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The Best Snorkeling on Oahu

Swim with turtles, fish and more during one of these Hawaiian trips.

By [Lyn Mettler](#) | March 12, 2021, at 3:46 p.m. |



Hanauma Bay is a popular spot for snorkeling on Oahu. (GETTY IMAGES)

Without doubt, when you visit [Oahu](#), you'll want to explore all the island has to offer underwater in addition to all the [popular attractions](#) on land. There are numerous Oahu snorkeling tours to take you to top snorkeling destinations and some provide additional experiences like swimming with dolphins, sea turtles and even sharks. After consulting both traveler opinion and expert input, U.S. News compiled some of the best snorkeling on Oahu.

Hawaii Nautical – Waikiki Turtle, Snorkel & Lunch

On this three-hour tour, travelers set sail around [Waikiki](#) to see top sights, snorkel and find green sea turtles. December through April, the crew will also be on the lookout for migrating whales. The tour also includes a sandwich lunch with unlimited nonalcoholic drinks and two alcoholic drink tickets for each adult. Reviewers say they see lots of turtles and fish, and that the crew provides great service and pays close attention to safety. Tours are available at 11 a.m. daily except Wednesdays, and tickets start at \$129 per person ages 13 and older, \$89 for children ages 4 to 12 and free for children 3 and younger. A snorkel and mask are not included in the price; be sure to bring your own. The company also guarantees that if you do not see a sea turtle, you can return for a free sail. Hawaii Nautical offers a variety of sailing trips, including dolphin, whale and sunset sails, among others.

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Dolphin Excursions Snorkel Adventure – Oahu Dolphin Excursion

See spinner dolphins in an eco-friendly way on this three-hour tour aboard a 34-foot rigid inflatable boat. Departing from Wai'anae Small Boat Harbor, crew and naturalists will sail in search of the mammals. Travelers have the opportunity to snorkel with sea turtles and tropical fish as part of the tour. Participants praise the staff and their friendliness and say they see lots of wildlife, including dolphins, turtles and even whales (during winter only). Ticket prices start at \$140 for participants ages 13 and older and \$95 for ages 4 to 12. Children younger than 4 are not permitted, and food and drinks are not included. Tours run most days at 7:30 and 11 a.m. Participants should check in 30 minutes prior, and there is a minimum of seven guests needed in order for the tour to operate. The company also offers a whale watching tour.

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Hanauma Bay Snorkel Adventures

This company picks you up from your Waikiki [hotel](#) and takes you about 10 miles east via an air-conditioned van to Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve to enjoy approximately three hours of snorkeling. Sanitized snorkeling equipment is included with the tour. The bay is nestled within an ancient volcanic crater and is home to many colorful tropical fish, sea turtles and a coral reef. Travelers describe the bay as beautiful and appreciate the convenient transportation the company provides. Tickets start at \$34.95 and do not include the \$12 per person preserve admission fee. Children 3 and younger can join the tour free. Excursions run every day except Tuesday with pick-up times at 7:15, 8:45 and 10:15 a.m. The company recommends travelers bring a towel.

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Holokai Catamaran – Turtle Canyon Snorkel Sail

On this 2 1/2 hour adventure, you'll snorkel at Turtle Canyon with green sea turtles and tropical fish, and then cruise around [Diamond Head](#) looking for dolphins and whales. The trip also includes a guide, snacks and snorkel gear with a safety vest, but you'll need to bring your own towel. Tour-takers highly recommend the excursion and report seeing lots of turtles. Tours depart at 9 a.m. and noon daily. Tickets start at \$80 for participants 3 and older; children 2 and younger join for free. Holokai Catamaran also has a Tradewinds Sail tour, as well as a Sunset Cruise.

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Pure Aloha Adventures – Snorkel and Swim With Sea Turtles

After a boat ride to Turtle Canyon, you'll get the chance to snorkel with green sea turtles and fish and explore the area's coral reef. This woman-owned company provides an instructor and snorkeling gear as part of the tour. Those who don't want to snorkel can join the tour and simply remain on the boat. Travelers say they see lots of turtles and that the crew is interactive and informative. Tickets cost approximately \$69 per person for all ages, and tours depart at 12:30 and 3 p.m. daily. Pura Aloha Adventures also offers a Hanauma Bay Guided Snorkel Tour, as well as multiple scuba diving tours.

