

Huckaby Kauai Guidance

(For the adventurous)

Background – My first visit to the Hawaiian Islands was in 1973 when my mom and dad took us to visit Oahu, Maui and Kauai. And although I have been to those other islands many times Kauai has always been my favorite...by far... and consequently a favorite to the Huckabys. It's our favorite because of the unspoiled and undeveloped nature and the countless adventures in the wilderness there. A full 1/3rd of the island is undeveloped; the road doesn't even go around the island.

I can remember my dad, beating the hell out of a rental car driving for miles on sugar cane roads, before the Hyatt existed in Poipu... opening and closing the gates behind us, cutting sugar cane with a butter knife so we could taste it and finally popping out at Mahaulepu beach.

If you want shopping and touristy stuff and eating your 3 squares in restaurants go to Maui. If you want adventure and sightseeing in nature go to Kauai.

The Book

buy it now. The guidance and directions are spectacular. The reviews don't lie.

http://www.amazon.com/Ultimate-Kauai-Guidebook-Revealed/dp/0983888760/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1432479066&sr=1-1&keywords=kauai+revealed+2015

The Island and Weather

The general rule is on a sunny day you go north. On a rainy day you stay south. Remember that there is a reason Kauai is so green... it will rain. On your side and the south typically only for 20 or 30 mins and then the sun comes out. On the north it can rain all day. so, get a cocktail and wait it out.

The **east side**, often called the windy side or the better middle side is located right in the middle of the island so that getting to the north side (the rainy side) to Princeville is easy. It can be windy on the east side

The **west side** is where many of the locals are concentrated. It is sunny and rural

Our timeshare (Marriott Waiohai) is in Poipu on the sunny side; the **south side**.

The **North Side** of the island is the rainy side; it's beautiful and green for a reason.

The surf is generally big in winter especially on the north side and smaller in summer

Adventures

The Huckaby top 6 Adventures that cost money

(in no order)

The Helicopter – is a must at least once....if you can afford it. find the highest rated ones through yelp or other internet means and find a coupon on the internet and reserve in advance.

Sugar cane flume tubes - A great...and I mean perfect adventure / fun family thing for those with little kids or grandma and grandpa is the sugar cane flume float. you get in bathing suits and float slowly in inner tubes in the actual sugar cane flumes. Through tunnels, etc. Unfortunately it is very popular and people reserve months in advance. <http://kauaibackcountry.com/>

ATVs – totally fun and very close to poipu. One our our best paid adventures ever. Muddy, waterfalls, awesome. <http://www.kauaiatv.com/>

Ziplining – is done very close to Poipu in the mountains of kipu above the waita reservoir. <http://kauaibackcountry.com/>

Napali Coast Zodiac – of all the boat / snorkel tours the zodiac is our favorite and because of that we have done it many times. It's a must for the adventurous family. There are a number of companies that do it so use the internet to find the ratings and reserve in advance.

Kayaking / Stand up Paddle boards – Wailua River or Menehune (kelly's favorite)

Non-Paid favorite Adventures

Every adventurous family that visits Kauai for a week must burn two full days of their 7 days on the island in two "must do" full day adventures:

