V26 N°5

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2023

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PHOTOGRAPH BY **ELYSE BUTLER**

ALOHA GOES BOTH WAYS / **Lynne O’Neill has been producing fashion shows and events in New York City for the past forty years. Follow her behind the scenes in New York and back to Honolulu, where she was born and raised, to reconnect with Hawai‘i’s fashion ‘ohana.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY **BLAKE ABES**

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ON THE COVER

Mare Tranquillis

Krista Jaspers freedives at Pūpūkea, Oʻahu.

PHOTO BY **ELYSE BUTLER**

Contributors

Beau Flemister

"Originally, this visit to Makatea was just a stopover from Tahiti on our sail through Tuamotu with the Roark team, primarily there for surfing," says **Beau Flemister**, who wrote "Vertical Bliss" for this issue. "The rock climbing scene is still so new that there's really not a whole lot of intel on the place other than: 'Talk to Heitapu Mai'—the island's only climbing guide. Sure enough, he was there waiting and got every single one of us, whether expert or newbie, harnessed and climbing. Heitapu was so cool and the island is so fascinating that by the end of our stay, we all just wanted to anchor a week or two longer." Flemister is a writer from Kailua, Hawai'i and a former editor-at-large at *Surfing Magazine*. His work has been published in *VICE*, *Outside*, *The Surfer's Journal*, *Lonely Planet* and more. His debut novel, *In the Seat of a Stranger's Car*, is available in local bookstores and online.

Jackie Oshiro

"I'm skeptical whenever companies make grand claims about climate solutions, but after talking to the people involved with Terraformation, I'm cautiously optimistic," says **Jackie Oshiro**, who wrote about the environmental startup's reforestation efforts in "Forest of a Trillion Trees." "I also came away with a sense of pride in being from Hawai'i: It became clear that these tiny islands in the middle of the Pacific have much to offer in the global effort to combat climate change. Our many climate zones make us a great experimental microcosm, while the Native Hawaiian connection to the land exemplifies a needed shift in perspective, one that prioritizes the environment. Whether or not Terraformation succeeds, I think Hawai'i will have an increasing role to play in future efforts surrounding climate change." Oshiro is a storyteller from Hawai'i who focuses on initiatives working toward a better future for the Islands.

Dylan Gordon

"I was unfamiliar with Makatea until some friends I was working with in Mexico started spitballing ideas for things to do on an upcoming trip to Tahiti," says **Dylan Gordon**, who shot "Vertical Bliss" for this issue. "So after some research, we landed on sailing to Makatea for part of it. The island itself was a trip. Such an isolated, almost abandoned place—it was a hot spot for mining up until the 1960s. Exploring the mine shafts and what was left in the wake of the mining industry was an unexpected experience. The massive white cliffs are stunning, and I wish we'd had more time to explore them. I love finding these small communities and having the opportunity to capture them to help their stories be told and celebrated even in the smallest way." Based in Ventura, California, Gordon is a freelance photographer, director and brand ambassador. He spends his time on the road, in the mountains and in the ocean.

Mengshin Lin

"I didn't know much about wa'a or Ryan Olivares' work upon assignment, but I was amazed by the attention to detail and the time Ryan and the youths he mentors put into it," says **Mengshin Lin**, who documented woodworker Olivares' effort to repair a Hawaiian outrigger canoe with at-risk youth for "Mending Wa'a" in this issue. "I was touched when Ryan told me he didn't teach as a job or for money but purely to pass on the tradition and perpetuate the culture. Most of the youths involved might not choose woodworking as a future career, but the wa'a connects them to their culture, and they commit their time and passion into it. No matter what they choose to do with their lives, they'll have what they learned working on the wa'a to achieve their goals." Lin is a Taiwanese photojournalist based in Honolulu and has interned at the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Tampa Bay Times* and *Deseret News*. The China-Taiwan conflict is a major subject of her work, which focuses on social issues, community and politics.

A Shared Legacy of Navigation

BY **PETER INGRAM**, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, HAWAIIAN AIRLINES

Polynesian Voyaging Society CEO Nainoa Thompson (above left) was joined by Hawaiian Airlines president and CEO Peter Ingram at the April launch of "Moananuiākea: A Voyage for Earth."

When I reflect on everything that makes modern-day air travel possible, my mind sometimes wanders to the Polynesians who embarked on open-ocean odysseys thousands of years ago. Without instruments, they relied on indigenous wisdom, celestial navigation and other traditional wayfinding techniques to discover the Hawaiian Islands and bring Pacific communities together.

While our GPS and fly-by-wire aircraft are a stark contrast to the voyaging canoe, we nonetheless share roots as pioneers of Pacific travel. In 1929 our company's founders inaugurated commercial air service linking the islands of the Hawaiian archipelago. Today, we connect our Island home with the world and share its rich culture wherever we operate. In doing so, Hawaiian Airlines must cross the same Pacific seas mastered by wayfinders of the past and today.

We are continuously humbled by their skill and bravery and strive to honor their legacy in ways large and small, such as naming our transpacific widebody aircraft after the same constellations that guided them.

We are also the exclusive airline partner of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), a collective of watermen and women spanning generations that is committed to perpetuating traditional Polynesian wayfinding and the spirit of exploration. We've backed PVS's mission since its inaugural voyage to Tahiti in 1976 and most notably via our title sponsorship of its Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage, an epic six-year global journey launched in 2013 with the double-hulled canoes *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia*.

During the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage, 245 crew members sailed more than 50,000 nautical miles across the globe with the message "to care for our Island Earth." In the process *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia* visited 100 ports, 27 countries and 13 marine World Heritage sites. The historic expedition demonstrated the impact of exchanging culture, preserving island intelligence and sharing stories and lessons that will inspire communities to come together to protect the oceans and natural resources.

Mālama Honua also reinforced our own kuleana (responsibility) as Hawai'i's airline for the well-being of the archipelago's environment, culture and communities. We continue the work of caring for this beautiful place that we are so lucky to call home and to hold ourselves accountable by outlining our sustainability commitments and progress in our annual Corporate Kuleana report.

I'm proud that this spring Hawaiian Airlines became a sponsor of PVS's "Moananuiākea: A Voyage for Earth," an ambitious 47-month journey scheduled to set sail this year. The voyage plan includes 43,000 nautical miles, 36 countries, nearly 100 indigenous territories and 345 ports visited by 400 crew members. As the official airline sponsor for Moananuiākea, we've donated 34 million air miles for crew travel and committed to transporting cargo to support the voyage throughout the Pacific. Our title in the voyage will be Moa'e Kū, which is the predictable, steady and reliable wind on which navigators depend.

Our 'ohana is honored to be a backbone for Moananuiākea and to once again stand alongside the hundreds of navigators who will guide *Hōkūle'a* to distant shores and home again.

From our 'ohana to yours,

Peter

COOK ISLANDS

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Aitutaki

Rarotonga

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TOP COUNTRY
Cook Islands
BEST IN TRAVEL
2022

The Cook Islands,

an exotic South Pacific Archipelago

Only a six-hour flight south of Hawaii lies Hawaiian Airlines' newest destination, Rarotonga, The Cook Islands. This relatively unknown South Pacific archipelago is located in the remoteness of central Polynesia, sharing the same time zone as Hawai'i. It is the same distance south of the equator that Hawai'i is north. Those fortunate enough to discover this paradise find themselves surrounded by unspoiled, natural beauty; its lagoons, beaches, coral reefs, rainforests, caves, and waterfalls. Rarotonga is ringed by a stunning coral reef, teaming with life.

Lagoon-side resorts, boutique hotels and home-stays can be reached within 25 minutes of the airport. Rather than being confined to some isolated resort, everything is nearby; restaurants, beach bars, gift shops, galleries, cafes, and convenience stores.

It's easy to get around by rental car, motorbike or scooter hire, or by boarding a local "clockwise" or "anti-clockwise" bus. There are no high-rise hotels, traffic-lights or stop signs. The Cook Islands straddles the present and the past. It is like going back in time yet still enjoying today's modern conveniences.

There are wide open beaches and clear turquoise lagoons. Aitutaki, just a 45-minute flight away from Rarotonga, has been named one of the world's most beautiful lagoons by many travel publications. Its vast lagoon is populated by pristine islets of white sand and coconut trees.

There is so much to do such as taking a cycle tour, watching a cultural show, enjoying a lagoon cruise, snorkeling, scuba diving, fishing, jet-skiing, whale watching, sampling local dishes, attending a local church service, or just enjoying seclusion and relaxation.

Visitors easily engage with the warm local Māori people to hear their tales of history, to chat at local markets, or to witness their amazing drumming and dancing talents. The spirit of the island people is reflected in the Māori term for "hello", which is "kia orana" or, "may you live a long and healthy life".

This is one of the world's most affordable destinations.
The currency is the New Zealand Dollar.

Hawaiian Airlines flies from Honolulu to Rarotonga every Saturday, departing at 4pm and arriving at 10.25pm. Return flights operate from Rarotonga to Honolulu every Sunday, departing at 11.35pm and arriving in Honolulu at 5.50am each Monday morning. The Honolulu hub offers connections with many of Hawaiian Airlines' other gateway cities, and beyond.

CookIslands.travel

hana hou!

island intelligence

The Surf Shrine

STORY BY **NOEL NICHOLAS**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **NATHAN WEYLAND**

The Santa Cruz Surfing Museum in the Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse (seen on the previous spread) preserves the history of the NorCal surf mecca, where the sport was introduced by Hawaiian princes in 1885. Above right, museum founder Kim Stoner with Fred Hunt's 1940s-era wood board. Left, the Santa Cruz Surfing Club in 1941. Facing page, a historic wood board from Hawai'i.

In July 1885, spectators gathered at the mouth of the San Lorenzo River in Santa Cruz, California, to watch three young Hawaiians paddle into the surf on olo, longboards shaped from local redwood. Queen Kapi'olani's nephews, Princes Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, Edward Abnel Keli'iahonui and David La'amea Kawānanakoa, were attending St. Matthew's Military School in San Mateo and summering in Santa Cruz. An article in a local paper later that week contains the first documented account of surfing in North America: "The young Hawaiian princes were in the water, enjoying it hugely, and giving interesting exhibitions of surfboard swimming as practiced in their native islands." The demonstration captivated the crowd, and exactly a hundred years later, a group of local surfers banded together to preserve the sport's history in their hometown.

"Since that moment in 1885, surfing has been an integral part of life in Santa Cruz," says Kim Stoner, a local surfer and historian. "Around it has formed a close-knit community of generations of surfers and their families." Stoner is a founding member of the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum (SCSM), a small but picturesque museum in the Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse on a bluff above the famous surf break named Steamer Lane.

In 1985, members of the Santa Cruz Surfing Club, the Santa Cruz Longboard Union, the Westside Longboard Coalition and the local Surfrider Foundation chapter joined together to source every museum-worthy artifact, photograph, document and firsthand story they could. What resulted is SCSM's permanent exhibit, and on May 24, 1986, the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum was opened with the ceremonial cutting of a surf leash. At the time it was the first museum in the world dedicated entirely to surfing.

Visitors are taken through a timeline of photos, surfboard innovations and memorable moments. "We have the only surviving board from the 1936 Santa Cruz Surfing Club," says Stoner, "as well as an original balsa board shaped in 1952, and Jay Moriarity's board from Chasing Mavericks." What the museum lacks in size (the exhibit space is less than five hundred square feet) it makes up for in heart: Stories from generations of local surfers make it feel more like a shrine than a museum. Donations and gift shop revenue ensure that SCSM remains free and open to the public five days a week.

In 2010, Princess Esther Kapi'olani Kawānanakoa Marignoli, granddaughter of Prince David, assisted the Santa Cruz Surfing Club Preservation Society in creating a monument to the three princes. It sits outside SCSM, overlooking the bay the royal brothers surfed for the first time nearly 140 years ago.

SANTACRUZSURFINGMUSEUM.ORG

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY **VIOLA GASKELL**

Master of Mead

Artist, apiarist and now mead-maker Yuki Uzuhashi pours a flight with his wife, Erika, at Mānoa Honey & Mead's new location in Wahiawā. Uzuhashi approaches honey wine with a light touch, co-fermenting the honey with locally sourced fruits including liliko'i, durian, dragon fruit and more.

In an industrial neighborhood in Wahiawā, across the street from a *shoji* door maker and a retro surf van rental shop, the tasting room at Mānoa Honey & Mead is serving new takes on an ancient spirit: meads co-fermented with local fruits.

Twenty years ago, while studying art at Kyoto Seika University, owner Yuki Uzuhashi became interested in Japan's nomadic honey harvesters, who each spring and summer would bring their beehives along as they followed flower blooms from the southern islands north to Hokkaido. Beekeeping became part of his art: He replicated the "gypsy beekeeper lifestyle," as he calls it, by building a yurt surrounded by beehives, for his final exhibition. When he graduated, he continued to follow the bees, ultimately to O'ahu, where he bought Mānoa Honey Co. in 2014.

During the first year of the pandemic, Uzuhashi began tinkering with mead making, using hand-me-down equipment from Beer Lab HI. "It seemed like the natural next step," he says, both as an apiarist and an artist. "Making mead is about adding a new perspective, about extracting the beauty of what's out there—and as an artist, thinking about how we can elevate the state of the honey." Known in Greek mythology as "the nectar of the gods," honey wine is mankind's original booze, predating the wheel by two millennia. It was imbibed by Paleolithic hunter-gatherers in Africa, who are thought to have flooded bee nests, and by Beowulf's seafaring warriors.

Uzuhashi started with light, fruity meads—co-fermented with liliko'i, dragon fruit, Tahitian lime—and then moved on to more traditional meads that hark back to its original form, including one he calls Pō, which is aged for a year in rum barrels from Kō Hana Distillers. Uzuhashi sources locally when possible: oranges from the North Shore, durian from Hilo, pineapple from O'ahu. For each mead, he pairs the honey with the added ingredients, co-fermenting ginger from Hawai'i Island with macadamia honey, and sour pineapple with delicate kiawe (mesquite) honey. His Slee Ping Potion, a still mead made with Christmas berry honey, is infused with lavender and orange peel; Uzuhashi says it's a relaxing nightcap.

To bring his mead to fruition, Uzuhashi, wife Erika and their kids lived among stainless-steel fermenters; the living room smelled of citrus, guava, liliko'i—whatever fruit was included in the batch du jour. Four years on, and with the opening of their Wahiawā location, the office is no longer partly a living room, and the ambrosial scents of mead making waft into the outdoor space, where visitors sample flights.

MANOAHONEY.COM

The Art of Play

STORY BY **TRACY CHAN**
PHOTOGRAPH BY **FLOYD TAKEUCHI**

The world of artist Bonhui Uy (seen at left) is, above all, fun—a counterweight to his work as an architect designing some of Honolulu's well-known buildings. At right, Uy's playful "Gorilla," a sculpture of sheet metal and acrylic paint. PHOTOGRAPH BY **TRACY CHAN**

It's hard not to smile at Bonhui Uy's work. The 82-year-old Chinese-American artist's deceptively simple, brightly colored designs—grimacing animals with wide eyes, houses with toothy grins—bring out the child in those who view his work. "I've never even owned a pet," Uy says. "I love [portraying] animals because their faces are all so different. Birds are so different from a tiger or an ant. The type of animal just comes to me."

The sense of fun in his art belies Uy's intensity and discipline, honed by his work as an architectural designer and illustrator in Taiwan, New York, the Philippines and Hawai'i. Born in the Philippines, Uy graduated as an architectural engineer in Taiwan and came to New York in 1965, where he attended Pratt Institute. He moved to Hawai'i in 1972, helping to design the distinctive Ward Warehouse shopping mall. When he became a partner in the architecture firm Media Five in the mid-1970s, Uy began sketching what he saw around him, including his family, street scenes and landmarks like 'Iolani Palace, as a way to decompress from the stress of his career. Several of these charming sketches survive on bar napkins the artist has kept for all this time. Others are included in his first book, *Architectural Drawings & Leisure Sketches*, self-published in 1978.

Sending out that little book changed Uy's life. When the Museum of Modern Art in New York ordered fifty copies, it inspired him to explore fine art. Returning to New York, Uy set up a studio, providing illustrations for notable architects. When he wasn't working, he was sketching, painting and creating collages. As architectural jobs dried up with the recession of the early '90s, Uy got his first solo art exhibition in Taipei in 1993, followed by many more art shows in both Asia and Hawai'i, including a major retrospective at Downtown Art Center in Honolulu last March.

Energetic as ever in his retirement, Uy now spends his time sketching on his iPad, creating fantastical 3D creatures in his workshop and experimenting with his signature style in different media. He's also completed a large-scale public works project on O'ahu, a series of playful public murals on the basketball court at Cartwright Neighborhood Park in Makiki. "When you are practicing [architecture] or designing, you are constrained. Now I am totally free," Uy says. "Nobody's going to tell me good or bad; this is how I think, and this is what I'm going to do. I like art that's fun and playful ... that's all."

BONHUI.COM

Staying for Keeps

STORY BY **MARTHA CHENG**
PHOTOGRAPH BY **MEGAN SPELMAN**

Change has come slowly to the Manago Hotel on Hawai'i Island over the 106 years since it opened—there's still no television or air conditioning in the rooms, and the restaurant recently won the James Beard America's Classics Award for preserving local cuisine.

Most of Hawai'i's historic hotels are grand and luxurious: Halekulani, Moana Surfrider, Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. Manago Hotel, which turns 106 this year, is insistently neither. What began as a small, roadside cafe in Kawa'aloa (Captain Cook) on Hawai'i Island, with a futon thrown on the floor for salesmen shuttling between Hilo and Kona, remains a humble place to rest your head. And to eat. The dining room, fronted by a porcelain sink where coffee farmers once washed the red dirt off their hands, resembles a mess hall. Its succinct, decades-old menu offers sauteed mahimahi, liver and onions, and its famous pork chops, fried in a cast-iron pan that's rumored to be as old as the hotel and forged in the defunct Hilo Iron Works. The restaurant is Hawai'i's oldest continually operating restaurant, and it recently received the James Beard America's Classics award, given to places that the James Beard Foundation deems to "have timeless appeal and are beloved regionally for quality food that reflects the character of its community."

In 1917, Osame and Kinzo Manago, a picture bride and her husband, borrowed $100 to buy a small house, where they sold udon, bread, jam and coffee. Eventually, the udon and futons in their two-room home gave way to a twenty-two-room building with a dining room in 1929, and in the 1960s a second, three-story wing was built, taking advantage of the hotel's perch on Mauna Loa's slopes, with views to Kealakekua Bay. The third generation, Dwight Manago, who had worked at the ritzy Kahala Hilton and Maunalani Bay Hotel, tried to update things: He wanted TVs in every room, but his guests told him if he changed anything, they wouldn't come back.

Now run by Dwight's daughters Britney and Taryn, they keep Manago's spirit the same: no TVs or AC in the rooms, handwritten room ledgers and reservation book (but now, WiFi). One of the hotel's regular guests is writer Kiana Davenport, who comes to Manago Hotel to begin work on her novels. "Late at night I gaze out at the sea and contemplate one hundred years of history that this hotel has been part of," she says. "All that has transpired. As I begin each novel here, I feel the breath of the past whispering, 'Write with good conscience. Be true. Ha'ina 'ia mai ana ka puana! Let the story be told!'"

MANAGOHOTEL.COM

The Man Makes the Hat

STORY BY **ERIC STINTON**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MICHELLE MISHINA**

Anthony Duong (left) is the creative force behind Illikoi GOODS; Duong repurposes old, often vintage fabrics to fashion one-of-a-kind hats. At right, a cap made from an old Kokeshi Rice sack.

Anthony Duong has always worn many hats. Now he makes them. Duong has been transforming old material into custom-made hats through his Kāne'ohe-based company, Illikoi GOODS, since 2019. Before that he was living in the Bay Area doing just about anything and everything—photography, graphic design, working at his family's restaurant, running a DJ company. "All these things were super random," Duong says, "but they follow the theme of doing what I'm passionate about."

