

The big island of Hawaii (called Hawaii, Kona is the western region) is a geologically young island. For this reason there is not as much sand as some people would picture a tropical island to have. But the beaches are there.....

Hapuna Beach:

This beach is probably our most famous beach. It has been mentioned as one of the finest beaches in the nation (but locally it is not my favorite) by various travel rags. It's strong points are a well cared for park grounds and decent beginner level boogie boarding (not to mention a lot of sand). There is some snorkeling around the rocks at the ends. I went there on New Year's Day and there were probably 3000 people there (spread out, it's a big beach) but I've seen as few as a couple dozen or so in the off season. It is located roughly 30 miles north of Kailua in the Kohala region of the island.

Spencer Beach:

This beach is located just a couple miles north of Hapuna Beach near Kawaihae. Spencer Beach Park has good facilities and the beach has a more local feel. Camping is available. There is a trail off the pavilion on the south end which leads to a small nice beach about a 10 minute walk down the trail. The only time I have been there was on New Year's and there were about 30 people there, one naked- I've since heard this is one of the local nude beaches.

Waialea Bay:

Driving into Puako (south of Hapuna) you'll see Old Puako Road. It is lined by telephone poles which are numbered. At pole number 71 you will see a dirt road with a "government property, no commercial activities" sign. The pole used to be numbered 69 so the beach is commonly referred to as "Beach 69". Take the road, by auto or foot, to the beach at the end. This is one of my most favorite beaches in the picturesque category. There is a small nude beach a couple hundred yards north you may notice in the distance which is accessible by another dirt road- don't know which one as I don't frequent those, but I thought I'd mention the beach as some individuals may be offended by it's proximity (It's far enough off you won't see anything) and others may wish to seek it out. Waialea Bay has been scheduled for development as a park for a number of years, and it may happen yet some day.

The Waikoloa, Four Seasons and other resort areas have beaches:

Personally I'm not overly wild about these beaches, but I'm sure people staying there will appreciate knowing they are there.

Kua Bay and Makalawena Beach:

These beaches are accessible by 4 wheel drive roads located both north and south of a large cinder cone about half way between Kailua and Waikoloa on the makai (ocean) side of the highway. Kua Bay is a nice little beach on the north side of the cinder cone - you'll be hearing a lot more of this beach in the next few years as they begin to develop around it. Makalawena beach is a grouping of 3 nice sandy beaches on the south side of the cinder cone. If you are looking for pristine and uncrowded - this is the beach for you. This beach is another of my favorites. It's about a half mile long and often draws "crowds" of 6 to 8 during mid-week. This beach has more sand than most beaches in the area and actually has small dunes on the mauka (mountain) side. Due to the large amount of sand I won't recommend this beach for snorkeling (fish tend to be where the rocks are) close in, but it's a great beach for sunning and frolicking. It is also reachable by a 15 minute walk across the lava from the Kona Coast Park.

Kona Coast Park:

The beach here runs from ok to wow. Located a few miles north of the airport take the pothole friendly road to the end to find the ok beach. It's big and uncrowded, but it isn't the finest sand available within 5 minutes. If you want to visit the nicer beach just walk down the beach to the north and you'll find it...or... park your car at the wide spot in the road a hundred yards before the end of the road near some outhouses and take the trail to the beach. A very, very, very few of you may remember this beach from the network TV hit show "Wind over Water" featuring Bo Derick a couple of years back- it was cancelled after two weeks I believe. This is another of my favorite beaches, and it's fairly close to town. On the north end of the beach is an old house. Go up to it and look for a small trail through the bushes leading to some small brackish water ponds and the old "King's Trail" across the lava. A 15 minute walk will take you to Makalawena beach- TAKE WATER, the lava field gets you hot and thirsty.

Natural Energy Lab and Pine Trees area:

The natural energy lab (NELHA), located just south of the airport, has a beach and tidepool my sister's family (with young children) liked a lot. The beach is straight ahead of the entry road to NELHA. To the south (left at the end of the road) you'll find a very rough road to the "Pine Trees" area (popular local surfing and homeless camping spot) where there are some decent uncrowded beaches.

