

Volcano house hotel reopens

The volcanic movements of 2018 were some of the most active in living memory, but with nature now 'settled down', many operations are back to business. This includes the iconic Volcano house hotel, which is located on the edge of Kilauea volcano's summit caldera, right inside Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. The hotel recently reopened to guest stays, but while the seismic activity has altered the landscape - the Halema'uma'u crater has tripled in depth and doubled in diameter - the hotel still offers some of the best vantage points in the park.



Sweet treat at Fairmont Orchid spa

Fairmont Orchid resort's award-winning Spa Without Walls recently announced two sweet-themed treatments created for the spring season. The 'Sweet Relaxation Honey Massage' and 'Sweet Honey Mask Facial' using locally-sourced honey from the resort's four on-site flow hives - home to more than 80,000 honey bees. The treatments are high in antioxidants, anti-inflammatory and rich in conditioning. Spa guests can select an oceanfront or waterfall hale (building) for their treatment, both accompanied by the relaxing sound of water. Sounds delightful!

Love coffee? Visit Kau!

The 11th annual Kau Coffee Festival returns April 26-May 5 to celebrate the award-winning coffees of the island of Hawaii's southeast Kau district with a full schedule of activities, including the Miss Kau Coffee Pageant, recipe contest, stargazing sessions, farm tours and a hike to the highland water systems that irrigate the area's coffee fields. The two-week festival will finish with its annual community hoolaulea (celebration), set for May 5 at the Pahala Community Center, featuring live entertainment, hula performances, farm tours and coffee-infused arts, crafts and eats! If you're in the neighbourhood, make sure you put some time aside. Visit www.kaucoffeefestival.com.



Seafood experience is straight to plate

The Four Seasons Resort Hualalai on Hawaii Island has a new sustainable seafood experience allowing guests to explore the resort's Punawai Pond with marine naturalists. There they'll learn how fresh oysters are raised, grown and harvested, and taste two species of resort-raised oysters with champagne!

Escorted by the resort executive chef Thomas Bellec, the tour also visits a shrimp pond where each participant traps shrimp. The Sustainable Seafood Experience finishes with a delicious five-course oceanfront dinner at the resort's 'Ulu Ocean Grill + Sushi Lounge - using the days catch of course!

Hawaii Marriott Resort's relaxed beach vibe inspired by local legends

Stroll along Kuhio Beach on the arc of sand that is Waikiki, and you're bound to come across the Waikiki Beach Boys. They are renowned for their casual, bohemian attitude as they arrange surf lessons and canoe rides, and hire out surfboards.

Their glory days may be over, now they have had to adopt a corporate image of uniforms, name tags and iPads. It's supposed to give their presence on the beach a more professional look. But their welcoming smiles, local colour and aloha were the inspiration for interior designer Bianca Yih, from design company CRA in her concept for transforming the guest rooms at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa.

This second phase of the resort's transformation will see all of the 1310 rooms renovated by autumn, 2019. The painted wooden shiplap panels and warm ceruse wood stain throughout the guestrooms' millwork and furniture promote the casual feel of a welcoming Hawaiian home.

All the guest bathrooms are being clad with tiles inspired by whitewashed driftwood planks, and flanked by barn door entries, with new vanities and lighting. Maritime works of art above the beds pay homage to Waikiki's reef.

Other subtle nods to the Beach Boys' lifestyle include coral-coloured accent pillows and rope-woven details to help create a sense of place and time. The bathrooms in the renovated King Rooms will have new walk-in showers encased in glass.

Guests can swim in one of the resort's freshwater swimming pools, then relax in the new 10-person outdoor whirlpool located on the third floor of the Paoakalani Tower.

There is a new state-of-the-art 24-hour fitness centre, or guests can learn Hawaiian arts and crafts, browse the shops and boutiques, or relax and listen to live Hawaiian entertainment. The balconies or lanai, where guests can enjoy a drink and a snack and lap up the unforgettable view of the Pacific Ocean, have also been refreshed.

The renovation of the guest rooms follows the first phase in the transformation of the Waikiki Beach Marriott, which began in 2016 with the completion of the Kona Moku Ballroom, the Nanea Lobby and the Kuhio Beach Grill.

The focal point of the Kona Moku Ballroom is a stunning blown glass chandelier which beams out a kaleidoscope of colours. Customised lighting and a lanai overlooking the lobby's water feature help ensure meetings and events happen in a professional, relaxed atmosphere. The ballroom accommodates 800 guests in a theatre setup and 610 attendees for a banquet.

The crowning touch of the Nanea Lobby transformation is a dramatic 18 x 6 metre carved wooden artwork, Ka Maka Hinu (The Bright Face), by artist Kaiwi Nui Yoon. The artwork is intended to reflect the love of Queen Liliuokalani, Hawaii's last reigning monarch, for the people of her kingdom.



The Kuhio Beach Grill, or KBG, takes pride in their bourbon bar, featuring craft cocktails and over 40 different whiskies, including some from Japan. The menu features locally inspired modern American cuisine. The Grill is open for breakfast and dinner, with a prime rib buffet being an evening highlight.

A century ago, the land on which the resort stands was the Queen's summer residence, complementing her main home. The resort honoured her by naming its two towers to represent her two homes Kealohilani and Paoakalani (for 'heavenly' and 'fragrance'). It perpetuates her legacy by providing guests with authentic Hawaiian music by some of the state's best musicians, displaying Hawaiian artifacts throughout the hotel, and welcoming guests with traditional, gracious Hawaiian hospitality.

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Get a bird's eye view of the Big Island

Paradise Helicopters is expanding its service from the Waimea-Kohala Airport in the northern part of the island of Hawaii. The new helicopter tour of the Kohala Mountain's takes in breathtaking valleys and waterfalls. The tour is also 'doors-off', so your camera (or phone) will be the only thing between you and the towering 2500ft waterfalls and sheer cliff faces. And along the way, you'll experience and learn about the geography, history and lush beauty of Kohala, birthplace of King Kamehameha. For more information, visit www.paradisecoasters.com



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Moana Masters Cooking a must for foodies

Following on from a successful debut in February, Chef Colin Sato will continue his popular Moana Masters Cooking Class at the iconic Moana Surfrider Hotel, a Westin Resort & Spa, Waikiki Beach. Sato will showcase his skills and demonstrate a variety of culinary techniques such as breaking down the locally sustainable fish Kanpachi and then preparing it as sashimi and a grilled version. Plus attendees get to enjoy a delicious meal and paired beverages along the way! "The Masters Chef Series was created with the foodie, beverage connoisseur, and the passionate diner in mind," says Ryan Loo, director of food & beverage at the Moana Surfrider. Moana Masters Cooking Classes are held monthly on a Saturday from noon to 2 pm – the next few classes include Chef Colin Sato creating sous vide pork chop, chicken and andouille sausage gumbo, and seafood boil with slaw and stone fruit cobbler. Delish!

White Sands Hotel swings back to the 1960s

Honolulu's White Sands Hotel is undergoing a full restoration to its original 1960's glory, with a reopening planned for July 2019. As one of Waikiki's only remaining walk-up motels, White Sands will be a funky, fun return to the Hawaii of a classic era.

A full revamp by Honolulu-based interior design house Vanguard Theory will put a twist on Hawaii's mid-century nostalgia.

Think lush garden and a pool courtyard oasis complete with a bar-adjacent hot tub that will be a magnet for fun-loving patrons! Honolulu's well-loved Fête restaurant group will also re-create continental cuisine with elevated 1960's throwback items. Sounds amazing!





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