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LANIKAI BEACH, OAHU, HAWAII



# Oahu

FROM CITY TO STUNNING SURF

TO HONOLULU RESIDENTS, the other side of the island seems so far away they call it "country." "You're going way out there," exclaimed the Waikiki car rental clerk when I told her we were driving the windward coast to **Kahuku Point** and **Turtle Bay Resort** at the island's northern tip. Yet when we arrived three hours later, we had put just 73 miles on the odometer.

Windward Oahu is such a surprising contrast to Honolulu that it's a shame most visitors never venture there. For example, in the bustling town of **Kailua**, about a third of the way up the windward shore, you'll find the island's most beautiful beach. The two-lane road that skirts the sea for much of the 40-mile coast provides intimate glimpses of the traditional Hawaiian countryside. And for virtually the entire trip you'll have the jagged peaks of the Koolau Range on your left.

Start by driving east from Honolulu on the H1 freeway, which soon becomes Route 72. After about 10 miles, you turn into the wind at Makapuu Point. The vistas up the east coast there are breathtaking, but watch for **Waimanalo Beach Park**, the ideal Boogie board novice spot.

WHERE TO STAY

NORTH SHORE

➤ **Turtle Bay Resort**

866/827-5327; turtlebayresort.com. From \$458; standard rooms are often available for around \$300 online or by phone.

HONOLULU

➤ **Halekulani** The finest hotel in town, period. 800/367-2343; halekulani.com. From \$435.

➤ **The New Otani Kaimana Beach Hotel** Perhaps the best \$150 room in Waikiki—and the only one smack on the beach. 800/356-8264; kaimana.com.

➤ **Waikiki Parc Hotel** The Halekulani's trendy little sister.

800/422-0450; waikikiparc.com. From \$275.

WHERE TO EAT

NORTH SHORE

➤ **21 Degrees North** Fusion dining and fresh fish at Turtle Bay Resort. 808/293-8811.

HONOLULU

➤ **Chef Mavro**

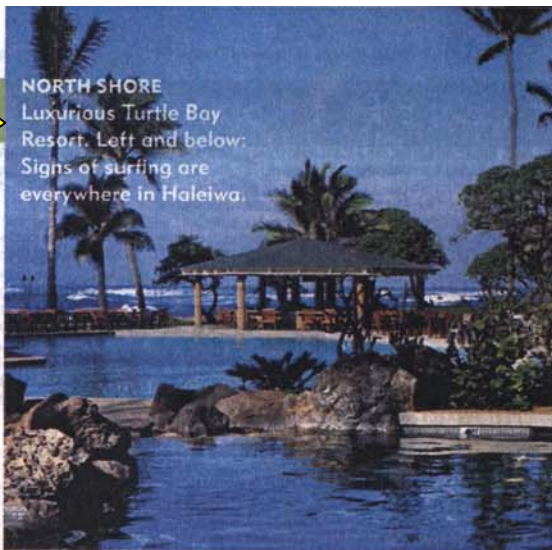
The city's best restaurant. 808/944-4714.

➤ **Little Village Noodle House** A perennial favorite in Chinatown. 808/545-3008.

➤ **Orchids** The Halekulani's excellent midlevel restaurant. 808/923-2311.

NORTH SHORE

Luxurious Turtle Bay Resort. Left and below: Signs of surfing are everywhere in Haleiwa.



Ahead, small villages and a simple way of life prevail.

At the outskirts of the town of Kailua, turn right onto Kailua Road and wind your way to the sea at three-mile-long Kailua Beach. Pinup-quality **Kailua Beach Park** is perfect

for a swim and a picnic lunch—or take a table at Buzz's across the street. Now retrace your steps and pick up the Kamehameha Highway, which hugs the sea most of the way to Kahuku Point.

Hawaiian monarchs used to send their children to live along this lush coast, and more recently sugarcane was king. On the inland side just past **Kaaawa**, you'll spot the ruins of the old Kualoa Sugar Mill. Past **Kaneohe**, the pace slows to harmonize with the peaceful murmur of the sea. Curving **Kahana Bay** is the stuff of South Seas fantasies. As you pass the town of Laie and approach Kahuku Point, aquaculture farms and trucks serving popular garlicky, chile-sauced shrimp mark the end of the windward coast.

You can turn around here and return to Honolulu by following the signs for the Likelike Highway, the shortcut over the Koolau mountains. But keep going on the Kam Highway, as locals call it, and you're on the North Shore, Oahu's fabled surfing Valhalla. A few miles along

is Turtle Bay Resort which is an excellent spot for an overnight stay. Ten minutes farther on is the surf-crazed town of **Haleiwa**, where you can inspect the funky shops and cafés, then head through pineapple country directly back to Honolulu, a scant hour but several eras away.



CAPITAL DINING  
Salad niçoise at Chef Mavro.

TOP LEFT: BLAINE HARRINGTON III; CENTER, PHOTO: ADRIANNA TORRES CHONG