Kaloko/Honokohou area:

There is a small beach down a small road makai of the highway across from the Kaloko industrial district (Costo and other businesses- just north of Kailua). Not crowded and somewhat historic. On the north end of Honokohou harbor you'll find a fairly large beach area to check out.

Old Airport Park:

Yet more sand here. Not the best swimming area due to lava rock and a bit of surf, but a popular local hangout. Located at the north edge of town off Kaiwi and Makala streets. Snorkeling is ok (actually snorkeling is ok almost anywhere you can get in the water off Kona) at the bay off the north end of the old runway- may get a bit choppy in the afternoons.

There are beaches in town:

Snorkeling, swimming and boogie boarding are available - Check it out.



Whew, I'm gettin' bored of beaches and I haven't even hit a couple of my most favorites in Kona which are located south of town:

Here's the very brief synopsis of some of the beaches south of Kailua. Some day when I feel wordy I'll expand on my descriptions.

Napo'opo'o beach: Not the world's best beach since hurricane Iniki hit in '92. Used to be great, but now the "only" attractions are that it's one of the world's best places to swim with wild dolphins and it has historic significance.

Manini Beach: Not great sand, but nice view and good snorkeling.

Keei Beach: Pat's favorite, right up there for me. Nice sand, nice tidepooling and ok snorkeling, etc. Nice local feel.

Place of Refuge picnic area- Great vibrations (I say this not as the hippy type), more lava than sand. Pat and I were married there.

Ho'okena Beach: Another of my personal favorites. Great, fine gray sand, decent snorkeling, swimming and boogie boarding. Dolphins on sunny afternoons. Camping and a nice "local" feel. Some facilities available. To get there drive to Ho'okena town and you'll see a big sign pointing to the beach - now for the tricky part - the sign points down someone's driveway. Don't go down the driveway. About 50 yards past the sign there is a nice road which goes the 3 or 4 miles down to the beach.

Pebble Beach at Kona Paradise: Not one of my favorites, but I'll mention it because there are a bunch of vacation rentals down in this area. Kona Paradise is a subdivision a few curvy miles south of Ho'okena town. Turn down into the subdivision and you'll find a road reminiscent of a cross between an alpine slalom run and San Francisco's Lombard Street. Ten minutes later you can get out of your car and let the smoke from your brake pads clear and you'll be at Pebble Beach. Some refer to this as a black sand beach, but it's more of a black gravel beach- pea sized gravel. It makes a real neat whooshing sound as the waves recede. I've only been there once so I can't tell you much about it.

Further south: Yes there's more, but they'll be a bit of a trip. I haven't been to Honomalino Bay yet, but I've heard it's a nice place. Milolii has areas to picnic and get into the water also.

South Kona Beaches and Snorkeling

City of Refuge (Puuhomua o Honaunau)

In ancient Hawaii culture, the City of Refuge was the place where those who broke Kapu (taboo) could be pardoned (if they reached there alive). Now a National Park, there still remains a boat launch and snorkel area outside the park border which usage is free. This area borders Kealakekua Bay, which is a Fish and Wildlife Preserve, and consequently snorkeling is excellent.

To reach the City of Refuge, take the belt highway (11) south to Honaunau. Take a right turn towards the shore at the sign for "Puuhomua o Honaunau". Follow the road past the scenic lookout and make a left turn into the National Park. Then, before reaching the entrance booth, make a right turn into the boat launch area. Park along the road, and look north of the launch for steps in the rocks which make a fairly decent entry into the water.

Napoopoo Beach Park

Until recently, Napoopoo had a great sandy beach. But strong winter swells have removed the sand and left it rocky. It is still suitable for great snorkeling, as Napoopoo also borders Kealakekua Bay. From here you can swim to the Captain Cook Monument, the point where natives slayed Cook as he was attempting to return to the island.

To reach Napoopoo Beach Park, take the belt highway (11) south to the town of Captain Cook. After passing the Trail Rides on the left, look on the right for the turnoff to Napoopoo. Follow the windy road down toward the shore, making a right turn where straight would wind back toward the highway. At the shore the road tees. Take a right turn and another 100 yards brings you to the beach park. If you were to take a left, you would follow a narrow road which goes south along the shore and eventually winds up at the City of Refuge.