They also honed the skills that he now applies to Illikoi GOODS (the name is a hip-hop play on liliko'i, the Hawaiian word for passion fruit). He designs and sews the hats himself, a process that takes several hours per hat, then photographs and sells them online. He uses whatever material he can get his hands on: football jerseys, fleece jackets, rice bags, burlap sacks, firefighter jackets, USPS envelopes. "Living on an island, we don't want to ship a bunch of stuff over here and just throw it away. It's cool to remix an old garment that doesn't get the love it deserves and turn it into something fresh." But he never intended to turn it into a business, he says. "I just wanted to learn how to sew and make my own stuff." Sewing isn't exactly a popular craft among young folks, but he found the mentors he needed. "My community is mostly older aunties," he says. "They taught me how to sew, what machines to get, how different fabrics work with one another. I take what they do and flip it into a more modern, younger type of feel."

Customers often come to Duong with clothes from loved ones who have passed on: dad's silk ties, grandpa's vintage aloha shirts, auntie's favorite cooking apron. "Stuff that otherwise would just be hanging out in your closet, not seeing the light of day," Duong says. "I won't know the story behind them until they come back to get the hat. They'll say, 'This is actually from my uncle who passed away. Me and my cousins want to pay homage to him.'"

His hats run anywhere between $145 and $250—a lot for headware, but so far the price hasn't deterred buyers. New batches sell out as soon as they're posted on Instagram, and nearly four years in, demand has only grown. "It's pretty much all I've been doing for the last four years," he says. "Half custom orders, half stuff that I want to do creatively for fun. I think a lot of the support I get is from people seeing that I'm not a robot, I'm not a factory, I'm not a team of people. I'm just a guy trying to do something on his own. I'm not doing it big time, but I'm still doing it."

ILLIKOI.COM

Surprise Performance

STORY BY **NATANYA FRIEDHEIM**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MICHAEL OGASAWARA**

Sofar Sounds is a new concept in live music: Buy a ticket without knowing either the artists or the venue. But the mystery is part of the pleasure, both for music lovers discovering artists in unexpected, intimate settings ("Sofar" is an acronym for "songs from a small room") and for performers finding new, attentive audiences. Above left, Payton Sullivan performs at Island Sound Studios in Hawai'i Kai; right, Evan Khay and Hāwane Rios on the lānai of a private home overlooking Honolulu.

On a Saturday night in the O'ahu suburb of Hawai'i Kai, dozens of well-dressed 20- and 30-somethings stride across a shopping center parking lot toward a silver door opening to a multimillion-dollar waterfront recording studio, where music aficionados are gathering for a pop-up concert hosted by Sofar Sounds.

"This has been one of my dream gigs," says Payton Sullivan, one of the four acts performing that night. "It was the starting point for so many artists I look up to." Sullivan is nervous, she admits to the audience of about 120, most of whom are sitting on pillows strewn across the floor. "When I sing there usually aren't that many people sitting looking." Then she launches into a rendition of the Jackson Five's "Who's Lovin' You."

Sofar Sounds hosts live music performances in unexpected locations around the world; concerts in Honolulu have taken place in living rooms, yoga studios, even on a boat. But the venues are perhaps the least surprising thing about these shows: Attendees buy tickets without knowing the location, the artist or even the genre of music—those aren't revealed until the days leading up to the performance—and the music you might hear at a Sofar Sounds event is as diverse as the venues.

Singer Jordan Paul and guitarist Cory Mira, who are also performing at the Hawai'i Kai show, play nightly in bars and restaurants on Kaua'i—crowd-pleasing covers, mostly. But at the Hawai'i Kai show they perform their effortless R&B originals. "This is really important," Mira says, "especially for up-and-coming Hawai'i artists, because it allows the real artistry to come out."

"The music in these Islands is so diverse, and travelers and even locals don't often get a chance to hear it," says Michelle Anderson, who produces Sofar's Hawai'i shows. "These experiences allow for that to happen." Local music lovers and musicians alike face a dearth of options for intimate venues, but that's changing as Sofar gains traction and expands to neighbor islands. Since launching Hawai'i Sofar Sounds in 2019, Anderson has produced fifty-three shows across the Islands, featuring local talent like Nick Kurosawa, IZIK, Hāwane Rios, Rabbitt and the Artis family, including Thunderstorm Artis. Anderson tries to match the artist to the venue, typically asking the hosts their preference. "A lot of times it's just me blending people where I think, 'Wow, this bridge needs to be built,' and all these friendships blossom," she says. "It's a beautiful thing."

SOFARSOUNDS.COM/CITIES/HONOLULU

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departments & features

PHOTOGRAPH BY **JORDAN S. NĀHOLOWAʻA MURPH**

STORY BY **MARTHA CHENG**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **LAURA LA MONACA**

The Palace of Rust and Memory

A farewell to Aloha Stadium after forty-seven years as Honolulu's gathering place

On a hot March morning, pieces of Aloha Stadium lie on the asphalt like items at a yard sale: two pay phones, rows of orange stadium seats, concessions signs, section signs, bathroom signs, five-foot-tall photos of University of Hawai'i football players and tiny T-ball players that used to hang over the entrances to the stands. At the box office, online bidders pick up their winnings: six-inch squares of turf, 1996 Pro Bowl programs, flyers from the 2018 Snoop Dogg and Cardi B concert.

Gary Viela straps his season-ticket seats from row 29 into the bed of his pickup truck. They've been in his family since the stadium opened in 1975. "My father worked for the state, so he and his staff all decided to buy seats together," he says. "When my father passed away, I just kept the seats—we just stayed in the same seats from the time the stadium opened till the time it closed. We'd always meet here for the games, we'd always tailgate together. Then at the last game of the season, I'd buy Dungeness crab and steaks and we'd boil the crabs at the stadium. People would ask me to buy some."

Viela plans on putting the seats on his patio. "I have a picture of my mom

OPENING SPREAD / **With the closure of Aloha Stadium (right), its contents, including seats, are being auctioned off. At left, Gary Viela straps the seats that his family, season's ticket holders, had from the time the stadium opened in 1975.**

TOP / **In addition to University of Hawai'i football, Aloha Stadium was the venue for some of the biggest musical acts to perform in Hawai'i.**

BOTTOM / **Six-square-inch sections of artificial turf were among the memorabilia at auction.**

AT LEFT / **A vintage photo goes home with the highest bidder.**

and dad sitting here," he says. "I'm gonna blow it up and slap it on the seat," so even though his parents and Aloha Stadium—at least the one he knows—are now gone, he can still watch the games from the seats they once sat in. "To the very end, they came to the game."

As the forty-eight-year-old Aloha Stadium faces demolition, people are buying up pieces of nostalgia. In the parking lot they reminisce about the glory days, when June Jones and Heisman runner-up Colt Brennan led the Rainbow Warriors to the Sugar Bowl, when the lot was so packed you'd have to park at Pearl Harbor; about the saimin at the concession stands; about the other season-ticket holders they would see only at games, every year for forty years, long enough to watch the kids grow up and exchange end-of-the-season Christmas presents. "They wasn't the best seats," says Troy Hiura, picking up his seats from the north end zone, "but I just loved those people around us for forty years."

Even if you aren't a sports fan living in Hawai'i, you probably have a memory of Aloha Stadium. A friend remembers skydivers parachuting in to tell kids not to do drugs during a statewide DARE day. Another remembers vomit raining down from the upper deck at a Bruno Mars concert. Another can still smell the hot dogs as she worked the concession stand for a high school fundraiser. I remember the tailgate parties with smoke meat, laulau, 'opihi (limpets) on the grill and apple banana moonshine. You didn't even have to be at the stadium to feel its presence—when I worked at a restaurant in 2006, during the Colt Brennan era, we knew that we might as well close for dinner on game nights, it was so slow. In those years almost fifty thousand people—about 20 percent of Honolulu's population—would be in the stadium on Saturday nights,

Glory days: University of Hawai'i former football coach June Jones and quarterback Colt Brennan strategize during a game against USC at Aloha Stadium in 2005. "The best thing I liked was being able to tailgate," says Viela of the UH games. "We always had a regular area right by the entrance—and then when Colt Brennan started to play, it was so crowded we ended up parking in Pearl Harbor." PHOTOGRAPH BY **KIRK LEE AEDER**

the greatest concentration of people in the state over a three-hour span.

Kelly Tam Sing was a kid in the early '80s running up the steep stairs of Aloha Stadium when he tripped and slammed his face on the concrete, breaking his tooth and bleeding. His dad, knowing that his dentist would be at the stadium, paged him over the stadium PA. The dentist came, albeit grumpy about a work call during the game. Back then, before televised games and the internet, everyone was at the stadium on Saturday nights. It was like Hawai'i's living room, even down to the family photos on the wall—a photo of Tam Sing's sister as a young cheerleader hung above the entrance to the north end-zone seats. Sometime in the '80s the images above the entrances were covered by sponsorship signs.

David Brandt, owner of Oahu Auctions and Liquidations, which is handling the stadium auction, rediscovered those images when he was taking down the signs. "It almost shows—not to get too deep—a different era, when we weren't trying to squeeze every penny out of everything, right?" He muses. "Because instead of putting up Budweiser, we put up those photos. It's almost an 'ohana thing. Like maybe it should have been called 'Ohana Stadium, not Aloha Stadium."

When Aloha Stadium opened in 1975, it was the Swiss Army knife of stadiums. The stands could slide into an oval for football games, a diamond for baseball and soccer, and a triangle for concerts and other events. At the time it was a cutting-edge marvel: Four of the stadium's six grandstand sections, each as tall as a fourteen-story building and weighing 3.5 million pounds, could slide around the playing field on cushions of air, using technology from NASA's Apollo program. "Even before the University of Hawai'i's season-opening football game with Texas A&M last week, there had been a show of another kind of power and agility at the state's new $30 million Aloha Stadium in Honolulu," proclaimed *Time* magazine in 1975, in awe of the stadium's mechanics. "All it would take to prepare the stadium for baseball next spring is some season-end shoving by the football team."

And so the stadium was all things to all people: It was home field for the Hawaii Islanders, Hawai'i's minor-league baseball team, before it decamped to Colorado in 1987. It hosted Major League Baseball, rugby matches and professional soccer teams—even Pelé, one of soccer's greatest players, flexed his prowess here, scoring four goals against a team from Japan in 1976. The World Cup-winning US women's national soccer team, however, never played at Aloha Stadium—their exhibition match in 2015 was canceled when they showed the artificial turf on the field coming apart, literally, at the seams, deeming it unsafe to play on. (Soon after, the turf

TOP / **U2 performing in 2006; Bruno Mars broke the Aloha Stadium attendance record set by U2 with three sold-out 2018 concerts in his hometown of Honolulu.**

BOTTOM / **The Saint Louis Cardinals play the San Diego Padres in the Paradise Series, a trio of regular-season MLB games held at Aloha Stadium in 1997.**
PHOTOGRAPH BY **KIRK LEE AEDER**

AT LEFT / **Most of the country knew Aloha Stadium as the home of the NFL's Pro Bowl for thirty-four years, starting in 1980. Here, the Cardinals' Larry Fitzgerald catches a touchdown pass in the 2009 Pro Bowl.**
PHOTOGRAPH BY **KIRK LEE AEDER**

was replaced for $1.2 million. "My goal, and people tell me I'm out of my mind," says Brandt, "is to find a buyer who wants to buy the whole thing.")

There were the monster truck rallies, the MMA fights, the concerts—Janet Jackson, the Rolling Stones, Michael Jackson, U2. Add on the high school graduations, and in Aloha Stadium's prime you'd be hard pressed to find a more multipurpose stadium in the country. Football games, both the Pro Bowl and Rainbow Warriors, though, were still its marquee events, with fans peaking at a record 49,651 on November 23, 2007, when UH played Boise State. The stadium, which already rocked during even the most tepid wave, shook like a child's bouncy house as fans stomped their feet while Colt Brennan threw for 495 yards and five touchdowns to lead the Warriors to their first undefeated regular season in the school's history.

But after thirty years, moving the stands wasn't as frictionless as it once was, requiring up to two weeks and $20,000 for labor and equipment rentals each time they needed to be moved. By 2007 the stands were locked into a football configuration. And as UH wins slid, so did attendance. Meanwhile, maintenance problems and costs piled up over the years—what was supposed to be a protective patina ended up being straight-up corrosive rust, earning the stadium the unfortunate moniker of the Rust Palace. In 2019, $350 million was set aside for a redevelopment project, a.k.a. the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District, which envisioned a brand-new stadium ready by the 2023 football season, plus retail and housing. Now, midway through 2023, the old Aloha Stadium, slated for demolition two years ago, still stands, with no progress on a replacement. In front of the stadium, as part of O'ahu's

In some ways the most valuable part of Aloha Stadium is its parking lot. Annually, a little over a million people attend the thrice weekly Swap Meet, where more than four hundred vendors and everyday people sell and resell items. Above, Chin Ng, one of the Swap Meet's longest-running vendors, has been selling knives from his stand for thirty-five years.

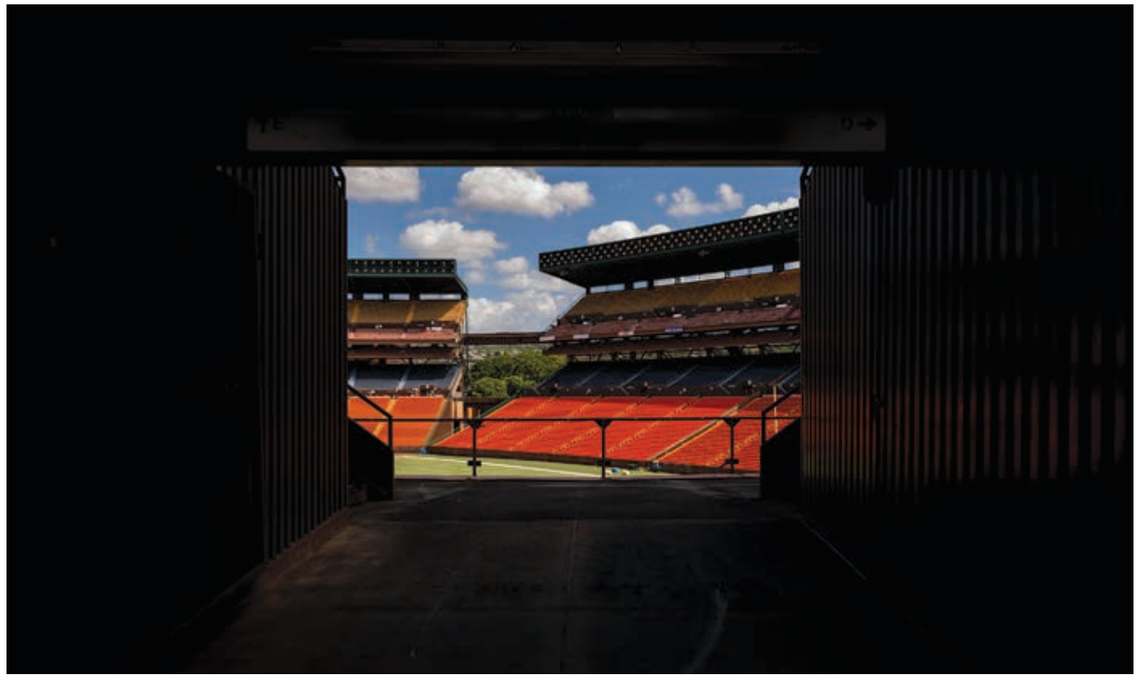
beleaguered rail project, empty trial train cars shuttle back and forth on the new elevated railway, as if a reminder of how long such projects take.

One of Aloha Stadium's most profitable sports (if you want to call it that) happens across two miles of its parking lot: shopping. On a recent Saturday morning, about four hundred vendors are set up, selling Laotian sausages and Cajun tater tots, foam plumeria hair clips and real plumeria cuttings, Gamecube discs and fidget spinners, Tahitian black pearls and pearl milk tea, Kona coffee and Starbucks merchandise from the Philippines, Indonesia, Mexico ... and more, so much more bric-a-brac. (One of the auction bidders purchased a stack of boxes filled with lost-and-found clothes that he intends to sell at the swap meet.) It's part flea market, craft fair, farmers market, souvenir shop and, in the outer rows, haphazard garage sale, with items dumped directly on the asphalt. While all other events have ceased at Aloha Stadium, the Swap Meet continues Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday in the parking lot, where it has operated since 1979. It is, after all, one of the stadium's biggest moneymakers, generating around $4 million in revenue a year—one person knowledgeable about the stadium's finances remarked that Aloha Stadium is "the only stadium in the country in which the parking lot is more valuable than the stadium itself."

Quieter success stories have begun here in the lot. Olay Somsanith, a Laotian refugee, began her life in Hawai'i selling vegetables at the swap meet. Today, Olay's Thai still operates here, now selling pad thai and papaya salad, and it is one of the most ubiquitous Thai food vendors across the island, open at farmers markets on almost every day of the week while also operating a brick-and-mortar in Chinatown.

"This is one of the last strongholds for old-time people," Chin Ng says, shirtless and yet dapper in his bucket hat and a white handkerchief tied around his neck. He smiles behind rows of knives interspersed with photos of him and his wild boar kills—his stand seems incongruous among the pink plastic lei and plush Spam keychains being hawked around him. Ng is one of the swap meet's longest-running vendors, selling knives here for thirty-five years. "Not too much has changed," he says, in terms of shoppers, with "a good diverse mix of locals and military and tourists. But retail has changed—back in the heyday before the internet, [the parking lot] was all full of vendors." There aren't many sellers left who have been there as long as him, he says. "They are getting far and few, but there's always new entrepreneurs. That's what the swap meet is about." Or life. "Everything changes. The old regime is gone, and then the young blood comes in."

The play clock blazes hot and fantastically bright in Sean



After forty-seven years in operation, Aloha Stadium is closed and awaiting demolition. The state has allocated funds for a new stadium, but when construction might begin remains uncertain. "This facility holds a lot of emotions and experiences that are near and dear to people's hearts," said stadium manager Ryan Andrews at a recent press conference. "It's hosted the greatest talent this world has produced … so it's definitely served its mission in providing great entertainment to the state."

Scanlan's garage. In a frenzy of bidding in the Aloha Stadium online auction, he rushed to buy signs ("Stairs Down," "Upper Seating Sections," "U"), turf and stadium seat backs that he's bolted onto his folding chairs. And two play clocks.

Sean and his brother Cavan are adamant: Whatever else might have happened at Aloha Stadium—concerts, Swap Meet—it's the football that it was known for. They have an intimate knowledge of the stadium, having played in it, coached in it and watched games from every section. For Aloha Stadium is the rare American stadium where a kid on a Pop Warner team can get turf burn playing on the same field as Tom Brady did when he came for the Pro Bowl. They remember where beer and bathroom lines were the shortest (yellow section), where the best parties were (in the spirals in the south end zone, when there was a bar set up in the base of the stairs), where to sit when the Halāwa rains came.

"You want to be on the mauka [toward the mountains] side, but can't be too towards the back because it can blow in on the blues," Sean says, referring to the color of the seats. "Makai [toward the sea] side blues is not bad if you're high up because it just blows down."

"Blue, brown, yellow mauka side's pretty good," Cavan says.

"Yellow better than blue because of the big gap in the roof."

"But if you're orange you're screwed."

"And the poor Mainland guys get cooked, all sunburned every time at the Pro Bowl."

"Shirt off, sunburned."

Cavan divides his Aloha Stadium memories into kid times and fan times. Kid times: carefully tearing the rosters into strips, rolling them and throwing them in the air, along with thousands of other fans, when the Warriors scored. They'd run routes in the parking lot, crashing into cars while their families tailgated, or play touch football on the turf pockets that stuck out from the bottom of the stadium, segments of the baseball turf that were exposed when the stands were moved for the football field.

