

1

Best of Kauai

On any list of the world's most spectacular islands, Kauai ranks right up there with Bora Bora, Huahine, and Rarotonga. All the elements are here: moody rainforests, majestic cliffs, jagged peaks, emerald valleys, palm trees swaying in the breeze, daily rainbows, and some of the most spectacular golden beaches you'll find anywhere. Soft tropical air, sunrise bird song, essences of ginger and plumeria, golden sunsets, sparkling waterfalls—you don't just go to Kauai, you absorb it with every sense. It may get more than its fair share of tropical downpours, but that's what makes it so lush and green—and creates an abundance of rainbows.

Kauai is essentially a single large shield volcano that rises 3 miles above the sea floor. The island lies 90 miles across the open ocean from Oahu, but it seems at least a half century removed in time. It's often called "the separate kingdom" because it stood alone and resisted King Kamehameha's efforts to unite Hawaii. In the end, a royal kidnapping was required to take the Garden Isle: After King Kamehameha died, his son, Liholiho, ascended the throne. He gained control of Kauai by luring Kauai's king, Kaumualii, aboard the royal yacht and sailing to Oahu; once there, Kaumualii was forced to marry Kaahumanu, Kamehameha's widow, thereby uniting the islands.

A Kauai rule is that no building may exceed the height of a coconut tree—between three and four stories. As a result, the island itself, not its palatial beach hotels, is the attention-grabber. There's no real nightlife here, no opulent shopping malls. But there is the beauty of the verdant jungle, the endless succession of spectacular beaches, the grandeur of Waimea Canyon, and the drama of the Na Pali Coast. Even Princeville, an opulent marble-and-glass luxury hotel, does little more than frame the natural glory of Hanalei's spectacular 4,000-foot-high Namolokama mountain range.

This is the place for active visitors: There's watersports galore; miles of trails through rainforests and along ocean cliffs for hikers, bikers, and horseback riders; and golf options that range from championship links to funky local courses where chickens roam the greens and balls wind up embedded in coconut trees. But Kauai is also great for those who need to relax and heal jangled nerves. Here you'll find miles of sandy beaches, perfect for just sitting and meditating. There are also quiet spots in the forest where you can listen to the rain dance on the leaves, as well as an endless supply of laid-back, lazy days that end with the sun sinking into the Pacific amid a blaze of glorious tropical color.

1 The Best Beaches

- **Kalapaki Beach:** Kalapaki is the best beach not only in Lihue but also on the entire east coast. Any town would pay a fortune to have a beach like Kalapaki, one of Kauai's best, in its backyard. But little

Lihue turns its back on Kalapaki; there's not even a sign pointing the way through the labyrinth of traffic to this graceful half moon of golden sand at the foot of the Kauai Marriott Resort & Beach

2 CHAPTER 1 · BEST OF KAUAI

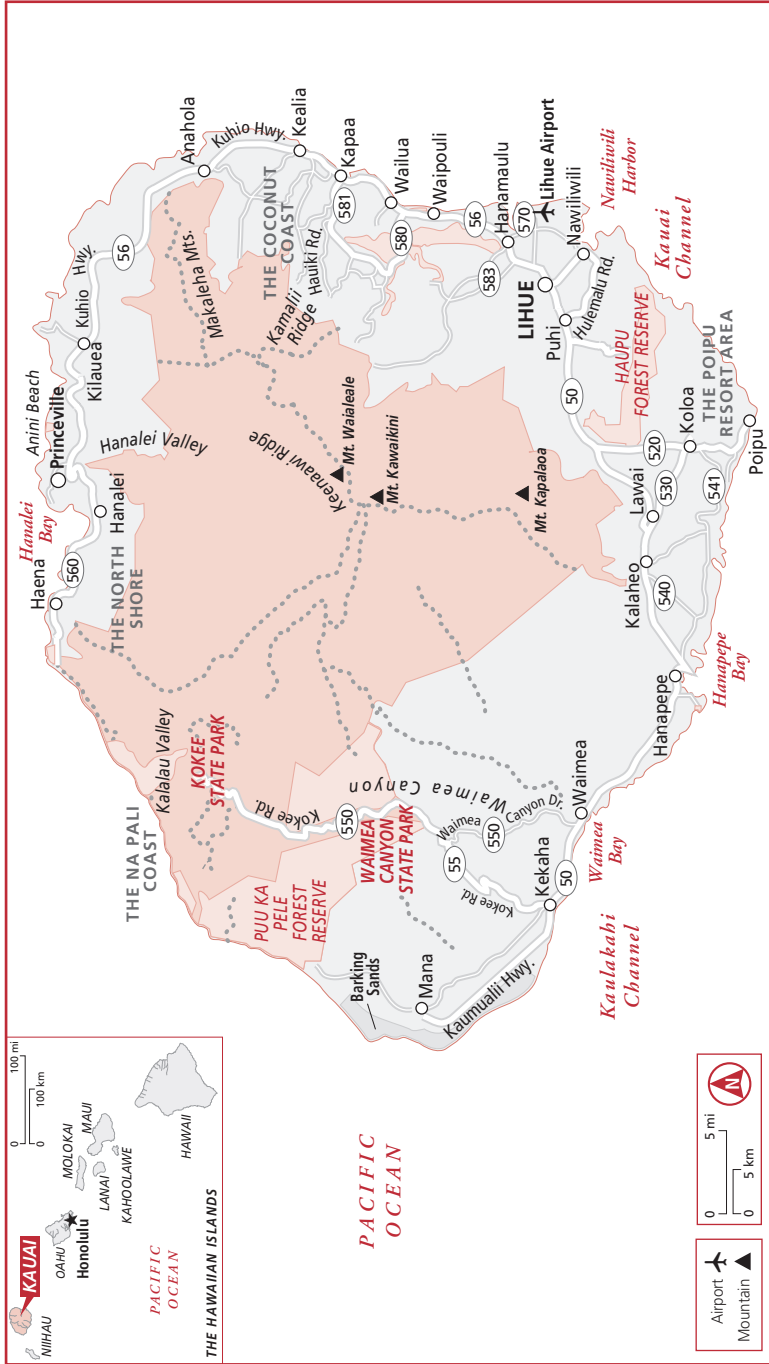
Club. Fifty yards wide and a quarter mile long, Kalapaki is protected by a jetty, making it very safe for swimmers. The waves are good for surfing when there's a winter swell, and the view from the sand—of the steeped, 2,200-foot peaks of the majestic Haupu Ridge that shield Nawiliwili Bay—is awesome. See p. 130.

