



Hawaii : Sightseeing

Attractions

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

Hwy. 11, Volcano 96785

808-985-6000, 800-967-7311

Open daily 24 hours. Visitors center open daily 7:45 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission \$10 a car a week, cars with visitors 65 & older free.

If you go nowhere else on Hawaii, visit the home of Pele, the Hawaiian fire goddess, and watch as our planet continues being born. Established in 1916, the 229,000-acre Hawaii Volcanoes National Park sprawls down Kilauea's southern and eastern flanks and up the slopes of Mauna Loa to the 13,677-foot summit. Within the park's boundaries are scenic drives, 150 miles of hiking trails, a comprehensive visitors center at park headquarters, the Thomas A. Jaggar Museum, Hawaii Volcano Observatory, campgrounds, the Volcano Art Center and the Volcano House (a mediocre hotel, except for the rooms with a window on the rim of Kilauea caldera). Pele is currently in the midst of a temper tantrum that started in January 1983, one of the longest continuous eruptions ever recorded. The park is dotted with sights of this ever-changing geology: hissing roadside fumaroles, smoldering pits, pungent sulfur banks and miles of black, crusted lava. Eruptions vary from spectacular "curtains of fire" to underground rivers of molten lava. In addition to watching the eruption, visitors can enjoy one of the best hiking areas in Hawaii. The air is cool and brisk at 4,000 feet. The numerous trails lead across small craters, down Devastation Trail, into the 1,400-foot Thurston Lava Tube and even up to the top of Mauna Loa. For non-hikers, most of the park's points of interest are also reachable by car.

Mauna Kea Observatory & Ellison Onizuka Visitors Center

Summit, Mauna Kea

808-961-2180

For those interested in the stars, there are two programs available to the public. At the 9,000 foot elevation, the Ellison Onizuka Visitors Center (named after the Hawaii-born astronaut who died in the 1986 Challenger space shuttle tragedy), features displays and programs about Mauna Kea and the astronomy work taking place there. Call for visitors center hours, stargazing schedules and summit tours. The tours meet at the 9,000-foot-elevation visitors center and proceed up to the observatory at the summit. Since the observatory is located at nearly 14,000 feet, no one under 16 is allowed on the tour and anyone with a heart or respiratory condition or who is pregnant, is advised not to make the trip to the summit. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is required to make the journey from the visitors center to the summit; before you venture up, be advised that the weather at high altitude is changeable and can be quite dramatic. High winds and sudden drops in temperature along with rain, hail and snow are common occurrences. Before you go, call 808-974-4203 for road and weather conditions.

Mauna Loa

Macadamia Nut Co.

Macadamia Rd., Hilo 96720

Open daily 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission free.

Don't trek all the way here hoping for a free handout-if you're struck by the urge to binge on the heavenly nut after visiting the plant, you'll have to pay dearly for them at the gift shop. Even if your interest in the nut is purely

academic, a visit to Hawaii's largest producer of macadamia nuts makes for an enjoyable excursion. The visitors center's diversions include a "nature walk" through the orchards, a video on the nut's history and a self-guided tour of the processing plant next door. To get there, take Highway 11 about five miles south of Hilo and turn left on Macadamia Road. You'll meander three miles through macadamia orchards to reach the visitors' center.

Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii

Keahole Point, Kailua-Kona 96740

808-329-7341

Open Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Free 1 1/2-hour-tours Thurs. 10 a.m., reservation required.

The natural energy comes from 2,000 feet beneath the ocean's surface-that's called cold water. The temperature difference between the deep water and warmer surface water is what generates energy. It is a very basic yet complex notion at the same time, and if you want it explained, go ahead and schedule a visit to the lab. There you'll have the chance to visit special organic, lobster and spirulina (algae) farms and other intriguing water-based energy resource experiments. To get there take Queen Kaahumanu Highway to Keahole Point.