There were the years when the kid time and fan time overlapped: "As a kid, you had a dream weekend of high school football, and then UH was home. You had the back-to-back stadium Friday and Saturday nights," Cavan says. And then as a fan: "We had seats in every color, every level. We were there for the winless season. We're there for the undefeated season. And those were within ten years of each other."

Sean says, "Well if you're going to be called a fan, you go. 'Fan' is short for fanatic, not fantastical, once-in-a-while thing. You go."

"Afterwards you cruise in the parking lot, finish up the food, talk about the game. That was our communal weekly event, where at least I'd know I'd see you. Because everybody has their lives, but I know I'd see you Saturday. Worst-case scenario, we all hung out for a few hours. One time I remember talking story and come back, it's fourth quarter already."

"Maybe that's you. I was there for the game." **hh**

STORY BY **ANNABELLE LE JEUNE**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MENGSHIN LIN**

Mending Wa‘a

For Ryan Olivares, repairing a canoe is an act of healing

A deteriorated outrigger canoe rests on a sawhorse beneath the jagged peak of Olomana, in the Windward O‘ahu town of Kailua. In a warehouse courtyard surrounded by a fifteen-foot fence crowned with barbed wire, a high school student puts a router to what remains of its hull. Beside her, Ryan Olivares watches, guiding her, telling her when to stop.

“Where’s the piece of wood for this?” asks Olivares, pointing to a hole in the rotting koa hull.

“Stay over here,” says the student in her thick pidgin.

“OK, grab ’um. We go clamp ’um up.”

Teacher and student epoxy the nose of the nearly forty-year-old wa‘a, the Hawaiian word for canoe. It’s pretty beat up—pieces are missing, the tail nearly gone. Other canoe repairers considered it unsalvageable, not worth the effort. But Olivares had other plans for the canoe that nobody wanted. He saw its potential, just as he sees the potential in the kids he mentors. Most of them are youth incarcerated at the Hawai‘i Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF); others come from Olomana School, an alternative-education institution serving youth who need academic and credit recovery or are

OPENING PAGE / **Woodworker Ryan Olivares (seen also at left) touches a new patch on a deteriorating koa canoe at the Hawai‘i Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) in Kailua, O‘ahu.**

TOP / **When Olivares started working with at-risk youth to restore the wa‘a (canoe), he knew little about canoe repair but was skilled at other traditional Hawaiian crafts, including making makau (fishhooks), i‘e kuku (bark cloth beaters), niho ‘oki (tooth cutters) and other implements.**

BOTTOM / **While Olivares encourages students to use traditional hand tools whenever possible, sometimes you just need a little extra power. Here, the first female HYCF student to work on the canoe removes a rotted section of wood.**

disciplinary transfers from their home district school.

Olivares was given three years to work with the students on getting the wa‘a back into the water. But apart from the canoe’s condition, there was another hurdle: While Olivares is a master woodworker—fashioning traditional Hawaiian items like papa ku‘i ‘ai (poi-pounding boards), niho ‘oki (shell- and wood-cutting tools) and makau (fishhooks)—he had never worked on any kind of canoe before.

Olivares was working construction in 2005 when a friend asked him to volunteer at the nearby detention center. Olivares didn’t have much experience outside of construction, but the instructor gave him free rein to craft with the students.

“I got addicted,” Olivares says.

He spent more and more time volunteering and eventually picked up a part-time job. At the same time, Olivares earned a degree in career and technical education and became the detention home’s lead woodshop teacher. “I see myself in these kids,” he says. “I wasn’t no criminal, but I was a knucklehead. I know what these kids is going through.”

Growing up, Olivares had a hard time paying attention in school. In those days, few options were available for students who weren’t cut out for the classroom. He spent summers on Kaua‘i with his uncle, who taught him to work the ‘āina, the land. Olivares grew his food and made home-cooked meals from scratch. Sometimes, he says, his summers ran past the start of the school year because putting his hands in the soil interested him more than sitting in a classroom.

One day while working at the detention home, an inspector came into Olivares’ woodshop class to look at the machines. Finding many of them unsafe, he cut the power cords. “I said, you know what? I still going teach the class,”

The wa‘a, *Adam Haleloa o Kukana o Kamehameha*, was originally carved by students and mentors like Wright Bowman Sr. (seen in the photo above, top left) at HYCF in the mid-1980s from a single koa log. By the time Olivares and his students started working on it, it was considered unfixable by most kālai wa‘a (canoe builders).

Olivares says. “I can make it all by hand.” That’s when he started learning traditional Hawaiian woodworking.

Eventually he transferred from the detention home in Kapolei to the Olomana Youth Center in Kailua, all under the umbrella of Olomana School. Together with the faculty, Olivares helped design a dual-credit program with Windward Community College, teaching technical skills while remaining rooted in Hawaiian studies. His students use traditional tools and techniques as much as possible. Once they exhaust all other options, they may use power tools. Every year, Olivares’ students compete in regional woodwork competitions, and every year one if not more of his students places in the top three.

About forty years ago a group of HYCF youth and staff raised $6,000 to purchase a koa log from Hawai‘i Island. Together, the HYCF boys, their teacher and master canoe builders Wright ‘Elemakule Bowman Sr. and his son Wright Bowman Jr. transformed that log into a traditional, six-person racing wa‘a named *Adam Haleloa o Kaukana o Kamehameha Ahai*, in honor of one of the men who selected the tree and mentored the youth working on the project.

Bowman Sr. was instrumental in revitalizing traditional Hawaiian woodwork. He’s best known for his koa craftsmanship and his work on the renowned Hawaiian voyaging canoe *Hōkūle‘a*, a replica of the type of traditional Hawaiian wa‘a last seen more than six hundred years ago. The canoe first set sail in 1975 and has since navigated all around the world without the use of modern instruments, navigating by the stars. Bowman and *Hōkūle‘a* breathed life into a dying art and sparked a wave of cultural pride throughout Polynesia.

When Bowman and the HYCF crew finished the wa‘a, it was valued at $12,000. It was the only koa wa‘a among thirteen canoes in the Nā ‘Ōpio Canoe Racing Association’s high school races in 1985. However, managing a canoe club at HYCF proved difficult. The story goes that the canoe was found abandoned in Waimānalo and returned to the correctional facility, where it sat for years, exposed to the sun and rain of the Windward side.

Despite the fact that it couldn’t be picked up without falling apart, the wa‘a is “priceless,” says William K. Richards Jr., president of the Friends of *Hōkūle‘a* and Hawai‘iloa. Koa trees can grow over one hundred feet tall, and the curving grain protects the wood from splitting while being carved. While it grows bountifully in Hawai‘i (and only in Hawai‘i), trees tall enough and straight enough to carve a wa‘a from a single log are exceedingly rare today. Add to that the dwindling number of kālai wa‘a (canoe builders), and you begin to understand the value of such a wa‘a, even in its disrepair. When it comes to the number of people who can walk into a forest, chop down a tree and build a canoe, “we’re down to about six,” says Richards, “and they’re getting older.”

Richards was called to take a look at the HYCF wa‘a. He has nearly fifty years of experience sailing traditional Hawaiian wa‘a and was asked to make the connections to get it repaired. That’s

For Olivares, repairing the waʻa isn't only about teaching vocational skills—it's about connecting youth with their Hawaiian roots. "These kids know more about rappers than they know about themselves," he says. "It's an easy way to connect with the kids, that canoe. It's part of their culture." Above, Olivares and Olomana School senior Keliʻi Makaio-Kalai repair the hull.

when Olivares' name came up. His skills and experience, coupled with his background in supporting at-risk youth, made him the ideal candidate to get *Adam Haleloa o Kaukana o Kamehameha Ahai* back into the water. But no can, he said.

"At first I said, 'I don't want to do this. I don't know how to work on canoe,'" Olivares recalls. Richards, who sat in on one of Olivares' woodshop classes, told Olivares they would "work it out."

"Work what out? I just told you, Uncle, I no like do this," Olivares remembers telling Richards.

But Richards pressed, telling Olivares, "Don't make any decisions right now."

Then Olivares visited the Honolulu Kūpuna Shed, a creative space in an easy-to-miss warehouse where makers gather to share their skills and work on projects that give back to the community, things like bicycles, woodworking—and canoes. There, Tay Perry agreed to teach Olivares. The 85-year-old Perry is one of Hawaiʻi's last kālai waʻa; he's worked on canoes since the 1950s and has tackled seemingly impossible restoration projects, like *Kaimiloa*, a waʻa that fell from the ceiling in the Hawaiʻi Maritime Museum and shattered into hundreds of pieces.

Olivares spent many hours of his free time on weekends and after school working on canoes with Perry at the Kūpuna Shed. After two months Perry presented him with a container holding shavings from the first canoe Olivares worked on. "I have no idea what it means," says Olivares, "but from that day on I was like, OK, I guess I'm working on canoes now."

"When Tay can leave him alone to work on a canoe that's going to be up in a museum, he pretty much graduated," says Richards. "Now the real test is, how well can you teach it?"

Before any of Olivares' students start working on the waʻa for the day, they walk around the whole canoe by themselves and talk to it, look at it, introduce themselves to it. There are only three rules, says Olivares. "No swearing around the canoe, and happy thoughts. If somebody makes a mistake, no be grumbling, no scold nobody."

At the Kūpuna Shed, Olivares learned that if it can be fixed, it's not a mistake. It just means there's more work to do.

The waʻa sits on the five-hundred-acre campus of the Kawailoa Youth and Family Wellness Center, home to Olomana School, HYCF and four other organizations known collectively as the Opportunity Youth Action Hawaiʻi hui. Together they aim to transform youth incarceration by applying indigenous knowledge. The waʻa restoration is only one of the projects on campus that seeks to reconnect Hawaiʻi's at-risk youth, who are disproportionately Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, with their cultural identity.

"The canoe is one easier way for teach," says Olivares. "Instead of sitting in one class, I can teach math through this, history through this, science through this.

“Actually repairing something that you probably didn’t think could be repaired is kind of an amazing feeling,” says Makaio-Kalai (seen above). Working on the wa‘a, he says, connected him with his Hawaiian ancestry—his mother paddled and his grandfather was a woodworker, and the canoe gave him the chance to combine those traditions. “There’s not too many places you have the opportunity to actually do this,” he says.

And, it kind of helps them take one pride in their culture. These kids know more about rappers than they know about themselves. It’s an easy way to connect with the kids, that canoe. It’s part of their culture.”

“What I like best is learning how our kūpuna [ancestors] built canoes and seeing how hard it was to put a canoe together back in the olden days,” says Keli‘i Makaio-Kalai, a senior at Olomana School who’s working on the canoe. “And we’re actually using power tools, too.”

“You going work on the canoe this summer?” Makaio-Kalai asks Olivares as the two line up the frame for the router.

“Yeah, gotta figure out the funding,” says Olivares. “But you know me. I’ll work on it for free.”

“Straight up. Shoots. Let me know,” says Makaio-Kalai. “I’ll come by.”

Since taking Olivares’ courses, Makaio-Kalai says he’s become interested in a career working with the ‘āina, like gardening, farming or woodwork. “I love being around [Olivares] because it’s learning about all the things I’m interested in, too, just all our traditions,” he says. “He’s kind of like me in a way: How we think the same, we’re not always sure about something, but we’ll get the task done. He’s more like a father figure to me. A good influence.”

While Olomana School students face challenges in conventional classrooms, Olivares reminds them that intelligence is more than just getting an A; it’s about applying what they learn.

“Actually repairing something that you probably didn’t think could be repaired is kind of an amazing feeling,” Makaio-Kalai says.

Engaging numerous students

to support the revival of the wa‘a means that there is more mana, or spiritual energy, invested in it. “It’s been sitting around for years without breath,” says Richards. “The more hands that touch it, the more mana is in there.”

For Olivares, restoring this wa‘a isn’t about saving just one canoe. It’s about preserving an art, an indigenous technology once used to explore, to feed people, to transport goods and to sustain a nation. Working so closely with youth who have been estranged from their culture, Olivares knows the dangers of allowing these traditions to slip away. “We in trouble,” he says, referring to the Hawaiian nation.

Until the work is done, Olivares will post updates to his Instagram (@ao_mau_woodworks), but he has no interest in paddling the finished canoe himself; his passion remains in woodworking, he says, in honoring his teachers and playing a role in the small but growing group of kālai wa‘a.

And as for the future of carving canoes? “Hopefully, one of these kids picks it up,” he says. **hh**

STORY BY **LARRY LIEBERMAN**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **TONY NOVAK-CLIFFORD**

Man of a Thousand Facets

For actor, musician and writer Eric Gilliom, Hawai‘i’s story is a family story

OPENING PAGE / **Actor, musician, dancer and writer Eric Gilliom (seen also at left) plays all the parts in his new one-man show *White Hawaiian*, which tells the story of modern Hawai'i through his own family history.**

TOP / **The Gilliom family in 1972, a year after Eric's father, Lloyd B. Gilliom, brought the family from Hollywood back to their roots on Maui.** PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GILLIOM FAMILY

BOTTOM / **Some of the accessories from the thirty costume changes Gilliom undergoes throughout *White Hawaiian*.**

A mustachioed turn-of-the-century prizefighter fresh off a bare-knuckles boxing loss struts across the stage, bawdily singing "What do you do with a drunken sailor?" He launches into the story of how he met his wife in 1902. "She was a delicate maiden who paddled a canoe from Moloka'i," he recalls. Moments later that delicate maiden is onstage, nursing the youngest of their six children while lamenting the departure of her eldest daughter. "Now people from all over the world watch her dance and sing," she says in a thick pidgin accent. "Our little Jennie go all the way New York and nevah come back."

As the evening progresses, there are 1950s hula girls, Broadway musical theater performers from the '80s, lounge crooners and lū'au busboys, parents, siblings, grandparents and great-grandparents—all part of Eric Gilliom's family story, all of them part of Hawai'i history and all of them played by Gilliom in his one-man show *White Hawaiian*.

Gilliom, whose great-grandmother was a Native Hawaiian from Moloka'i and great-grandfather was Irish by way of Canada, straddled different worlds throughout his life. In his autobiographical romp, he celebrates and pokes fun at his own mixed heritage, at being the middle child stuck between two famous siblings, at his journey from Maui boy to Broadway performer (and back again). Gilliom brings his family tree to life while taking the audience on a hilarious and historical tour of Hawai'i pop culture, with nearly thirty rapid costume changes during the seventy-five-minute performance.

A mix of tourists and locals packs the sold-out ProArts Playhouse in Kīhei. The funny, fast-paced show leaves many in tears—mostly from laughter but some from the tenderness

Of the many roles Gilliom has played, including a big part in the notorious Broadway musical version of *Carrie* by Stephen King, *White Hawaiian*, he says, is the most significant. "It's my story, but it's also about all families," he says of the show, which has been playing to sold-out audiences on Maui and began a year-long residency on Kaua'i last June. "I get to show the legacy of a Hawaiian family going back to the turn of the twentieth century, one that's been in many facets of the entertainment business. Some have succeeded and some have not—but this is what I'm best at."

of the underlying story. At the start of the show, the audience gets a clue about its theme. Just before curtain, a prop coconut drops to the floor from a fake palm. It's the literal embodiment of the show's logline: The coconut didn't fall far from the tree.

Gilliom was eight when his father, Lloyd B. Gilliom, decided to return to his ancestral home in Hawai'i with wife Marilee and their three children. The patriarch had no plan and no prospects, but he was determined to leave the hustle of Hollywood behind and take a break from the entertainment industry in which he'd grown up. That break helped young Eric discover his Hawaiian roots and inspired his own future as an actor, singer, dancer and musician.

"All I had known was California. Then suddenly we were on this amazing tropical island, living on Maui. I literally had PE class on the beach!" Gilliom recalls. "Hawai'i completely blew my mind. I loved it. And it was the first time in my life that I thought more deeply about our ancestors."

Gilliom's ancestors include great-grandfather Louis Bucklemen Woodd, a scrappy pugilist whose skill in fisticuffs wasn't enough to keep him from being shanghaied and shipped off from Canada to Kahului Harbor in 1902. Soon after arrival, Woodd met and fell in love at first sight with Jennie Ho'okano Ka'ahanui, who had also just arrived at the harbor after paddling a canoe across the treacherous Pailolo Channel from Moloka'i with her brothers to sell fish in Kahului. Their first daughter was named Jennie, after her mother.

The younger Jennie, Eric Gilliom's grandmother Jennie "Napua" Woodd, developed wanderlust at an early age, along with a love for song and dance. She moved to New York City, teaching hula, performing in Hawaiian-themed events and productions and singing in smoky, late-night clubs. Napua Woodd met and married Lloyd H. Gilliom, a big-band musician in the Big Apple, and their son, Lloyd B. Gilliom, stayed with his mom when she divorced and moved to the West Coast. He learned the ins and outs of showbiz, assisting while Napua promoted Hawai'i through hula shows and lū'au that introduced America (and the world) to the Islands.

As Napua became a mainstay for Hawaiian dance and choreography in Hollywood and Las Vegas, Lloyd B. Gilliom became a jack-of-all-trades, assisting Napua by sweeping floors, bussing tables, digging imu (earth oven) pits and filling any gap needed to keep the shows running smoothly—including performing as a fire dancer. He learned to act a bit as well, hanging out on movie sets and hobnobbing with celebrities. As a part-Polynesian who could pass for a variety of ethnicities, Lloyd B. Gilliom secured occasional gigs as an extra in motion pictures like *Ben Hur, The Time Machine* and others. But the elder Gilliom eventually tired of bit parts and stereotypes, and longed to connect his children with their Island roots. Coming home to Hawai'i brought the Gilliom family full circle.

"By the time my dad moved us here, we had already spent a lot of time with Grandma Napua," Gilliom recalls. "When we were little, we loved hanging around with Grandma, always singing

Gilliom describes his grandmother, Jennie Napua Woodd (seen above), as "a funny, Hawaiian, hula-dancing comedian." A well-known figure in show business through the 1940s and '50s, Napua appeared in film and television and danced hula at the famed Hawaiian Room in New York City's Hotel Lexington, often alongside her best friend, Hilo Hattie. The two frequently traveled together as "ambassadors of aloha," promoting Hawai'i on the Mainland. PHOTOS COURTESY OF **THE GILLIOM FAMILY**

and dancing. My younger sister, Amy, and I got the bug very, very young. My brother Tim was older and not as into it, but Amy and I just loved putting on our own little shows, even when we were just kids." When Gilliom got to Baldwin High School in Wailuku and joined the drama program, it felt like the big leagues. "The minute I got to do it for real, in high school, I just thought. 'Oh my God, this is awesome!' Amy was right behind me, doing her thing, and that's the trajectory of how entertainment came through our bloodline."

While Amy Hanaiali'i Gilliom eventually became a renowned Hawaiian singer who's earned six Grammy nominations, and brother Tim (the other great-grandson of canoe-paddling Jennie Ka'ahanui) became a captain of the famed Polynesian voyaging canoe *Hōkūle'a*, Eric continued down the acting path. Role after role, Gilliom brought down the house at Baldwin, gaining notoriety and the attention of acclaimed drama teacher Sue Loudon, who helped Gilliom get into the prestigious Goodman School of Drama in Chicago as the first person of Native Hawaiian descent ever to attend.

From Chicago, Gilliom followed in Grandma Napua's footsteps, heading west to pursue a life on stage and screen. In Hollywood he earned numerous credits, including a role in the 1986 film *Hoosiers*. "I had come up as a young actor from Hawai'i who could sing and dance," Gilliom recalls. "Then one day I got a call from Debbie Allen, the choreographer from the TV series *Fame*, and suddenly found myself auditioning for a huge Broadway musical." Gilliom landed a big role in the production, and it was off to London for rehearsals, followed by a highly anticipated opening in New York City. Unfortunately, the play—a musical version of *Carrie* by Stephen King—folded after only four days, becoming one of Broadway's biggest and most expensive failures ever. Theater critic Ken Mandelbaum called one of Carrie's big numbers (a scene lampooned hilariously in *White Hawaiian*), "A nightmare from which no show could possibly recover," and even named his book on Broadway bombs *Not Since Carrie: 40 Years of Broadway Musical Flops*. "How could I have known?" Gilliom laughs. "It had seemed like a good idea at the time."