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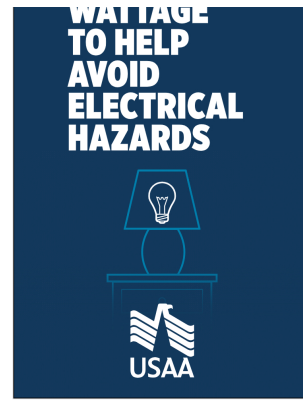
Ko Olina Ocean Adventures – Catamaran Sail & Snorkel Tour

Take an approximately three-hour sail around Oahu, enjoying the sights and stopping at two top snorkeling spots to swim with sea turtles and tropical fish. Tours include a hot lunch, three alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and snorkel gear. Reviewers praise the crew and the food and drinks, and say they enjoy snorkeling and seeing wildlife. Tickets cost about \$150 for ages 13 and older, \$120 for children ages 4 to 12 and \$30 for infants 3 and younger with special rates for military members and Hawaii residents. For additional fees, you can add a luau to your snorkeling outing; there's also an option to book round-trip transportation from your Waikiki hotel. Tours depart at 8:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. Ko Olina Ocean Adventures also operates several sunset sails, as well as a Speedboat Dolphin Snorkel.

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One Ocean Diving – Marine Research & Conservation Shark Snorkel

Snorkel with Hawaii's marine life in the company of a biologist on this adventure with One Ocean Diving, which departs from Haleiwa Harbor. During the excursion, you're invited to stay on the boat, get into the water and hold onto a line, or deep dive to swim with marine life like sharks, dolphins, turtles, fish and more. During the ride, you'll learn about the animals, their behavior, conservation efforts and more. Travelers describe this as a "life-changing" experience that is also serene and peaceful. They say staff are knowledgeable and that they feel very safe. Ticket prices start at \$150 per person, which includes snorkeling gear, or \$80 for those who will not be snorkeling. Participants must be at least 4 feet tall. The company recommends bringing your own towel and a change of clothes. The snorkel tour runs hourly each day from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.




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Dive into Oahu's waters to discover an underwater world.  (GETTY IMAGES)

Hanauma Bay Tours – Hanauma Bay Snorkeling Tour

Hop a ride to Hanauma Bay aboard this tour, which picks up from four Waikiki stops and takes you to the state park via air-conditioned van. Once you arrive, you should have about 3 1/2 hours of snorkeling time before returning back to your hotel. Tour-takers describe this tour as educational, fun and magical, and highly praise the crew. Ticket prices start at \$25 for ages 13 and older and \$22 for those 12 and younger. The park's entrance fee is not included, but snorkeling gear is provided. Shuttles depart Waikiki at 7:15, 8:45 and 10:15 a.m. every day except Tuesday. The company offers a variety of outings, including a Turtle Tour, North Shore Snorkel, Helicopter Island Tour and more.

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Living Ocean Scuba – Turtle Canyons Snorkeling Trip

On this two-hour trip, Living Ocean Scuba takes passengers to snorkel at Turtle Canyon, an area with a coral reef that is frequented by sea turtles and tropical fish. Travelers may also spot spinner dolphins and whales as they cruise along the Waikiki coast. The trip includes light snacks and cold drinks to enjoy during the ride. The boat has a maximum of 30 passengers and offers shaded and sunny areas. Reviewers say crew members are friendly and that they see lots of turtles, fish and other wildlife. Tickets cost approximately \$65 per person; the company doesn't recommend the trip for kids 3 and younger. The price includes snorkeling gear. Tours depart daily at 12:30 and 3 p.m. Living Ocean Scuba also offers scuba diving trips around Oahu.

