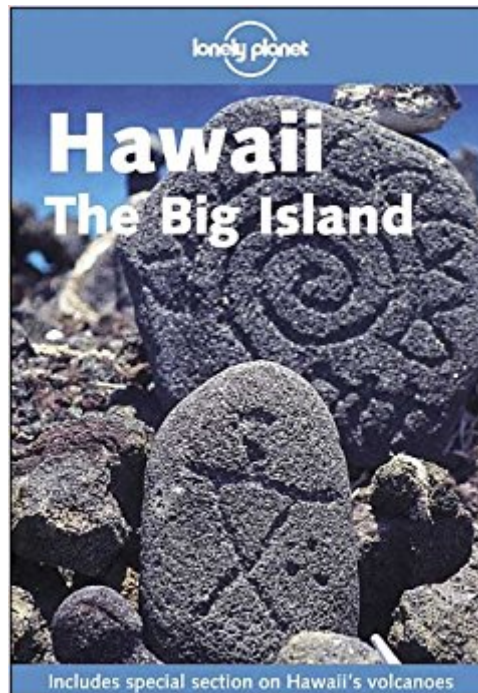


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Lonely Planet Hawaii: The Big Island



Synopsis

This guide features a special section on volcanoes, plus the best-of outdoor activities such as swimming, surfing and hiking, as well as coverage of the Hilo and Kona coasts and where to lounge with the laid-back locals.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nobody covers the world like Lonely Planet.' --New York Post, May 2004 --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

A sage kupuna (elder) observed today that the Big Island is so beautiful it hurts your eyes; she's right. In this tropical wonder world, azure waves lap at the green-sand beaches and volcanoes flush lava to the sea in a primordial display of fire, boiling water and steam. On this idyll, dolphins and morays, turtles and rays sluice through coves and there's snow for the ski bums, rain forest for the hardy, idyllic beaches for the idle and the world's clearest stargazing. Like a lover so cherished you conjure pet names in a vain attempt to capture their every essence, so too the Big Island goes by several names: at turns it's Hawaii, the Orchid Isle, and the Volcano Island. It's also the home to Madame Pele, goddess of volcanoes, and Ku, god of war. But above all, it's the superlative island, the singular jewel in the string of Hawaiian beauties making up the archipelago. What so distinguishes this islands is its geography. The Big Island is so big, you could fit all the major Hawaiian Islands within its borders twice. The entire land mass is five volcanoes fused together,

created by eons of magma pulsing from deep within the earth. Stacked layers of lava grew so high that the newly created land eventually emerged from the depths of the sea. The magma is still pumping, new volcanoes are still rising and the Big Island is still growing. Indeed, the newest volcano in the chain is expected to break the surface and unite with the others in as little as 10,000 years - tomorrow in geological terms. All these tidbits should be sufficient to excite chronic stoics, but you might also consider that the Big Island is the youngest piece of earth on earth, it's the most isolated piece of rock in the world (2500 miles from the closest landmass) and contains so many microclimates you can realistically go from desert to jungle to permafrost in a day. The diverse flora and fauna here will delight the casual visitor and is a bonanza for birders, orchid lovers and entomologists. As islanders the world over know, thriving on a piece of land amidst a great sea promotes a certain psychology, philosophy and innate, sometimes subconscious, self-reliance that sets these communities apart. On the Big Island, this unique perspective is intensified by wide open spaces, resulting in the least touristed and most mysterious of all the Hawaiian Islands. Here you'll find mavericks and misfits, astronomers and mystics all dipping into the pools of Big Island mana (spiritual power). Much of this power is generated by the gods and goddesses of the land, sea and volcanoes - forces forever worshipped and harnessed by Hawaiians - and you won't have to look long or hard to find ample evidence of this in your travels. Waipi'o Valley, Halema'uma'u Crater, South Point, Mauna Kea and the Place of Refuge - the list of historically, archaeologically and mythologically significant sites is long and varied and even if that leaves you yawning, each is also a place everyone should set their eyes and heart upon at least once. Still, there's trouble in Paradise, as struggles amongst man, nature, progress and history threaten to upset Hawaii's state of grace. In a certain sense, Hawaii is stuck between a rock and a hard place, with Mother Nature on the one hand and rapacious developers on the other, forever trying to tame her handiwork into hedonistic oases. Drought on the Kona side and lava and tsunamis on the Hilo side are a constant worry. An economy overly dependent on tourism means even higher unemployment in an already anemic job climate, and a heavier reliance on those aforementioned developers. Nevertheless, nothing defines Hawaii more than the spirit of aloha. Here, this isn't just a cheesy marketing slogan; it translates into genuine friendliness, courtesy and suspension of judgment. Welcome to the Big Island, where you can hike, bike, ski, camp, dive, swim, snorkel, sunbathe, surf and dine finely; this is the place to live your dreams.

I purchased both "The Big Island Revealed" and this book for my trip to the island of Hawaii. After reading both, the Lonely Planet Big Island stood out as a superior resource. I found myself planning

almost my entire trip from it. It has a huge wealth of knowledge, and will give you all the tools you need to plan your trip, all in the familiar Lonely Planet format. It is particularly well suited to adventure/budget travelers, with excellent reviews and information of the hostels, budget hotels, and budget restaurants on the island. The maps are also great, and accurately show where all the restaurants, hostels, hotels, and attractions are; something "The Big Island Revealed" does a poor job of. As a bonus, the entire guide is in full color, something new for Lonely Planet. Overall, an excellent guide book.

Bought this book for a week-long trip to the Big Island in July 2011. I believe a newer edition of this book is coming out in Oct. 2011, but we had to go with the older edition. Provides recommendations and ideas for a mix of different activities. Sampled a number of their restaurant recommendations and enjoyed them. Packs a lot of information in about the different parts/cities of the Big Island.

This book absolutely touched my heart and soul. I was especially thrilled to read the information about Puna. I especially loved that the authors visited the Big Island and took the time to include specific details and information. I feel this book is a "must read" for anyone planning a visit to the Big Island of Hawai'i. I believe the writing to be above and beyond the average vacation guide. Mahalo!!!

The book is fantastic. We've always had it handy during our vacation on the Island of Hawaii. Many detailed information, maps and most important itineraries helped us to plan our vacation in advance. This way we didn't waste the time and were able to see all most important places on the Island.

This book had great maps and an easy to follow format. Information was great and was up to date. Definitely would recommend

I used this book for my 1 week visit of the Big Island. I gave good overviews and hints for places, definitely good one for a short visit to Hawaii island.

The big island is our favorite of the Hawaiian Islands, and mainly because we had this book that steered us off the beaten path. What an amazing book for an amazing place. I'll never Hawaii again without it. Excellent reviews for cheap lodging (like the great hostel we stayed at in Hilo, or the dive motel with a great location we stayed at in Ka Lae, or the cute B&B at Volcanoes NP) and great

recommendations for off-the-beaten-path stuff to do. Sometimes there were no other tourists in sight... definitely recommended!!

We read 6 books on the Big Island before going there (I know, a little compulsive). This one is helpful, but really the only two books you need are: Hawaii The Big Island Revealed by Andrew Doughty and Adventure Guide Hawaii The Big Island (Hunter Travel Guides) by Bryan Fryklund & Jen Reeder. The Fryklund/Reeder book is absolutely jam-packed with information. The Doughty is also packed with info and will have a few things the Fryklund book doesn't have, but it's main attribute is that it is an absolute joy to read.

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