



## **O'AHU FOR THE BUDGET-SMART TRAVELER**

*Modern getaways, authentic activities and big flavors for small budgets*

O'AHU – On the island of O'ahu, authentic, fun and memorable doesn't have to be synonymous with "pricey." The island's burgeoning arts and culture scene, and the mix of Honolulu's energetic urban atmosphere with the island's pristine natural vistas provide the ingredients to mix up an unexpected budget-friendly vacation.

### **Stay**

While Waikīkī's beachfront Kalākaua Avenue is the playground for the island's iconic legacy properties, one street in Mauka (towards the mountains) lies Kuhio Avenue. The area has experienced a resurgence of hotel renovations and new builds that are often more affordable compared to beachfront properties. These central Waikīkī properties provide modern amenities and needed respite from a busy day on O'ahu with a nightly rack rate averaging from \$200 to \$300.

Just two blocks from the beach and directly across from the iconic International Market Place, **Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach** offers modern guestrooms and one-bedroom suites at an affordable price. Its location makes it a strategic spot to experience all that the South Shore has to offer, the convenient grab and go outlet, Holoholo Café and Market, ensures that guests greet the day prepared for whatever adventures await. [HGIWaikikiBeach.com](http://HGIWaikikiBeach.com)

**Hyatt Centric** boasts a selection of thoughtful amenities, a rooftop pool lounge with a tapas-style eatery, as well as a lobby restaurant and bar. The floor to ceiling windows framing the guestrooms allow visitors to take in the island surroundings, and the contemporary décor keeps things modern and fresh. [HyattCentricWaikikiBeach.com](http://HyattCentricWaikikiBeach.com)

For those who prefer something with a little swagger, the **Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club** takes guests on a stylistic journey to Waikīkī during its mid-century heyday. The 112 vintage-inspired rooms are reminiscent of Waikīkī's vintage surf culture and features crafted furniture and fixtures

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made by local artists. The hotel offers weekly events, from featured DJ’s to talks from some of Hawai‘i’s upcoming movers and shakers. [Surfjack.com](http://Surfjack.com)

Another choice for the design-minded is **The Laylow**, also located on Kuhio Avenue near International Market Place. The Laylow’s 186 guestrooms and 65 suites come with bold designs including monstera leaf wallpaper and an energetic color palate. The hotel’s signature restaurant, Hideout, specializes in creative spins on pacific-rim classics. [LaylowWaikiki.com](http://LaylowWaikiki.com)

The **Holiday Inn Express Waikiki** is another fresh option on O‘ahu for affordable accommodations. At nearly 600 rooms across 44 floors, it is the largest Holiday Inn Express in the U.S. and comes equipped with convenient amenities like free Wi-Fi and a free breakfast buffet.

[IHG.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/us/en/honolulu](http://IHG.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/us/en/honolulu)

### **Play**

From outdoor adventures to cultural experiences, O‘ahu offers a plethora of activities that fit nicely within a slim budget. Thanks to the abundance of options, several of these activities are completely free of charge.

Visitors can take a hike up Waikiki’s most famous landmark, **Lē‘ahi**. Commonly known as **Diamond Head**, the state monument’s summit trail takes visitors up a .8 mile paved pathway presenting stunning views overlooking Waikiki and the island’s southern shore. Entrance fees are \$5 per car or \$1 for pedestrians. [PacificHistoricParks.org/dhsm\\_park\\_info.php](http://PacificHistoricParks.org/dhsm_park_info.php)

One of the longest standing Waikiki traditions is free for all visitors. Waikiki Improvement Association’s **Kūhiō Beach Hula Show** features authentic Hawaiian music and hula and begins with a torch-lighting and conch-blowing ceremony. Visitors can catch the show at sunset at the Kūhiō Beach Hula Mound every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

[WaikikiImprovement.com/waikiki-calendar-of-events/kuhio-beach-hula-show](http://WaikikiImprovement.com/waikiki-calendar-of-events/kuhio-beach-hula-show)

Touted as the second oldest public aquarium in the United States, a small admission fee of \$12 for adults and \$5 for kids ages 4-12 will give guests a closer look at Hawai‘i’s marine wonders featured at

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the **Waikiki Aquarium**. Guests can get an in-depth look at some of the marine life that thrives just off O‘ahu’s shores with the aquarium housing 500+ marine species and more than 3,500 marine specimens. Visitors can see giant clams, elegant jellyfish or even check out the aquarium’s Hawaiian Monk Seal habitat. [WaikikiAquarium.org](http://WaikikiAquarium.org)

**Pearl Harbor** is one of O‘ahu’s most revered and popular destinations. A centerpiece of the Pearl Harbor experience is a journey to the **USS Arizona Memorial**, which sits tranquilly over the remains of the sunken battleship USS Arizona, the final resting place for many of the 1,177 crewmen killed on Dec. 7, 1941. The visitor’s journey to the monument begins with a film illuminating the events that led up to the attack and the U.S. entrance into World War II. Following, visitors board a U.S. Navy-operated boat to the monument itself for an unforgettable time of remembrance. Tours to the USS Arizona are free and guests should arrive early to secure admission from the pool of tickets offered at the start of each day, or reserve their admission online for a small processing fee. [www.nps.gov/valr/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/valr/index.htm)