Kahaluu Beach Park

Next door to the Keahou Beach Hotel, Kahaluu offers a cove protected from



ocean waves for swimming and snorkeling. Generally crowded, it's still a good spot for those more ocean timid.

To reach Kahaluu Beach Park: at the intersection with stoplights on the belt highway between Kailua-Kona and Kealakekua, turn on King Kamehameha III toward the shore and follow until it intersects Allie Drive. Turn

right and the beach park is visible within 100 Yards.

Disappearing Sands Beach Park

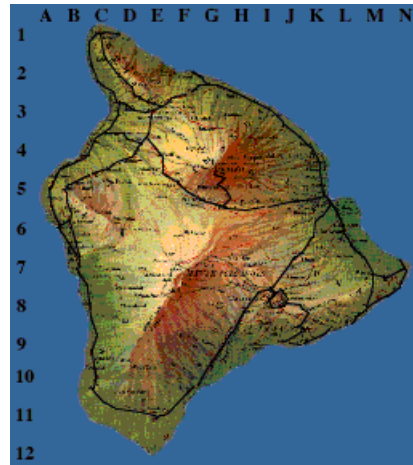
Between Kahaluu Beach Park and Kailua-Kona on Alii Drive, this beach park (also known as White Sands) is known for its body surfing. The name comes from the fact that the sand disappears each winter and returns in the spring. Generally crowded, it's not a good spot for beginners.

To reach Disappearing Sands Beach Park, following the directions to get to Kahaluu Beach Park. Then continue traveling north on Alii drive for a couple of miles more till you come to the park.



**BEACHES
ON
THE
ISLAND
OF
HAWAII**

Beaches, after all, are one of the things most people think of when they consider vacations. This list is simple and concise. It begins at the northern tip of the Island and goes counter clockwise around the island. Remember that most of these beaches have no lifeguard and many don't even have drinking water. The ocean is a great joy, but it can change from friend to foe in one breath. Treat it with respect, and don't turn your back on the waves!



[For Photos of Selected Beaches, Click Here](#)

Name of Beach	Swim	Snorkel	Body Surf	Water	Rest rooms	Shore	Map	Remarks
Keokea Beach Park	+	+	+	+	+	rocky	D1	
Kapaa Beach Park	+	+	-	+	+	rocky	C1	
Mahukona Beach Park	+	+	-	+	+	rocky	C2	whale viewing
Lapakahi State Park	+	++	-	+	+	rocky	C2	whale viewing
Spencer Beach Park	+	+	-	+	+	sandy	C3	
Mauna Kea Beach	+++	+++	+++	+	+	white sand	C3	gated
Hapuna Beach Park	+++	++	+++	+	+	white sand	C3	picnic areas
Waialea Bay	++	+++	-	-	-	white sand	C3	easy hike
Anaehoomalu Bay	++	++	-	+	+	white sand	B4	windsurf
Kua Bay	+	-	++	-	-	white sand	B4	4 wheel or hike
Makalawena	+	+	+	-	-	white sand	B4	4 wheel or hike
North Kona Coast Park	++	-	++	-	+	mixed sand	B4	bumpy road
Keahole Point	+	+	+	+	+	white sand	A5	
Pine Trees	+	+	+++	-	-	rocky	A5	surfing
Old Airport	-	+	++	+	+	rocky	B6	picnic areas
King Kamehameha	++	+	-	+	+	sandy	B6	toddler beach
Pahoehoe Beach Park	+	++	-	+	+	rocky	B6	quiet, shady
White Sands Beach	+	+	++	+	+	sandy	B6	local crowds
Kahalu'u Beach Park	+	++++	+	+	+	mixed	B6	easy snorkel
Napoopoo Beach	+	+++	-	+	+	rocky	B7	
Manini Beach	+	++	-	-	-	pebbles	B7	