1. **Kokee State Park and Waimea Canyon** – is shockingly beautiful. This is where the helicopters spend most of their time. There are numerous hikes in the state park. The Pihee trail at the end of the road is a must...and if caught on a sunny day you will never forget it. it's rugged; not for the faint of heart, but none of the hikes in the area are easy. The Alaka'I swamp trail is a great addition to this. The elusive Kauaian Rainbow trout lives here...and when I say elusive I mean it. it took me 8 years and I spilled a lot of blood bushwhacking 18 mile hikes to catch and release one.
2. **Kee beach and the kalalua trail** – at the end of the road on the North side this beach has everything. If you catch it on a sunny day it will be what you remember most from your vacation. The beach is protected from the surf and the snorkeling and turtles can be great. the Kaulau trailhead is here. ¼ mile on the trail is the most photographed place on the island. The adventurous hike 2 miles of the trail to the river. It's a strenuous 4 mile hike that is a must. When young and fit I have run the trail to the 4 mile mark and back. This is a popular place and they closed the natural parking lot at the beach so, parking is at a premium. It's best to drop off the stuff in the parking lot and one person parks the car as far as a mile away and hikes it back.
3. **The sugar cane tunnel:** My family has not done one of my favorite adventures and I wish they will one day: the tunnel through the mountain in Kipu ranch near Koloa. I stumbled upon this accidentally running years ago, faced my fears and just went in...it's about ½ mile long. When you pop out on the other side you are where most of Jurasik park was filmed. To get there you park where ATV adventures is; at the old sugar cane mill at the end of Mahaulepu / wili wili road in koloa. It's a good 2.5 miles on the dirt road before you get to the tunnel. Mountain Bikes would be a good here. There are tons of dirt roads in the area. The zip line is in the area too. you'll

see the atvs and zipliners. You'll also see the wild pigs and tons of birds. The waita reservoir is here.

4. **Mahaulepu** – This beach is great because it's hard to get to and there is no civilization for miles. You have to take a small easy series of poorly maintained dirt sugar cane roads. Drive to the hyatt in poipu and keep going past until the road ends. Take a right on the dirt road that parallels the poipu bay golf course. When that road end take a right turn on the dirt road (mahaulepu road) another couple miles, past the empty guard shack until it ends at the beach (that is gillin's beach). Left turn following the beach for another 1.5 miles until it ends at Mahaulepu. There is Plenty of parking here at the end of the road and the nasty dirt roads scare the tourists off. It can get windy here and the beach is primitive and beautiful. There is a trail that parallels the beach to the north that goes for miles... past spouting horns and beautiful cliffs. About a mile down the trail is the lithified cliffs; climb to the top and take pictures. You can continue the hike for another mile to what I call the most secluded beach in Kauai because there is not a road close to it for miles. Follow the trail to a gate, ignore it, and keep going until you are stopped by the cliffs. Look down and you'll see the secluded beach. I have never seen anyone on this beach...ever.
5. **The Makauwahi Cave Trail** – this is a spectacular hike along the bluffs just past the Hyatt in Poipu. Park at the public beach parking lot between the hyatt and the golf course. the trailhead is easy to find at the end of the beach in where the big cliff is. you hike along the cliffs with the spectacular views. The trail actually goes on the edge of the golf course by ancient Hawaiian burial grounds. Just short of the river it turns inland to the ancient Hawaiian caves.

Snorkling

The snorkeling in Kauai can be spectacular if you catch the right day when the surf is down and the water clarity is good. The best guidance is to buy and bring your equipment and don't rent it there. But, you can rent there easily. Turtles are abundant on the south shorelines. If you stay in the water long enough you will run into them. or you just spot them from the shore and swim to them.

All the beaches and lava shoreline are great for snorkeling in Poipu. For the adventurous drive to the old Koloa landing just a couple miles north of poipu beach, park up top and walk down the road to where the scuba people enter the water. Swim the shoreline south. It's eery because of the deep clear water and spectacular. Lots of turtles and fish; big fish. It's a tough swim in rough surf. Mark and I fish the shoreline here very successfully.

The reefs at the beach house restaurant beach are calm and easy and pretty good too.

Golf

poipu bay is a world class course...the pga course... plan on bringing a lot of golf balls.... A lot....

The Kiahuna course across the street from our condo is great because it's close and it's inexpensive. One trip mark and I inked a "play every day" deal. It was dirt cheap and as much golf as we wanted after 3pm.

The best Beaches

South Side

- Poipu Beaches (poipu beach park, waiohai and kiahuna)
- Mahaulepu (see adventures)
- Baby beach (in front of and next to the beach house restaurant)

North Side

- Kee (see adventures)
- Tunnels (is overrated....skip it unless you want to surf)
- Lumahai (requires a hike down; the locals go here. It's awesome. It's where the movie south pacific was filmed)
- Secrets (another locals beach that requires a hike down). Once there, Hike a mile north to the rocks, climb up and over to the waterfall that enters the ocean.