- **Poipu Beach Park:** Big, wide Poipu is actually two beaches in one; it's divided by a sandbar, called a tombolo. On the left, a lava-rock jetty protects a sandy-bottomed pool that's perfect for children; on the right, the open bay attracts swimmers, snorkelers, and surfers. You'll find excellent swimming, small tide pools to explore, great reefs for snorkeling and diving, good fishing, nice waves for surfers, and a steady wind for windsurfers. See p. 131.
- **Polihale State Park:** This mini-Sahara on the western end of the island is Hawaii's biggest beach: 17 miles long and as wide as three football fields. This is a wonderful place to get away from it all, but don't forget your flip-flops—the midday sand is hotter than a lava flow. The golden sands wrap around Kauai's northwestern shore from the Kekaha plantation town, just beyond Waimea, to where the ridgebacks of the Na Pali Coast begin. The state park includes ancient Hawaiian *heiau* (temple) and burial sites, a view of the "forbidden" island of Niihau, and the famed **Barking Sands Beach**, where footfalls sound like a barking dog. (Scientists say that the grains of sand are perforated with tiny echo chambers, which emit a "barking" sound when they rub together.) See p. 133.
- **Anini Beach County Park:** Kauai's safest beach for swimming and windsurfing, Anini is also one

of the island's most beautiful: It sits on a blue lagoon at the foot of emerald cliffs, looking more like Tahiti than almost any other strand in the islands. This 3-mile-long, gold-sand beach is shielded from the open ocean by the longest, widest fringing reef in Hawaii. With shallow water 4 to 5 feet deep, it's also the very best snorkeling spot on Kauai, even for beginners. On the northwest side, a channel in the reef runs out to the deep blue water with a 60-foot drop that attracts divers. Beachcombers love it, too: Seashells, cowries, and sometimes even rare Niihau shells can be found here. See p. 136.

- **Hanalei Beach:** Gentle waves roll across the face of half-moon Hanalei Bay, running up to the wide, golden sand. Sheer volcanic ridges laced by waterfalls rise to 4,000 feet on the other side, 3 miles inland. Is there any beach with a better location? Celebrated in song and hula and featured on travel posters, this beach owes its natural beauty to its age—it's an ancient sunken valley with post-erosional cliffs. Hanalei Bay indents the coast a full mile inland and runs 2 miles point to point, with coral reefs on either side and a patch of coral in the middle—plus a sunken ship that belonged to a king, so divers love it. Swimming is excellent year-round, especially in summer, when Hanalei Bay becomes a big, placid lake. The aquamarine water is also great for bodyboarding, surfing, fishing, windsurfing, canoe paddling, kayaking, and boating. (There's a boat ramp on the west bank of the Hanalei River.) See p. 136.
- **Haena Beach:** Backed by verdant cliffs, this curvaceous North Shore beach has starred as paradise in many a movie. It's easy to see why

Kauai



4 CHAPTER 1 · BEST OF KAUAI

Hollywood loves Haena Beach, with its grainy golden sand and translucent turquoise waters. Summer months bring calm waters for swimming and snorkeling, while

winter brings mighty waves for surfers. There are plenty of facilities on hand, including picnic tables, restrooms, and showers. See p. 138.

