

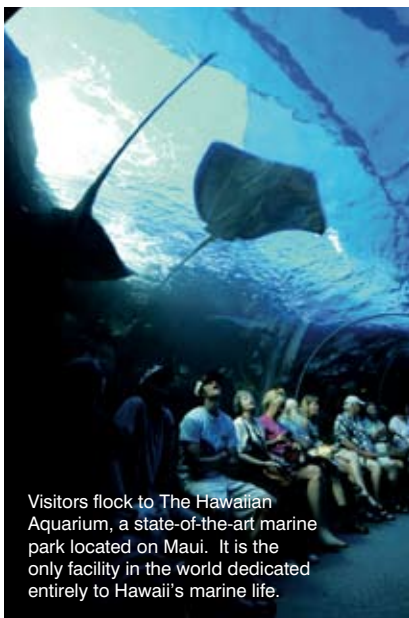


# The Magic of Maui

Prepare to be enchanted

**A**s you approach any Hawaiian island from the air, you are guaranteed to sport a smile a mile wide, knowing that you are about to arrive in paradise. Flying over the island of Maui is quite magical; from the moment it comes into view, you become enchanted, falling under its spell.

Known as the “Valley Isle,” Maui is frequently called one of the prettiest islands in the world—and for good reason.



Visitors flock to The Hawaiian Aquarium, a state-of-the-art marine park located on Maui. It is the only facility in the world dedicated entirely to Hawaii's marine life.

The 48-mile-long tropical paradise offers the perfect blend of lush landscapes, rugged mountains and valleys, and warm Polynesian culture, not to mention white sand beaches, cerulean blue waters, cascading waterfalls, and pineapple and sugarcane fields that stretch to the horizon.

Maui also is home to the world's largest dormant volcano, Mount Haleakala, or “House of the Sun,” whose presence you can sense from afar. It's perhaps Maui's most magnificent site, rising to more than 10,000 feet above sea level, and boasts the most heavenly sunrises from

atop its crater (which literally brought tears to my eyes).

Ringed with more than 120 miles of coastline, Maui is lined with strikingly beautiful hotels and resorts offering manicured

beaches, oceanfront restaurants and bars, indulgent spas, and a vast array of water activities (added bonuses include extraordinary art galleries, and, of course, great shopping). For those who prefer more charming, intimate accommodations, there are several inns and bed and breakfasts from which to choose. We stayed at The Plantation Inn in historic Lahaina Town on the island's left coast, once the royal capital of the Hawaiian kingdom.

The Plantation Inn, located just one block from the ocean, is tucked away serenely in the heart of Lahaina. Considered Maui's premier bed and breakfast, it is truly a home away from home. When we arrived, we were greeted with warm smiles from the staff, who instantly made us feel as if they had known us for years. The inn is a mélange of 19 quaint and uniquely appointed rooms and suites centered around a tropical garden, a secluded blue-tile pool, spa and terrace, where complimentary deluxe breakfasts are served poolside. We highly recommend the chef's gourmet French toast and eggs basquaise.

Don't be fooled by the inn's laid-back, homey feel. It lays claim to Maui's award-winning, four-star French restaurant, Gerard's. Inspired by Chef Gerard Reversade's love of French cuisine and passion for using fresh ingredients from Maui's upcountry, the menu includes divine selections such as fresh ahi tartare, roasted Hawaiian snapper with star anise, and the grilled filet of beef with warm Maui onion jam. Come prepared to savor the experience; dining at Gerard's is nothing to be rushed through.

Although it's certainly possible to be a total beach bum, you may want to experience the island's unforgettable adventures instead, and, to do so, you will need to rent a car. We opted to take

Shown above:  
**THE PLANTATION INN**

174 Lahainaluna Road  
800.433.6815  
[theplantationinn.com](http://theplantationinn.com)



a driving tour, which lead us through Maui's beautiful upcountry toward Hana on the far eastern coast.