East Side

- Lydgate beach is on the west side. it's called a childrens beach because they built a lagoon which protects it from the surf. With a mask and snorkel it can be awesome for the kids. But, when that wind and tide come up it is the exact opposite....miserable. So go early in the morning or on a calm day. if you do go to lydgate then hike north up the beach to where the wailua river enters the ocean. You can see the ancient kauai'n carvings in the rocks. Just don't swim there. it's a general rule never to swim in the ocean where rivers enter (sharks).

Mountain Biking – can be rented in koloa. I have mountain biked the sugar cane roads and trails in the mehaulepu area and it's so rugged broke spokes in the process. If I were to do it again I'd do it through the tunnel by the waita reservoir. (see adventures).

Running / walking – both directions along the coast in poipu is fantastic. Mostly flat. See adventures for running the tunnel.

Fishing and Fly Fishing – is a totally separate document that is twice as long as this one. Email me (timhuck@interknowlogy.com) for guidance on fishing.

Dinner Restaurants / Eating highlights:

Nice

- Tidepools restaurant is an awesome place; 4 star level food and has the pricetag to go with it. it's in the hyatt in poipu. Its set on a lagoon so that the coi swim right by your table. Our kids adore this place
- The nicest restaurant on the island is the beach house....arguable because there is a roys and others. it's 4 star and has the pricetag to go with it. it is kid friendly but upscale. The views here are awesome. Turtles everywhere in the water in front of the restaurant. Get a reso "on the window" or with a view. Before or after drive the 3 or so miles to spouting horn.
- Brenneckes – a must
- Merrimans – in the "new" shopping center in Poipu

- La Spezia Restaurant and Wine Bar – in Koloa by the market and the little fish market. fairly new; great Italian food and awesome service.

Little Kid Friendly

- If you are considering a luau, which can be mega fun for the kids, then Smith's in Wailua is the best. cheesy, average food, good entertainment. Everyone must do it once.
- Tomcats in Koloa is a great kid place because it's decent food and they do have house cats that wander the place
- Keoki's Paradise in Poipu is a place kids love....and many honeymooners. It's medium priced...which in Kauai there is no such thing so it's still pricey, but set in a garden area with water features. We always go here because the kids even as teenagers still love it. awesome fu-fu drinks.
- If you make the day trip south and west to Waimea Canyon (the Grand Canyon of Hawaii) then you must stop at Jo Jo's Shave Ice on the way back. It's hard to miss on the main hwy in Waimea. It's legendary and has a cult following all over the world.... And always crowded. The wait is worth it.

Other Restaurant and Food options

- There is a local fresh fish market, tiny, cash only, limited hours, in Koloa. It's close to the Big Save market and La Spezia. If you want the highest end fresh fish to cook yourself or the highest end poke, this is the place to go.
- The locals eat at Kountry Kitchen. It's right by the airport. Tons of families. it's awesome....simply for food and value. No ambiance; it's a dive. We always figure out a way to eat there. always on the way home before the red-eye.
- Brick Oven Pizza in Kalaheo for pizza
- Mark's Place – in Lihue. great for lunch
- Ono Family Restaurant in Kapaa.
- Plantation Gardens that is my father in law's favorite place. very kid friendly.

Up North Options

We really don't know the restaurants up north at an expertise level and there are a lot of nice ones....the world's elite have places up in Princeville. When we go north it's an all day trip because we are so far south in Poipu. it's usually spent on one of their spectacular beaches with a bag lunch and a long tired drive home. But, we have added a ritual in the last 3-4 years. After a long day at Kee Beach and the Kalalua trail, we shower up at Kee, then hit the St. Regis Hotel for cocktails as the sun goes down on the balcony restaurant off the main lobby.

Another great casual place is Happy Talk lounge in Princeville. It has a good view, reasonable prices and good food. It's really highly rated.