Panaewa Rain Forest Zoo

Off Hwy. 11, Stainback Hwy., Hilo 96720

808-959-7224

Open daily 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission free.

Panaewa is one of the few tropical rain-forest zoos in the United States. This tiny zoo features several rain-forest species in a natural environment: African pygmy hippopotami, rain-forest monkeys, a tapir, jungle parrots, rain-forest tigers and endangered Hawaiian birds including the nene goose, Hawaiian stilt and koloa duck.

Parker Ranch Visitors Center

Parker Ranch Square

Kawaihae Rd., Kamuela 96743

808-885-7655

Open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m., last tour 3 p.m. Admission to visitors center \$5; admission & historical homes tour \$10; historical homes tour only \$7.50.

An integral part of the Big Island history, the 225,000-acre Parker Ranch has been in operation for more than 150 years and is considered the largest privately owned cattle ranch in the United States. It represents a period of history in Hawaii when paniolos (cowboys) were the backbone of a major industry in the Islands. Its historical homes and some facilities are open to the public. The visitors center features large-screen videos on the family history. The historical home tour includes a visit to Puu Opelo, the former ranch owner's exquisite home with a priceless art collection, ranging from Impressionist paintings to Ming Dynasty antiques. Next door is the Mana Home, the original home of the founder, John Palmer Parker I. Built in 1847, the home is constructed of rare koa wood and is a prime example of the simple but elegant lifestyle of the 19th century. It's filled with memorabilia of six generations of the family. Ask about wagon rides, which go onto the ranchlands.

Puuhonua o Honaunau

(Place of Refuge of Honaunau)

Off Hwy. 160, Honaunau 96704

808-328-2288

Open Mon.-Thurs. 6 a.m.-8 p.m., Fri.-Sun. 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Visitors center open daily 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Admission \$3.

This ancient Hawaiian place of refuge was once a sanctuary for law-breakers-if one entered, one would be spared from death. During times of war, it also became a sanctuary for those who couldn't fight or who were defeated in battle. Honaunau was the residence of the ruling chief, and his palace grounds adjoined the refuge. Inside the refuge was a mausoleum that housed the dead bodies of royalty. The ancient Hawaiians believed that the spiritual power of chiefs remained within their bones after death. Today this sacred site is preserved as a 181-acre national park. Many of the arts and skills of Old Hawaii are performed, including the pounding of kapa (cloth made from bark)

and the weaving of lauhala (pandanus leaf) into baskets or mats.

Suisan Fish Auction

85 Lihiwai, Hilo 96720
808-935-8051 (market)
808-935-9349 (retail & wholesale)
Open Mon.-Sat. 7:30 a.m. (closing time varies)

Catching the Suisan Fish Auction may mean getting up earlier than your usual vacation schedule, but it's worth it. It's a culture within itself. Wholesale buyers bark out bids in a staccato rhythm, language punctuated with hand gestures and poker faces, as the commercial catch from Hilo's fleet goes on the block. Fat tuna, giant marlin, swordfish, mahi mahi and various kinds of deep-water snapper are inspected, graded and sold. The whole process can take as little as 30 minutes if the catch is off, or last for hours when the fishing is good. If all of this auctioning makes your mouth water, go next door to the retail shop and do a little bidding of your own.

Volcano Winery

35 Pii Mauna Dr., Volcano 96785
808-967-7772
Open daily 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

This unique vineyard and winery began in 1986 with the planting of grapes; the tasting room opened in 1993 and is producing one-of-a-kind wines like passion Chablis, guava Chablis, Volcano Red, Volcano blush and various grape wines. All wines are available at about \$13 from the gift shop, where the friendly staff will tell you all you need to know about macadamia nut honey wine.

Beaches

The shoreline of the Big Island mimics its dramatic and varied interior. More than 100 beaches-of white, black and even green sand-are found along the 361-mile coastline. These beaches range from those with full public facilities, including parking lots, rest rooms and showers, to nearly inaccessible, remote locations hidden behind private land, or at the base of steep cliffs. Needless to say, each beach has a personality of its own.

