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Strategies for Seeing **Maui**



Maui may be an island, but it's a good-sized island and your vacation time is precious. There really is just one cardinal rule: relax. Maui is not a place to "see" but a place to experience. If you are too busy rushing to see everything, you won't experience the magic of the island. Here are my suggestions for making the most out of your time.

Rule #1: Remember you are on vacation

Don't jam-pack your days with activities; allow time to relax, to stop and smell the plumerias. Since you'll probably arrive jet lagged, make sure to spend some time on your first day lounging around the beach or the hotel swimming pool. Don't forget that exposure to sunlight can help reset your internal clock—another good reason to visit the beach when you arrive.

Rule #2: Driving takes a lot longer on Maui

You will need a car to get around; Maui does not have adequate public transportation. But plan to get out of your car as much as possible. Don't just look at Maui from the car window, get out and breathe in the tropical aroma, soak in those views, and listen to the sounds of the island. Sure, you could drive the 50-mile- (80.5km-) long Hana Highway in as few as 2 to 3 hours, but that would miss the point of the journey entirely. One last thing: Maui does have traffic jams. Between 7 to 9am and 4 to 6pm the main roads are bumper-to-bumper with commuters. Plan accordingly. Sleep in late and get on the road after the traffic has cleared out, or watch the sunset and then go to dinner.

Rule #3: If your visit is short, stay in one place

Unless you're visiting for a week or longer, try not to hotel hop. With the exception of Hana, all the towns

on Maui are within easy driving distance. Second, it is not easy (or cheap) checking in and out of hotels. There's the schlepping of the luggage (and the corresponding tips to the parking valet, the bellman, and so on), the waiting in line to check in, and unpacking, only to repeat the entire process a few days later. Your vacation time is too precious.

Rule #4: Pick the key activity of the day and plan accordingly

To maximize your time, decide what you really want to do that day, then plan all other activities in the same geographical area. For example, if you really want to go golfing at Kapalua, pick a beach in the same area for the afternoon or a shopping spree in the

Take some time to stop and smell the plumerias.



area and plan dinner nearby, that way you won't have to track back and forth across the island.

Rule #5: Remember you are on the island of aloha

Maui is different. Slow down (no need to rush, you're on vacation). Smile and say "aloha," it's what the local residents do. Ask them: "Howzit?" (the local expression for "how are you?"). When they ask you, tell 'em "Couldn't be better—I'm on Maui!" Wave at everyone—you'll feel better, they'll feel better. Laugh a lot, even if things aren't going as

Makena Beach.



Keep your eyes peeled, and you might see a Hawaiian honeycreeper like this one.

planned—laugh. Even if you're stuck in a traffic jam—laugh. (Hey, you're on Maui, how bad can it be?)

Rule #6: Use this book as a reference, not a concrete plan

You will not hurt my feelings if you don't follow every single tour and do absolutely everything I've suggested. In fact, you'll have a better time if you pick and choose the tours you want to take and the things you want to do. This book is filled with recommendations. ●

Fly Direct

If possible, fly non-stop and directly to the island of Maui (the airport is in Kahului and the airport code is OGG). Not only is it easier, but it will save you time. Yes, there are flights from the U.S. Mainland through Honolulu and then on to Maui, but the "on to Maui" bit generally means getting off a plane in the big, big Honolulu International Airport, and transferring to another terminal. Going through the fun-filled security procedures (taking off your shoes again!), and then checking in and waiting (sometimes up to 2 hours) for your flight to Maui is no way to begin a vacation.