

Guide to the Wai'anae Coast



Wild Side Specialty Tours

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Separated from the rest of the island by the rugged Waianae Mountain Range, the West Side has some of the last undeveloped coastline on Oahu. With magnificent sapphire blue waters and uncrowded expanses of golden sand beaches spectacular reefs (Hawaii's natural aquarium), cultural sites, hiking through mesic forests, the best sunsets on the island, it offers a safe haven from the commercialism and crowds of Honolulu.

It is easily accessible from the main highway which follows the coast all the way up to majestic Yokohama Bay. As you drive, you will have the Waianae mountains on one side, and tons of options for great beaches on the other side – right off the highway! You will also drive through lots of small towns whose communities take pride in their Hawaiian roots, which go back for centuries, and you will see a slice of everyday life for those who reside on this side of Oahu.

Wai'anae, means “water mullet”, in reference to a prized fish in this historical fishing village. Prior to western contact, Wai'anae was known for its strength and war tactics. Warring villages especially feared the “bone-breakers” of Makaha and Makua. As western shippers brought ideals of money and riches the chiefs of the area sent their fishermen and framers up into the forest to retrieve sandalwood for Chinese trade. Soon famine and western disease devastated the population.

In the late 1800's Wai'anae recovered as immigrants from Japan, China and Portugal were

brought in to work on the Wai'anae Sugar Plantation. Today 60% of the fish caught in Oahu comes from the Wai'anae Small Boat Harbor. . Leeward Oahu is a taste of true old Hawaii... uncrowded, unrushed, and unbelievably beautiful.

Where to PLAY

BEACHES

In general strong shore breaks and rip currents are prevalent during the winter, while the water is much calmer during the summer months. Always bring water, sunscreen and shoes (hot sand). Don't leave valuables in your car and it's always a good idea to check with the lifeguards about the current conditions.

[Makaha Beach Park](#) Good for swimming, surfing, body boarding, snorkeling and scuba diving. The middle part of the beach is good for swimming. Sharp reef at the right side of the beach (near the hotel). Amenities include restrooms, showers, picnic tables, street parking and lifeguards.

[Keawaula Beach / Yokohama Bay](#) At the end of Farrington Hwy is a delicate beach with long sandy shores. A spot for expert surfers only and swimming is risky as the currents and riptides are strong. However the beach is great for sunbathing and for

that feeling of peaceful isolation. We like to lay our towel down past the last lifeguard stand or “third dips” as the locals call it.

[Ka'ena Point State Park](#) The Northwest tip of Oahu, is sacred grounds for Hawaiian people. It is referred to as a “jumping-off point” for souls departing this world for the next. It is also a nature reserve where albatross breed and lay their eggs. The lowland dune ecosystems is a hot 2.5 mile hike one way so bring sunscreen, a hat, and plenty of water if you decide to check it out.

EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

The ancient gods of Hawai'i made specific places on the island sacred. These sites are said to possess mana (spiritual power) and must be treated with the utmost respect. It is important to ask for permission out of respect for past generations, before you “take” anything from Hawaii, even photos.

"Taking" includes photos of sacred places, as well as rocks or shells along the seashore. It is customary to give something back, such as an offering or a prayer. This is part of the kapu, the ancient Hawaiian code of conduct. Please, do not climb or walk on the rock walls and platforms.

[Kane'aki Heiau](#), Makaha Valley -closed for restoration

One such ancient Hawaiian heiau can be found deep in Makaha Valley and is one of Hawaii's best maintained archeological sites. The Kane'aki Heiau was built in the fifteenth century and was known to be both an agricultural heiau and a war temple. As a war heiau human sacrifices were performed on the first prisoners of war.

[Ku'iolioloa Heiau](#) Located on Kane'ilio Point, a small peninsula in Waianae, the Ku'iolioloa Heiau commands a beautiful view of Oahu's west shore. To the north is [Pokai Bay](#) and Lahilahi Point in the distance, and to the south are the [Lualualei](#) and [Ma'ili](#) beach parks.

The heiau has three terraced platforms and is believed to have been a temple of learning and training, mainly in the arts of fishing, navigation and other ocean-related skills.

In the Hawaiian language, Ku'iolioloa means “the long dog Ku.” It is believed that the heiau was named after a legendary dog who protected travelers.

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Kaneana Cave, Makua

Located near Mauka Beach, about one mile before the end of Farrington Highway. Kaneana cave, carved out by the sea, was once underwater. Currently it stands one hundred feet high and four hundred fifty feet deep right on Farrington Hwy. The ancient shark-man deity who made his home in this sea cave would disguise himself as a human and lure his victims into the cave, then turn into a shark and devour them. [Hiking above the cave.](#)

Ka'ena Point

- Insider Tip: Go to [Hale Nalu](#), rent a mountain bike, put you and it on TheBus, take it to the end of the bus line, and ride out to Ka'ena Point. Even if you don't make the 5miles to the end of the road, and the two miles of dirt trail to the point, the while oceanside drive is breathtaking!

ADVENTURE

[Hale Nalu Surf & Bike](#) (rentals!) - Polynesians had the ability to “walk upon the water” by using their technology and skills upon surfboards and canoes. Surf shop also rents snorkel gear, mountain bikes, SUPs, surf boards, boogie boards. Also carry sunscreen, local-kine bumper stickers, polarized sunglasses, all your beach needs.

Rent a mountain bike, put you and it on TheBus to the end of the bus line, mount and ride about 8 miles to [Ka'ena Point](#)

Hike Kaena Point

Following an old railroad bed and former dirt road, the easy 3.5 mile hike will take you to the western most point of Oahu. This hike is notorious for being hot



with little shade, so bring plenty of water and wear sunscreen. Tons of marine life to see including *Honu* (green sea turtles) and Hawaiian Monk Seals.