Anaehoomalu

Outrigger Waikoloa Beach
69-275 Waikoloa Beach Dr.
Waikoloa 96738

Residents and visitors flock to this long, white-sand crescent, dotted with black-lava fragments and bordered by waving palm trees fronting the Outrigger Waikoloa Beach hotel. The beach slopes gently down to deeper waters offshore, where swimming, snorkeling, near-shore scuba diving, windsurfing and occasionally surfing are excellent. Equipment rental and instruction in snorkeling, scuba and windsurfing are available at the north end of the beach. There's a small park with rest rooms, showers and picnic tables at the south end. Parking is near the hotel.

Coconut Island Park

Center of Hilo Bay, Hilo 96720

The ancient Hawaiians claimed that swimming around the rock that lies offshore from Coconut Island could cure any illness. Today, most of the swimming is centered around the diving tower, but this grassy, tree-lined area is popular with picnickers and fishermen as well as swimmers. Facilities include a pavilion with rest rooms, picnic tables, benches and a parking lot adjacent to the grounds of the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel.

Hapuna Beach State

Recreation Area
Queen Kaahumanu Hwy., Waikoloa 96743

Hapuna is the kind of perfect white-sand beach that location scouts would choose for a movie set in paradise. Deep, clean sand stretches for half a mile

between the black-lava promontories that mark its boundaries. In the summer, the beach is 200 feet wide (the widest beach on the Big Island). In the winter, the surf gobbles up most of the white sand but leaves a few feet for beachgoers. May through September, residents from all over the island flock here for swimming, snorkeling and bodysurfing. Facilities include half a dozen A-frame cabins for overnight camping, paved parking lots, picnic pavilions, rest rooms and showers. Come winter, Hapuna totally changes. Around October until April, high surf pounds the beach, generating a thundering shore break and extremely powerful rip currents. There is a lifeguard on duty every day, but people unfamiliar with the angry waters of Hapuna should be cautious.

Hookena Beach Park

Off Hawaii Belt Rd., Hookena 96704

This is a beach off the beaten path, tricky to find but a pleasant ride down the mountain from the Hawaii Belt Highway. It's to Hookena that Hawaii residents bring their families to relax in the small park, complete with rest rooms, showers, picnic tables and shade trees. The beach, which is a combination of very fine black and white sand that blends into gray, allows easy entry and exit for swimmers. The best snorkeling and scuba diving is north of Hookena Beach Park along the rocky shoreline.

Kahaluu Beach Park

Alii Dr., Keauhou 96739

Shallow water, a protected breakwater, extraordinary reef structure and schools of colorful fish make Kahaluu Beach Park the most popular snorkeling spot in Kona. Even the most timid swimmers are comfortable here: They can stand up if they panic. The white-sand beach fills up quickly with sunbathers and families. On weekends, nearly every foot of space is occupied, including the picnic pavilion and parking area. County lifeguards warn the inexperienced that during high surf a strong rip current can pull swimmers outside the bay. When the surf's up, more rescues are made at Kahaluu Beach Park than at any other beach in Kona.

Magic Sands

Alii Dr., Kailua-Kona 96740

Magic Sands, also called White Sands or Disappearing Sands, gets its name from the periodic flushing of sand from this small beach. During the winter, violent waves can literally remove the sand within a 24-hour period, leaving bare rock. In the summer, the sand generally washes back. This tiny beach, the largest along the seven-mile coast from Kailua to Keauhou, is excellent for swimming; a small shore break on the sandbar offers small "training" waves for beginning bodysurfers and body boarders. In the winter, powerful waves-up to 10 feet-roar through this small cove, providing excellent bodysurfing conditions for experts. The facilities include rest rooms, showers, a lifeguard tower and a tiny parking lot.