Honaunau Bay	+	+++	-	-	+	rocky	B7	advanced snorkel
Ho'okena Bay	+	++	+	+	+	sandy	B8	
Honomalino Beach	+	+	-	-	-	black sand	B8	hike
Green Sands	+	+	+	-	-	green sand	E12	4 wheel or hike
Whittington Beach	-	-	-	+	+	rocky	F11	picnic area
Punalu'u Beach	+	++	-	-	+	black sand	-	sea turtles
Kahena Beach	+	-	++	-	-	black sand	L8	
Isaac Hale Beach	+	+	+	+	+	pebbles	M8	
Onekahakaha Beach Park	+	+	-	+	+	black sand	L5	
Hilo Bayfront Park	+	-	-	-	-	sandy	L5	windsurf
Lelewi Beach Park	+	+	+	+	+	sandy	L5	
Honoli'i Beach Park	+	-	+	+	+	sandy	K5	
Laupahoehoe Beach	-	-	-	+	+	rocky	K4	picnic area
Kolekole Beach Park	+	-	-	+	+	pebbles	J3	
Waipi'o Beach	-	-	++	-	-	black sand	F2	4 wheel or hike

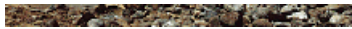
KONA WEB



BEACHES ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII

[For a Complete Text Listing of Beaches, Click Here](#)

	<p>Old Airport State Park Just north of Kailua-Kona, this beach ranges from rocky coast to sandy tidal pools. A great place to get your toes wet, play with the kids or watch the local kids catching the waves on their boogie boards. Picnic tables and showers are available, and there's a nice walking track to boot!</p>
	<p>Surf Happens All along Alii Drive between Kailua and Keauhou, there are little pocket size beaches and surfing spots. Pahoehoe Beach Park, White Sands, and our premiere snorkeling beach, Kahalu'u Beach Park, are all found in these parts. Most have some facilities, though parking can be an issue.</p>
	<p>A-Bay is really Anaeho'omalu, but most people are in too much of a hurry to say it. The windsurfing capital of the Big Island, there are a lot of other great activities that are available here on Kona's "Gold Coast" as well. Lots of nice shade under the coconut trees make it very pleasant here.</p>
	<p>Hapuna Beach The Prince of the Big Island beaches is a beautiful long white beach with plenty of facilities, and nearby cabins which rent for very little. It can be hard to find parking on a weekend, but this is the classic Hawaiian beach!</p>
	<p>Near the resort at Hualalai is Kahuwai bay. Now nicely appointed with showers and restrooms, this beach is a fine place to soak up rays, or to have a picnic. Just about 6 miles north of the airport.</p>
	<p>Keokea Beach Park is located at the northern end of the island. A wonderful place to eat lunch and watch for whales. The waves come marching in with a lot of thunder and only the bold will go out past the break wall.</p>



If you visit the **King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel**, you will no doubt be thrilled by this small sandy spot of protected shoreline. Great for kids, with lots of "water toys" for rent nearby for adults, too. King Kamehameha made this his home in the early 1800's, and you never know who'll show up...



Mauna Kea Beach

was chosen by Conde Nast as one of the World's Best Beaches. Twice! Obviously, they can only keep it that way by controlling access to it. Which they do. Get here before 9:30 am if you want to be sure to get a beach pass. Otherwise, wait in line. Fortunately, Hapuna Beach is just south of Mauna Kea should you decide not to wait.



Punalu'u

On the southeast side of the island is this little beach of beautiful black sand with huge coconut palms. A few facilities and not too much traffic make it a good place to visit, but what makes it really a treat is the abundance of sea turtles that thrive in this cove. The water can be a little cool due to fresh water springs that bubble up from beneath the rocks.



Place of Refuge

is not a beach but it is next to one of our island's best snorkeling spots. The black lava rock drops off into the sea, which is deep and filled with color. Watch for stinging sea urchins as you get in and out of the water - you will be rewarded with an experience you will not soon forget! If you decide not to get wet, you can always visit the National Historical Park "next door".



Waipio Valley

How you get here is your business, but once you do, you will understand why it's called the Valley of the Kings. Waterfalls, black sand, wild horses, and a scenic river are all part of your reward for making the journey. Absolutely no facilities, and permits are needed for camping. A very sacred place to Hawaiians, please don't leave anything behind when you leave.