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O'ahu Regenerative Tourism Updates

O'AHU — Regenerative tourism creates positive impacts, preserves natural environments, supports local communities and provides meaningful, sustainable experiences for travelers. O'ahu's commitment to this tourism approach emphasizes safeguarding the island's cultural and environmental heritage while promoting eco-conscious practices, supporting local businesses, reducing carbon emissions and other actions. Key initiatives emphasize community involvement and the *pono* (proper) promotion of Hawaiian culture and traditions. Regenerative tourism appeals to visitors who want more than a typical vacation. It provides an opportunity to go beyond sightseeing, allowing travelers to actively contribute to preserving nature, supporting local communities, and practicing sustainability. By engaging in regenerative tourism, visitors help ensure that O'ahu thrives for years to come. Through this approach, the island seeks to protect its natural resources and support its communities for future generations, while offering travelers a responsible and enriching way to experience O'ahu.

Read on to learn about regenerative tourism activities happening now on O'ahu as you plan your summer travel.

Participate in Activities That Give Back

Travelers can leave a positive impact on themselves and Hawai'i by participating in activities that give back to the island's natural world, communities and culture. The initiatives below promote *mālama* (care) for O'ahu's natural landscapes, surrounding ocean and communities while creating memorable experiences and deeper connections to the island for visitors.

- **Ho'okua'āina** volunteer experiences and community workdays offer a meaningful, hands-on opportunity to connect with the land and Hawaiian culture through the restoration and cultivation of *kalo* (taro). Located in Maunawili, O'ahu, this environmental nonprofit organization uses traditional farming practices to foster community, healing and personal growth. Volunteers get their hands muddy while working in the nonprofit's *lo'i kalo* (taro patches), engaging in activities such as planting, harvesting and weeding. Through their work, participants gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural and spiritual significance of *kalo*, its connection to Hawaiian identity and the importance of sustainable agriculture. www.Hookuaaina.org
- Residents and visitors across Hawai'i are encouraged to participate in **Kanu Hawai'i's Volunteer Month**, a statewide initiative in April dedicated to fostering community engagement and service. Coordinated by Hawai'i-based environment-focused community organization Kanu Hawai'i, the Volunteer Month campaign aims to mobilize over 20,000 volunteers in more than 600 events spanning seven of Hawai'i's islands. Activities will include environmental cleanups, educational workshops, cultural preservation projects and

multiple service opportunities designed to strengthen community bonds and promote a culture of giving. Many of these experiences are available throughout the year. www.KanuHawaii.org/volunteer-month-hawaii/

- The **‘Īlio Explorers Program** at the **Hawaiian Humane Society** offers a rewarding way to support shelter dogs while exploring O‘ahu. Open to residents and visitors, the field-trip program allows volunteers to take adult shelter dogs on outings to parks, beaches and hiking trails, giving them a much-needed break from the shelter. The excursions help reduce participant stress, improve well-being and provide valuable insights to aid in adoption matchmaking. Participants also enjoy a fun-filled day and play a crucial role in showcasing adoptable dogs and increasing their chances of finding a forever home. www.HawaiianHumane.org/IlioExplorers
- The **Mālama Hawai‘i Beach Cleanup Program** at **International Market Place** in Waikīkī invites visitors to give back to the Islands while enjoying O‘ahu’s natural beauty. The self-guided cleanup initiative encourages participants to borrow a Sustainable Coastlines Beach Cleanup Kit from the IMP’s Customer Service desk on Level 1 with a refundable \$10 deposit. Program volunteers are then invited to collect litter while exploring O‘ahu’s beaches or hiking, helping to *mālama* (care for) Hawai‘i’s environment. As a *mahalo* (thank you) for their efforts, participants who post an action photo tagging @intlmktplace receive a \$20 gift card. www.ShopInternationalMarketplace.com
- **Paepae o He‘eia** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring and maintaining He‘eia Fishpond, a traditional *loko kuapā* (rock-walled fishpond) on O‘ahu’s Windward Coast. Participating in hands-on community workdays, volunteers help remove invasive mangroves, rebuild the fishpond’s walls and learn about aquaculture and sustainability practiced by the Hawaiian culture. The effort revives an ancient food production system and strengthens connections between people and place. www.PaepaeoHeeia.org

Support, Explore and Immerse Yourself in All Things Local

Supporting local artists, farmers and businesses while you visit O‘ahu’s communities and learn about them encourages responsible travel.