Spencer Beach Park

Below the Puukohola Heiau
Hwy. 19, Kawaihae 96743

Lying in the shadow of the giant temple that Kamehameha built before uniting all the Hawaiian Islands is a white-sand beach. Its protection from the prevailing winds and offshore waves makes for exceptional swimming, snorkeling and diving conditions. The facilities include rest rooms, picnic tables, showers, tennis courts, a roofed pavilion, parking lots, camping area and lifeguard tower.

Excursions

Hilo

Hwy. 19

Who needs a time machine? A trip to Hilo is a trip to Hawaii circa 1939. Curving around the crescent bay at the base of Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea is the Big Island's capital city, Hilo. Lush with greenery that thrives in its rainy

weather, Hilo has streets lined with old tin-roofed wooden buildings from a more leisurely era. Many of these venerable structures have been carefully renovated over the last dozen years to preserve their yesteryear charm. Home to more than 42,000 people, Hilo is the county seat, the location of a state university and the main port of the island. The city's people, who are a mixture of Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian, Filipino and Caucasian, still believe in smiling at strangers and taking time to stop and talk to their neighbors. Don't be surprised when shopping in some of the old woodfront stores downtown if your selection is tallied with paper and pencil, an abacus or an old-fashioned cash register that "rings" up your purchase. Take time to wander through the tropical gardens and historical museums. Time in Hilo is not measured in hours and minutes but in seasons. As one Hilo resident puts it: "Warning-Hilo's slow pace of life can become habit-forming."

Ka Lae

Southern tip of the Big Island

Down a bumpy, 11-mile road from Highway 11, along unfenced rangelands where cattle roam freely, lies the southernmost point of the United States, Ka Lae, also known as South Point. The windswept point was the first landfall made by the Polynesian voyagers. For eons after it has been a prime fishing spot, as the ancient mooring loops carved into the lava show. A hot, three-mile hike east from South Point through dry grass over a constantly windy plain leads to the famous Green Sand Beach. An entire cinder cone of olivine collapsed into the bay, resulting in this oddity. Good for swimming and picnicking, but watch out for the rip currents, the beach faces miles of open ocean, where the next landfall is thousands of miles away.

Kohala Coast

Queen Kaahumanu Hwy.
(to Rte. 270)

For a taste of ancient Hawaii, a half-day drive up the Kohala Coast is your ticket to the past. Starting at Puako, near Kawaihae, stop and view the petroglyphs, the ancient Hawaiian rock carvings depicting people, animals, historical and religious events, maps and nearly every aspect of daily life. North of Puako, just before Kawaihae, lies the Puukohola Heiau, the temple Kamehameha the Great built in 1790 to honor the war god Kukailimoku and thus ensure his domination of all the Hawaiian islands. Traveling north, stop at Lapakahi, a state historical park, between Kawaihae and Mahukona on Highway 270. This ancient coastal fishing village has been preserved to show Hawaiian life as it was lived 600 years ago. The final and most mysterious stop on the tour is the Mookini Heiau, near the Upolu airfield on the northern tip of the island. This temple, once the site of important ceremonies and human sacrifices, is more than 1,500 years old. It is built of water-worn basalt stones that come from Polulu Valley, more than ten miles away. Oral history recounts that it was built in just one night by a human chain, which passed stones hand over hand ten miles to the site.

Kona Coffee Country

Hwy. 180 & Hwy. 11
Holualoa & Kealahou

Up the slopes where lush tropical vegetation blankets the hillside lies Kona coffee country. A 20-mile belt of land, beginning at 700 feet and rising to 2,500 feet, wraps across the flanks of two volcanoes, Hualalai and Mauna Loa. Little has changed in the growing and milling of coffee since the first trees came to Kona in 1828. The towns along the coffee belt have remained sleepy villages. Start on Route 180 at the northern end of coffee country in Holualoa, a one-street village with clusters of art galleries. Drive south past the flowering coffee trees, tall avocado trees, blooming yellow ginger plants and dew-kissed ferns to Kainaliu on Highway 11. Another place time has forgotten, Kainaliu seems like a town from the '40s. The stores still have names like "dry goods" and "mercantile," and their proprietors know most of their customers' first names. Coffee country ends just past Kealahou, which overlooks the bay where Captain Cook was killed. This is the home of Kona coffee, and tasting rooms abound. During coffee season (September to January), you can watch farmers deliver and weigh their coffee cherries.

