

Sunset

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Secrets to the aloha spirit

Hawaiians are the most content people in the country. What can the rest of us learn from them?

WHERE THE LOCALS GO

THE BIG ISLAND



"I like the northeast side...the most. The green, lush side. On Hawaii, it's the Hamakua Coast, from Hilo up to Waimea." – M. Kalani Souza, musician and community organizer

Jack Wolford

To see the island at its wildest and most rejuvenating, explore the rain forests and waterfalls of the Hamakua Coast, which runs northwest from Hilo to Waipio Valley. For fiery geological excitement, follow Danny Akaka's lead and view Halema'uma'u Crater in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.



Thomas J. Story

"Where the birth of new land starts is a very powerful place. I took my family to the crater of Halema'uma'u, Kilauea." – Danny Akaka, cultural historian

Hamakua Coast

- **Akaka Falls State Park.** An easy 0.4-mile walk leads to two spectacular waterfalls. \$5/vehicle; hawaii.stateparks.org
- **Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden.** An exotic paradise with 3,500 species of plants. \$15; hawaiigarden.com
- **Café Il Mondo.** Italy meets the Big Island—e.g., in macadamia nut pesto. \$\$; 45-3626A Mamane St., Honoka'a; 808/775-7711.
- **The Palms Cliff House Inn.** Lanais at the plantation-style inn take in views of Pohakumanu Bay. From \$239; palmscliffhouse.com
- **Waianuhea Bed & Breakfast.** A sustainable retreat, poised between the coast and Mauna Kea. From \$210; waianuhea.com
- **Lava Lava Beach Club.** On the Kohala Coast, southwest from Hamakua, four new cottages beside a glittering turquoise bay. From \$450; lavalavabeachclub.com

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

Kilauea. Head out at dusk or before sunrise to the overlook from Thomas A. Jaggar Museum and catch the glow and rumble of Halema'uma'u Crater's lava lake. \$10/vehicle; nps.gov/havo

- **Volcano Art Center.** The gallery is a go-to place for original works by top printmakers, woodworkers, and ceramicists. 866/967-7565.
- **Kilauea Lodge & Restaurant.** The lodge's historic fireplace warms an eclectic dining experience that ranges from a German sausage plate to a local catch prepared Hawaiian-style with mango-chutney glaze and macadamia nuts. \$\$\$; 19-3948 Old Volcano Rd., Volcano Village; 808/967-7366.
- **Volcano Rainforest Retreat.** Shoji screens and Japanese soaking tubs add to the soulful allure of the retreat; wake up to the lilting calls of native 'apapane birds. From \$155; 2-night min.; volcanoretreat.com
- **Volcano Village Lodge.** Cottages with floor-to-ceiling windows and wraparound decks let you immerse yourself in the surrounding rain forest. From \$280; 2-night min.; emmaspencerliving.com