After Carrie, Gilliom headed back to LA but started coming home to visit family in Hawai'i more often. "Maui just started to feel more like where I belong," Gilliom says of making the move permanent. "When I was going to school in Chicago, doing the play in New York, churning through auditions in LA, I just never really felt settled down. I was always a fish out of water. But Hawai'i—it was comfortable and familiar, and allowed me to just focus on being an artist."

Gilliom's Maui homecoming also meant hard labor, helping his dad in the family sandblasting business by day while continuing to land leading roles at

TOP / **Gilliom performs in the House of Rumours band with Mick Fleetwood. "Even when I was going to acting school, I was hanging out in the music school with all the musicians," says Gilliom. "I was always in both worlds."**

BOTTOM / **Gilliom plays with the late Hawaiian music legend, Willie K.**

LEFT / **Gilliom in the groove at Fleetwood's on Front St. in Lāhainā, Maui.**

night in a slew of local stage productions like *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Evita* and *Godspell*. Gilliom eventually got away from sandblasting by joining a luxury cruise line's onboard variety show while keeping roots planted firmly on Maui.

Upon returning home from the cruise-ship gig (a period that stands out as one of the funniest sequences in *White Hawaiian* because of the rapid-fire costume changes and campy ship-show montage), Gilliom started focusing more on music. He honed his guitar and songwriting chops, learning from one of Hawai'i's best guitarists: Barry Flanagan of the group HAPA. He formed the Eric Gilliom Project, a musical steppingstone that led to eventually creating the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award-winning group Barefoot Natives with the late legendary Hawaiian performer Uncle Willie K.

"Willie and I got to travel the world, and we had so much fun," Gilliom remembers. "But every time we hit the stage, it was terrifying and thrilling all at once. At one of our first big shows, I had printed out the set list and taped it to the stage, and he picked it up, crumpled it and threw it away, saying, 'I don't use set lists.' Then he just stepped on the gas and I was like, 'OK, here we go!' As a rhythm guitarist, playing with Willie really helped me learn to just strap in for a roller-coaster ride and hold on tight."

In 2007 Gilliom's stage presence, vocal ability and guitar chops got noticed by a notable guest at one of his gigs. Fleetwood Mac co-founder and Maui resident Mick Fleetwood approached him after the show. "He came up to me—all six foot eight of him—and said he was putting a new band together and wondered if I'd like to get together sometime to jam and see what happens," Gilliom says. "That was more than fifteen years ago, and we've had a great time doing shows together ever since." Fleetwood kept Gilliom in the lineup

"This is the best version of this band we've ever had," says Gilliom of the current lineup in the House of Rumours band, seen above at Fleetwood's on Front St. "It's super tight and has a kind of blues base to it, which is really in Mick's wheelhouse." Fleetwood, for his part, calls Gilliom "a riveting performer whose musical talents run deep, including singing and songwriting skills."

through multiple iterations of his post-Fleetwood Mac projects, including the current House of Rumours band, which plays several times a year at Mick's restaurant, Fleetwood's on Front St.

"I saw Eric playing at a show, and I was blown away," says Fleetwood, "He is a riveting performer whose musical talents run deep, including his singing and songwriting skills. Over the years Eric's become a close personal friend and has been a part of teaching me about these lovely Islands. It's always a continuing inspiration to share the stage with him."

After years of experience in local stage productions on Maui, multiple music projects including tours with Willie K, HAPA and Fleetwood, and more film and TV credits (including the lead in 2011's Hawai'i-filmed comedy feature *Get a Job*, also starring Willie K), Gilliom currently finds himself exactly where he wants to be. *White Hawaiian* has earned rave reviews in every run. All fifty performances to date have sold out. He's booked a one-year residency-style engagement performing the show weekly on Kaua'i at Porter Pavilion in Kīlauea and plans to continue monthly performances on Maui and possibly other islands. He's also playing semi-regular shows with Fleetwood and doing frequent solo and duo singer/guitarist gigs at various local live-music venues. And he's still a go-to lead for serious stage productions on Maui.

"I think right now, for the first time in my career, all of the things I love to do are at play," Gilliom says.

Despite fronting a one-man show (and single-handedly designing and building all of the show's set pieces, costumes, props and special effects), Gilliom's got plenty of capable accomplices. "I've got a great team behind this production," Gilliom says. "Brian Kohne was my writing partner. All of the interstitial videos on screen conveying the historical Hawai'i were put together by Adi El-Ad, a fantastic Hollywood editor. And I couldn't do the show at all without Luke McKinna in the booth running all of the sound and lighting and special effects."

***White Hawaiian* ends with Gilliom** finally finding the closure he's always been looking for. Or does he? When the house lights come up, the crowd reflects on what they've just seen. Almost universally, audience members can relate it to events and experiences in their own lives.

"Brian and I really set out to make *White Hawaiian* a show that's *not* just about me," says Gilliom. "I'm the vessel, my family is the vessel for telling a story—but that story is really about everybody. Everyone has an origin. Where do you come from? How did you get to where you are? Just like mine, everybody's story is also wacky and colorful and funny and sad and weird and heartfelt in its own way. The greatest satisfaction I get out of performing this piece is making people remember their families, their history, their own stories." **hh**

STORY BY **BEAU FLEMISTER**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DYLAN GORDON**

Vertical Bliss

The tiny Pacific island of Makatea is rock climbing's hidden surprise

From the bow of our catamaran, the chalky white cliffs of Makatea look like a distant oncoming wave, frozen in place. As we sail closer in the soft light of dawn, it becomes clear why this lonely atoll is like no other in the region. Part of the Tuamotu archipelago of French Polynesia—the largest chain of atolls on the planet, sprawled across 350 square miles of the Pacific—the five-by-three-mile island rises 250 feet higher than its sea-level siblings. While most atolls are low-lying bracelets of dead coral surrounding a lagoon, Makatea is raised, courtesy of a tectonic shift two million years ago that created Tahiti, 130 miles away. This seismic event depressed the seafloor, lifting Makatea and creating the sheer cliffs we're now approaching.

I've come with a group of professional climbers and surfers from the adventure brand Roark—atolls sometimes hide particularly good waves—but we're really here for the cliffs. The limestone walls are pocked with holds, crags, dimples and cracks, which have recently put Makatea on many a rock climber's bucket list—in part because this place shouldn't exist. There's nothing like it among Pacific islands because most of the rock in the region is too "chossy," too brittle for climbing. Makatea is a complete anomaly.

Having sailed half of yesterday, through the night and into the morning, it's taken us nearly twenty hours to get here from Tahiti—pretty good time, really, as it can take thirty hours when the weather and swells aren't cooperating. Motoring along the outer reef, there's no sign of civilization. Dense jungle caps the white cliffs. There are no resorts, bungalows, homes or development of any kind along the golden shores, lapped by cerulean seas. A shower—more a mist—passes through our sails and over the atoll, throwing a colossal, vivid rainbow over the entire island.

Makatea has been a world-class rock climbing destination for only about five years. Before that it was a hub for the phosphate mining industry. We motor up to the remains of Temao Harbor, once a bustling seaport for shipping the 11.5 million tons of phosphate extracted from Makatea between 1906 and 1966, most of it for fertilizer to replenish the depleted soil of Europe and the United States, and later Japan's rice fields that had been ravaged by World War II. With only three moorings and a channel too narrow and shallow for our boat, we anchor outside the harbor, staring at the eerie ruins of an empire. Steel turret-like structures rot away next to other deteriorating machinery. On shore, we spot a couple of men beside a Hilux pickup truck parked among the ruins next to a pavilion with breeze-block walls.

A few of us pile into a four-person dinghy with duffel bags of climbing gear and try to make it to shore, but then double back in a panic. The swell is closing out the keyhole, so we wait for an opening, charging in dangerously a second time. With no airfield, the only way here is by an expensive four-hour speedboat from Rangiroa or a day's sail from Tahiti. Makatea surely doesn't make it easy on people wanting to get to it, but perhaps that's part of its allure.

Heitapu Mai, a resident of Makatea and head guide of Club Makatea Escalade (Makatea Climbing Club), the island's rock climbing outfit, greets our group, already in his helmet and harness. Handsome and smiling, Heitapu introduces himself, his brother Tarariki and two Americans, James Rebel and Allie Karney, who have been climbing for the last two weeks. He asks the surfers among us if we'll be climbing—for most of us it'll be our first time—and we shrug as if to say, "That's an option?" He points to the gear—helmets, lines, gloves, carabiners, harnesses, shoes—hanging neatly from the truck's racks and replies matter-of-factly, "*Oui, oui*, of course it is possible. There are routes for every level here."

We follow Heitapu along the shoreline toward sections of the cliff shaded from the harsh sun until noon.

OPENING SPREAD / **Climber Drew Smith scales a route named "Scrupules au Crépuscule" on Makatea, a tiny, remote island in the Tuamotu archipelago of French Polynesia. Until Makatea's cliffs were "discovered" about five years ago, world-class rock climbing was all but unknown in Oceania.**

TOP / **Smith (left) and fellow climber Jeff Johnson (right) debark at Temao on Makatea, which is accessible only by boat.**

BOTTOM / **"It's pretty surprising to find excellent climbing like this in such an unlikely spot," says Johnson, seen here with Smith preparing to climb. "It is so unlike all the islands surrounding it. It's flanked by steep one- to three-hundred-foot limestone cliffs, whereas the other islands are merely sand atolls, barely above sea level."**

FACING PAGE / **Makatea's east side beckons as Club Makatea Escalade drives climbers to its walls.**

ABOVE / **After phosphate was discovered on Makatea in 1906, it became a hub of a global mining industry. In the mid-1950s, a gigantic mobile gateway called "the grasshopper" (seen here) was constructed at Makatea's port of Temao to deliver ore directly from a train to cargo ships.** PHOTO COURTESY OF **LOUIS MOLET / TAHITI HERITAGE**

FACING PAGE / **Temao as it looks today. When phosphate mining ended in 1966, the primary driver of the economy on Makatea—and a major source of revenue for French Polynesia—went with it. The population dropped from three thousand to less than a hundred almost overnight.**

NEXT SPREAD / **Sustainable tourism, including rock climbing, has partly revived Makatea, where its fifty or so residents live a mostly subsistence lifestyle. Here, Johnson scales "La Rapapapaye" while Smith watches from below.**

While there are many climbing routes yet to discover and establish, the existing ones were pioneered by Heitapu's climbing club and later by a group of a dozen international professional climbers who came here in 2019 to build a foundation for the sport. Heitapu himself had never climbed before 2018, when a visiting friend who worked for Acropol, a work-at-height company on Tahiti made up of rope specialists and mountaineers, saw the potential for epic climbing and helped Heitapu jump-start the scene.

Later that year, Heitapu and the team from Acropol bolted forty routes on three different sections of cliffs. Around the same time, Erwan Le Lann, skipper of the French scientific and educational NGO vessel *Maewan*, stopped by Makatea on his way to the Marquesas. Le Lann, who was traveling with a couple of professional climbers, also saw the potential and told Heitapu he'd assemble a team to return and help bolt more routes. The following year, during the summer of 2019, the *Maewan* arrived with ten professional climbers, who for three weeks bolted sixty more routes with Club Makatea Escalade and Acropol. That visit culminated in an event called Makatea Vertical Adventure, in which 150 locals from the island and nearby atolls were invited to join in the launch of what was hoped would become a sustainable ecotourism endeavor. A 2020 film about the event had everyone in the climbing world suddenly searching for the speck on Google Maps called Makatea.

"I think when we started here," says Heitapu, "local people thought that I was crazy. Rock climbing looks like a crazy thing. But it's a crazy thing that you can share with people, you know?"

Drew Smith and Jeff Johnson, two accomplished professional climbers whom I'd arrived with, get right to work, asking Heitapu to point out the most difficult routes. One belays while the other one spiders up the steep faces.

Heitapu sets us newbies up at the base of a cliff section with large and abundant handholds, foot divots and grippy, textured rock—basically, rock climbing with training wheels. He wanders over to check on the pros and leaves us in the hands of James and Allie, who have been staying at Heitapu's family-run *pension*, or guesthouse (one of two on Makatea). We sniff our helmets, tighten harnesses and squeeze into our climbing shoes, and James scales a hundred feet up while Allie waits with us to belay.

I make my way up the rock face trying not to look down and instead focus on the array of holds in the rock. I reach the top and James helps me up, guiding me into a shallow cave with a five-star view of the coastline while I wait for the others to ascend. When they do, we unclip and breathe it in. It's magnificent, with birds soaring at eye level, flying in and out of valleys and narrow canyons. Heitapu appears and leads us around a portion of the cliff and through another cave to a prehistoric-looking gorge teeming with gargantuan palms and ferns. Makatea is one of the only atolls in French Polynesia with intact primary forest, and it's home to some of the richest plant diversity in the archipelago. The island is home to seventy-seven native species, thirteen of them endemic to French Polynesia and four of them found only on Makatea.

After rappelling back down to the beach, we take a dip to cool off in a small tidal gully of electric-blue water, then stroll over to the section of cliff where Drew and Jeff are still climbing. Drew rappels down, grinning ear to ear.

"That good?" I ask, wondering whether this whole thing is but a novelty for climbers of their caliber, who have literally named routes and mountain peaks around the world. Is this like that standing river wave in Germany? It's good surf ... for Germany.

"It's really good rock," says Drew. "It's bullet-hard limestone. And when it comes to limestone, what you're looking for are the blue streaks like

they have here. Typically, beautiful blue limestone means good-quality rock. I think any climber would be impressed by this place. So far, I sure am."

"The climbing on Makatea is actually amazing," says Brette Harrington, a world-class professional climber who visited the island in 2022. "That limestone is some of the best you can find anywhere. The challenge is the humidity—because it's so hot there, your fingers are constantly perspiring. You really have to use good chalk and take advantage of the early hours of the day before the sun hits. But as far as the actual climbing, if you go, you can find easy routes for beginners, all the way up to very challenging routes for advanced climbers."

The view from the bed of Heitapu's pickup truck while riding through Moumu, the only settlement on Makatea, is surreal. Corroded, burnt-umber machinery—structures, water towers, tools, gears, cogs, axles, engines—lie frozen in the brush on either side of the worn one-lane road, most of the relics completely swallowed by vines and ferns. Giant hooks from some kind of contraption claw at us from the forest; broken crane arms stretch out from the jungle like limbs reaching for help. Moumu, which has fifty residents, two pensions, a primary school and one restaurant, if you could call it that, feels like a ghost town.

But not completely. A few old men and women sip midday coffee outside of simple homes, seated around plastic tables covered with the floral-print cloth universal to Oceania. They wave and offer warm *ia oranas* (aloha) as we pass. Heitapu stops at his family's pension where a handful of visiting climbers stay and picks up a couple of Canadian climbers. He shows us his equipment cellar, well stocked thanks to the hundreds of climbers who have left gear over the last few years, as we will.

Halfway across the island, Heitapu pulls the Hilux over, and we follow him through the bush to a vast expanse of sunbaked, jagged limestone holes, many dangerously hidden by a thin layer of foliage. This clearing, which seen from above looks like a cratered no man's land, as if shelled in a long and vicious war, is where for nearly sixty years his grandfathers, great-uncles and many other "diggers" excavated phosphate from the limestone tubes with only shovels, pickaxes and wheelbarrows. It was backbreaking and dangerous work, paid by the barrow, not by the day, as incentive to dig more. There was little relief from the South Pacific sun, and the often barefoot workers would be lowered into holes ranging from eighty to two hundred feet deep.

Following Heitapu, we skirt cautiously along the edge of the moonscape, which was once covered in a maze of wood planks on which workers rolled the wheelbarrows to conveyor belts and rail systems delivering the phosphate to the harbor and from there to wealthy, developed nations around the world.

Once upon a time on Makatea, there was a golden age. Through the first half of the twentieth century, it was "the place to be," as Heitapu puts it. Before phosphate was discovered in 1906, it was a sleepy, typical Tuamotuan island of around 250 people living a subsistence lifestyle. After phosphate was found, with extraction beginning in 1911, La Compagnie Française des Phosphates de l'Océanie (CFPO) transformed Moumu into a company town, replete with infrastructure that dwarfed that of the far larger Tahiti island. Immigrant workers came from all over French Polynesia and the Pacific; the population ballooned to nearly four thousand. Narrow roads were paved, railways built. There were churches, shops, a boulangerie, hospital, library, nightclub, tennis courts, restaurants and two cinemas. "*Two* of them," Heitapu repeats, raising his thumb and index finger for emphasis.

Then in 1966, as the phosphate industry was drying up in the Pacific, the French government decided to develop its nuclear weapons program, an endeavor that transformed (even more destructively) a small atoll called Moruroa in the far eastern corner of the Tuamotus, where nuclear testing would be conducted over the next thirty years. The CFPO shut down operations in a matter of days, literally shutting off the lights when Makatea's power plant closed, leaving the mining industry's remains to rust. Many of the workers transferred to Moruroa. Many went

ABOVE / **The port facility for La Compagnie Française de Phosphates de l'Océanie, which ran the mining operation on Makatea, as it appeared in the 1960s.** PHOTO COURTESY OF **LOUIS MOLET / TAHITI HERITAGE**

FACING PAGE / **Climbing has been a "boom, like a big tank of oxygen for the community," says Heitapu Mai, the head of Club Makatea Escalade (seen at center with Smith and Johnson). "Now Makatea is somehow known around the world. That was my goal."**

home to neighboring atolls like Tikehau, Rangiroa, Fakarava and Kaukura or headed south to Tahiti to start over. The CFPO paid their way to go where they wanted, and in a matter of weeks Makatea's population shrank to fewer than fifty.

"It was definitely a really, really sad moment for the people on Makatea," laments Heitapu.

"What did they do once everyone left?" I ask.

"They just returned back to nature," Heitapu shrugs. "Back to the natural life. They hunted for coconut crabs, they fished and they bagged up copra for when the boat would come and collect the sacks for money. Fifty years, they did like this. 1966 until almost today, really.

"Since promoting climbing on the island, though, it's been a boom," he continues, "like a big tank of oxygen for the community, and now Makatea is somehow known all around the world. That was my goal."

We head to the windward side of the island, shaded from the sun this time of day, for more climbing. The cliffs on this side offer even more challenging routes, with some inverted features for the experts. The potholed road leads down a hill past more disintegrating machinery and vehicles, and parallels a beach with rows of coconut trees. Anywhere else you'd see hotels and all-inclusive resorts , but there's not a soul or home in sight. The dirt track ends after barely half a mile, and the two Canadians tell Heitapu where they'll be and take a walkie-talkie.

The rest of us walk along the beach at the foot of the towering cliffs and set up a base camp beneath an overhang. Drew and Jeff nimbly make their way up different lines. Some of their maneuvers look like stationary karate kicks, posed to build leverage before pulling themselves vertically with what appear to be their heels. Wall yoga. Heitapu leads us to a nearby beginners' route that's incredibly fun albeit more challenging than the one we climbed earlier, requiring one to maneuver up a crack in the limestone as if pulling the rock apart the way you'd open curtains.

While rock climbers, often known for their lifestyle of "dirtbagging," a non-pejorative term for those who live out of their vans to stay closer to climbing, are indeed a type of tourist, Heitapu is under no illusion that climbing will completely transform Makatea. He understands it's a small number of visitors, comparatively, who clearly have to want it.