Milolii Fishing Village

Hwy. 11, Milolii

Down a steep, winding road on the southwest flank of the Big Island lies the sleepy fishing village of Milolii. Ramshackle houses and motorized outrigger canoes line the beaches. The sound of ukuleles, the surf and children's laughter fills the air. Most of the Milolii residents, Hawaiians who escaped a '20s eruption and settled here, make their living from the sea. Material possessions are not important; for some, electricity and running water are something to be enjoyed only in "town" (Kailua). Residents prefer to tinker with their boats, lounge on dilapidated porches or sit in the shade of a tree and "talk story" with neighbors. Journey to this special place not only to view this lifestyle but also to feel the strong sense of community among these open-hearted people.

Parks & Gardens

Akaka Falls State Park

Hwy. 19, Hilo 96720

Open daily

This is as close as you may ever get to the Garden of Eden-66 acres under a rain-forest canopy: wild bamboo groves, dewy ferns, brilliant ti plants and tropical trees, the scent of ginger in the air. The highlight is the 420-foot cascade known as Akaka Falls. If you want a spot for a fabulous picnic, this is it.

Hawaii Tropical Botanical Gardens

P.O. Box 80, Papaikou 96781

808-964-5233

Open daily. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (except Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day). Adults \$15, ages 16 & under \$5, 6 & under free.

Pathways carved out of the jungle meander through this exotic nature preserve. Streams, waterfalls and more than 1,000 plant species, including extensive collections of palms, bromeliads, gingers, exotic ornamentals and rare plants fill this natural wonderland. The park borders rugged coastline, where giant sea turtles may be seen. Located seven miles north of Hilo on the Four-Mile Scenic Route-look for Onomea Bay.

Liliuokalani Gardens

Banyan Dr., Waiakea Peninsula

Hilo 96720

Open daily

This is the largest formal Asian garden-30 acres-outside of Japan. The magnificent cultural park, named after Hawaii's last reigning monarch, Queen Liliuokalani, was built in the early 1900s as a memorial to the immigrant Japanese who came to work at the old Waiakea Sugar Plantation. The gardens feature both Hawaiian and Asian trees, pagodas, arched bridges, carved stone lions, Japanese stone lanterns and reflecting lagoons. For information, call the Hawaii County Department of Parks and Recreation 808-961-8311.

Tours

Atlantis Submarine

Kona Street Shopping Center

Kailua-Kona 96740

808-329-6626

Tours Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Adults \$79, ages 4-12 \$39.

For those unwilling to plunge underwater in the flesh, or for those looking for a one-of-a-kind experience, Atlantis has brought in an 80-ton submarine and operates daily from the Kailua Pier off the shores of Kailua-Kona. A shuttle boat takes 48 passengers to the sub, which dives as deep as 120 feet. The vessel prowls around the reef as the passengers view the subterranean world from large portholes during the 45-minute ride. Even ardent divers have been impressed with the tour. Atlantis is located across the street from the King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel in the Kona Street Shopping Center. Children must be at least 36 inches tall.

Blue Hawaiian Helicopters

Hilo International Airport, Hangar 105

Hilo 96720

808-961-5600, 800-786-2583

www.bluehawaiian.com

Open daily 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Circle of Fire \$140 per person; Kohala Coast Adventure \$145 per person; Big Island Spectacular \$305 per person.

