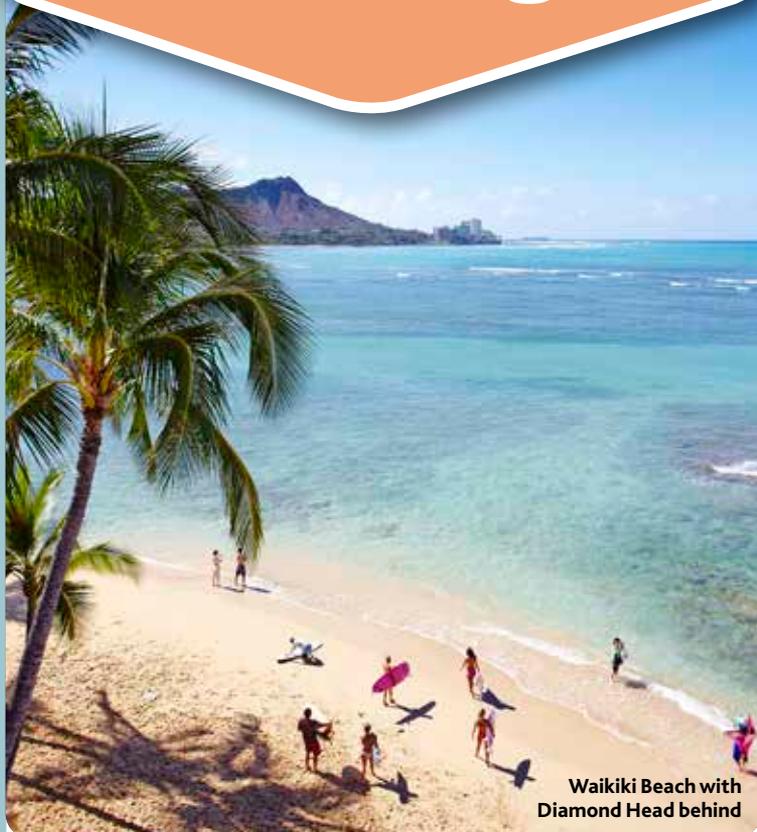


Honolulu on a budget



Waikiki Beach with Diamond Head behind

Honolulu, the boisterous capital of Hawaii, delivers an explosion of diverse experiences. Though a flight to these tropical islands doesn't come cheap, once you get to the city, you'll find it works just fine on a budget.

📍 SIGHTS

Ala Moana Beach Park (1201 Ala Moana Blvd)

This city park has a broad, golden-sand beach nearly a mile long, buffered from passing traffic by shade trees. Ala Moana is hugely popular, yet big enough to never feel too crowded. This is where Honolulu residents come to go running after work, play beach volleyball and enjoy weekend picnics. The park has tennis courts, ball fields, picnic tables, drinking water, restrooms, outdoor showers and lifeguards.

Ali'iolani Hale (jhchawaii.net; 417 South King St)

The 'House of Heavenly Kings' was designed by Australian architect Thomas Rowe to be a royal palace, although it was never used as such. Today, it's

home to the Supreme Court of Hawaii. Go through the security checkpoint (entry is free) and step inside the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center, where you can browse displays about martial law during WWII and the reign of Kamehameha I.

Chinatown Markets (chinatownnow.com)

In the commercial heart of Chinatown is its market. Noodle factories, plus pastry and produce stalls, line the narrow sidewalks, always crowded with cart-pushing grandmothers and errand-running families. The sellers have everything a Chinese cook needs: ginger root, fresh octopus, jasmine rice, slabs of tuna, long beans and jellyfish. Even if you're not looking to pick up groceries, it's a sight to behold.

Hawai'i State Art Museum (sfca.hawaii.gov; 250 South Hotel St)

With its thought-provoking collections, this public museum brings together traditional and contemporary pieces from across Hawaii's communities – all free to the public. The museum inhabits a grand 1928 Spanish Mission Revival-style building.

Hawaii Theatre (hawaiitheatre.com; 1130 Bethel St)

A Neoclassical landmark that first opened in 1922, when silent films were played to the tunes of a pipe organ. Dubbed the 'Pride of the Pacific', the theatre ran continuous shows during WWII and, after some restorations, reopened in 1996. Its stunning architecture is free to see.