2 The Best Kauai Experiences

- **Hitting the Beach:** A beach is a beach, right? Not on Kauai. With 50 miles of beaches, Kauai offers ocean experiences in all shapes and forms. You can go to a different beach every day during your vacations and still not get tired of seeing them. See chapter 6.
- **Taking the Plunge:** Rent a mask, fins, and snorkel, and enter a magical underwater world. Facedown, you'll float like a leaf on a pond, watching brilliant fish dart here and there in water clear as day; a slow-moving turtle may even stop by to check you out. Faceup, you'll contemplate green-velvet cathedral-like cliffs under a blue sky, with long-tailed tropical birds riding the trade winds. See chapter 6.
- **Meeting Local Folks:** If you go to Kauai and see only people like the ones back home, you might as well not have come. Extend yourself—leave your hotel, go out and meet the locals, and learn about Hawaii and its people. Just smile and say “Howzit?”—which means “How is it?” (“It’s good,” is the usual response—and you may make a new friend.) Hawaii is remarkably cosmopolitan; every ethnic group in the world seems to be represented here. There’s a huge diversity of food, culture, language, and customs.
- **Feeling History Come Alive:** It is possible to walk back in history on Kauai. You can see ancient, ancient history, from the times when the *menehune* were around, at the **Menehune Ditch** and **Menehune Fishpond**. Or experience Hawaiian history at the **Kauai Museum**, the archaeological sites at **Wailua River State Park**, and the **Ka Ulu O Laka heiau**. For more recent history, since the arrival of Captain Cook, check out **Grove Farm Homestead Museum**, **Kilohana**, and **Waioli Mission House Museum**. See chapter 7.
- **Going Deep-Sea, Big-Game Fishing:** Don’t pass up the opportunity to try your luck in the sportfishing capital of the world, where 1,000-pound marlin are taken from the seas just about every month of the year. Not looking to set a world record? Kauai’s charter-boat captains specialize in conservation and will be glad to tag and release any fish you angle, letting it go so someone else can have the fun of fighting a big-game fish tomorrow. See chapter 6.
- **Exploring the Grand Canyon of the Pacific:** The great gaping gulch known as Waimea Canyon is quite a sight. This valley, known for its reddish lava beds, reminds everyone who sees it of the Grand Canyon. Kauai’s version is bursting with ever-changing color, just like its namesake, but it’s smaller—only a mile wide, 3,567 feet deep, and 12 miles long. A massive earthquake sent streams into the single river that ultimately carved this picturesque canyon. Today, the Waimea River—a silver thread of water in the gorge that’s sometimes a trickle, often a torrent, but always there—keeps cutting the canyon deeper and wider, and nobody can say what the result will be 100 million years from now. See chapter 7.

- **Watching the Hula:** The Coconut Marketplace, on Kuhio Highway (Hwy. 56) between mile markers 6 and 7, hosts free shows every day at 5pm. Arrive early to get a good seat for the hour-long performances of both *kahiko* (ancient) and *auwana* (modern) hula. The real show-stoppers are the *keiki* (children) who perform. Don't forget your camera!
- **Bidding the Sun Aloha:** Polihale State Park hugs Kauai's western shore for some 17 miles. It's a great place to bring a picnic dinner, stretch out on the sand, and toast the sun as it sinks into the Pacific, illuminating the island of Niihau in the distance. Queen's Pond has facilities for camping as well as restrooms, showers, picnic tables, and pavilions. See chapter 6.
- **Soaring Over the Na Pali Coast:** This is the only way to see the spectacular, surreal beauty of Kauai. Your helicopter will dip low over razor-thin cliffs, flutter past sparkling waterfalls, and swoop down into the canyons and valleys of the fabled Na Pali Coast. The only problem is that there's too much beauty to absorb, and it all goes by in a rush. See chapter 7.

3 The Best Adventures

- **Take a Helicopter Tour of the Island:** Don't leave Kauai without seeing it from a helicopter. It's expensive but worth the splurge. You can take home memories of the thrilling ride up and over the Kalalau Valley on Kauai's wild North Shore and into the 5,200-foot vertical temple of Mount Waialeale, the most sacred place on the island and the wettest spot on earth. (In some cases, you can even take home a video of your ride.) See p. 172.
- **Explore the Na Pali Coast by Water:** Unless you're willing to make an arduous 22-mile hike (p. 156), there are only two ways to see Na Pali: by helicopter (p. 173) or by boat. Picture yourself cruising the rugged Na Pali coastline in a 42-foot ketch-rigged yacht under full sail, watching the sunset as you enjoy a tropical cocktail, or speeding through the aquamarine water in a 40-foot trimaran as porpoises play off the bow. See p. 139.
- **Kayak Kauai:** You can take the Huleia River into Huleia National Wildlife Refuge (located along the eastern portion of Huleia Stream where it flows into Nawiliwili Bay). It's the last stand for Kauai's endangered birds, and the only way to see it is by kayak. The adventurous can head to the Na Pali Coast, which features majestic cliffs, empty beaches, open-ocean conditions, and monster waves. Or you can just paddle around Hanalei Bay. See p. 141.
- **Duck Underwater:** You haven't really seen Hawaii until you have seen the magical world underwater. Beneath those blue waves is an entire universe in itself. You'll see schools of rainbow-colored fish, dazzling corals, graceful manta rays, lumbering turtles, and quick-moving silvery game fish. If you are really lucky, you may see playful dolphins or the frequent winter visitors to Hawaii, humpback whales. See chapter 6.
- **Hike Until You Drop:** Kauai is made for hiking, from the numerous trails in Waimea Canyon to the high forests of Kokee to the interior trails that give the island its special beauty. See chapter 6.

