

 *THE ALOHA STATE* is one of the priciest destinations in the country, but with insider intelligence, it doesn't have to be. Our correspondents have scoured the Hawaiian islands to turn up 33 places to stay and 23 places to dine without breaking the bank or sacrificing comfort or style.



Big Island



The Big Island—twice the size of the other islands combined—has something to appeal to every traveler: white, black, and green sand beaches, coffee farms, marine preserves, rain forests, and horse ranches. It's also home to massive *Mauna Kea*, known for its colony of world-class telescopes, and *Hawaii Volcanoes National Park*, where lava's been flowing nearly continuously for the past 25 years. The island's lush and rainy east side has several comfortable B&Bs, though restaurant options are limited. On the sunny western coast, mega-resorts offer ocean views and excellent eateries, but values are harder to find.

- LODGING -

On the rustic Hamakua Coast, the solar-powered five-room *Waianuhe* inn has deep tubs, flat-screen TVs, and high-thread-count sheets to complement sweeping ocean views. **Strengths:** Floor-to-ceiling windows; modern rooms; three-course organic breakfast. **Weaknesses:** Remote location; no pool or beach (808-775-1118; waianuhe.com; doubles, \$195-\$310).

The owners of the *Hilo Honu Inn* are Southern transplants brimming with hospitality and pride for their restored Craftsman-style home. Rooms are tastefully decorated with antiques from around the world; the Samurai Suite has an enclosed sunporch with views of Hilo Bay. **Strengths:** Walking distance to Hilo; extra-large bathrooms, and fresh-baked treats throughout the day. **Weaknesses:** Communal breakfast table; no pool or beach (808-935-4325; hilothonu.com;

doubles, \$140-\$250). The stunning one-bedroom redwood *Artist Cottage at Volcano Garden Arts* is the perfect place to stay when visiting Volcanoes National Park, just two miles away. **Strengths:** Surrounded by three private acres of gardens; fireplace and full kitchen. **Weakness:** No hot breakfast (808-985-8979; volcanoartistcottage.com; doubles, \$109).

Aaahtheviews offers the best of



The Hawaiian outpost of Tokyo's Fujimamas.



Hilo Honu Inn's Samurai Suite and sunporch.

both worlds: cool, starry upcountry nights just a 20-minute scenic drive to tropical temperatures and a gorgeous view of beach. **Strengths:** Spotless, comfortable rooms; stunning views of Mauna Kea; delightful hosts. **Weaknesses:** No hot breakfast, pool, or beach (866-885-3455; aaahtheviews.com; doubles, \$175-\$195).

The two wooden cottages and studio at *Waimea Gardens* have wood floors, kitchens, and French doors that open onto private gardens. **Strengths:** Privacy; patios; the nearby stream. **Weaknesses:** Remote location; no pool or beach (808-885-8550; waimeagardens.com; doubles, \$155-\$170).

A four-year-old condo complex tucked between the posh resorts of the South Kohala Coast, *Outrigger Fairway Villas* has 80 two- and three-bedroom units, each with a roomy kitchen, giant TV, and patio facing the greens of the Waikoloa Beach Golf Course. A petroglyph park bordering the complex is a fine place for an early evening stroll. **Strengths:** Small pool, hot tub, daily housekeeping; within

walking distance of shops and restaurants. **Weaknesses:** Fifteen-minute walk to a mediocre beach; ten-minute drive to a better one (800-688-7444; outriggerfairwayvillascondo.com; two-bedrooms, \$355).

- DINING -

The owners of Tokyo's *Fujimamas* restaurant opened a Kailua-Kona outpost last year, which turns out some of the best food on the island, including an obsession-worthy Thai-style Caesar salad. Sit on the tiki-lit bamboo patio (75-5719 Alii Dr., Kailua-Kona; 808-327-2125; entrées, \$12-\$24). Visitors typically stop at the *Coffee Shack* for its views of Kealakekua Bay, but they come back for the inventive sandwiches on fresh-baked breads, home-

made pies, and best eggs Benedict on the planet (83-5799 Mamalahoa Hwy., Captain Cook; 808-328-9555; entrées, \$8-\$13). When locals need a break from Hilo's typically greasy fare, they head for the organic dishes at *Hilo Bay Cafe*. One bite of heirloom tomato salad or braised short ribs and you'll forget you're in a strip mall (315 Maka'ala St., Hilo; 808-935-4939; entrées, \$12-\$18).

Bamboo Restaurant, in the funky artist enclave of Hilo, is housed in an historic plantation building that doubles as an art gallery. It's a local favorite for delicious Pacific Rim fusion dishes such as grilled fish served on crispy goat cheese polenta and topped with spicy mango salsa (Old Takata Store, Akoni Pule Hwy., Hilo; 808-889-5555; entrées, \$12-\$33).

—Amy Westervelt

Tip
 To try sustainably raised Kona Kampachi, also known as Amberjack— all the rage among island chefs—buy direct from the fish farmers at the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (73-4460 Queen Kaahumanu Hwy., Kailua-Kona).