In 2022, he says, 650 to 700 people came to Makatea, mostly by catamaran from Tahiti, to partake in climbing and other outdoor activities. A couple of other guides on the atoll run stand up paddleboard tours, snorkeling/diving excursions and nature/mining site tours. There's an incredible freshwater cave in the middle of the island unlike anything found elsewhere in French Polynesia, a draw for cavers. "It's a good vision, I think," says Heitapu. "Not massive tourism, but regular tourism. And tourism with a connection to nature, which, I think, is more sustainable."

If you have neither the time nor the luxury to get on a catamaran to sail the roughly twenty-four hours from Tahiti, you can do what Brette Harrington did and fly from Papeete to Rangiroa, then hop on a speedboat and take the pricey, often bumpy four-hour open-ocean crossing. "The boat driver was like a race car driver," recalls Harrington. "We were dodging swells, and at one point we had to go through the surf break on Rangiroa, and there were just huge waves breaking around us. It's a wild ride. I was pretty scared. But the driver was spot-on. He even caught us some fish along the way." Heitapu, however, sees the "adventure" of getting to Makatea as part of the draw, and the challenging access is a natural check on over-tourism, which for this island's fragile ecosystem is clearly for the best.

"That's why we keep the ocean option," he explains. "We don't want an airport. We're not a lot of people here, so if we got a huge influx of tourism, it'd be a problem. By keeping the boat access, Makatea becomes a treasure. It becomes exceptional to come here. Once you arrive after twenty-four hours of navigation, maybe you're a little seasick," he smiles. "You're happy to get here. You'll appreciate it *that* much more."

"I think you go to Makatea for the overall experience—not just the climbing," says Charlotte Durif, a six-time world champion climber from France who visited in 2019 with the group aboard the *Maewan*. "The climbing definitely surprised me, with some super high-quality rock and neat features. Some of the climbing reminded me of the iconic Gorges du Tarn in France. But as soon as you put your foot on land there, you're supporting the local economy and the ecotourism operation that Makatea's offering. Also, I'm all for going off the beaten path, and Makatea is the epitome of that."

We make our way along the reef and back to the Hilux in the dark, guided by headlamps and the half-moon's steady glow.

"Still impressed?" I ask Drew, whose grin hasn't left him all day. He nods yes.

"It's kind of insane how it's this unknown, little paradise—although if there were a whole bunch of resorts and stuff around, it *wouldn't* be paradise. I guess because it's just so far out there, you really gotta want it, as a climber. It's a dreamy destination, but some would probably consider this roughing it."

I ask Heitapu how, if he'd really never climbed before 2018, he developed a passion for it so quickly and created such an extraordinary scene in so little time.

"I think Polynesian people love a challenge," he says. "It's in our blood. Sport is in our blood. We're active people. I paddled canoe for ten years. When my brother and I discovered the climbing here and that feeling that you can have on a vertical cliff, my mind was blown." **hh**

ABOVE / **Dangerous excavations: Phosphate miners on Makatea in 1962 cart wheelbarrows loaded with phosphate sand along narrow footbridges spanning deep, limestone-walled pits.** PHOTO COURTESY OF **LOUIS MOLET / TAHITI HERITAGE**

FACING PAGE / **Smith navigates the edges of the now empty pits, some more than a hundred feet deep. "It's kind of eerie with all the old, decrepit buildings and rusted machinery," says Johnson. "Hard to believe that at one time this island had more infrastructure than Pape'ete on Tahiti."**

Full Immersion

Visions from the blue realm

For those who hear it, the call of the sea is undeniable. We have our reasons for diving in: to play, to work, to hunt, to heal, to claim for a few untethered moments the wildness and joy that is our birthright. But maybe there's more to it. Like us, the ocean is unpredictable, full of contradiction and dynamism, of serenity and ferocity more felt than understood. Its surface is like the movement of our minds, a dance of light and reflection; like our minds, dark mysteries roam its depths, glimpsed in flashes of imagination and dream. We enter the sea at our peril and maybe, without realizing it, in pursuit of belonging. Suspended there, briefly without breath, our edges may blur into a kind of communion. For the seas are one sea after all—even the sea we carry within us, the salt water in our blood. We cannot stay long, but while we remain, we reclaim an ancient freedom and rejoin a family older than memory. For the past five years, photographer Elyse Butler has sought such grace in the waters around O'ahu and documented what she's found, an offering of both wonder and appreciation.

Freediver Krista Jaspers blows bubble rings at Hanauma Bay. Facing page: A predatory kamanu (rainbow runner) scatters a school of akule (bigeye scad), Waimea Bay. Previous spread: A boy dives under the shorebreak at Makapuʻu. Following spread: The glittering waters of Waiʻanae.

‘Īlio holo i ka uaua (Hawaiian monk seals) off Wai‘anae. Facing page: A child of the sea floats at Waimea Bay. Following spread: A *ta‘ape* (blue-striped snapper) among a school of ulua (bigeye jacks), Hanauma Bay.

Danica Swenson freedives above the dunes at Hanauma Bay. Facing page: Bubbles rise from scuba divers at depth, Waiʻanae. Following spread: Naiʻa (Hawaiian spinner dolphins) off Waiʻanae.

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STORY BY **JACKIE OSHIRO**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ANDREW RICHARD HARA**

Forest of a Trillion Trees

Terraformation aims to regreen the world—starting in Hawai‘i

Loose dirt blows around as the unremitting sun beats down. A small native shrub, an ‘ilima, is just beginning to flower. The plant, brimming with new life, seems undaunted by the parched environment—and so do the seven thousand other native plants growing in neat rows on this forty-five-acre plot in Kohala. Despite conditions that would kill most native Hawaiian species, these plants aren’t struggling; if anything, they’re working to transform this abused landscape, with an assist from an emerging technology that just might change the world.

Hawai‘i Island’s northwest peninsula has the steepest rainfall gradient in the world. From its western coast to the summit of Kohala, a distance of just eleven miles, annual rainfall ranges from as little as two inches to nearly two hundred. While dense cloud forest sits at the summit, the mountain’s leeward flank is blanketed with miles of parched, windswept grass, more African savannah than tropical island. At one time this area was home to an expansive sandalwood forest with some of the richest dry-forest plant and insect biodiversity in the world. Years of logging and cattle grazing, however, degraded the land. Native trees and shrubs that captured moisture and protected the watershed have been replaced by invasive monocultures that do little to harness the infrequent but heavy rainstorms. Runoff pulls topsoil into the ocean, exposing the bare hardpan and silting reefs.

In this sunbaked, depleted soil, the Hawai‘i-based environmental start-up Terraformation is hoping to grow a native forest, and this plot along Akoni Pule Highway is a small step in a long journey: to combat climate change by restoring native forest on billions of acres around the world—altogether, an area larger than the United States and Mexico combined. For Terraformation site lead Lopaka Dela Cruz, the company’s local roots have an important role to play in achieving that ambitious goal globally. “Hawai‘i is unique because we have ten different climate zones—from dry to wet and all different types of elevation. I think everybody could learn a little something from us no matter what part of the world they’re in,” he says.

“Especially because we’re on an island chain in the middle of the sea, and we’ve got all of those hurdles,” adds restoration technician Chauncey Revilla. “If we can be successful here, pretty much anyplace in the world can be as well.”

Terraformation's origin story sits at the intersection of coincidence, luck and fate. Founder Yishan Wong, a key player in the early years of the Silicon Valley tech boom and former CEO of Reddit, had originally moved to Hawai‘i to retire. In 2017 he was driving along the highway when a sign caught his attention. For Sale: Eco Retreat. Curiosity piqued, he turned up the driveway. “It was just this building and a barn,” Wong recalls, “but there was something about the land when I stood there. I’m a pretty technical person, but there was this magic or, I don’t know, ‘the call of destiny’ might be too dramatic, but there was a feeling.”

Nursery manager Rocky Thiel cultivates native Hawaiian plant seedlings at the Waimea planting site of Terraformation. The environmental start-up headquartered on Hawai'i Island is aiming for a stratospherically ambitious goal: planting one trillion trees on three billion acres around the world to acclerate carbon capture and combat climate change.

The parcel included a small set of solar panels and a brackish water well. Taking stock of the abundant sunlight and degraded landscape, Wong saw the potential to reforest the land by irrigating heavily with desalinated water, powered by solar energy. As he assembled a team to build the solar desalination system, Wong and his family were living in the nearby town of Waimea. Known for its cool, breezy climate, Waimea at the time was unseasonably hot. Historically hot, even, as Wong discovered when he spoke with his neighbors. That was when he decided to come out of retirement. "Everybody who works in climate has their moment. Maybe something happens to them, or they read a book. They realize something, and they're like, 'OK, I have to work on solving climate change until it's solved.' And that was my moment."

Wong began to research large-scale climate solutions, and it quickly became apparent that planting forests was the answer due to its efficacy, cost, reliability, safety and inclusivity (anyone can plant a tree; you don't need special training or expensive tech). At the time, however, some estimates projected that reforestation might address only about a third of the climate problem and was therefore broadly discounted. ("Which, by the way, is a weirdly irrational way to think," says Wong. "If you could wave a magic wand and solve a third of the climate change problem, you would obviously want to do it.") Looking at those calculations, Wong determined there was a good amount of land that wasn't factored in due to poor growing conditions, particularly desertified areas—areas that could be irrigated using systems similar to the solar desalination system he was building in North Kohala.

"If you don't do solar desal, you get about a third of the way to solving climate change," says Wong. "And if you really lean into the solar desal, you can potentially do the entire thing. If you combine that with reducing fossil fuel usage and decarbonizing our grid, we could in fact solve climate change in this generation. It's actually possible now, and you don't have to develop significant new technologies to pull it off."

ABOVE / **Terraformation founder and former CEO of Reddit, Yishan Wong**

OPENING SPREAD / **Pono Oguma picks longan at Terraformation's agroforestry project at the Kaiwiki Food Forest in Laupāhoehoe.**

The idea that climate change can be addressed through large-scale tree planting has seen countless critiques, particularly in response to a 2019 study by Crowther Lab at ETH Zurich, the conclusions of which are in line with Terraformation's goals. Scrutiny is largely focused around the feasibility of planting such a large area, how to safeguard planted areas to ensure they aren't logged or otherwise misused, and concerns that a dramatic increase in dark-colored canopy cover might lead to greater planetary heat absorption.

Dela Cruz and Revilla work primarily at Terraformation's ʻŌhiʻa Lani site in Waimea. Together with their team, they've planted about 150 acres over the past two years—more than 17,000 plants. Planting, however, is unique to Terraformation's work in Hawai'i. Elsewhere, the company partners with established community organizations already doing native forest restoration in their regions to help address the four main bottlenecks in conservation: funding, access to native seeds, tools and training.

To that end, Terraformation's work

Terraformation has projects at several sites on Hawai'i Island, including the agroforestry project at the Kaiwiki Food Forest (seen above). The island's fourteen climate zones make it an ideal laboratory to experiment with reforestation approaches that could be applied in different environments around the world.

in Hawai'i serves partially as R&D. "We did experiments with soils. We worked on different planting methods, trying to be as efficient as possible," says Revilla. Dela Cruz explains that there was almost no plan at the beginning. The team was tasked with developing a system that worked best for the site in the hope that what they learned here might jump-start other restoration projects in similar climates around the world.

To improve access to native seeds, the company developed an off-grid seed bank built from a modified forty-foot shipping container. Seeds, while seemingly infinite and available, are often locked in remote forests, where seeding events can be infrequent. Forests are susceptible to climate extremes like drought and wildfires, making seed sources fragile. By collecting and storing native seeds throughout the year, restoration projects can also eliminate a major bottleneck: having the right plants at the right time, an issue that Terraformation ran into early on. "In the beginning my plan was to have every species ready before we planted, but the nursery wasn't ready," recalls Dela Cruz, highlighting the value of a seed bank. "It's super important that they can start growing six months or a year ahead of the project." Terraformation's original plan was to build and send these seed banks around the world, but it was ultimately thwarted by the high cost of shipping from the middle of the Pacific. Instead, they provide plans and expertise to help their partners build their own seed banks using locally available materials, something they've done in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Ecuador.

For now all eyes are on Wong's North Kohala property, called Pacific Flight at Kaupalaoa. While degraded lands have been successfully reforested before, it's usually a decades-long process that requires planting in waves, with generations of plants growing and dying to rebuild the soil before putting in the plants that will eventually make up the forest. Terraformation is betting that consistent irrigation via solar desalination will allow restoration projects to plant the final forest species directly into degraded landscape. It's unorthodox, but if it works, the savings in time, energy and resources could make all the difference.

ABOVE / **Thiel checks on plant starts in different growing media at Terraformation's nursery in Waimea.**

FACING PAGE / **Site operations manager Bryn Lawrence at Terraformation's key innovation, its solar desalination facility in Kohala. "It's the only solar desalination facility in the world that's fully off-grid and 100 percent solar powered," says Wong; it's capable of desalinating 34,000 gallons of brackish well water per day for irrigation.**

More than seven thousand native seedlings have been planted across the site's forty-five fenced acres. Species such as koaiʻa, ʻaʻaliʻi and wiliwili were chosen because of their documented historic presence in the area or their environmental compatibility. As the plants mature and the forest fills in, they will eventually be able to capture enough water to be self-sustaining, but in the meantime each plant has its own drip line delivering water directly to stem to prevent waste or runoff. The solar desalination system making this all possible is powered by 336 solar panels, which have the capacity to pump and desalinate over 30,000 gallons of water per day using reverse osmosis. (Roughly ten thousand gallons of water are used each day for irrigation.) The goal, ultimately, is to bring solar desal to restoration efforts around the world, particularly those located near coasts. Planting was completed at Kaupalaoa in 2021, and early indicators are extremely positive. One year later, over 70 percent of the plants survived.

"We have enough human beings, and we have enough resources," says Wong on the effort to plant a trillion trees. "This is actually within the realm of logistical possibility." Above, restoration technician Aka Rodriguez-Herring examines a koa tree in Terraformation's ʻŌhiʻa Lani at Mahiki restoration area near Waimea.

While these early successes in the field are promising, planting is only part of the work that Terraformation needs to do, says Kealiʻi Thoene, Terraformation's former community programs manager. The most important lessons that Terraformation can learn working in Hawaiʻi, he believes, should come from engaging its Native people. "Most of the land that will need to be reforested is going to be in the global South, tied to indigenous populations. Hawaiʻi is in a unique position because we straddle two worlds: We have a thousand years or so of indigenous knowledge and an indigenous population that is still thriving on the same land where that knowledge was developed, but we're also a part of the United States and the Western world. If we can get the relationship between those two worlds right, we can highlight how the Western world can support indigenous populations to create a reforested planet Earth that is healthy and mutually beneficial for all humans involved.

"In the Kānaka Maoli [Native Hawaiian] worldview, our ecological communities are not separate from our human communities," he continues. "This is clear when you look at the Hawaiian language. Take the foundational word wai. Simply, it means fresh water. If you reduplicate it, waiwai means wealth, abundance, riches. So, in Hawaiian, wealth is intrinsically tied to the health of the natural ecosystems. When you contrast that with the Western definition of wealth, it's pretty striking, but there is a way to include waiwai into the wealth of our people, our ecosystems, as well as our business models."

Building trust with the community has been slow, and Wong acknowledges that the way he runs the Hawaiʻi operation probably didn't help. "Early in my career I worked on the internationalization team at PayPal, and one of the things we learned was when it comes to other countries and understanding other people, you need to remember that you don't know anything," he says. That experience informs his approach today, which may result in the company being less proactive in the community as some might wish. "Lots of other orgs have been doing this for a long time," Wong says. "They know a lot more than we do. I'm not going to go and say, 'Hey, we should do this. We know how to do it.' And so we're walking a fine line there because I don't want to impose, and that can seem kind of standoffish, but at the same time people are like, 'Why aren't you [Terraformation] stepping up?'" Terraformation's presence is being felt, though, as it begins working with more community partners. One of its seed bank prototypes now sits on the lawn at Bishop Museum in Honolulu and is operated jointly by three Oʻahu-based conservation groups.

An ʻilima, one of the species Terraformation is planting to help restore the native ecosystem.

Earlier this year, Hawaiʻi Island restaurateur Peter Merriman reached out to Terraformation for help reforesting seventeen acres in Kohala to offset his restaurant's carbon footprint. While Merriman's Waimea has been carbon neutral for the past few years, that was achieved through purchasing out-of-state carbon credits. "We really wanted to have offsets that would help Hawaiʻi as well," Merriman says. "Then we started looking at it, and we realized that this might ultimately be something that's good for landowners, farmers and other agricultural people in the future,

Terraformation personnel plant koa in what was once pastureland in the ʻŌhiʻa Lani at Mahiki restoration area. Before it was cleared for cattle, this area was the likely location of the historical and legendary forest of Mahiki—a vast stretch of koa and ʻōhiʻa.

as more people want to buy offsets. I'm excited we can be one of the first restaurants to go down this path, and hopefully make it a little easier for any other restaurants who want to go down the same path in the future."

In collaboration with Arizona State University, Terraformation is also developing the Ridge-to-Reef Restoration Center in Kailua-Kona, where both organizations can develop solutions to environmental degradation on land and sea. The eventual goal, says Greg Asner, director of ASU's Center for Global Discovery and Conservation Science, is to do land-reef restorations jointly. "We're ready to restore some reefs, but we have all these land issues in the reef, mostly sedimentation and pollution. And Terraformation is in the pole position to lead those land-based interventions." Ultimately, Terraformation will manage upslope resources and reduce runoff, while Ridge-to-Reef will grow and outplant coral on the reefs.

For Wong it's only the beginning of what he hopes Terraformation can offer Hawai'i and the world. "The Hawaiian word for wealth is water, and until I embarked on this, I did not truly understand, but now I really, truly understand. Access to water is the true measure of wealth in human society. And we can now create or bring water anywhere in the Islands. We can have as much water as we want, and frankly, the economic development and the improvement to people's lives would be amazing. I don't want to push anything on anyone. I just try to tell people that it's possible and that the future can be bright and the Islands can be wealthy in the truest sort of sense of the word: having water and abundance." **hh**

STORY BY **DAVE CHOO**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ELYSE BUTLER**

Hawai‘i in a Packet

From kimchi to *char siu*, Noh Foods mixes are the Islands in powder form—just add water.

The first meal I cooked all by myself was lunch: a half-dozen teri-burgers fried in a big cast-iron pan and served with Ore-Ida Golden Crinkles French Fries. I was 10 or 12 and thoroughly impressed with myself, even though my prep work only involved emptying the contents of a package of Noh Foods of Hawai‘i Hawaiian Style Teri-Burger Seasoning Mix into a bowl with some water and a pound of hamburger. The burger was basic: no lettuce, tomato, onion, cheese, not even ketchup or mayo. Just a burger on a bun.

But it was delicious. Unlike restaurant teri-burgers, which rely on sauces or glazes for their teriyaki

In the sixty years since Noh Foods of Hawaiʻi was founded in 1963, its products—especially its variety of Island and Asian-influenced powdered mixes (seen on the opening page)—have become as beloved as they are ubiquitous. Above, Noh Foods president Raymond Noh (right) with vice president of business development Jacob Noh at the company's Honolulu warehouse.

flavoring, my burger had the taste of shoyu, sugar, garlic, ginger and onion all infused into the meat itself. It didn't need anything else.

In our house, Noh Foods of Hawai'i's powdered seasoning packets were cupboard staples, ever present as the bottle of shoyu on the kitchen counter, the bag of Hawaiian salt on the bottom shelf of the pantry or the chili pepper water in the fridge. Even though my mother was a great cook, our pantry always had a small stash of Noh's seasoning mixes (Chinese Lemon Chicken, Korean Kim Chee, Chinese Beef Tomato)—just in case.