4 The Best of Natural Hawaii

- **Waterfalls:** Rushing waterfalls thundering downward into sparkling freshwater pools are some of Hawaii's most beautiful natural wonders. Kauai is loaded with waterfalls, especially along the North Shore and in the Wailua area, where you'll find 40-foot **Opaekaa Falls**, probably the best-looking drive-up waterfall on Kauai. With scenic mountain peaks in the background and a restored Hawaiian village on the nearby riverbank, the Opaekaa Falls are what the tourist bureau folks call an eye-popping photo op. See p. 177.
- **Gardens:** The islands are redolent with the sweet scent of flowers. For a glimpse of the full breadth and beauty of Hawaii's spectacular range of tropical flora, we suggest spending an afternoon at a lush garden. **Na Aina Kai Botanical Gardens**, on some 240 acres sprinkled with about 70 life-size (some larger than life-size) whimsical bronze statues, lies hidden off the beaten path of the North Shore.

Other great gardens are **Allerton Garden** in Poipu and **Limahuli** outside of Hanalei.

- **National Wildlife Refuges:** Kauai has three wildlife refuges: **Kilauea Point**, which protects seabirds; **Huleia**, which shelters Hawaiian endemic birds and wetlands; and **Hanalei**, which maintains a sheltered area for Hawaiian birds and the watershed. See p. 141 and 163.
- **The Grand Canyon of the Pacific—Waimea Canyon:** This valley, known for its reddish lava beds, reminds everyone who sees it of Arizona's Grand Canyon. Kauai's version is bursting with ever-changing color, just like its namesake, but it's smaller—only a mile wide, 3,567 feet deep, and 12 miles long. All this grandeur was caused by a massive earthquake that sent existing streams flowing into a single river, which then carved this picturesque canyon. You can stop by the road to view the canyon, hike down into it, or swoop through it by helicopter. See p. 170.

5 The Best of Underwater Hawaii

- **Caverns:** Located off the Poipu Beach resort area, this site consists of a series of lava tubes interconnected by a chain of archways. A constant parade of fish streams by (even shy lionfish are spotted lurking in crevices), brightly hued Hawaiian lobsters hide in the lava's tiny holes, and turtles swim past. See p. 142.
- **Prince Kuhio Park:** This tiny park, across the street from Ho'ai Bay, marks the birthplace of Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole. This park is across the street from the ocean, where the rocky drop-off into the water is not very convenient for access (although snorkeling offshore is great). We suggest that

you go a bit further east to Keiki (Baby) Beach, a small pocket of sand off Hoona Road, where swimming is generally safe. See p. 133.

- **Hanalei Beach:** Divers love this area because it has an ancient sunken valley with post-erosional cliffs. Hanalei Bay indents the coast a full mile inland and runs 2 miles point to point, with coral reefs on either side and a patch of coral in the middle—plus a sunken ship that belonged to a king, which means excellent diving. See p. 136.
- **Oceanarium:** Northwest of Hanalei Bay you'll find this kaleidoscopic marine world in a horseshoe-shaped cove. From the

rare (long-handed spiny lobsters) to the more common (taape, conger eels, and nudibranches), the resident population is one of the more diverse on the island. The topography, which features pinnales, ridges, and archways, is covered with cup corals, black-coral trees, and nooks and crannies enough for a dozen dives. See p. 142.

- **Haena Beach Park:** In summer when the water calms down, this golden sand beach becomes a giant aquarium, great for

snorkeling amid clouds of tropical fish. See p. 138.

- **Kee Beach:** Where the road ends on the North Shore, you'll find a dandy little reddish-gold-sand beach almost too beautiful to be real. It borders a reef-protected cove at the foot of fluted volcanic cliffs. Swimming and snorkeling are safe inside the reef, where long-nosed butterfly fish flit about and schools of *taape* (blue stripe snapper) swarm over the coral. See p. 138.

