride the Hawaiian range, **whether on horseback or from the saddle of an**

ATV, will find exciting ways to get a glimpse of paniolo life. Scenic, guided horseback rides venture into lush, mesmerizing Waipi‘o Valley and across the ranges of North Kohala.

Whale of Fortune—Hawai‘i’s Big Island welcomes “our” beloved, migratory humpback whales back every winter, and a bevy of whale watching charters depart from our island harbors from December through April, during peak humpback whale season. Visitors and residents can also watch whales from shore, and volunteer for the annual humpback whale counts sponsored by the **Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary**, <http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/welcome.html>. But did you know that other whale species can be observed year-round? Pilot whales, pygmy sperm whales, beaked whales, sperm whales and false killer whales are frequently spotted off our shores, as are spinner and bottlenose dolphins. On the Big Island, it’s whale season all year long!

For info on adventure destinations, parks and tour operators, go to <http://www.bigisland.org/adventure>.

For BIVB’s press kit, photo gallery, press releases and industry news, visit
<http://media.bigisland.org>

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Special note to media: The Big Island Visitors Bureau (BIVB) recognizes the use of the ‘okina [‘] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the modern Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai‘i such as Kīlauea). However, BIVB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.