Our first stop was the Surfing Goat Dairy in Kula, where owners Thomas and Eva Kafsack—eccentric and charming Germans—found a rich plot on the slopes of Haleakala to raise goats and create internationally acclaimed organic cheeses. The farm is delightful and entertaining, and the Kafsacks make feeding, petting and even hand-milking goats an unforgettable experience. Twenty-minute tours are offered daily, which include a cheese tasting, and you can sample and purchase any of the farm's more than 20 award-winning cheeses, ranging from fresh creamy chevre and lightly salty feta to perfectly ripened cheeses in wax.

Next, we arrived at the Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm. Nestled right along the cloud line of Haleakala, this farm is a lavender oasis. Owner Ali'i Chang, a lovely botanical shaman of sorts, has created a garden unlike any other in the world, where fields cascade down the mountainside with more than 25,000 lavender plants of 45 different varieties. The farm offers walking tours—often led by Ali'i himself—that begin with lavender tea and lavender scones (custom lunches for individuals or groups also are offered, as are wreath-making tours). At the gift shop, stock up on unique items such as lavender-mango lip balm, lavender-strawberry syrup and lavender-coconut soap. You will leave feeling renewed, relaxed and rejuvenated.

As we headed further east, we stopped at the Tedeschi Vineyards, Maui's only winery. Tedeschi is home to the wildly popular and celebrated Maui blanc pineapple wine, as well as the respected Maui-style Syrah and Chenin Blanc. On the grounds, you can see the vineyards of Ulupalakua Ranch stretch all the way to the sea. Go on one of the daily tours, and ask for Haunani (pronounced Haw-nah-nee), who

This page, from top: One of the many beautiful beaches found in Maui; Lahaina is bustling day and night; 10,000 feet above sea level at Mount Haleakala

Opposite page: One of the intimate rooms at The Plantation Inn; Chef Gerard Reversade at The Plantation Inn's four-star French restaurant, Gerard's

## What to do and where to eat

**Surfing Goat Dairy Farm**  
3651 Omaopio Road  
808.878.2870  
surfinggoatdairy.com

**Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm**  
1100 Waipoli Road  
808.878.3004  
aliiikulalavender.com

**Maui's Winery**  
Tedeschi Vineyards, Ltd.  
808.878.6058/877.878.8058  
mauiwine.com

**Trilogy Excursions**  
180 Lahainaluna Road  
808.661.4743  
sailtrilogy.com

**Maui Ocean Center**  
The Hawaiian Aquarium  
192 Ma'alaea Rd.  
808.270.7000  
mauiocenter.com

**Mama's Fish House**  
799 Poho Place  
808.579.8488  
mamasfishhouse.com  
Call ahead for dinner reservations.

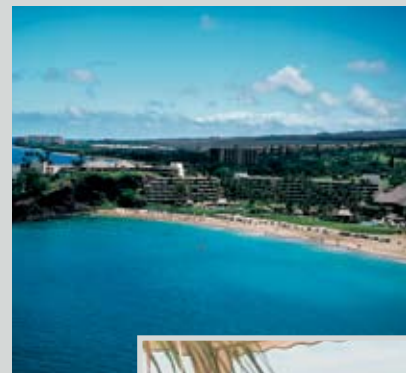
**Gerard's**  
at The Plantation Inn  
808.661.8939  
Dinner is served from 6 to 9 p.m.  
Reservations are highly recommended.

**Teppan-yaki Dan**  
at the Sheraton Maui  
808.662.8053  
Dinner is served from 5:45 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

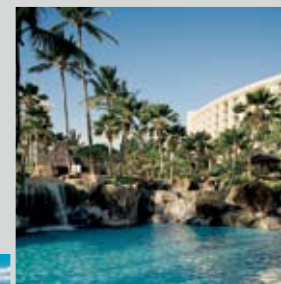
**Tropica**  
at the Westin Maui Resort & Spa  
866.500.8313  
Dinner is served 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.  
Reservations are highly recommended.

