



Big Island Visitors Bureau Media Contact: Jessica Ferracane, Irondog Communications, (808) 895-5740, jessica@irondogpr.com

Romance Rules on Hawai'i's Big Island

*Love is in the air ... and on the beach and by the lava flow and in the ocean
and pretty much everywhere on Hawai'i Island*

Hawai'i's Big Island – How has Hawai'i Island earned its reputation as such a romantic destination? Let us count the ways:

- **It begins with legend.** The native tree that graces our upland forests is nothing less than a testament to love. Volcano goddess Pele got all *huhū* (upset) when handsome warrior 'Ohi'a rebuffed her affections to remain true to his beloved Lehua. So what's a jealous goddess to do? She turned him into a tree, of course. This left Lehua heartbroken, but other gods took pity on her and reunited the two lovers by turning Lehua into the beautiful red blossom on the 'ōhia lehua tree. Now they've been immortalized all over again in a stunning poster by designer Nelson Makua, who with his son and design partner, Kainoa Makua, offer it at their store, Na Makua Original Hawaiian Designs in downtown Hilo and their web site www.namakua.com
- **Other Big Island true-life love stories are more recent – and more required.** There's the couple who got married on the snowy summit of Maunakea by the same judge who'd married John Wayne years before. But they didn't say, "I do, *pilgrim*," because the ceremony was in Hawaiian. And there's the husband and wife who recently hiked to the lava flow in Kalapana, reclined on the sinuous lava rock and added their own flames of passion to the fiery scene. And another couple camping on the beach at Kīholo Bay who discovered that watching the sun set while sipping wine as two amorous

whales cavorted in the bay *definitely* put them in the mood.

- **Here's the thing about Big Island romance:** It nearly always comes with *adventure* – however you define that. It could be getting a sensuous couples massage in a AAA Five Diamond resort, slurping up local lobster under candlelight on the beach, kissing while scuba diving, or getting married in a misty rainforest, or on the beach at dawn, or on horseback or on a catamaran sailing offshore or – why not? – on the golf course! And no matter where you do it, you'll be draped in a lei of fragrant flowers. That's just how we do it here on Hawai'i's Big Island, where matters of the heart are an art.

The Lovescape

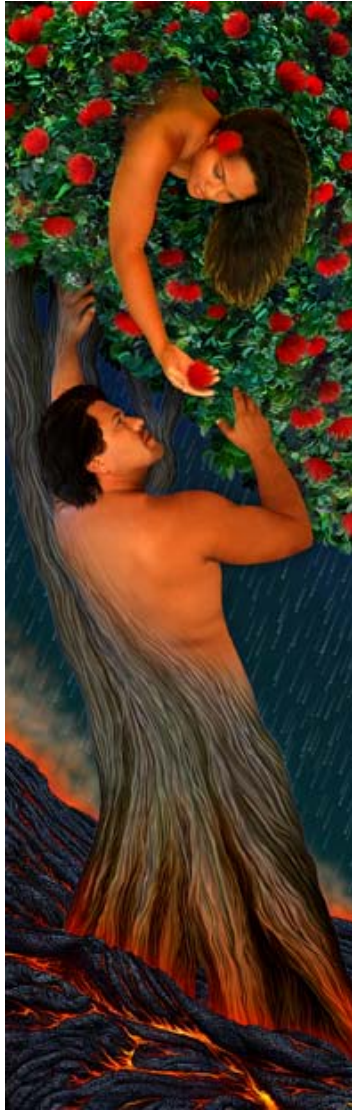
Ask around, and you soon get a nice collection of pushpins on the Big Island's love map:

- **Hilo:** Getting soaked to the skin by a downpour while running hand-in-hand among the ferns at Rainbow Falls
- **Hāmākua:** Camping by the crashing sea at Laupāhoehoe Point
- **Waipi'o:** Hiking deep into this valley steeped in legends of separated lovers
- **Maunakea:** Stargazing at the heavens and into each other's eyes
- **Waimea:** Succulent Hawai'i Regional Cuisine dishes at Merriman's Restaurant
- **North Kohala:** Wandering the villages of Kapa'au and Hāwī from art gallery to café to local history museum
- **Kohala Coast:** Surrendering to the sublime resorts—fine dining, slack-key guitar, white sand, couples massages, floating on a sea of kisses
- **Kailua Village:** During the day, hand-in-hand strolling quietly where Hawaiian royalty walked; that night, whooping it up at one of our favorite hot spots
- **South Point (Ka Lae):** Contemplating the power and passion of the ancient Polynesians who landed their sailing canoes here on this remote coastline, discovering Hawai'i for the first time
- **Volcano:** Visiting Kīlauea volcano, where Pele's glowing home at Halema'uma'u Crater captures the imagination within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park
- **Puna:** Cruising the boardwalk in funky Pāhoa town, then driving dramatic coastal Highway 137, a.k.a. the Red Road, with the top down, exploring volcanically heated hot ponds and watching the planet's ongoing birth as glowing streams of lava burst steaming into the sea

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.

For more information on Hawai‘i’s Big Island, please visit <http://gohawaii.com/big-island>

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Poster art credit: “The Legend of Ohia and Lehua” by Nelson Makua. Available in higher-resolution in exchange for artwork with credit