- **The Crouching Lion** restaurant in Ka‘a‘awa has reopened after nearly a decade, blending historical charm with sustainable design. Owner Eddie Kim revitalized the establishment by incorporating repurposed materials from ReUse Hawai‘i, such as a bed frame suspended above the bar and a high-end chandelier acquired at a fraction of its original cost. The menu reflects Hawai‘i’s diverse culinary influences, featuring dishes like temaki and kimbap rolls, kimchi fried rice, and robata-grilled local vegetables. This thoughtful restoration not only preserves the restaurant’s legacy but also promotes environmental responsibility, offering guests a unique dining experience that honors both tradition and sustainability. www.TheCrouchingLion.com
- Located in Kailua town, **Kailua Honey** recently partnered with **Ko‘olau Distillery** to create its Barrel-Aged Bourbon Honey, an infusion aiming to highlight the best of both crafts. Utilizing repurposed bourbon barrels, the honey absorbs the barrel oak and bourbon notes, deepening its complexity. The process enhances the flavors of Kailua Honey and extends the life of Ko‘olau Distillery’s barrels, reinforcing the sustainability efforts of both brands. After the honey ages, the barrels return to Ko‘olau Distillery where they are utilized to create

small-batch honey bourbon, continuing the cycle of minimizing waste.

www.KailuaHoney.com

- The **Kaiwi‘ula Night Market** at Bishop Museum is a vibrant monthly gathering that brings together the community for an evening of local food, artisan crafts, and cultural connection. Held every third Wednesday, this lively market features a rotating selection of local vendors, offering delicious eats and handcrafted goods that showcase Hawai‘i’s creative spirit. The event also serves as the O‘ahu pickup site for Grow Aloha, a community initiative dedicated to restoring native Hawaiian plants in urban spaces. Each month in 2025, visitors can reserve a plant online and pick it up for free at the Grow Aloha tent, fostering a deeper connection to Hawai‘i’s natural heritage. Join us for an evening of food, culture, and sustainability at Bishop Museum’s Kaiwi‘ula Night Market. www.BishopMuseum.org
- **Kualoa Ranch's KualoaGrown Market** is a daily market offering a diverse selection of fresh, sustainably raised products directly from Kualoa Ranch's agricultural operations. About 95% of what the ranch produces is sold at KualoaGrown Market. Visitors can find grass-fed beef, farm-raised shrimp, oysters, heritage pork and a variety of organically grown fruits and vegetables. The market also features specialty products like **Aloha Bites** and **KualoaGrown Rangpur Lime Marmalade**, which received a 2024 Commended Award at the Dalemian World Marmalade Festival. On the last Friday of every month, KualoaGrown hosts a pop-up where shoppers can meet local vendors and farmers. www.Kualoa.com/Kualoa-Grown
- **Mori by Art and Flea at Capitol Modern** is a boutique celebrating Hawai‘i’s creative community through a curated selection of artwork, ceramics, apparel, stationery and vintage homewares. The shop, located at the Capitol Modern museum also offers a selection of design- and culture-focused books, inspired by former Honolulu bookseller Bās Bookshop. An extension of founder Aly Ishikuni’s role as the Honolulu museum’s public programmer, Mori features exclusive merchandise from artists and designers showcased during First Friday events, creating a hub for local artistry and culture. www.ArtandFlea.com
- **Sweet Land Farm** in Waialua offers visitors an immersive experience in sustainable agriculture and goat farming. Open to the public Thursday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., the farm provides guided tours on Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 11:45 a.m., where guests can engage with friendly goats and learn about the cheesemaking process. The on-site farm store features a variety of goat milk products, including cheeses, lotions, and soaps. Visitors can enjoy these treats in a serene setting, complete with picnic tables and scenic views. For more information, visit www.SweetLandFarmHawaii.com.
- The **Waiāhole Poi Factory Country Store** offers visitors a unique way to take home a piece of Hawai‘i while supporting local artisans and businesses. Located behind the flagship Waiāhole Poi Factory, this newly opened country store features branded merchandise alongside a carefully curated selection of clothing, accessories, food, and crafts from local makers. From handcrafted goods to delicious island treats, the store celebrates the rich traditions of Hawaiian culture and craftsmanship. Whether you're looking for a meaningful souvenir or a taste of authentic Hawai‘i, the Waiāhole Poi Factory Country Store provides a true local shopping experience. waiaholepoiactory.com/country-store

Learn About and Embrace Hawaiian Culture

Check out these new O‘ahu initiatives celebrating the knowledge, traditions, practices and history of the state’s indigenous Hawaiian culture.

