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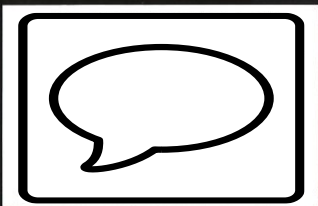
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# go

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS

## SEAS THE DAY

FINDING THE MAGIC IN MAUI IS ABOUT FAR MORE THAN THE GORGEOUS BEACHES AND STUNNING LANDSCAPE

**H**undreds of guidebooks have been penned promising visitors access to the “real” or “hidden” Hawaii. They include advice on where to find secret waterfalls and unspoiled beaches, and which stop on the Road to Hana will lead to the “Hawaii of your dreams.”

The thing these guidebooks miss—and it’s at the heart of experiencing authentic Hawaii—is meeting the Hawaiians themselves. There is a Hawaiian word, *mana*, that means the life energy that flows through all things and humans. Though I have traveled to this remote island chain

many times, I had never experienced *mana*. Until, as unlikely as it sounds, I checked into a very special beachfront hotel on Maui.

Kaliko Storer’s title is Cultural Advisor at the Andaz Maui. However, it’s not possible to reduce what she does to a simple title. To those of us with scant knowledge of Hawaiian history, this role could seem unnecessary. As I peppered her with trite questions about where to find the elusive real Hawaii that *GREENWICH* magazine readers would be eager to visit, she gently returned me to the same answer again and again. Meet the people, sit, listen, be. I had a lot to learn.



**above:** The outrigger experience is a must-do activity **right:** Chef Isaac at the Andaz Maui **below:** Wilson Evans explores the beach

We know that Hawaii became the fiftieth state in 1959, but what many of us don't know is that natives believe their monarchy was overthrown and their land illegally annexed. Teaching the Hawaiian language was banned until 1987. And by then, only 1 percent of the population could speak it fluently. Part of the resurgence of the local culture is the language. Kaliko's job isn't just teaching tourists, but also the staff. One of her many efforts is to normalize the Hawaiian language. "We have a Hawaiian word of the day program that we launched. I think it's important to reclaim the Hawaiian names for places and other things."

Disney's *Moana* taught us that ancient voyagers could navigate the stars using just their hands. Standing under the boundless night sky measuring the distance to the North Star with my palm, I learned that I could as well. Classes on celestial navigation are another of Kaliko's educational efforts.

Kala Tanaka looks a bit like Moana, young and sweet. But she is a serious Wayfinder

who guided an entire crew and hulking double-hull canoe through dark waters using nothing more than her diminutive hand. When asked how she would know if we were off course, she replied that she could feel it—in the waves and in the wind. Learn more about the legacy of ancient voyaging at [hokulea.com](http://hokulea.com).

Though the Andaz Maui was recently voted one of the best hotels in the world by *Conde Nast Traveler*, it's not the modern design or the cascading infinity pools that make it worth a visit. The resort spans fifteen beachfront acres just up the coast from the more well-known Four Seasons Maui.

The term "house reef" is used by hotels to indicate that guests can swim to a coral reef from the property's shore. The Andaz has a house reef, and a swim around the rocky corner reveals an entire playground of sea turtles. Though you can borrow snorkel gear and rent a kayak, you won't meet an octopus without a little help from an expert. Book the



## TO DO ON-PROPERTY

**Get a Lomilomi massage** at the Awili spa, ask for Jamie. The one-hour massage is \$190. Add the custom oil blending experience and create your own massage oil using local ingredients; for \$55 you'll leave with your creation and the hotel will keep your recipe on file for future use.

**Book a Chef's Table dinner** at Ka'ana kitchen. Only four guests are seated per night and the six-course meal is created "a la

minute" for each guest and can be accompanied by expert wine pairings. Ask for Charlie the sommelier, and if you're lucky he might pour some of his 1927 port or other rare vintages.

**Capture the perfect photo** with a complimentary session from Pacific Dream Photography. The forty-five-minute shoot is free and guests get a \$50 credit toward prints. Digital images start at \$79.



## TO DO OFF-PROPERTY

**Learn to surf** in nearby Kihei. The combination of warm, shallow water and gentle rolling waves makes this the perfect place to learn. Maui Waveriders promises that you'll stand up during your first lesson or it's free. A private lesson, \$150 for two hours, includes the board, rash guard and booties. Your glory will be captured by photographers from No Ka Oi—it's only \$30 for all your digital images. (Fun fact: historians believe the phrase "pursuit of happiness" in the constitution was inspired by surfers.) [mauiwaveriders.com](http://mauiwaveriders.com)

**Eat at Mama's Fish House.** It sounds like a tourist trap, but it's not. This iconic waterfront restaurant serves up some of the best—and most expensive—food you'll ever eat. Reservations are hard to come by, so book early. Taxis are expensive on the island; rent a car from the hotel's on-site Enterprise. While there, drive a mile up the road and watch the real surfers ride the waves at Ho'okipa. If you're not an expert, don't try to get in on the action; a lifeguard will stop you. Some lessons are learned the hard way. [mamasfishhouse.com](http://mamasfishhouse.com)

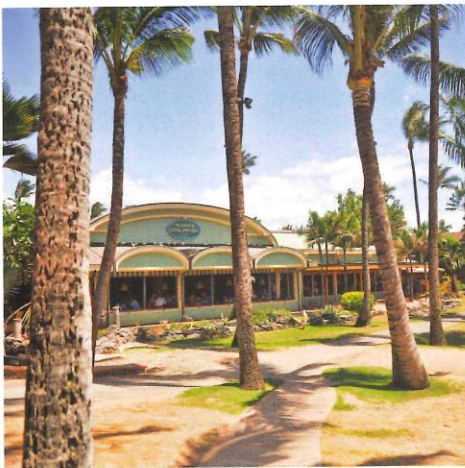
**Spend the day relaxing on nearby Makena Beach,** also known as Big Beach. Follow signs for Makena, the beach is through the trees. Though it's rated the No. 1 beach in Maui, it's not crowded and is great for boogie boarding, though the shore break can be rough. The beach has lifeguards, restrooms and food trucks.



**above:** Makena Beach is one of Hawaii's largest undeveloped beaches—a perfect place to escape the crowds of some of Maui's more crowded beaches.

two-hour outrigger snorkel expedition (\$139 per person). Ask if you can get on Koa's boat. Keko Cramer is the beach crew manager, a competitive outrigger canoe rower and erstwhile sea-life whisperer. We had been in the water for about ten minutes when he swam up cradling an octopus. He assured me that as soon as he "calmed it down," I could hold it. On a two-hour trip, we met Honu (sea turtles), octopi and all manner of tropical fish. Though the hotel offers guests complimentary new GoPro video cameras, leave it in the room for this outing. Be in the moment, and Koa will snap the photos.

**left:** According to Open Table, Mama's Fish House is the second-most popular restaurant in the United States. **below:** Rooms with a view at the Andaz Maui



### GETTING THERE:

There are no direct flights to Maui from the East Coast. Either fly to Honolulu from JFK and then connect to Maui (airport code OGG) or connect through San Francisco or Los Angeles. The Andaz has 301 rooms, including thirty-five suites and eleven private villas. All rooms have a private lanai.