If you're game, flying in a helicopter above the Big Island is an unparalleled thrill. The view of the volcano from the air is unduplicated-if there's any activity, you will see fiery molten lava flowing into the sea, shooting a hiss of steam skyward. You can also see the effects of the most recent ongoing eruption near Kalapana-half-buried school buses, houses isolated in the middle of vast lava fields. Blue Hawaiian Helicopters, with their fleet of safe ASTAR jet helicopters, is the hands-down winner in the helicopter tour category. Owned and operated by Hawaii's oldest established family helicopter company, it offers you luxurious and unforgettable tours. There are such amenities as noise-canceling headsets and videos of your actual flight. Also see review in Maui/Sightseeing/Tours. Also located at Hwy. 19 at Waikoloa Village Rd., Waikoloa, Big Island, 808-886-1768, and Kahului Heliport, Hangar 105, Kahului, Maui, 808-871-8844, 800-745-2583.

Captain Beans' Cruises

Kailua Pier, Kailua-Kona 96840

808-329-2955

Dinner sunset sail Sat.-Thurs. 5:15 p.m., Fri. 7 p.m. Adults \$52-\$63.

Captain Beans is an institution in Kona. The trademark red crab claw-shaped Polynesian sails have been cruising the waters of Kona for a couple of decades. The dinner sunset sail offers lots of entertainment, hula dancers and never-ending refills on libations. The 150-foot Tamure can hold up to 290 people.

Captain Dan McSweeney's Year-Round Whale Watching

P.O. Box 139, Holualoa 96725

808-322-0028

Tours twice daily Dec. 20-April 30, tours 3 times a week July 1-Dec. 19. Adults \$49.50, children \$29.50.

Capt. Dan McSweeney, a professional whale researcher, has been studying several different species of whales in the waters off Kona for more than 25 years. He is on board every trip, conducting ongoing research of the whales, while informing visitors about them. During the humpback whale season, December through April, the boat has two three-hour trips to observe the whales. During the other seasons, the boat does just one morning tour on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Once the whales are spotted, Capt. McSweeney may put a hydrophone (underwater microphone) into the water to listen to the songs of the humpbacks or the calls of the other whales. More and more customers are return visitors who get hooked on watching the humpback whales in the winter and return during the summer and fall to see the other whales: pilot, sperm, false killer, melon-headed, pygmy killer and beaked. These whales are found in pods of 20 to 40 and are very social, interacting with each other on the surface. Repeat visitors claim they are more fascinated with the summer-fall whales because of their animated interaction. Capt. McSweeney strictly follows whale-watching guidelines to make sure his research is a positive experience for the animals in the water as well as for the visitors on the boat.

Captain Zodiac

Honokohau Harbor, Kailua-Kona 96740

808-329-3199

Tours daily 8:15 a.m. & 1 p.m. Adults \$67, 12 & under \$54.

Twice a day, the 23-foot inflatable raft leaves Honokohau Harbor for a four-hour journey along the Kona Coast. Hugging the coastline, the captain reels off Hawaiian legends and points out places of interest, such as sea caves, to a maximum of 16 passengers per boat. At Kealakekua Bay, the boat stops for snorkeling in the calm waters. The tours provide all gear and a snack (fruit, chips, pretzels and juice) and the staff even gives a bit of instruction. The trip back can be a bit rough and bumpy (they refuse to take pregnant women and people with bad backs as passengers). This tour is a good way to see the coast

close-up, but it's not for the infirm. Great during whale season, December through April.

Kenai Helicopters

Hapuna Heliport

Kohala Coast 96738

808-329-7424

Open daily 7 a.m.-5 p.m. The 1 3/4-hour Volcano deluxe tour \$304, 3/4-hour Hamakua Coast tour \$135.