- **‘Auana** is Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group’s first resident production in Hawai‘i and its first show to be curated around its host destination. The production introduces Cirque du Soleil’s performance artistry through the guidance and vision of several Native Hawaiian creatives, including Dr. Aaron J. Salā, costume designer Manaola Yap, and choreographer and *kumu hula* (hula instructor) Hiwa Vaughan-Darval. Available as an exclusive add-on to show tickets in all categories, the ‘Auana VIP Experience at Maui Brewing Co. offers guests the option of enjoying a menu of island-inspired cuisine and local-crafted beverages 90 minutes prior to select performances. Tickets are available now. www.CirqueDuSoleil.com
- **Dole Plantation’s New Native Hawaiian Medicinal Garden** expands its eco-tourism experience with a dedicated space highlighting healing plants. Located within Dole Plantation’s two-acre Plantation Garden, the new section introduces visitors to the practice of *la‘au lapa‘au* (Hawaiian herbal medicine) and the cultural significance of native plants. Dole Plantation’s eight themed gardens educate guests on agriculture, irrigation, *lei* plants and plantation life, offering an understanding of Hawai‘i’s agricultural and cultural heritage. www.DolePlantation.com
- The **Hawai‘i Triennial**, one of the state’s largest contemporary art festivals, is currently showcasing local, national and international artists through exhibitions and installations across multiple venues on O‘ahu. Featuring a diverse mix of visual art, performance and cultural storytelling, the Triennial highlights themes of place, history and identity in the Pacific. The event brings together artists, curators and thought leaders to engage in meaningful conversations about art and its role in shaping the region’s future. The Hawai‘i Triennial’s exhibits will be open through May 4, 2025. www.HawaiiTriennial.org
- Located oceanside in Waikiki, the **Healer Stones of Kapaemahu** are four large *pōbaku* (stones) honoring Tahitian healers who brought their spiritual and medicinal knowledge to Hawai‘i centuries ago. Placed in their current location on Kūhiō Beach in the early 1900s, the stones are a testament to the *mana* (spiritual power) of the healers and their legacy. Efforts to preserve and share the story of the stones continue today, ensuring their cultural significance remains recognized and respected. Every Wednesday night 6:30-7:30 p.m., free live hula performances are steps away from the sacred site where healers once performed their miraculous cures. All are welcome to visit the sacred site and learn more about its history through interpretive signage and ongoing educational initiatives.
- Join **Native Books** for a 20-minute interactive stroll through the *Wahi Pana: Storied Places* public art installation at Fort Street Mall! This temporary project, supported by the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts (MOCA), features poetry by *‘Imaikalani Kalabele* and a tiled artwork by *Carl F.K. Pao*. Kalabele’s poetry, displayed on lamppost banners, explores themes of place and identity, rooted in his deep connection to the Fort Street area. Tours are every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00–5:30 p.m., starting at Native Books (1164 Nuuanu Ave.). Come engage with this meaningful piece of art in the heart of Honolulu.
- **Wahi Pana: O‘ahu’s Storied Places** is a public art initiative sharing the layered and profound *mo‘olelo* (stories) of the *‘āina* (land) and offering educational experiences for all who experience its installations. Spanning 11 multimedia artworks across the island, the project connects key locations with Native Hawaiian narratives, bringing cultural history to life through art. Each installation, created by local artists, invites the public to go beyond surface-level understanding and develop a deeper appreciation of the people and places that shape O‘ahu. Developed in collaboration with the City and County of Honolulu, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Pu‘uhonua Society, Aupuni Space, Hawai‘i Contemporary, the O‘ahu

Visitors Bureau, and Bishop Museum, **Wahi Pana** will remain open through 2028.
www.WahiPana.com

- Phase 1: (Unveiled in February)
 - [TheBus](#)
 - [Fort Street Mall](#)
 - [Fort DeRussy](#)
 - [Lē‘ahi](#)
- Phase 2: May 2025
 - [Kapi‘olani Park](#)
 - [Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve](#)
 - [Koko Crater Botanical Garden](#)
- Phase 3: September 2025
 - [Kahe Point Beach Park](#)
 - [Ho‘omaluhia Botanical Garden](#)
 - [Hale‘iwa Beach Park](#)
 - [Chinatown Gateway Plaza](#)

Accommodations Doing Good and Giving Back

O‘ahu accommodations are embracing regenerative tourism, implementing eco-friendly initiatives and supporting local communities. From organizing beach cleanups and adopting public parks to promoting cultural education and reforestation efforts, these hotels and resorts offer guests a sustainable, eco-conscious and enriching travel experience.