When I went away to college and later worked on the faraway East Coast, I would get the occasional care package from home that contained packets of Chinese Barbecue (*char siu*), Oriental Stir Fry or Chinese Sweet & Sour Spareribs mixes. In the days before dim sum was widely available in Chinese restaurants on the Mainland (at least in my neighborhood in suburban Washington, DC), I made my own baked char siu *bao*, adding the barbecue mix to ground pork, chopped green onions and diced water chestnuts before wrapping the little neon pink meatballs in rounds of ready-to-bake Pillsbury biscuit dough. While my hockey puck-size dim sum biscuits weren't as light and airy as those from home, they were little flavor bombs that exploded with sweet, slightly licorice-flavored char siu. It soon became a much-requested potluck mainstay. For me, being so far from home, Noh Foods seasoning mixes were home. Just add water.

Tucked into a corner across a small parking lot from a laundromat called Launder Land, Noh Foods' headquarters looks like a small auto body shop or a large storage locker. Inside, the walls of the office's crowded reception area are lined with racks and bookshelves filled with dozens of seasoning packets, sauces, marinades and seasoned salts: Japanese Teriyaki, Korean Barbecue (kalbi or bulgogi), Portuguese Fish Vinha Dalhos, a vinegary mixture used to marinate meats or pickle onions.

Jacob Noh, the company's vice president of business development, tells me that Noh Foods has forty unique products. He explains that because of the nature of the food distribution business, it's difficult to determine the exact number of stores and customers who carry and buy Noh Foods products, but the company has a presence in supermarket mega-chains like Walmart, Safeway and Ralphs, which has 185 stores on the West Coast, as well as Kroger and H-E-B, which have stores throughout the Midwest and South. In addition, the company relies on another distribution network for smaller specialty and ethnic grocery stores. Noh Foods also sells in bulk to restaurants and restaurant supply companies, which explains why the company's most popular item, its char siu mix, comes in three-pound bags.

Since moving much of its production to the West Coast, Noh Foods continues to make its popular poke mix, dried *ogo* (seen above) and season salts in Honolulu.

Thirty years ago, when I was making my char siu baos, the vast majority—about 90 percent—of Noh Foods products were sold in Hawai'i, the rest trickling into California and the West Coast. Today that market has nearly flipped, with about 80 percent of the company's sales outside of Hawai'i. Its catalog of powdered mixes, seasonings, sauces and marinades can be found at stores and in professional kitchens across the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico, the Asia-Pacific region and points beyond.

This year Noh Foods is celebrating its sixtieth year in business, and I've come to talk with president Raymond Noh (no relation to Jacob) about an upcoming expansion of the company's product line, the first in years. The 65-year-old Raymond meets us in the reception/spice room and ushers us into the warehouse and past a bright, enclosed workroom where three women are sorting through bags of *ogo*, a dark, spindly seaweed. Raymond explains that today is "drying day" for the company's production of its Original Poke Mix. The women are preparing to dehydrate the ogo, which will be packaged with a blend of Hawaiian salt and chili pepper.

According to Raymond, the poke mix was originally targeted for the Japanese market, for those who had visited the Islands and wanted to enjoy

"My dad developed a knack for powdered mixes," says Raymond, initially as quick way to make mass quantities of kimchi for the family's Korean restaurant, Arirang. Above, Noh Foods founders Edwin and Miriam (in the forklift) with their three sons (left to right: Howard, Raymond and David) in the company's warehouse on Sand Island in 1993.

the dish at home. Just add cubes of raw fish, tofu or slices of cooked octopus and maybe a handful of green onions. However, when he test-marketed the mix in Hawaiʻi, it quickly sold out and became wildly popular. And then, years later, the poke craze spread on the Mainland.

"The pandemic hit the restaurant industry, and that was tough," says Raymond. "But during that time our business on Amazon spiked. Overall, we tripled our e-commerce business."

I ask whether Noh Food's online success was behind his decision to expand. Instead of answering, Raymond pulls out an old menu, vibrantly colored in the traditional Korean colors of yellow, white, black, blue and red. He says he wants to talk a little bit about the past first.

Noh Foods of Hawaiʻi was founded in 1963 by Raymond's parents, Edwin and Miriam, who owned Honolulu's first formal, sit-down Korean restaurant, Arirang, which they had opened just two years before. The couple had no experience in the restaurant business. Edwin, who did all the cooking, was a sheet metal worker at Pearl Harbor; Miriam was a government secretary. They drew on their families' recipes and developed a menu featuring the grilled marinated meats and fresh, braised or fermented vegetable dishes that would eventually become standard Korean restaurant fare: *kal bi*, *bulgogi*, *namul*, *chop chae* and, of course, kimchi, the iconic and fiery side dish, usually made with Korean cabbage or turnips and served with every meal.

Edwin was a tinkerer and process guy, so when he saw how much kimchi Arirang needed every day and how much time his kitchen staff took cutting and dicing garlic, ginger and chili peppers, he got to work. "He started by dehydrating chili peppers and eventually developed a powdered kimchi base with all the spices and flavorings," says Raymond. "So all the kitchen staff had to do was cut and soak the vegetables and then add a scoop of the mix. A little while later it was ready to serve."

From there Edwin moved on to other flavors. "My dad developed a knack for powdered mixes. After several friends asked, he started working on a mix for sweet and sour spareribs. Me and my brothers ate spareribs for five days a week for months. Then it was teriyaki, then another one. We were my dad's test subjects," says Noh.

Raymond is quick to acknowledge that his dad's kimchi is very different from "hardcore Korean kimchi," which in the case of cabbage kimchi features a complex and potent spice paste that is meticulously rubbed between each leaf before fermenting for days or even months. His dad's kimchi, he says, was developed for a local market that wanted a spicy side dish but had yet to be exposed to the more traditional and robust version.

But that local market never went away and is bigger than ever. Today the quickly spiced kimchi is featured everywhere from plate lunches restaurants to hotel buffet lines and many, many places in between. How many restaurants actually use Noh Foods' three-pound bags of Kim Chee Mix is hard to say, but the mix is and always has been one of the company's best sellers.

In 1967, Edwin and Miriam sold Arirang to one of their waitresses but kept the seasoning mix business going, moving operations from the family apartment to a warehouse on Sand Island. Raymond, the youngest of the three Noh brothers, took over the business shortly after graduating from Washington State University in 1981. The company had been doing OK, grossing a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year, but Raymond knew that to really grow Noh Foods, it had to be selling on the Mainland. And to sell on the Mainland, he had to move production to the Mainland. Two years later he opened a twenty-thousand-square-foot office and warehouse in Torrance, a city in Los Angeles' South Bay that had become an enclave for Hawaiʻi expats.

Noh had secured deals with a few distributors, but few of his products were making the retail shelves. "I'm driving around, and I went into the Asian food aisle of a Ralphs grocery store and I found just a handful of our products on the shelves. I'm thinking, 'We can do better than this.'"

So the young entrepreneur, not knowing any better, decided to tell Ralphs just that. He went to a phone booth across the street and called Ralphs' corporate headquarters and, inexplicably, was transferred directly to the chain's senior vice president for specialty foods. After a brief pitch the executive invited Raymond to join him and a couple of colleagues for after-work drinks. Raymond showed up in his best suit and with a sample case in hand. Six hours and many drinks later, Raymond had a handshake deal for Ralphs to bring in four more Noh seasoning mixes as well as a bottle of his Korean-style barbecue sauce. The deal was directly with Ralphs, no distributors involved.

Raymond had quickly and unexpectedly gained a foothold on the Mainland and never looked back. For the next several years, he lived like

In addition to powdered mixes, Noh Foods has been making sauces, marinades, season salts and iced tea mix as well as canned iced tea for decades. In the coming months Noh Foods plans to expand, introducing new products and flavors for sale in hundreds of stores in the Islands, on the Mainland and around the world.

a nomad, handing out seasoning, sauce and marinade samples at countless food shows and at occasional after-work meetings. Noh eventually closed its Sand Island facility and moved its Hawai'i operation to the warehouse next to Launder Land. Today, besides the Original Poke Mix, the facility mixes the company's various seasoned salts. The rest of Noh Foods' products are manufactured in Torrance and shipped around the world.

"We're found in so many places, I think people assume that our footprint is equally large," says Raymond. However, this year Noh Foods is beginning to fill out its own big shoes. In January, Jacob joined the staff and has been busy working on the rollout of various new product lines. In a month or two, Noh Foods will introduce thin beef chips that come in their classic flavors: Char Siu, Korean Barbecue and Hula Hula, the company's version of the smoky huli-huli style of barbecue. Also in the product lineup are heat-and-serve Teriyaki Beef Patties and Teriyaki Meatballs. Later in the year the company will expand its canned beverage offerings with a line of ice teas in a variety of familiar but unique flavors such as Country Club (pineapple), Honey-Ginger and Hibiscus, as well as a sugar-free flavor.

In addition to new products, Raymond and Jacob are planning a build-out of Noh's office and production space. In the near future, they'll begin construction on a new three-story headquarters that will feature, among other things, a test kitchen where the company hopes to work with local chefs and culinary students to expand the reach of Island cuisine. "For the most part, the image of Noh foods is a lot bigger than the company itself," says Raymond. "But I think that's a good thing, because now all we have to do is grow into that image."

Before I leave, Raymond and Jacob load up a small, clear plastic carrying case with nearly a dozen different seasoning packets. Included are many familiar favorites, such as the char siu and roast duck mixes. When I get home, I stash the bag in the corner of my pantry next to the Hawaiian sea salt and the shoyu—just in case. **hh**

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Support dozens of small local businesses, selling their handcrafted jewelry, baked goods, unique apparel, charms and more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free. Pearlridge Center, (808) 689-9091

BACKYARD ADVENTURES
Through 8/30
An interactive science exhibit that engages guests with the wonders that can be found in their own backyards. Bishop Museum, (808) 847-3511

OLA KA NO'EAU: EXCELLENCE IN HAWAIIAN ARTISTRY
Through 10/29
An exhibition exploring the genealogy of Hawaiian artistry, highlighting the bond between teacher and student as a fundamental value in Hawaiian culture. Bishop Museum, (808) 847-3511

DANE'S ULTIMATE SEASON MIX-TAPES
8/5
A mashup of the upcoming Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's Masterworks season with movements from Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Rimsky-Korsakov and more from HSO's new director Dane Lam. Tom Moffatt Waikiki Shell, (808) 768-5252

NĀ HULA FESTIVAL
8/6
Hawai'i's longest-running noncompetitive hula event, the festival brings together hālau (troupes) from around the state for a day of dance. Free. Kapi'olani Park, (808) 768-3041

BISHOP MUSEUM AFTER HOURS
8/11
Museum exhibits are open for viewing from 5:30 to 9 p.m., along with cultural demonstrations, keiki activities and a night market with food trucks and local vendors. Bishop Museum, (808) 847-3511

JOANN GOES TO THE OPERA
8/12
Conductor Emeritus JoAnn Falletta performs selections from the operatic canon. Hear excerpts from Wagner's epic Ring Cycle and Strauss' "Suite from Der Rosenkavalier." Tom Moffatt Waikiki Shell, (808) 768-5252

Made in Hawai'i Festival

Taimane: Hawaiki

HUBB'S KEIKI FEST
8/12
A children's body-boarding competition focused on creating ocean awareness, cultural connection and fostering the competitive spirit. 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. Sherwood Beach, Waimānalo, (808) 635-2435

41ST HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY GUITAR FESTIVAL: WAIKĪKĪ STYLE
8/12
A gathering of some of the greatest slack key musicians, this festival features five hours of musical performances, with local cuisine and crafters. 5 to 9 p.m. Waikiki Aquarium, (808) 226-2697

MADE IN HAWAI'I FESTIVAL
8/18–20
Hundreds of exhibitors sell locally made food, apparel, accessories and art along with cooking demonstrations and live music. Hawaii Convention Center, madeinhawaiifestival.com

19TH KOREAN FESTIVAL
8/19
This annual festival presents an authentic taste of Korean culture through food, dance, art, music and entertainment. Frank F. Fasi Civic Center Grounds, koreanfesthawaii.com

DUKE'S OCEANFEST
8/19–27
A celebration of waterman, Olympian and ambassador of aloha Duke Kahanamoku with various lifestyle sports competitions and cultural, hula, film and music presentations. Waikīkī Beach, dukesoceanfest.com

FAMILY SUNDAYS
8/20
HoMA offers creative activities for keiki of all ages, community-focused programming, and entertainment. Free museum admission for residents. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Honolulu Museum of Art, (808) 532-8700

TAIMANE: HAWAIKI
8/25
A theatrical odyssey with music, dance, costume, aerial acrobatics and spoken word written, scored and produced by international 'ukulele star and composer Taimane. Hawaii Theatre Center, (808) 528-0506

SEPTEMBER

THE GREEN
9/2
Celebrated roots reggae band The Green performs with special guest Teddy Swims. Tom Moffatt Waikiki Shell, (808) 768-5252

Aloha Festivals Floral Parade

41ST OKINAWAN FESTIVAL
9/2&3
Eat *andagi* (Okinawan fried dough), dress in traditional Okinawan *bingata* or *paranku* and participate in -* dancing at this popular annual festival organized by the Hawaii United Okinawa Association. Hawaii Convention Center, (808) 676-5400

BISHOP MUSEUM AFTER HOURS
9/8
Museum exhibits are open for viewing from 5:30 to 9 p.m., along with cultural demonstrations, keiki activities and a night market with food trucks and local vendors. Bishop Museum, (808) 847-3511

ALOHA FESTIVALS ROYAL COURT INVESTITURE & OPENING CEREMONY
9/9
An opening ceremony kicks off the annual Aloha Festivals. Ali‘i Court members receive their royal cloaks, helmets, head feather lei and other symbols of their reign amid traditional hula and chants. 4 to 6 p.m. Waikīkī, alohafestivals.com

46TH ANNUAL HONOLULU INTERTRIBAL POWWOW
9/9&10
This annual festival of Native American culture features local and Mainland Native American arts and crafts vendors, craft activities for kids and educational booths along with dance concerts, drumming and singing. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Bishop Museum, oichawaii.org

FAMILY SUNDAYS
9/17
HoMA offers creative activities for keiki of all ages, community-focused programming, and entertainment. Free museum admission for residents. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Honolulu Museum of Art, (808) 532-8700

69TH WAIKĪKĪ HO‘OLAULE‘A
9/23
Thousands gather on Kalākaua Avenue for food and entertainment as part of this year’s Aloha Festivals. Hawaiian musicians and hula hālau perform on stages set up along the street. Hawaiian crafts, lei and Island cuisine are offered throughout the event. 6 to 9:30 p.m. Kalākaua Avenue, alohafestivals.com

Bishop Museum After Hours

HONOLULU CENTURY RIDE
9/24
Cyclists from around the world come together for the largest cycling event in Hawai'i, featuring rides of 25, 50, 75 or 100 miles. 6:15 a.m. Kapi'olani Park, (808) 735-5756

NA WAHINE O KE KAI
9/24
A grueling and prestigious 41-mile women's outrigger canoe race across the channel from Moloka'i to Waikīkī. Hale o Lono Harbor, Moloka'i, to Waikīkī Beach, O'ahu, nawahineokekai.com

ALOHA FESTIVALS FLORAL PARADE
9/30
A parade featuring floats decorated with fresh flowers, horseback riders showcasing the traditional art of pā'ū and participants from marching bands to civic leaders. 9 a.m. to noon. Ala Moana Park through Kalākaua Avenue, alohafestivals.com

NORTH SHORE MAC NUT

67-330 Kamehameha Highway, Hale'iwa

Experience the "fresh-roasted difference" of Hawai'i macadamia nuts at the North Shore Macadamia Nut Company. Established in 1971, this family-operated macadamia nut farm is located at the north end of Hale'iwa town. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can enjoy free samples of the freshest Island macadamia nuts and premium coffees, available for purchase at the best prices!

(808) 637-4733
northshoremacnut.com

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northshoresoapfactory.com

WAIMEA VALLEY

59-864 Kamehameha Highway, Hale'iwa

Waimea Valley is a wahi pana (storied place) deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture. Today Waimea is home to six cultural sites and 5,000 unique plants from all over the world. Allow the wonders of Waimea to speak to you as you walk through this place of healing. Experience the tranquility and the sites that hark back to a bygone era in Hawai'i's history.

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waimeavalley.net

YOUNG'S FISH MARKET

City Square Shopping Center, Kapolei Commons

Home of the famous laulau! Young's Fish Market has been Hawai'i's go-to for delicious local foods since 1951. Laulau, kalua pork, poke and more... We have everything to satisfy your Hawaiian-food cravings. Want to send a taste of Hawai'i to loved ones on the mainland? Send a Laulau Care Package delivered right to their door! Visit our website for information!

(808) 841-4885
youngsfishmarket.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY **PF BENTLEY**

HALEAKALĀ–MAUI

Kauluhiwaolele Maui Fiber Arts Conference

AUGUST

WILDLIFE WEDNESDAYS
Wednesdays
Join naturalists from the Hawai‘i Wildlife Discovery Center every Wednesday and learn about humpback whales, monk seals and more Maui wildlife. 10 a.m. to noon. Whalers Village, (808) 661-4567

JOHN CRUZ “ISLAND STYLE” SERIES
First and third Wednesdays
Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award-winning artist John Cruz performs at home in his element. 7p.m. ProArts Playhouse, (808) 463-6550

HĀNA FARMERS MARKET
Fridays
Locally grown produce and products from East Maui. Free. 65-plus shopping starts at 2:30, general admission from 3 to 5 p.m. Hāna Town Center, (808) 378-0084

LĀHAINĀ ART NIGHT
Fridays
Front Street’s art galleries open their doors until 8 p.m. for viewings and live music. Lāhainā, lahainarestoration.org

KAMA‘ĀINA NIGHTS
Third Fridays
A free monthly concert highlighting Hawai‘i’s homegrown talent. Queen Ka‘ahumanu Center, (808) 877-3369

UPCOUNTRY FARMERS MARKET
Saturdays
Locally grown produce, fish, prepared food and products. Free. 7 to 11 a.m. Kula Malu Town Center, (808) 572-8122

QKC KEIKI CLUB
Third Saturdays
Monthly keiki activities focused on Hawaiian language and culture with Luana Kawa‘a of Morning Mana‘o at the QKC keiki play area. Enter to win giveaways and enjoy family-friendly festivities. 10 to 11 a.m. Queen Ka‘ahumanu Center, (808) 877-3369

MAUI SUNDAY MARKET
Sundays
An evening marketplace with local food and product vendors and live entertainment. Free. 4 to 8 p.m. Kahului Shopping Center, (888) 948-6382

YOUTH ART EXHIBITION
Through 8/25
An exhibition showcasing works by more than two hundred keiki artists participating in Hui No‘eau Visual Arts Center’s summer arts program. Hui No‘eau Visual Arts Center, (808) 572-6560

MACC BIENNIAL
Through 8/26
A statewide juried exhibit for artists living in Hawai‘i to enter their strongest, most innovative and thought-provoking work. Maui Arts & Cultural Center (MACC) Schaefer International Gallery, (808) 242-2787

KAULUHIWAOLELE MAUI FIBER ARTS CONFERENCE
8/31–9/3
Master weavers share their knowledge and skills of ancient Hawaiian weaving and discuss how Hawaiian plants can be used to create art. Kā‘anapali Beach Hotel, (808) 667-0219

SEPTEMBER

THE GREEN
9/2
Celebrated roots reggae band The Green performs with special guest Teddy Swims. MACC A&B Amphitheater, (808) 242-7469

FESTIVALS OF ALOHA—BANYAN TREE HO‘OLAULE‘A
9/3
The Festival of Aloha, Maui Nui Style kicks off a two-month celebration on Maui, Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i with the Banyan Tree Ho‘olaule‘a. Exhibits, keiki activities, local food, Maui-made arts, Hawaiian music and hula. Keawaiki Park, Lāhainā, festivalsofaloha.com

MĀLAMA WAO AKUA 2023
9/9–11/3
A juried art exhibition of all media celebrating the native species of Maui Nui (Maui, Lāna‘i, Moloka‘i, Kaho‘olawe). Maui artists explore watersheds and raise awareness about the importance of protecting native species. Hui No‘eau Visual Arts Center, malamawaoakua.org

21ST FRONT STREET MILE, 5K AND 10K
9/16
This flat, out-and-back course along the Lāhainā shoreline is one of the most popular races on Maui. Presented By Tommy Bahama Marlin Bar. Lāhainā, runnersparadiseinc.com

FESTIVALS OF ALOHA, MOLOKA‘I
9/28–30
“Friendly Isle” Moloka‘i displays its aloha spirit with the Royal Court’s investiture, a poke and aloha attire contest, a kalo-‘ulu-‘uala recipe contest and a keiki talent contest. Other events include a parade and ho‘olaule‘a (celebration). Various locations on Moloka‘i, festivalsofaloha.com

CHINESE MOON FESTIVAL
9/29
A traditional Chinese Moon festival during the first full moon of harvest season. Enjoy foods like moon cakes, cooking demonstrations, live music played on traditional instruments, cultural art demos including calligraphy and children’s crafts. Free. Wo Hing Museum, (808) 661-3262

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go-lanai.com

HUI NO'EAU VISUAL ARTS CENTER

2841 Baldwin Avenue, Makawao, Maui

Located in Upcountry Maui at the historic Kaluanui Estate, Hui No'eau Visual Arts Center is a nonprofit, community arts center offering art classes, cultural workshops, exhibitions, and events. Explore the 100-year-old Kaluanui home, enjoy artwork by local artists, or take a self-guided tour of the scenic 25-acre grounds. Supported in part by the County of Maui.