6 The Best Golf Courses

- **Kauai Lagoons Golf Course** (☎ 800/634-6400): Choose between two excellent Jack Nicklaus-designed courses: the **Mokihana Course** (formerly known as the Lagoons Course), for the recreational golfer, or the **Kauai Kiele Championship Course**, for the low handicapper. The 6,942-yard, par-72 Mokihana is a links-style course with a bunker that's a little less severe than Kiele's; emphasis is on the short game. The Kiele is a mixture of tournament-quality challenge and high-traffic playability. It winds up with one of Hawaii's most difficult holes, a 431-yard, par-4 played straightaway to an island green. See p. 158.

- **Puakea Golf Course** (☎ 866/773-5554): This former Grove Farm sugar plantation just opened up 18 holes in 2003 to rave reviews. The course was in the middle of construction when Hurricane Iniki slammed into it in 1992, rearranging the greens from golf-course designer Robin Nelson's original plan. The first nine (actually the first 10) holes finally opened in 1997 to many kudos; *Sports Illustrated* named Puakea one of the 10 best

nine-hole golf courses in the U.S. The final eight holes were finished last year and now give golfers something to think about. See p. 158.

- **Poipu Bay Golf Course** (☎ 808/742-8711): This 6,959-yard, par-72 course with a links-style layout is the home of the PGA Grand Slam of Golf. Designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr., this challenging course features undulating greens and water hazards on eight of the holes. The par-4 16th hole has the coastline weaving along the entire left side. You can take the safe route to the right and maybe make par (but more likely bogey), or you can try to take it tight against the ocean and possibly make it in two. See p. 161.
- **Kiahuna Golf Club** (☎ 808/742-9595): This par-70, 6,353-yard Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed course plays around four large archaeological sites, ranging from an ancient Hawaiian temple to the remains of a Portuguese home and crypt built in the early 1800s. This Scottish-style course has rolling terrain, undulating greens, 70 sand bunkers, and near-constant winds. At any given time, about half the players on the

8 CHAPTER 1 · BEST OF KAUAI

course are Kauai residents, the other half visitors. See p. 160.

- **Princeville Golf Club** (☎ 808/826-2727): Here you'll find 45 of the best tropical holes of golf in the world, all the work of Robert Trent Jones Jr. They range along green bluffs below sharp mountain peaks and offer stunning

views in every direction. One of the top three courses in Hawaii, the 18-hole Prince provides a round of golf few ever forget; it winds along 390 acres of scenic tableland bisected by tropical jungles, waterfalls, streams, and ravines. See chapter 6.

7 The Best Luxury Hotels & Resorts

- **Hyatt Regency Kauai Resort & Spa** (☎ 800/55-HYATT): This Art Deco beach hotel recalls Hawaii in the 1920s—before the Crash—when gentlemen in blue blazers and ladies in summer frocks came to the islands to learn to surf and play the ukulele. The Hyatt's architecture and location on the sunny side of Kauai make this the island's best hotel. The beach is a bit too rough for swimming, but the saltwater swimming pool is the biggest on the island. An old-fashioned reading room by the sea houses club chairs, billiards, and a bar well stocked with cognac and port. Golf, horseback riding, and the shops of Koloa, a boutique plantation town, are nearby diversions. See p. 72.
- **Kauai Marriott Resort & Beach Club** (☎ 800/220-2925): This truly looks like a Hawaiian hotel because water is found everywhere throughout the resort: lagoons, waterfalls, fountains, a 5-acre circular swimming pool (some 26,000 sq. ft., the largest on the island), and a terrific stretch of beach. The lagoons are home to six islands that serve as an exotic mini-zoo, which still lends an air of fantasy to the place and, along with the enormous pool and children's program, makes the resort popular with families. See p. 68.
- **Sheraton Kauai Resort** (☎ 800/782-9488): This modern Sheraton (since 1997) has the feeling of old Hawaii and a dynamite

location on one of Kauai's best beaches. It features buildings on both the ocean side and the mountain side of the road. The horseshoe-shaped, Polynesian-style lobby has shell chandeliers dangling from the ceiling. You have a choice of three buildings: one nestled in tropical gardens with koi-filled ponds; one facing the palm-fringed, white-sand beach (our favorite); and one looking across green grass to the ocean, with great sunset views. The rooms overlook either the tropical gardens or the rolling surf. See p. 74.

- **Princeville Resort Kauai** (☎ 800/826-4400): This palace of green marble and sparkling chandeliers recalls Hawaii's monarchy period of the 19th century. It's set in one of the most remarkable locations in the world, on a cliff between the crystal-blue waters of Hanalei Bay and steeped mountains. You arrive on the ninth floor and go down to the beach. Opulent rooms with magnificent views and all the activities of Princeville and Hanalei make this one of Hawaii's finest resorts. See p. 92.
- **Hanalei Bay Resort & Suites** (☎ 800/827-4427): This 22-acre resort is just up the street from ritzy Princeville Resort (see above), overlooking the fabled Bali Ha'i cliffs and Hanalei Bay. It has the same majestic view, but for as little as half the price. The place recaptures

the spirit of old Hawaii, especially in the three-story stucco units that angle down the hill to the gold-sand, palm-fringed beach it shares with its neighbor. Rooms are decorated in island style, with rattan

furnishings and lanais overlooking the bay, the lush grounds, and the distant mountains. Shuttle service is available for those who may have problems walking on the steep hillside. See p. 93.