The popular volcano tour goes from the active vent, down to where the hot molten lava hits the sea in an explosive display of primal force, then does a fly-over of valley waterfalls and the meadows of Parker Ranch on the return. Kenai has been flying on the Big Island for 20 years and has found a few hidden spots to take its clients, especially along the steep, lush valleys of the Hamakua Coast.

Kohala Mountain Kayak Cruise

P.O. Box 660, Kapaau 96755

808-889-6922

Tours daily 8:15 a.m. & 12:15 p.m. Adults \$75, ages 5-18 \$55.

One of the most unique tours in Hawaii, this trip through six miles of a scenic irrigation system (including a few tunnels bored through the mountains) is a wet adventure. The whole excursion from orientation talk in the wonderful little country town of Kapaau to return by van lasts three hours. You're actually on the water for about an hour and 15 minutes. It's both fun and educational. You'll learn about the area's sugar history and the amazing amount of labor that went into building this irrigation system traversing mountain forests.

Mauna Kea Helicopters

P.O. Box 1713, Kamuela 96743

808-885-6400

Tours daily. Valley Adventure \$140, Kilauea Show Stopper \$295. Minimum of 4, maximum of 6 a flight.

Ask for pilot Scott Shupe, one of the best helicopter pilots in Hawaii. Shupe's customers always leave with a smile after a ride in the sky. Our favorite tours are the Valley Adventure, a 45-minute ride that covers all eight of the dramatic Hamakua valleys, and the Kilauea Show Stopper, a tour of the active volcano, plus the Valley Adventure. Every seat in Shupe's rotorcraft is a window seat.

Mauna Kea Summit Adventures

P.O. Box 9027, Kailua-Kona 96740

808-322-2366

Tours daily 3 p.m.-11 p.m. Cost \$135 a person, minimum age 13 & over.

The sunset stargazing tour atop Mauna Kea: You're in for a two-hour tour of the heavens and a magnificent sunset through a high-tech telescope. Transportation is provided from designated pick-up points. The tour also provides warm parkas and hot drinks as you drive to the top of Hawaii's tallest volcano. Note: The company will not take pregnant women or anyone with respiratory or heart problems.

Mauna Loa Helicopters

Keahole Airport, Kona 96740

808-334-0234

Tours by reservation. 30-minute tours from \$100.

You're in for more than just a sightseeing tour with Mauna Loa Helicopters. You can design your own tour, lasting as long or as short as you want. The instructor/pilot flies the two-seat Robinson R22 helicopter giving you the opportunity to take the controls and try to fly the chopper yourself (under supervision)! Hobby- and pro-photographers have the rare opportunity to fly with their door removed enabling you to get the best possible pictures of this breathtaking island.

Volcano Heli-Tours

Hilo International Airport
Commuter Terminal, Hilo 96720
808-961-3355
Tours daily. Tours \$115-\$145 a person.

The tour features either a 45-minute or 55-minute flight to the eruption site and around the entire Volcanoes National Park.

Waipio Valley Shuttle & Services

End of Rte. 240, Waipio 96727
808-775-7121
Open Mon.-Sat. 8 a.m.-4 p.m., tours every hour. Adults \$35, ages 10 & under \$15.

Once a favored spot of Hawaiian royalty as well as a center of cultural and political life on the Big Island, Waipio Valley is now a retreat into the past. Neat geometric taro fields line the pastoral valley floor, bordered by 2,000-foot cliffs on three sides and the waves of the Pacific on the fourth. This is the Hawaii of bygone days. Only four-wheel-drive vehicles can traverse the steep access road into the valley. Waipio Valley Shuttle offers excellent guided tours.

Waipio Valley Wagon Tours

P.O. Box 1340, Honokaa 96727
808-775-9518
Tours Mon.-Sat. 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. & 3:30 p.m. Adults \$40, ages 13-18 \$20, ages 3-12 free.

Relax in a mule-driven wagon as you venture across taro fields and through the valley floor. The 1 1/2-hour tours leave four times a day. Definitely an adventure you won't forget.