- **‘Alohilani Resort** offers guests opportunities to connect with Hawai‘i’s natural splendor. ‘Alohilani was one of Hawai‘i’s first hotels to commit to achieving PAS 2060 carbon-neutral certification — the international standard for carbon neutrality — and aims to plant 100,000 native trees in partnership with the Hawaiian Legacy Reforestation Initiative (HLRI), helping rehabilitate a native ecosystem. Resort guests are also given the opportunity to visit HLRI’s forest on O‘ahu’s North Shore to plant their own tree. www.AlohilaniResort.com
- **First Cabin International Hawai‘i** introduces an innovative, eco-friendly lodging option in the heart of Waikīkī, offering a sustainable alternative to traditional hotels. As Hawai‘i’s first capsule-style hotel, it features 103 single-person pods inspired by first-class airplane cabins, maximizing space efficiency while minimizing resource consumption. Guests can choose from premium economy, business class, and first-class pods, each designed with a comfortable bed, personal storage, and access to shared amenities such as shower rooms, powder rooms, lounges, and luggage storage. Located on the 14th floor of the Waikīkī Business Plaza, just minutes from Waikīkī Beach, First Cabin promotes responsible tourism by reducing energy usage and material waste, offering an affordable and eco-conscious stay without compromising comfort. This compact and efficient hospitality model aligns with sustainable travel practices, helping to preserve Hawai‘i’s natural beauty for future generations. www.First-Cabin.us
- The **Kahala Initiative for Sustainability, Culture and the Arts (KISCA)** is a dedicated program at **The Kahala Hotel and Resort** promoting environmental stewardship, cultural preservation and artistic expression in Hawai‘i. Through KISCA, the resort offers immersive guest experiences, sustainability focused initiatives, cultural workshops and art programs aimed at highlighting the rich heritage of the Hawaiian Islands. Guests can participate in activities such as native plant restoration, ocean conservation and traditional Hawaiian

storytelling, deepening their connection to the land and local culture. KISCA is part of The Kahala's commitment to responsible tourism and community engagement aimed at ensuring Hawai'i's natural beauty and traditions are preserved for future generations.

www.KahalaResort.com/kisca

- As part of its commitment to sustainability and ocean conservation, **The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach** participates in an eco-friendly initiative utilizing Genki Balls—mud balls infused with beneficial microorganisms that help clean and restore polluted waterways. Guests and community members can take part in preparing and tossing these enzyme-rich spheres into local streams and waterways where they work to break down sludge, reduce harmful bacteria and improve water clarity. The hands-on effort supports the health of Hawai'i's marine ecosystems and reflects the resort's dedication to environmental stewardship and community engagement. On Earth Day, April 22, the hotel is aiming to surpass the 10,000 Genki Balls guests and volunteers have created since its support for the project began in 2022. www.RitzCarlton.com

Exploring the Hawaiian Islands Via Alternative Transportation

While driving a gas-powered rental car remains an easy go-to option for checking out attractions and getting around the Hawaiian Islands, O'ahu travelers will be happy to learn they can also explore the island via alternative transportation options.

- Look for the first-ever public art installation on the City and County of Honolulu's public transportation system **TheBus**. Designed by local artist Cory Kamehanaokāla Holt Taum, a vibrant bus wrap depicts the Hawaiian legend and epic journey, Hi'iakakapoliopole, visually connecting residents and visitors to the rich history and spirit of the Hawaiian Islands. Access the Bloomberg Connects app, as well, for *mele* (song) and stories you can listen to while riding TheBus, enhancing your immersive cultural experience. www.WahiPana.com
- **Hele On Waikiki Ebike** offers convenient electric bike rentals for exploring Waikiki and Honolulu with ease. www.HeleOnWaikiki.com
- **Waikiki Trolley** provides hop-on, hop-off trolley tours with routes covering top attractions, shopping and historic sites in Honolulu. www.WaikikiTrolley.com

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