8 The Best Moderately Priced Accommodations

- **Hideaway Cove Villas** (☎ 886/849-2426): Just a block from the beach and next door to an excellent restaurant are these gorgeous condominiums in a plantation setting. Amenities are top-drawer, and no expense was spared in the decor. Living areas are spacious, kitchens come with the best appliances and granite-top counters, and the outdoor lanais are big. You get all of this in a lush, landscaped tropical jungle at an affordable price. See p. 77.
- **Poipu Kapili Resort** (☎ 800/443-7714): This quiet, upscale oceanfront cluster of condos is outstanding in every area. We like the home-away-from-home comforts and special touches: a video and book library, a spacious pool, several barbecues, tennis courts lit for night play, and an herb garden. (You're welcome to take samples if you're cooking.) A golf course is located nearby. See p. 75.
- **Garden Isle Cottages Oceanfront** (☎ 800/742-6711): The site is spectacular: a 13-foot cliff overlooking historic Koloa Landing and an ocean inlet (where you can see turtles swimming). Nestled in a tropical garden setting, these one-bedroom apartments have an island feel, with rattan furniture, batiks, and original art on the walls—and great views. This is a quiet, peaceful place to stay in the heart of the Poipu area, within walking distance of beaches, golfing, tennis, shopping, and restaurants. See p. 76.
- **Turtle Cove Suites** (☎ 866/294-2733): What makes this property so incredible is not only the fabulous location (overlooking the stream and ocean) but also the great eye of the interior designer. It helps that owner Joe Sylvester and his wife own a furniture and fine arts store from which to choose the “perfect” items for their four units. Our favorite of the units, located on a quiet street away from the crowds, is the 1,100-square-foot oceanfront suite with a full kitchen and private Jacuzzi, original art on the walls, and a zillion little touches that make this place seem more like a home than a vacation rental. See p. 77.
- **Kauai Cove** (☎ 800/624-9945): These immaculate cottages, located just 300 feet from Koloa Landing and next to Waikomo Stream, are the perfect private getaway. Each studio has a full kitchen, a private lanai (with barbecue grill), and a big bamboo four-poster bed. The cozy rooms feature beautiful hardwood floors, tropical decor, and cathedral ceilings. The cottages are close enough for walks to sandy beaches, great restaurants, and shopping, yet far enough off the beaten path that privacy and quiet are assured. See p. 77.
- **Waimea Plantation Cottages** (☎ 800/92-ASTON): This beachfront vacation retreat is like no other in the islands: Among groves of towering coco palms sit clusters of restored sugar-plantation cottages, dating from the 1880s to the 1930s and bearing the names of

10 CHAPTER 1 · BEST OF KAUAI

their original plantation-worker dwellers. The lovely cottages have been transformed into cozy, comfortable guest units with period rattan and wicker furniture and fabrics from the 1930s, sugar's heyday on Kauai. Each has a furnished lanai and a fully equipped modern kitchen and bathroom; some units are oceanfront. Facilities include an oceanfront pool, tennis courts, and laundry. The seclusion of the village makes it a nice place for kids to wander and explore, away from traffic. See p. 83.

- **Wailua Bayview** (☎ 800/882-9007): Located right on the ocean, these spacious one-bedroom apartments offer excellent value. The bedrooms are roomy, and the sofa bed in the living room allows you to sleep up to four. On-site facilities include a pool and barbecue area. Restaurants, bars, shopping, golfing, and tennis are nearby. See p. 90.
- **Moloa'a Beach House** (☎ 800/262-9912): Off the beaten track, hidden in the not-so-well-known beach community of Moloa'a, this

modern, just-built, multimillion-dollar home is located right on the beach. Its unbelievable rates are \$225 for the studio and \$275 for the one-bedroom unit (or \$500 for the entire house). Everything in this two-unit home is first-class, from the marble floors to the granite kitchen countertop to the top-of-the-line kitchen appliances to the furniture. But the real reason to stay here is the eye-popping ocean view, just steps outside your door. On the 1,600-square-foot flat roof are a sun deck, Jacuzzi, and wet bar. You may never want to leave. See p. 94.

- **Aloha Sunrise Inn/Aloha Sunset Inn** (☎ 888/828-1008): Hidden on the North Shore, these two unique cottages nestle on a quiet 7-acre farm. They come fully furnished with all the great videos you've been meaning to watch, and an excellent CD library. The cottages are close to activities, restaurants, and shopping, yet isolated enough to offer the peace and quiet of old Hawaii. Rates are \$125 to \$130. See p. 94.