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Wild Side – Best of the West Tour

Just six passengers board Wild Side's 34-foot vessel to embark on a four-hour snorkeling excursion. Tour-takers enjoy swimming with wild dolphins, snorkeling and possibly spotting whales. There is an accompanying guide on all adventures, and the crew, who are marine biologists and naturalists, provide information about the history of the area, as well as the wildlife. Tourgoers rave about this tour, praising the crew and describing swimming with dolphins as incredible. They also appreciate that it is a private, personal experience thanks to the capacity limitations. Prices start at \$195 per person and include a sandwich lunch and snorkeling gear. Wild Side recommends the trip for people 12 and older. Tickets do not include taxes, fees or a \$5 per person fuel charge. Tours depart at 8 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. daily. Wild Side Specialty Tours also offers private charters.

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And You Creations – Dolphins and You

An ideal option for travelers on the hunt for a dynamic tour experience, Dolphins and You offers to transport the guests to swim with wild dolphins, spotted turtles and stand on a paddleboard

tourgoers the chance to swim with wild dolphins, snorkel, kayak and stand-up paddleboard. There's even a waterslide on the side of the boat. Passengers are given a snack and drinks, and at the end, the crew performs a hula dance. The boat has two decks, wraparound seating, bathrooms and showers. Reviewers love the boat's slide and praise the crew's friendliness, noting they see lots of wildlife. Ticket prices are approximately \$155 for ages 12 and older and \$125 for children ages 2 to 11. Children younger than 2 are not allowed. You can rent a wetsuit for an additional fee. Tours begin daily with pick-up from select Waikiki hotels at around 5:15 and 9:15 a.m. and conclude about 12:30 and 3 p.m. The company also offers private charters.

[\[View & Book Tickets.\]](#)

Diamond Head Cruises – Diamond Head Snorkel Turtle Cruise

Snorkel among Hawaii's sea turtles on this two-hour cruise aboard a 51-foot boat . Snacks, fresh fruit and drinks are included, along with snorkel gear. Additionally, you're welcome to bring your own cooler and drinks aboard. Reviewers offer high praise for the crew and recommend signing up for the early tour for the best water visibility and to see the sunrise. Ticket prices start at \$79 per person for all ages. Tours are available daily at 7, 9:10 and 11:15 a.m., as well as 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. Diamond Head Cruises also operates a whale watching tour, a sunset cruise and a fireworks cruise.

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Pure Aloha Adventures – Hanauma Bay Guided Snorkel Tour

On this small group tour limited to just five people, you'll head to Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve to snorkel with an expert guide. During the 2 1/2-hour excursion, guides point out key areas to see, offer information about the different types of fish and take photos of you underwater. Tourgoers say the crew and guides are interactive and informative. Reviewers also report seeing many turtles. Tickets cost about \$70 for ages 3 and older and include snorkeling gear, but not the park entrance fee. Tours are available Monday and Wednesday through Friday at 7:30 and 10:15 a.m., as well as 1 and 3 p.m. The company recommends booking the earliest tour to avoid crowds. Pure Aloha Adventures also runs several other tours, as well as stand-up paddleboard yoga.

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Kaimana Tours – Hanauma Bay Snorkeling & Shuttle

Want to explore Hanauma Bay without a guide? This is the company for you. Kaimana Tours runs a shuttle to Hanauma from Waikiki hotels. Travelers will have about four hours of snorkeling time. Reviewers say the trip is smooth and hassle-free and that the driver is friendly. Ticket prices start at \$39.99 for ages 13 and older and \$34.99 for ages 12 and younger, but do not include the \$12 entrance fee required for ages 13 and older. Tickets include snorkeling equipment, but the company recommends you bring your own towel. Shuttles depart at 7, 9 and 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. daily except for Tuesdays. It takes about 30 minutes to get from Waikiki to the bay. Alternatively, if you just need to rent equipment for your beach day or your own snorkeling trip, you can do so with this company. Fees are approximately \$20 per person. Kaimana Tours also offers shuttles to Diamond Head, Segway tours and even luaus.

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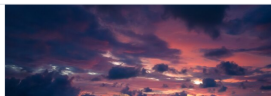
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