(808) 572-6560
huinoeau.com

MAUI HANDS ART GALLERIES

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Maui Hands is the creative efforts of 300 Hawai'i-based artists working in every conceivable medium to bring the best of the islands to you. Each location is uniquely curated with a selection of fine and casual jewelry; original artwork and prints; ceramic, glass, and wood creations; linens and home goods; and an extensive collection of exquisite Ni'ihau shell lei.

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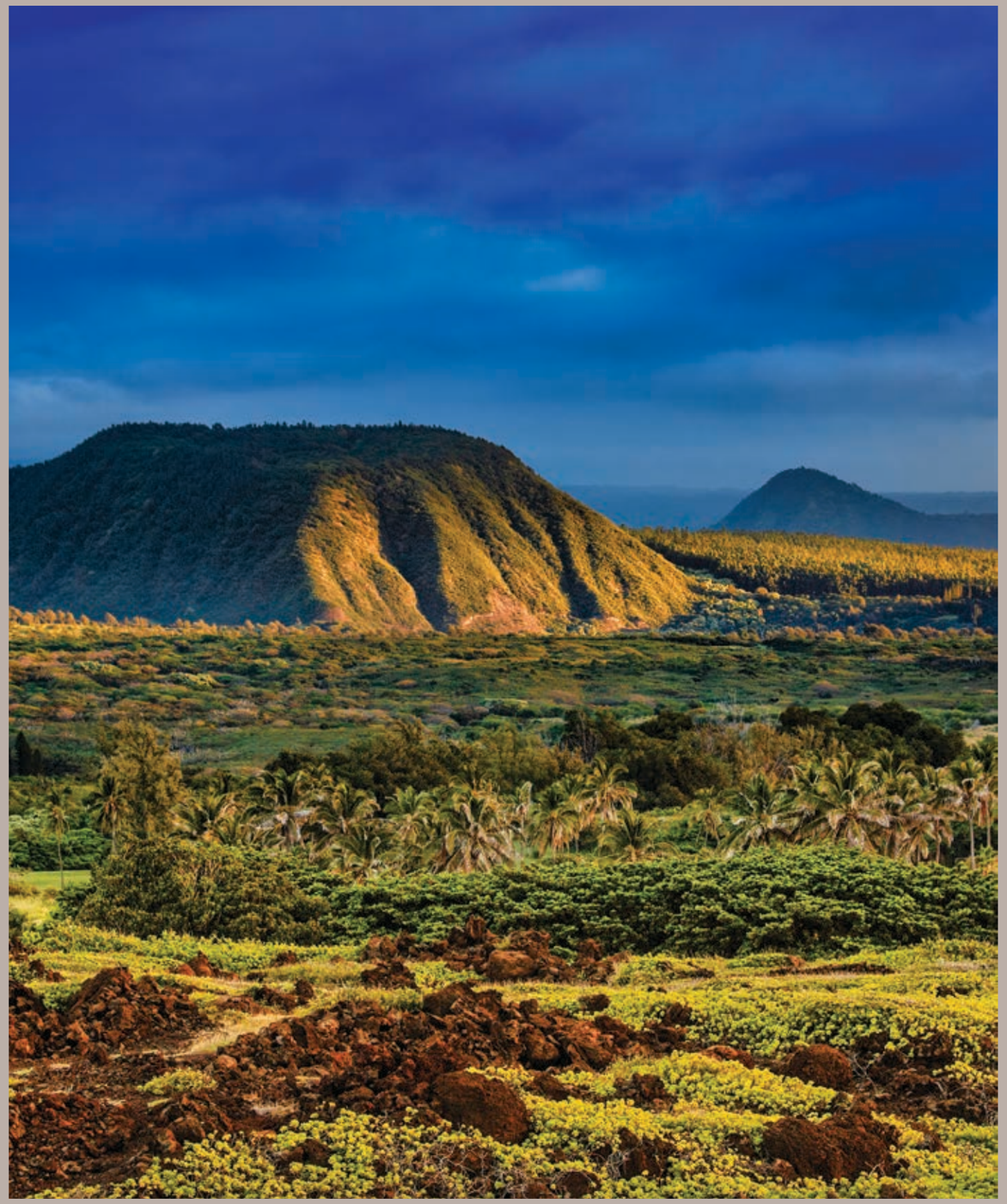
PHOTOGRAPH BY **PF BENTLEY**



KA LAE (SOUTH POINT)–HAWAI'I ISLAND

Queen Lili'uokalani Canoe Race

AUGUST

NIAULANI NATURE WALK
Mondays
A one-hour nature walk through an old-growth Hawai'i rainforest on an easy loop trail. Walkers are introduced to the native plants and birds of Kīlauea volcano. Free. 9:30 a.m. Volcano Art Center's Niaulani Campus, (808) 967-8222

PORTUGUESE BREAD BAKING
Thursdays
Observe the traditional art of baking Portuguese bread in a large wood-fired stone oven, or *forno*. Bread sales begin at 1 p.m. Program begins at 10 a.m. Kona Historical Society, (808) 323-3222

A WALK INTO THE PAST
Fridays
Take a walk back to 1912 and meet the founder of the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, Thomas A. Jaggar at the edge of Kīlauea volcano. Free. 10 a.m. to noon. Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, (808) 985-6000

NIGHT MARKET
Second and Fourth Fridays
Live music, food trucks and dozens of local vendors with Hawai'i Island products, local artwork and other goods. 4 to 8 p.m. Kings' Shops in Waikoloa, (808) 886-8811

HALEKI'I FARMERS MARKET & CRAFT FAIR
First Saturdays
Local crafts and art vendors, keiki entrepreneurs, fresh food, 'ohana-centered outreach, sustainable-living resources and live music. Free. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Kona Grill House, (808) 960-7728

YOUTH ARTS SATURDAYS
Second Saturdays
Keiki of all ages are welcome to join guest artists and local organizations in making a variety of creative projects. Free. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. East Hawai'i Cultural Center, (808) 961-5711

ARTISAN MARKET
Second Saturdays
Local crafters and makers selling gifts, art, crafts and food. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Kona Commons Shopping Center, (808) 854-1439

WONDROUS WORKS IN WOOD
Through 8/21
Artist Aaron Hammer's solo art exhibition of lathe-turned Hawai'i-grown wood. Volcano Art Center, (808) 967-7565

61ST HAWAIIAN INTERNATIONAL BILLFISH TOURNAMENT
8/5–13
Teams from around the world compete to catch Pacific blue marlin for cash prizes and the chance to win the coveted HIBT Governor's Trophy. Kailua-Kona, (808) 836-0161

FREE ADMISSION DAYS
8/4 & 9/23
For the anniversary of the Great American Outdoors Act and National Public Lands Day, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park offers free admission all day. Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, (808) 985-6000

MANA 10S RACES
8/12
A 10k and 10-mile race through Waimea Town via Mana Road sponsored by Big Island Road Runners. 7:30 a.m. Waimea, bigislandroadrunners.org

FLOWER FEST
8/12
Live music, food and drinks, lei contests, flower-arranging contests, team competitions and lots of prizes. Honoka'a, honokaa.org

KŌKUA KAILUA VILLAGE STROLL
8/21
Ali'i Drive transforms into a festive, pedestrian-only marketplace filled with music and art. At 4 p.m. there is a free Hawaiian music concert at Hulihe'e Palace. 1 to 6 p.m. Kailua-Kona, (808) 936-9202

SURROUNDED BY WATER
8/24–10/30
Hawai'i Handweavers' Hui's biennial exhibition will be juried by Stacie Robinson of NOAA's Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program. Kahilu Theatre, (808) 885-6868

QUEEN LILI'UOKALANI CANOE RACES
8/31–9/4
The largest long-distance canoe race in the world attracts dozens of canoe clubs and hundreds of paddlers from Hawai'i and beyond. This five-day event also includes a cultural festival, parade, fair, lū'au and food booths. Kailua-Kona, (808) 938-7846

Hawai'i Swim Show

SEPTEMBER

HAWAI'I SWIM SHOW
9/1–3
A fashion showcase featuring world-renowned designers and some of Hawai'i's top swimwear and resortwear brands. Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Spa, hiswimshow.com

PARKER RANCH ROUND-UP CLUB RODEO
9/2&3
This annual end-of-summer rodeo raises scholarship funds for the children of Parker Ranch employees with events like team roping, bull riding, double mugging and more. Waimea, (808) 885-7311

HILO BAY 5K AND 10K
9/12
Big Island Road Runners' longest-running event. The route for both races includes Lili'uokalani Park and Hilo Bayfront. Reed's Bay Park, bigislandroadrunners.org

KONA PRIDE
9/15–17
A weekend of events hosted by nonprofit Kona Pride Inc., celebrating Hawai'i Island's LGBTQ+ community. Various Locations, (808) 854-6205

BROWN CHICKEN BROWN COW STRING BAND
9/16
Brown Chicken Brown Cow String Band blends bluegrass, gypsy jazz, folk, old-time standards, Celtic and even classical. Palace Theater, Hilo, (808) 934-7010

KŌKUA KAILUA VILLAGE STROLL
9/17
Ali'i Drive transforms into a festive, pedestrian-only marketplace filled with music and art. At 4 p.m. there is a free Hawaiian music concert at Hulihe'e Palace. 1 to 6 p.m. Kailua-Kona, (808) 936-9202

PEACE OUT SATURDAY
9/23
Honoka'a town celebrates the United Nations International Day of Peace with a parade and festival. Honoka'a, honokaa.org

PHOTOGRAPH BY **PF BENTLEY**

HANALEI PIER–KAUA'I

AUGUST

KAUA'I CULINARY MARKET
Wednesdays
A weekly farmers market featuring fruits, vegetables, flowers and a cooking demonstration. 3:30 to 6 p.m. The Shops at Kukui'ula, (808) 742-9545

MAKAI MUSIC & ART FESTIVAL
Wednesdays
A weekly gathering with performances by local musicians and an assortment of handmade jewelry, crafts, art and more from local vendors. Free. 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Princeville–Makai Lawn, (818) 318-7338

ALOHA MARKET
Thursdays
Everything from fresh fruits and vegetables to noodles, spices and treats, along with jewelry, clothing, art and more for purchase. Hula performance at 12:30 every week. Free. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. NTBG South Shore Visitor Center, (808) 742-2623

ALOHA FRIDAY ART NIGHTS
Fridays
Each Friday night Kress Street fills with live art demonstrations. From music to murals, artists share their craft with the community. Līhu'e, (808) 652-1442

HANAPĒPĒ ART NIGHT
Fridays
Hanapēpē town comes to life with food trucks, street performers, live music and opportunities to talk story with local artists and gallery owners. Free. 5 to 8 p.m. Hanapēpē, hanapepe.org

OLD KAPA'A TOWN ART WALK
First Saturdays
Food vendors, crafts and treasures from local artisans, and services from local nonprofits. Old Kapa'a Town, kbakauai.org

HANALEI FARMERS MARKET
Saturdays
Locally grown fruits and vegetables from Kaua'i's North Shore, along with fresh-squeezed juices, locally made honey, fresh-baked goods and arts and crafts. 9 a.m. for seniors, 9:30 a.m. to noon for general admission. Hale Halawai 'Ohana O Hanalei, (808) 826-1011

ANAHOLA NIGHT MARKET
Last Saturdays
Live music, a variety of delicious food and handmade products from more than twenty local vendors. 4 to 9 p.m. Anahola Marketplace, (808) 320-7846

ALAKOKO PLANT SWAP
Sundays
This weekly market offers plant lovers the chance to buy, sell or trade a wide variety of greenery. Free. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Alakoko Shop, (808) 652-1442

PRINCEVILLE ARTIST AND FLEA MARKET
First Sundays
This monthly marketplace focuses on vintage apparel, accessories and home goods, and also features local vendors offering crafts, jewelry, health products, food, a keiki zone and live music. Free. 3 to 7 p.m. Princeville Community Center, (808) 826-6687

HEIVA I KAUA'I
8/5&6
A two-day festival that showcases Tahitian culture, featuring Tahitian dance and drum groups, and soloists competing in traditional and contemporary styles. Crafts and food vendors sell a wide variety of food and gifts. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Kapa'a Beach Park, (808) 822-9447

DOWNTOWN LĪHU'E NIGHT MARKET
8/12 & 9/9
Locally made crafts, gifts, food trucks, baked goods, live entertainment, and more. Featuring more than fifty vendors each month. Free. 4 to 8 p.m. Līhu'e, (808) 652-1442

PRINCEVILLE NIGHT MARKET
8/13 & 9/10
This monthly festival features live music, pottery, paintings, apparel, jewelry and more than forty local artisans. Free. 4 to 8 p.m. Princeville Shopping Center, (808) 635-2572

GARDEN ISLE QUILTERS EXHIBIT & SALE
8/18–26
A diverse display of quilts from everyday to fine-art. All quilts are for sale and ready to carry away. Meet the Artists Reception on 8/26 from 5 to 7 p.m. Free. Kauai Society of Artists Gallery, gardenislequilters.com

SEPTEMBER

KAUA'I MARATHON
9/3
Participants in the Kaua'i marathon and half-marathon pass hula dancers and taiko drum troupes along the course while viewing striking mountain vistas. Po'ipū, thekauaimarathon.com

BATTLE OF THE FOOD TRUCKS
9/10
Food trucks battle to be named Kaua'i's best. Each truck is given local ingredients and challenged to create sweet and savory dishes. Attendees can taste them all and vote for their favorites. 4 to 6 p.m. Līhu'e–Kress Street, (808) 652-1442

HAWAI'I LINE DANCE FESTIVAL
9/15&16
Kick up your heels with open line dancing, dance workshops, performances, food trucks, craft fair and prizes. Kaua'i Veterans Center and Museum, hawaiildf.com

MAKANA WAIPĀ: EAT THE INVASIVES
9/23
Chefs from O'ahu and Kaua'i gather with the community to celebrate the bounty of Waipā and enjoy innovative dishes highlighting invasive plants. Waipā Community Complex, (808) 826-9969

KAUA'I MOKIHANA FESTIVAL
9/24–30
This celebration of contemporary Hawaiian culture includes a Kaua'i composers contest, a children's music competition and a three-day hula competition. Various locations around the island, maliefoundation.org

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horsesaregood.com

KELA'S GLASS GALLERY
4-1400 Kuhio Highway, Kapa'a

At Kela's Glass Gallery, it's all about the glass art. See for yourself the stunning Color Changing Jewelry by the owner Mimi. This impressive gallery features the works of over 150 fine glass artists. Apparently the specialization works. Kela's Glass Gallery won the prestigious Top Retailer Award from NICHE Magazine voted on by over 10,000 American artists.

(808) 822-4527
glass-art.com

SALTY WAHINE GOURMET HAWAIIAN SEA SALTS
1-3529 Kaumuali'i Highway Unit 2B, Hanapēpē

Salty Wahine Gourmet Hawaiian Sea Salts is a family-owned Kaua'i Made Company that specializes in Kosher Hawaiian Sea salts, seasonings, and tropical sugars using fruit infusions like mango, coconut, guava, passionfruit, dragonfruit, and pineapple. All products are made by hand with Aloha in our Salty Wahine commercial kitchen/factory in Hanapēpē, Kaua'i.

(808) 378-4089
saltywahine.com

TIKI TOES ALOHA STICKERS
Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui,Hawai'i Island

Keep spreading aloha wherever you are! Tiki Toes is the original aloha sticker company. Made in Hawai'i. Proudly *'ohana-owned* and operated for three generations, since 1999. Mahalo for sticking with us! Find our classic stickers and temporary tattoos on all islands. Pick any of our authentic designs and show your love for Hawai'i nei. Available at ABC Stores and other fine establishments statewide. "Eh, sticks on whatevahs!"

info@tikitoes.com
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Aloha
Welcome aboard

E nanea i kā mākou hoʻokipa,
a e luana i ka lele ʻana!

Please enjoy our hospitality,
and have a relaxing flight!

In Hawaiian culture, mea hoʻokipa means "I am your host."
This phrase expresses the spirit of hospitality you'll find on our flights, whether you're traveling to the Neighbor Islands, between Hawaiʻi and North America or within the Asia-Pacific region. If there is anything that we can do to make your flight more enjoyable, please don't hesitate to let us know.

In-Flight Tastes of Hawai'i

Delicious Complimentary Meals

It's true. We're one of the only airlines left in the country to serve you a complimentary meal at mealtime in the Main Cabin. You'll find Hawai'i-inspired meals on select flights to and from Hawai'i, always served with our unique brand of Hawaiian hospitality.

Hawaiian Airlines Featured Chef Series showcases star chefs

Hawaiian Airlines' in-flight service shares the sights, sounds and tastes of Hawai'i, and when it comes to our First Class meal service, that means exciting, varied Pacific Rim cuisine with our Featured Chef Series. This esteemed collaboration showcases some of Hawai'i's most dynamic chefs creating menus for meals served in our forward cabin.

The Featured Chef Series is overseen by Hawaiian Airlines Executive Chefs Wade Ueoka and Michelle Karr-Ueoka.

Sit back and enjoy Hawai'i's vibrant food culture and our distinct onboard experience.

A taste of tradition

Executive Chefs Wade Ueoka and Michelle Karr-Ueoka opened MW Restaurant in Honolulu in 2013. Their cuisine combines inspirations from travels around the world with Hawai'i's culinary traditions and local bounty. To sample MW's latest creations visit their new location at 888 Kapi'olani Boulevard in Honolulu.

MWRestaurant.com

Wine pairings by our Master Sommelier

Chuck Furuya has a passion for the world's oldest fermented beverage and holds the distinction of becoming only the tenth person in the United States to pass the rigorous Master Sommelier examination, in 1988. You can find Chuck at Chuck Furuya Uncorked on YouTube.

Above top: Wade Ueoka and Michelle Karr-Ueoka
Bottom: Chuck Furuya

Left to right: Chef Eric Oto of Hoku's at the Kahala Resort and Spa, Chef Robynne Maii of Fete Hawaii, Chef Dell Valdez of vein at Kaka'ako, Executive Chefs Wade Ueoka and Michelle Karr-Ueoka of MW Restaurant, Chef Chris Kajioka of Miro Kaimuki and Chef Jason Yamaguchi of Mugen Waikiki.