Mt Ka'ala Trail

Hidden Gem

[Kuaokala](#) Trail Kaena Point Satellite Tracking Station sign (), located near a dirt parking lot, just before Yokohama Beach. Plan ahead of time as

(online) [permit needed](#) to get past the gate here Kuaokala is a very easy going 5 mile trail, that would be suitable for most ages and hikers of varying abilities. The Kuaokala Trail loops around the cliffs, ridges and gulches back of Ka'ena Point. The landscape's muted colors blend mountainsides of heathery-pink Christmas grass and lemon-gum eucalyptus groves with volcanic soil, a cobalt-colored ocean and the white-ribbon sands of Ka'ena Point. Be sure to take your time to enjoy the incredible vistas of the Waianae coast and Makua Valley.

3. Horseback Riding in Historic Makaha Valley

Makaha Valley Riding Stables has special permission to access the historic valley by horseback. Choose from five unique trail adventures. Suggested: for snorkelers and riders looking for the full experience is the *Mauka-Makai* (Land-Ocean) trip with Ko Olina Ocean Adventures, a day of riding scenic trails and snorkeling along Oahu's leeward coastline.

[Piihila'au Army Recreation Center](#)

RELAXATION

tranquility Spa

Makaha Golf Course - considered by many to be the number one golf resort in Hawaii

Spa Moana “is by far the best spa you can go to. They have a to-die-for facility. You feel like royalty when you are there. After your massage you get to sit in this room that is open and you see just the ocean. It was just the best!” — TripAdvisor Member, Gilroy, Calif.

Spa Moana, 200 Nohea Kai Drive, Lahaina, 808-667-4725.

The Kapalua Golf Resort consists of three golf courses. It is considered by many to be the number one golf resort in Hawaii.

The Kapalua Golf Resort, Kapalua, 877-527-2582.

Hana Highway is more than a way to get to the small town of Hana—it’s a destination. Snaking through the tropical rainforest, you’ll see waterfalls and the ocean and cross dozens of narrow bridges. Pull over at turnouts to snap pictures or take a hike. A popular stopping point beyond Hana is Ohe’o Gulch, also known as the Seven Sacred Pools.

Hana Highway, Route 36

Where to EAT

HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

Farm to Table: [Kahumana Organic Farm & Café](#)

Kahumana Farm Café showcases freshly harvested fruits, vegetables, herbs, eggs, local fish, grass-fed beef and free-range chicken on their daily menu. Check out the [yoga class](#) (donation only) before dinner for the full relaxation and farm to table experience!

[Island Salads](#) Organic salads, wraps, homemade soups, juice bar and smoothies to go or eat in

HIDDEN GEMS

[Maili Shave Ice and Snacks](#) located in a residential neighborhood, in part of the 76 gas station on the corner of Farrington Hwy and Hookele St. The portions here are big. The medium is like a large at most places. They have a big range of flavors, as good as Matsumoto on north shore!. Try the 'snow cap' w/ condensed milk and ice cream... also specialty Milkshakes

[Tacos and More](#) The owner is from Mexico City and has an authentic Mexican menu. Full bar (live music on weekend nights) w/ Mexican beers and awesome margaritas. \$\$

Eli's Kitchen - Real Hawaiian food (laulau, poi, etc.) The food is onolicious! The prices are extremely inexpensive for the amount of food. C,mon try it, very friendly and helpful staff.

Sunset Cafe Waterfront dining, "American food" and full bar. Located on the Pili'a'au Army Recreation Center, one of the best waterfront views on all of Oahu. Cafe must happen on "island" time when you aren't in any particular hurry. If more than a few tables become occupied the eatery's reputation for slow service may be fulfilled. But hey, this is Hawaii, after all, and hanging 'round the beach is what tropical lifestyles are all about! The Sunset Cafe is open every day, with weekday hours beginning at 11 a.m. Weekends start at 7 a.m. and breakfast is served Sat. and Sun. until 11 a.m. Happy hour runs from 3-6 p.m. with discounts on Pu-pus (appetizers).

Vehicle access is limited to those who possess a valid military I.D., Otherwise a photo I.D (driver's license or state identification card, etc.) is needed at the gate to walk onto the Rec Center and dine at the Cafe.

Park on the street outside the Center's gates.

Where to SHOP

[Wai'anae Mall](#)

for visitors and tourists to the Wai'anae Coast, it's a lifesaver. Convenient fast food places, banking, and 24 hour Longs Drugs Store with pharmacy. ATM's are lit and in safe places. Special events take place on weekends, **Farmers Market 9am-1pm each Saturday**. Starbucks, Subway, Pizza Hut, Burger King, Blazin Steaks, Hui On Fast Foods, In n Out Sushi, Little Caesars Pizza, Radio Shack, Jeans Warehouse, a medical clinic, jewelry store, Fantastic Sams.

All the local grocery stores have deli's, poke 'bars', and bus stops right out front.

[Sack 'n Save](#) Nanakuli

[Tamura's](#) - Be immersed in local people and contemporary culture. Cheapest grocery on the island.

[Wai'anae Store](#)

1. **“Bring plastic suction-cup hooks to use in the shower to hang swimsuits to dry.”** —TripAdvisor Member, Kansas City
2. Pack “a mini pair of binoculars, mini first-aid kit, spray gel sunscreen that has insect repellent built in and protein bars for hikes.” —TripAdvisor Member, San Clemente, Calif.
3. Take along “a soft-sided cooler. Throw

some frozen bottled water in and pack your lunch. Then fill it with souvenirs on the way home.” —TripAdvisor Member, Southern California

4. “Less is more. You don’t need much in Hawaii.” —TripAdvisor Member