A small, unassuming storefront in Honolulu’s Kaka‘ako neighborhood houses one of the island’s most iconic ‘ukulele makers, Kamaka Ukulele. In 1916, Samuel Kamaka founded Kamaka Ukulele and the company is still run by several generations of the Kamaka family. The instruments have been used by a host of Hawai‘i’s prolific musical artists, including ‘ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuro. A free guided tour of the Kamaka factory is offered Tuesday through Friday and highlights the intricate process of creating a top quality example of Hawai‘i’s most famous instrument. [KamakaHawaii.com](http://KamakaHawaii.com)

Historically a ghost town at night, Honolulu’s downtown financial district and bordering neighborhood, one of the oldest Chinatowns in the U.S., have blended to become one of the most trendy, vibrant places for new restaurants and bars, art, music, fashion and nightlife. Guests can find cheap eats and window shop at boutiques from Hawai‘i’s trendiest makers. For a small \$20 fee, **Hawaii Heritage Center** offers an in-depth walking tour exploring the area’s history and transformation.

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Travelers can dispatch to East O‘ahu to see a replica of a 950-year-old Buddhist temple. The **Byodo-In Temple** is nestled in the lush landscape of Kahalu‘u where visitors can wander through its gardens, sit beside peaceful ponds of Japanese Koi and spot wild peacocks that roam the grounds. Admission is \$5 per person. [Byodo-in.com](http://Byodo-in.com)

In 2016, the **International Market Place** reopened as a hub of unique shopping and dining experiences in the heart of Waikīkī. Beyond the retailers, the center’s main stage features Sunset Stories. Every evening, a ceremonial lighting of the Lamaku Torch Tower begins a presentation filled with Hawaiian and Polynesian song and dance, telling the stories of Hawai‘i icons from Queen Emma to Don Ho. [ShopInternationalMarketPlace.com](http://ShopInternationalMarketPlace.com)

Visitors can listen to the only band in the United States with a royal legacy for free at the **Royal Hawaiian Band’s** performances. Once known as the “King’s Band” the group of musicians was formed by King Kamehameha III during the period of the Hawaiian Monarchy. The free concerts are presented on Fridays at ‘Iolani Palace and on Sundays at Kapi‘olani Park. [RHB-Music.com](http://RHB-Music.com)

Every Friday night, colorful fireworks light up Waikīkī Beach for **Hilton Hawaiian Village’s fireworks show**. This one of a kind Waikīkī tradition is free for all to see, whether from the shoreline of the beach, the park at Magic Island, or at a nearby beachside bar or restaurant. [HiltonHawaiianVillage.com/resort-experiences/entertainment-and-events](http://HiltonHawaiianVillage.com/resort-experiences/entertainment-and-events)

### Cheap Eats

An established, family-friendly Chinatown restaurant, **Little Village Noodle Shop** has been serving classic Chinese cuisine in the Honolulu area for more than 20 years. Visitors can stop by for a budget-friendly meal representative of O‘ahu’s multicultural food heritage. [LittleVillageHawaii.com](http://LittleVillageHawaii.com)

**Rainbow Drive In** has been an affordable local favorite for more than 50 years. Visitors should pop in for a “plate lunch.” Classic choices include chili, fried rice and the loco moco – a grilled hamburger patty on a bed of rice, topped with a fried egg and drenched in brown gravy. [RainbowDriveIn.com](http://RainbowDriveIn.com)

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**Liliha Bakery** is most known for their delectable Coco Puffs, a chocolate cream-filled puff pastry topped with chantilly. However, it is also a classic diner-style restaurant where local favorites are sold at reasonable prices. With two locations on O‘ahu and hours extending into the early hours of the morning, Liliha Bakery is a dependable place for a comforting, home-cooked meal.

[LilihaBakery.com](http://LilihaBakery.com)

Poke, the tasty combination of cubed raw fish mixed with various seasonings and sauces, has taken the mainland by storm. Regardless, visitors must try this Hawaiian grown delicacy while on O‘ahu.

**Ahi Assassins** offers a selection of classic poke bowls made from fresh-caught, never-frozen fish. While prices are subject to change due to changing market costs for fish, Ahi Assassins has earned a reputation as one of the most reliable and affordable poke places on O‘ahu. [AhiAssassins.com](http://AhiAssassins.com)

No Hawai‘i visit is complete without local Hawaiian food, and quality options can be found at **Highway Inn**. Visitors can choose from the original location in Central Oahu, or dine at their modern restaurant in the heart of trendy Kaka‘ako neighborhood. Highway Inn has built a legacy of traditional Hawaiian food, and for a restaurant that is powered by three generations of tried-and-true family recipes, a meal at Highway Inn is surprisingly affordable. [MyHighwayInn.com](http://MyHighwayInn.com)

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