## More Great Spots to Stay

As the first resort on Ka'anapali Beach, the **Sheraton Maui Resort** claimed the area's most idyllic location. Nestled into historic Black Rock promontory, its sprawling 23 acres comprise 510 rooms in six towers, paradisiacal green space, a croquet lawn, a 142-yard lagoon-style pool and more. The hotel is part of the Ka'anapali Beach Resort community, which includes 36 holes of golf and the Whalers Village Shops and Restaurants. Guests can explore the world-famous Black Rock area by snorkeling, scuba diving and surfing, or discover traditional Hawaiian culture with lessons in poi ball, hula, lei making and ukulele. After an active day, unwind at the resort's spa, then head to the poolside bar to watch the sunset cliff-diving ceremony—an evening rite not to be missed. Dine with a group at Teppan-yaki Dan, a contemporary Japanese grill. Or, if you'd like a more intimate dining experience, choose a location anywhere on the resort and be served under the stars by your own private butler. It doesn't get more romantic than that! Guest rooms feature high-speed Internet, private lanai (balcony), yukata robes and dataports; suites offer all that plus a more spacious bedroom area and a bathroom with separate shower and a double vanity. For a honeymoon or special occasion getaway, the spacious Ali'i Suite is situated atop Black Rock with stunning panoramic views of the entire area. The Sheraton is family-friendly, offering plenty for children to do. For more information, call 808.661.0031 or visit [sheraton-maui.com](http://sheraton-maui.com).



Located on 12 oceanfront acres of Maui's Ka'anapali Beach, the **Westin Maui Resort & Spa** claims to be "where heaven and Aloha meet." With the resort's exotic gardens and wildlife as well as 15 to 20 foot waterfalls bound by the glittering Pacific Ocean and the lush West Maui Mountains, guests find themselves in an earthly Elysium. The Westin Maui features 758 recently renovated guest rooms and suites, which include the trademark Heavenly Beds (10 layers of deluxe bedding) and beautiful views of tropical mountain scenery or Hawaii's Lanai and Molokai islands. Rooms are styled with contemporary island décor and suites offer 1,232 square feet of luxury. There's also the immense, luxurious spa where massages, facials and body treatments bring nirvana a little closer. The 87,000-square-foot pool area includes an adult-only pool (perfect for those seeking peace and quiet), a secluded Jacuzzi and a 128-foot waterslide, plus four other pools. To wrap up a tranquil island day, try Tropica, the resort's signature restaurant, with its stunning views and innovative, fire-inspired cuisine. For guests wanting a divine wedding locale, the Westin Maui provides Hawaii's only director of romance. Through the wedding department, the romance director manages all resort wedding events, from intimate two-person ceremonies to large extravaganzas, and particularly caters to the special needs of brides. For rates and more information, call 866.500.8313 or visit [westinmaui.com](http://westinmaui.com).



provides a historical background on the paniolos, or Hawaiian cowboys, and their contribution to Maui's rise in prominence. Tastings are held in the King's Cottage, which was constructed in the late 1800s for Hawaii's reigning monarchs. Enjoy a picnic on the cottage lawn and savor the Hawaiian vistas as you sip on Maui wine.

On the way back to Lahaina, we tried out the famed Mama's Fish House for an early dinner and cocktails. Located in Kuau Cove right on the beach, this Maui icon serves outstanding fresh-catch plates and grand drinks, including the island favorite, Tropical Itch.

If you seek an ocean adventure, head two miles offshore to snorkel inside Molokini Crater, Maui's extinct volcano. Molokini's back wall sharply drops to depths of 300 feet and shelters a lush reef that is home to nearly 250 fish species—some of which are found nowhere else on earth. The tours, offered by the environmentally minded Trilogy Excursions from Ma'alaea Harbor, make this trek to the crater even more memorable. Captain Patty and her crew treat you as family, sharing interesting island facts—while plucking a ukulele or two—and the necessary diving tips. Book your tour in advance, and be sure to look back at the island as you head toward Molokini. Most likely, you will catch a rainbow or two.

Regardless of how you decide to spend your time on Maui, you will not only leave with a killer tan, you will also leave, as I did, with stars in your eyes. —CHAD BOYD