Izumo Taishakyo Mission (izumotaishahawaii.com; 215 North Kukui St)

Ringing the bell at the entrance to this Shinto shrine built by Japanese immigrants in 1922 is considered an act of purification by those who come to pray. Thousands of good-luck amulets are sold here annually.

Pu'u 'Ualaka'a State Wayside (hawaiistateparks.org)

At this hillside park, sweeping views extend from Diamond Head on the left, across Waikiki and downtown Honolulu, to the Waianae Range off to the right. The airport is visible on the coast and Pearl Harbor beyond that.

🌿 ACTIVITIES

Manoa Falls Trail (hawaii.com/oahu/things-to-do/hiking/manoa-falls-trail)

Honolulu's most rewarding short hike, this 1.6-mile round-trip runs above a rocky streambed before ending at a pretty little cascade. Wild orchids and red ginger grow near the falls, which drop about 100ft into a small, shallow pool.

Nā Mea Hawaii (nameahawaii.com; Ward Village, 1050 Ala Moana Blvd)

Visit for a community bookstore, art gallery and gift shop, plus free classes, workshops and demonstrations in hula dancing, Hawaiian language, traditional

feather lei making, and lauhala weaving and ukulele playing.

✂ EATING

Aloha Cones SEAFOOD £ (alohaconeshawaii.com; 725 Kinau St)

This tiny place has made a name for itself with sushi, salad, poké bowls and shave ice. It's the fresh fish that keeps the locals coming, and the tuna is tops. Try a shoyu (soy sauce) ahi poke bowl.

Aloha Vietnamese Food VIETNAMESE £ (00 1 808 941 1170; 2320 South King St)

Don't be fazed by the lines out of the door or the lack of decor. The menu is extensive, the service friendly and the food is superb. Try the brisket and sirloin pho.

Helena's Hawaiian Food HAWAIIAN £ (helenahawaiianfood.com; 1240 North School St)

Walking through the door is like stepping into another era at this legendary eatery, which opened in 1946. The original award-winning owner, Helena Chock, has passed away, but her relatives are still in charge of the kitchen.

Don't miss

The **Honolulu Festival** brings three days of Asian-Pacific cultural exchange with music, dance and drama events, an arts and crafts fair, a parade (pictured) and fireworks, all in early March (honolulu festival.com). Come in July and you could see the **Prince Lot Hula Festival** – the state's oldest and largest non-competitive hula event (moanalua gardens foundation.org).



HONOLULU ON A BUDGET



TOP PICKS

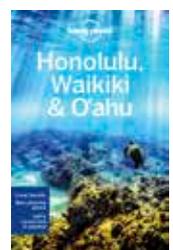
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Sleeping

Hostelling International (HI) Honolulu £
 Best for backpackers (hostelsaloha.com; 2323a Seaview Ave)
 Along a quiet residential side street near the University of Hawaii Manoa campus, this tidy, low-slung house a short bus ride from Waikiki has same-sex dorms and private rooms kept cool by the trade winds. It always rocks a full, lively atmosphere and a sociable outlook, and provides a kitchen and laundry room.

Manoa Valley Inn ££
 Best for B&B brilliance (manoavalleyinn.com; 2001 Vancouver Dr)
 Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Manoa Valley Inn was built in 1912 and is a block west from the University of Hawaii. A Honolulu landmark since it was built, the inn features seven plush rooms filled with antiques, lovely gardens, and a saltwater pool fringed with palms and pink flowers. It also serves a sumptuous breakfast.

Pagoda Hotel ££
 Best for an idyllic outdoor pool (pagodahotel.com; 1525 Rycroft St)
 A couple of blocks up from the Ala Moana Center, the Pagoda Hotel has a beautiful Japanese garden and a popular on-site restaurant. A \$13 per day 'convenience fee' gets you use of a Waikiki shuttle, wifi and shopping discounts. The pool is oasis-like, and there are daily koi (carp) feedings. The hotel is less than a 15-minute walk from the beach.



FURTHER READING
 Pick up our *Honolulu, Waikiki & Oahu* guide (£15.99) or download as an eBook (£11.19) or chapters (£2.99 each) from shop.lonelyplanet.com.