9 The Best Bed-and-Breakfasts

- **Victoria Place** (☎ 808/332-9300): This is our favorite bed-and-breakfast on Kauai. The reason to stay here? One name: Edee Seymour. It's easy to see why she won the Kauai Chamber of Commerce's Aloha Spirit Award. Her motto is "We pamper!" She lavishes her guests with attention and aloha. Her spacious, sky-lit, U-shaped house wraps around the garden and pool, which are surrounded by flowering walls of bougainvillea, hibiscus, gardenia, and ginger. Edee's breakfasts are truly a big deal: five kinds of fruit, followed by something from the oven such as homemade bread,

scones, or muffins. Most of her guests are returnees. As a couple from Germany told us, "Once you stay with Edee, every place else is cold and indifferent." See p. 79.

- **Gloria's Spouting Horn Bed & Breakfast** (☎ 808/742-6995): As one guest put it, "Staying here makes you want to get married again!" The price is a little high, but a stay here can be the highlight of your trip. All three spacious guest rooms are oceanfront, with huge private lanais overlooking the secluded beach. All of the private bathrooms feature Japanese-style deep soaking tubs and separate showers. There is an oceanside

pool, and elaborate breakfasts are served every morning. See p. 74.

- **Marjorie's Kauai Inn** (☎ 800/717-8838): This quiet property, perched on the side of a hill, is just 10 minutes from Poipu Beach and 5 minutes from Old Koloa Town. From its large lanai, it offers stunning views over rolling pastures and the Lawai Valley. The best reason to stay here is Marjorie Ketcher herself. "Do more than one fun thing a day!" is Marjorie's motto, and she makes sure that her guests are out enjoying one of the hundreds of things she can recommend. See p. 78.
- **Hale Kua** (☎ 800/440-4353): This is for people who love the beach—at a distance, and want to sleep in the quiet and cool climate of the hills of Lawai Valley, away from the maddening crowds. If you want to stay in a forest, wake up to bird song, and see incredible sunsets each night, this is your place. The beach is just a 10-minute drive down the hill. See p. 81.
- **Lani-keha** (☎ 800/821-4898): Step back in time to the 1940s, when Hawaiian families lived in open, airy, rambling homes on large plots of land lush with fruit trees and sweet-smelling flowers. This gracious age is still alive and well in Lani-keha, a *kamaaina* (old-timer) home with an open

living/game/writing/dining room and oversize picture windows to take in the views. Bedrooms come with private bathrooms. The house is elegant yet casual, with old-style rattan furniture—practicality and comfort outweigh design aesthetics. See p. 89.

- **Rosewood Bed & Breakfast** (☎ 808/822-5216): This lovingly restored century-old plantation home, set amid tropical flowers, lily ponds, and waterfalls, has accommodations to suit everyone. There's a Laura Ashley-style room in the main house, and two private cottages on the grounds. There's also a bunkhouse with three separate small rooms with a shared shower and toilet. See p. 90.
- **Hale Ho'o Maha** (☎ 800/851-0291): Kirby Guyer and her husband, Toby, have a spacious four-bedroom, three-bathroom home on 5 acres. It's filled with Hawaiian and South Pacific artifacts and features a fireplace, a library, and a 150-gallon saltwater aquarium more entertaining than TV. The rooms are uniquely decorated and are priced with budget travelers in mind. The home is close to two remarkable white-sand beaches, golf courses, riding stables, restaurants, and markets. See p. 96.

10 The Best Restaurants

- **Casa Blanca at Kiahuna** (☎ 808/742-2929): Elizabeth "Liz" Foley, the same culinary genius behind the Dali Deli and Café Cara, has just opened this stylish, open-air restaurant overlooking the manicured grounds of the Kiahuna Swim and Tennis Club. This casual, elegant restaurant not only is physically beautiful but serves some of the best cuisine

on Kauai, including a gourmet breakfast, a creative lunch, a tapas menu of small items (each one so delicious you can make a meal of them), and probably the best dinner you will eat on Kauai. See p. 106.

- **The Beach House** (☎ 808/742-1424): All reports are good from this beachfront magnet in Lawai, formerly owned by Jean-Marie

Josselin, who sold it to smart Maui restaurateurs who know a good thing when they see it. Subscribing to the if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it philosophy, the new owners left the staff and operation intact. Though there has been a major cosmetic overhaul, the food is as good as ever. Beach House remains the south shore's premier spot for sunset drinks, appetizers, and dinner—a treat for all the senses. See p. 103.

