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Suggested Itinerary: Honolulu, Kauai and Big Island

Go island-hopping through Hawaii, land of idyllic beaches, waterfalls, emerald rainforests and vibrant culture. Here, delicious food and a laid-back lifestyle will leave you longing for more. A trio of island experiences speak to the state's aloha spirit, showcasing its lush landscape as well as its history.

Honolulu

Suggested: 3-4 days

There's plenty to do and see in the state's capital on the island of Oahu. Begin at Diamond Head State Monument, a 300,000-year-old crater. Hike less than a mile (1 kilometre) to the rim for incredible views of the Pacific Ocean and the city. Browse the historical exhibits at the USS Arizona Memorial, which stretches over the sunken ship and commemorates the lives lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor. Scuba dive and snorkel to see wrecks, reefs and marine life in Hanauma Bay. Watch a lava pour and examine 24 million cultural artefacts at Bishop Museum. Don't leave Honolulu without visiting Iolani Palace, the restored 19th century home of Hawaii's monarchy.

Kauai

Suggested: 3 days

Just 15 minutes by plane from Honolulu, discover this six-million-year-old 'Garden Island', made popular in movies and known for its lush landscape. Both Waimea Canyon State Park and Koke'e State Park offer hikes featuring Waipo Falls and sweeping views of the Kalalau Valley. Walk through a rainforest, fish for trout or explore the natural history museum. Kayak through Nā Pali Coast State Park for dramatic views of the 'pali', or cliffs. Intrepid types can take a 10.5-mile (17-kilometre) coastal hike along Kalalau Trail, one of the world's most scenic. Sunbathe on the popular Poipu Beach on the southern coast. This is a paradise for surfers, swimmers and snorkellers.



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Big Island

Suggested: 2-3 days

Synonymous with Hawaii, this is the archipelago's largest island. Dive right into its turquoise waters bounded by striking beaches. Go snorkelling with sea turtles (called 'honu') in Kailua-Kona's shallow lagoons. Then head to Waimea, which is cowboy country, to trek over lush nature areas and ranches via horseback or ATV. Hike through a forest in Waipi'o Valley to journey past black sand shores, waterfalls and mystical-looking craters with steaming vents. For more volcanic activity, explore Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Marvel at two active volcanoes here – one of them, Mauna Loa, is the biggest on Earth – and drive over lava on Chain of Craters Road before visiting the park's Jaggar Museum and Volcano Art Center.

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