- **Dondero's** (☎ 808/742-1234): If you are looking for a romantic dinner either under the stars overlooking the ocean or tucked away at an intimate table surrounded by inlaid marble floors, ornate imported floor tiles, and Franciscan murals, this is your best bet. All this atmosphere comes with the best Italian cuisine on the island, served with efficiency. It's hard to have a bad experience here. Dinners are pricey and worth every penny. See p. 104.
- **Hanapepe Café** (☎ 808/335-5011): Now under new management, Hanapepe maintains the same wholesome cuisine in a casual, winning ambience that has drawn foodies for a decade. This is "the place" to get going in the morning with such draws as espresso, multi-grain pancakes, and homemade sourdough French toast. During lunchtime the place is packed with businesspeople who drive 30 minutes to eat here. On the Friday-night dinner menu, the Italian specialties shine: lasagna quattro formaggio with spinach, mushrooms, and four cheeses; crepes; and other goodies. There's no liquor license, so if you want wine, bring your own. See p. 112.
- **Caffè Coco** (☎ 808/822-7990): This gets our vote for the most charming ambience on Kauai. Caffè Coco is just off the main

road at the edge of a cane field in Wailua, its backyard shaded by fruit trees, with a view of Sleeping Giant Mountain. Gourmet fare is cooked to order—and at cafe prices. The food is excellent, with vegetarian and other healthful delights such as spanakopita, homemade chai, Greek salad, fish wraps, macadamia nut-black sesame ahi with wasabi cream, and an excellent tofu-and-roast-veggie wrap. See p. 116.

- **A Pacific Cafe Kauai** (☎ 808/822-0013): The first restaurant Jean-Marie Josselin opened in his burgeoning culinary empire is still the reigning fave. The signature items (tiger-eye sushi, garlic-crisped mahimahi) are staples. Foodies agree: It's the way he uses Kauai produce and seafood that gives this dining room the edge. See p. 114.
- **Lighthouse Bistro Kilauea** (☎ 808/828-0481): Even if you're not on your way to the legendary Kilauea Lighthouse, this bistro is so good it's worth a special trip. The charming green-and-white wooden building next to Kong Lung Store has open sides, old-fashioned plantation architecture, open-air seating, trellises, and high ceilings. The food is excellent, an eclectic selection that highlights local ingredients in everything from fresh fish tacos and fresh fish burgers to mac nut-crusted ahi and four preparations of fresh catch—much more elegant than usual lunchtime fare. See p. 123.
- **La Cascata** (☎ 808/826-9644): The North Shore's special-occasion restaurant is sumptuous—a Sicilian spree in Eden. Try to get here before dark, so you can enjoy the views of Bali Hai, the persimmon-colored sunset, and the waterfalls of Waialeale, all an integral part of

the feast. Click your heels on the terra-cotta floors, take in the trompe l'oeil vines, train your eyes

through the concertina windows, and pretend you're being served on a terrazzo in Sicily. See p. 121.

11 The Best Shops & Galleries

- **Tropical Flowers by Charles** (☎ 800/699-7984): Charles a flower genius who grows a range of tropical flowers, including some very rare and unusual varieties. Prices are extremely reasonable. See p. 188.
- **Banana Patch Studio** (☎ 808/335-5944): This place has the best prices on the island for anything artsy and cute like tropical plates and cups, hand-painted tiles, artwork, handmade soaps, pillows with tropical designs, and jewelry. Plus, they will pack and ship for you anywhere. See p. 189.
- **Bambulei** (☎ 808/823-8641): Celebrate the charm and style of 1930s to 1940s collectibles in this treasure trove at the edge of a cane field. Fabulous one-of-a-kind vintage finds—Mandarin dresses with hand-sewn sequins, 1940s *pake* muumuus in mint condition, Peking lacquerware, and Bakelite jewelry—fill this jewel of a boutique, owned by two women with a passion for the past. See p. 189.
- **Kong Lung** (☎ 808/828-1822): You'll be surprised by what you find inside this 1922 stone building. It's a showcase of design, style, and quality, with items from dinnerware, books, jewelry, and clothing to the finest sake and tea sets on the island. Throw in a lacquer bowl or two, a pair of beaded sandals, and a silk dress from the women's section, and the party's on at "Gump's of the Pacific." See p. 192.
- **Robert Hamada's Studio**: Woodturner Robert Hamada makes works of art for wood purists: museum-quality bowls and large sculptural shapes in kou, milo, kauila, camphor, mango, and native woods he logs himself. He works in his studio at the foot of the Sleeping Giant, quietly producing luminous pieces with unique textures and grains. His skill, his lathe, and his more than 60 years of experience put him in a class of his own. See p. 190.
- **Yellowfish Trading Company** (☎ 808/826-1227): Surprise yourself at Yellowfish Trading Company, where vintage bark cloth and that one-of-a-kind 1940s rattan sofa are among owner Gritt Benton's short-lived pleasures. The collectibles—1930s lampshades, '40s vases, '50s lunchboxes, antique silk piano shawls—move quickly. See p. 193.
- **Ola's** (☎ 808/826-6937): Fine crafts from across the country find their way to this temple of good taste: lamps, vases, blown glass, drumsticks, jewelry, hard-to-find books, and the peerless paintings of award-winning artist Doug Britt. See p. 193.