In-Flight Entertainment on A321neo Aircraft

Streaming Entertainment to Personal Devices

Guests on our new A321neo aircraft are able to stream complimentary in-flight entertainment on their personal electronic devices. We offer a wide selection of movies, TV shows and music as well as Hawaiian Airlines' own exclusive programming.

Viewing on a Personal Device

IN THE HAWAIIAN AIRLINES APP

1. Once onboard:
   - Switch to Airplane Mode
   - Connect to "Movies on HawaiianAir" WiFi network
2. Open the Hawaiian Airlines app:
   - Select "More" » Select "In-Flight Entertainment"

Supported on IOS 13+, and on Android 8.0+

IN A BROWSER

1. Connect to "Movies on HawaiianAir" WiFi network
2. Open browser and type in URL: MoviesOnHawaiianAir.com
3. Choose from the menu and enjoy!

Please note: Internet Explorer and Edge browsers are not supported at this time.

Having trouble accessing the entertainment?

TRY THESE GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING STEPS:

1. Double-check device settings to ensure airplane mode and WiFi are both enabled.
2. Ensure you are connected to the "Movies on HawaiianAir" WiFi network.
3. Make sure you are using the latest version of the Hawaiian Airlines app.
4. Close and relaunch the Hawaiian Airlines app after connecting to WiFi network.

Mele

Collections to suit your musical tastes

Hawaiian Airlines offers DJ-hosted, curated audio programming devoted to musical styles from across the globe, ranging from award-winning Hawaiian music to jazz and K-Pop.*

FEATURED CHANNELS INCLUDE:

Hawaiian Legacy Favorites

An exploration of vintage Hawaiian music, featuring Danny Kaleikini, Mākaha Sons of Ni'ihau, George Naope and others.

Classic Jawaiian Rhythms

The melding of Hawaiian melodies and Jamaican rhythms creates a uniquely Island groove. Big Every Time, Butch Helemano and Weldon Kekauoha are in the mix.

Slack Key Serenity

Sonny Lim, Dennis Kamakahi, the Waipuna Slack Key String Band and other kī hō'alu guitar masters present varied interpretations of the Hawai'i-born slack key style.

Paradise Lounge

Happy hour music with an island twist, served up by local luminaries The Surfers, Rocky Brown, Malia Ka'ai and more.

*Available only on A330 and A321neo aircraft.

Taimane (left) and Na Hoa (right).

In-Flight Snacks and Souvenirs

Made in Hawai'i Snack Sampler

'Ono Snack Box

Wahi Hawai'i Reusable Bamboo Cutlery Set

Pau Hana Snack Cart

Blanket and pillow set, popular local snacks, souvenirs and sundries are available from the Pau Hana Snack Cart. Cabin crew will advise when the cart is heading down the aisle on domestic flights or is open in the galley on Australia and New Zealand flights.

Selections and quantities are limited and may vary. To print receipts of in-flight purchases, visit HawaiianAirlines.com/receipts.

Popular Local Snacks

Mananalu Water in Aluminum Bottle, 16 oz.**	$3.50
Hawaiian Chip Company Taro and Sweet Potato Chips	$8.00
Island Princess Caramel Macadamia Nut Popcorn	$6.50
Kona Chips Furikake Chips	$8.50
Samurai Furikake Popcorn	$7.50

Snack Packs*

Made in Hawai'i Snack Sampler K Choco Caramel Popcorn, Choco Mochi, Lightly Salted and Maui Onion Macadamia Nuts, Mele Mac	$10.50
Classic Snack Box GF Crackers, Cookie, Chickpeas, Turkey Stick, Hummus, Gummies	$8.00
Keiki (Child) Snack Box GF Cheese Puffs, Granola Minis, Turkey Stick, Applesauce, Gummies, Cookie	$8.00
'Ono Snack Box GF Salami, Cheese Spread, Dried Fruit, Olives, Crackers, Cookie	$8.00
Cheese Tray with Crackers and Dried Fruit	$7.00

Classic Snacks

M & M's Peanut	$3.50
Maruchan Cup Ramen Chicken	$4.50
Pringles K	$4.50

Sundries

Wahi Hawai'i Reusable Bamboo Cutlery Set 100% all natural bamboo fork, knife, spoon, chopsticks, straw and cleaning brush in keepsake natural canvas travel pouch	$11.00
Ear Buds with Hawaiian Airlines Zipper Case**	$4.00
Hawaiian Airlines Blanket and Pillow Set**	$11.50

* Snack box components are subject to availability. Please see snack box for list of included items. GF Gluten-Free
** Available on select North America flights only. K Kosher

In-Flight Beverages

Juice drinks

Passion-Orange-Guava* (POG)

Pineapple Orange Nectar /
Fuji Apple / Island Style Orange

Mott's Tomato /
Mr. & Mrs. T Bloody Mary Mix

Hot beverages

Lion Coffee* / Tea

Soft drinks

Coke / Diet Coke / Sprite

Diamond Head Strawberry

Canada Dry Ginger Ale

Milk (Lowfat or Whole)

Club Soda / Tonic Water /
Flavored Sparkling Water

Cocktails

Pineapple Daiquiri** (Kō Hana)	$8.00
Aviation** (On the Rocks)	$8.00
Old Fashioned** (On the Rocks)	$8.00
Signature Mai Tai**	$8.00

Spirits

Rum (Koloa Rum)	$8.00
Vodka (Ocean)	$8.50
Scotch (Dewars)	$8.00
Bourbon (Jack Daniel's)	$8.50
Gin (Tanqueray)	$8.50
Hard Seltzer Dragon Fruit** (Maui Brewing Co.)	$8.50
Koloa Pineapple Passion*** (Koloa Rum)	$6.00

Wines & Champagne

Sparkling Wine Split	$9.50
Red Wine Split**	$8.00
Red Wine Half Bottle	$16.00
White Wine Split**	$8.00
White Wine Half Bottle	$16.00

Beers

Heineken**	$8.50
Bikini Blonde Lager** (Maui Brewing Co.)	$8.50

Complimentary beverages provided by Coca-Cola

*Complimentary on Neighbor Island flights.
**Available for purchase on Neighbor Island flights.
***Complimentary glass on flights to/from Hawai'i and West Coast North American cities. $6 per glass thereafter.

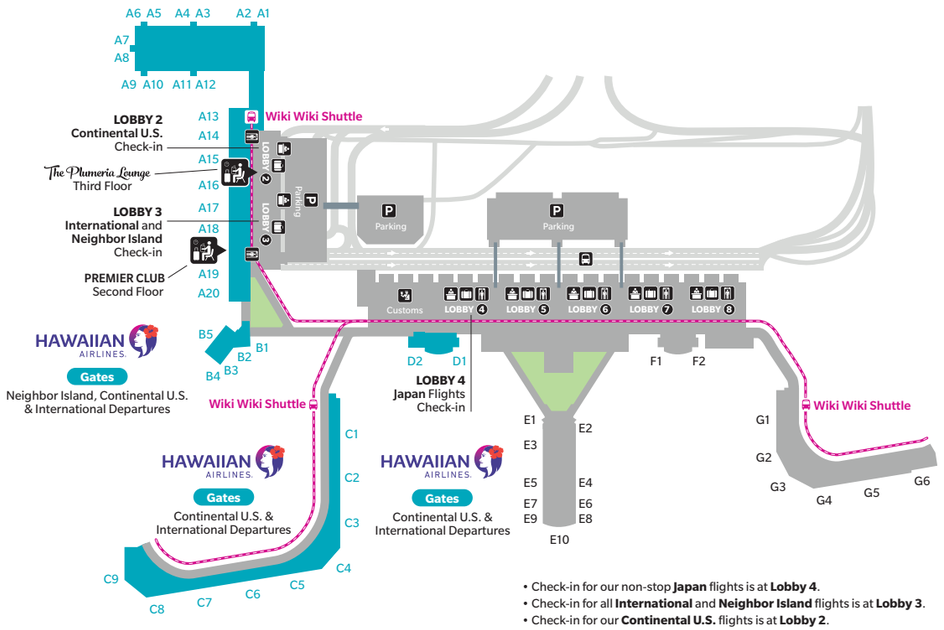
All beer, wine, champagne and spirits available for purchase on North American flights. Complimentary in First/Business Class.

Alcoholic Beverages
Only alcoholic beverages provided by Hawaiian Airlines and served by Flight Attendants may be consumed on board the aircraft. No alcoholic beverages will be served to persons who appear intoxicated or to those under 21 years of age.

Hawaiian Airlines' complimentary items may change or vary from time to time, and availability can be affected by aircraft schedule changes.

Beverage menu is subject to change. Some items may not be available on all flights and/or classes of service. Beverage availability is limited. Beers, wines, spirits, snacks and sundries are available for purchase with major credit/debit cards only.

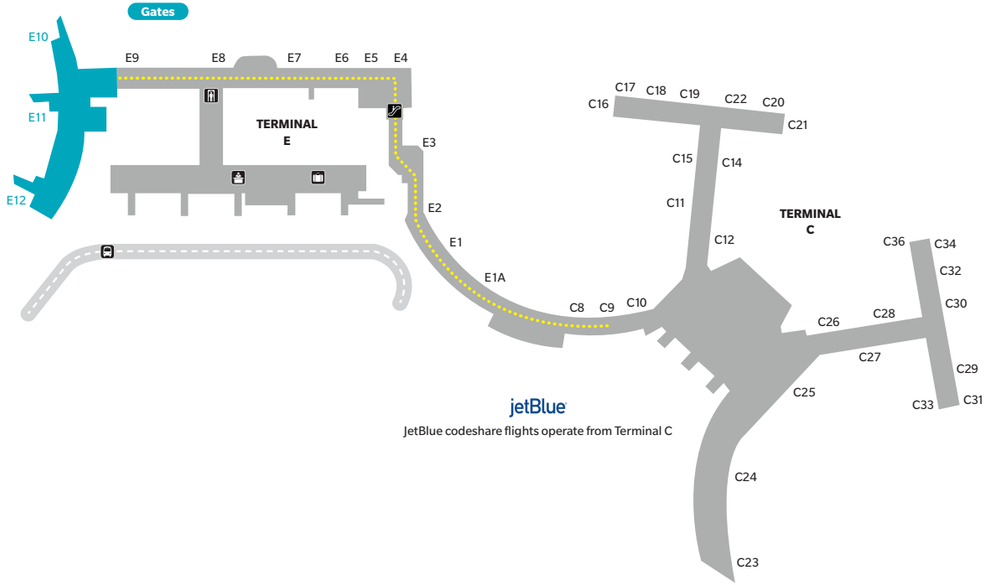
HNL | Honolulu Daniel K. Inouye International Airport



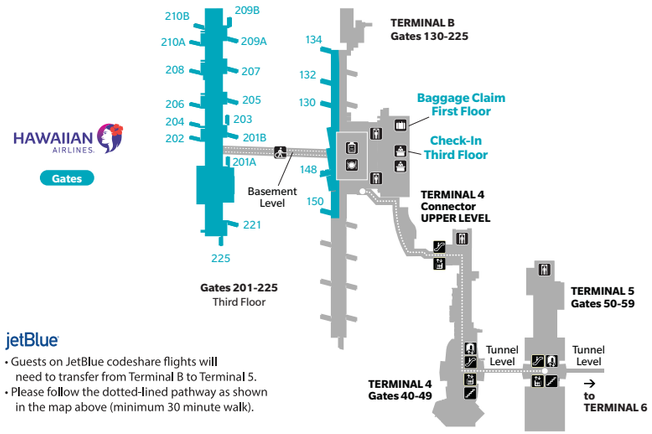
- Check-in for our non-stop **Japan** flights is at **Lobby 4**.
- Check-in for all **International** and **Neighbor Island** flights is at **Lobby 3**.
- Check-in for our **Continental U.S.** flights is at **Lobby 2**.

BOS | Boston Logan International Airport

HAWAIIAN AIRLINES. Hawaiian Airlines flights use Terminal E, Gates E10-E12



LAX | Los Angeles International Airport

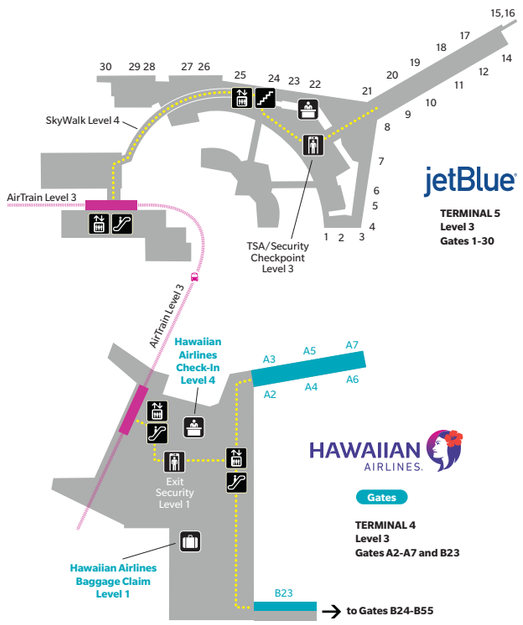


jetBlue

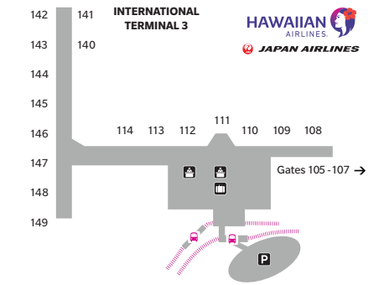
- Guests on JetBlue codeshare flights will need to transfer from Terminal B to Terminal 5.
- Please follow the dotted-lined pathway as shown in the map above (minimum 30 minute walk).

JFK | John F. Kennedy International Airport

Guests on JetBlue codeshare flights will need to transfer from Terminal 4 to Terminal 5. Please follow the yellow dotted-lined pathway as shown in the map below. Expected time is 45 minutes (15 minute walk, and time for AirTrain and security).



HND | Tokyo Haneda International Airport



INTERNATIONAL TO DOMESTIC

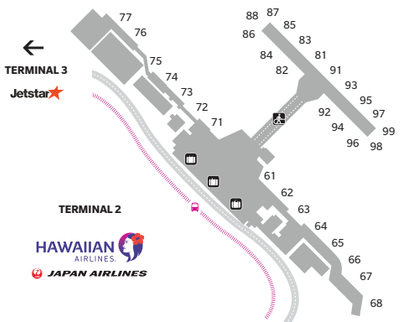
1. Collect baggage and proceed to **Customs** clearance.
2. Check in at the **JAL Domestic Connection Counter** on **Level 2** .
3. Proceed through the domestic transfer security inspection area.
4. Take the escalator down to the **JAL Domestic Transfers** bus stop. Exit the bus at **Domestic Terminal 1**.

INTERNATIONAL TO INTERNATIONAL

- If you HAVE NOT checked in to your final destination at your departure airport, go to the **International Transfers Counter** just before Immigration.
- All travelers must go to the **Security Inspection Area** (entrance next to the **Transfers Counter**) before heading to **Departures** on **Level 3**.

For more information regarding transfers, please visit **HawaiianAirlines.com**

NRT | Tokyo Narita International Airport



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HawaiianMiles

A mile flown is a mile earned. HawaiianMiles members earn miles every time you fly with us to one of our many domestic and international destinations. Members can redeem those miles for flights, car rentals and more.

How to earn miles

Whether you're traveling, out on the town, or on your computer, there are mileage earning opportunities everywhere. Earn miles with our airline, hotel, car rental, and shopping and dining partners. To learn about more ways to earn, visit **HawaiianAirlines.com/HawaiianMiles/Earn**.

How to redeem miles

Use your miles to book flight awards with Hawaiian Airlines, our airline partners and more. Redeem your miles at **HawaiianAirlines.com/HawaiianMiles/Redeem**.

Earn and redeem miles on partner flights

Fly with our partner airlines and earn miles. Make sure your HawaiianMiles number is included with your reservation when booking or checking in with an agent. You can also redeem miles with our partner airlines to fly to exciting destinations for the vacation of a lifetime.

JAPAN AIRLINES · virgin atlantic · Virgin australia · KOREAN AIR · jetBlue

To learn more about our partnership programs, please visit **HawaiianAirlines.com/HawaiianMiles**.

Marriott Bonvoy®

Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa

Earn up to 2 miles per $1 spent at hotels participating in the Marriott Bonvoy program including:

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- Marriott Hotels®
- Marriott Vacation Club®
- Sheraton®
- Westin® and more.

Plus, HawaiianMiles members can redeem miles for Marriott Bonvoy points to experience all that Marriott Bonvoy offers.

Visit **HawaiianAirlines.com/HawaiianMiles/Partners.**

MARRIOTT BONVOY

Royal Lahaina Resort & Bungalows

Exclusive offers for HawaiianMiles members at one of Maui's first resort properties, Royal Lahaina Resort. Located on Kā'anapali Beach with its soft white sand, crystal clear turquoise waters, and stunning views, it's no wonder why it is considered one of the best beaches in the world.

Room and Luau packages or kama'aina stays with daily breakfast; earn up to 1000 miles per night.

Visit **HawaiianAirlines.com/HawaiianMiles/Specials.**

Royal Lahaina RESORT & BUNGALOWS

HAWAIIANMiles.

To join HawaiianMiles, visit **HawaiianAirlines.com/Join/HanaHou** or call **1-877-HA-MILES (426-4537)**.

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Kushiro
Obihiro
Hakodate
Misawa
Aomori
Akita
Morioka
Hanamaki
Niigata
Yamagata
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Osaka/Itami
Izumo
Hiroshima
Ube
Nagoya
Tokyo/Narita
Tokyo/Haneda
Kitakyushu
Osaka/Kansai
Fukuoka
Nagasaki
Nanki Shirahama
Oita
Kumamoto
Kagoshima
Tokushima
Takamatsu
Kochi
Matsuyama
Miyazaki
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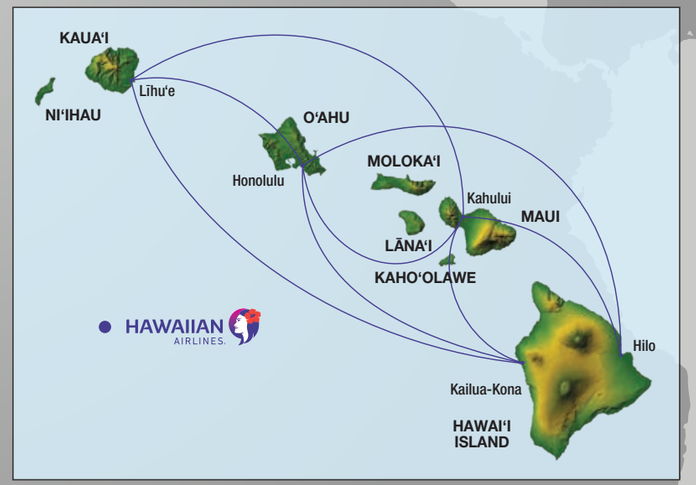

Codeshare Partners:

CHINA AIRLINES · JAPAN AIRLINES · KOREAN AIR · jetBlue · JAPAN TRANSOCEAN AIR · Virgin australia

Not all routes operate year-round.

Interline Partners:

JAPAN AIRLINES

Hawaiian Airlines has 65 Interline Partners across the globe.
Some international routes behind and beyond Japan pending receipt of government operating authority.

The ‘Ohana Pages

Waimea Bay lifeguard Luke Shepardson won this year’s Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational over some of the biggest names in professional surfing. Not long after this photo was taken, he was back in the lifeguard tower, finishing out his workday at one of the world’s most dangerous breaks.
PHOTOGRAPH BY **ARTO SAARI**

Eddie’s Legacy

January 22 was just another day at the office for Luke Shepardson ... except for the part where he won The Eddie. Shepardson has been a lifeguard for the City and County of Honolulu since 2019 and is currently stationed at Waimea Bay, where the late Eddie Aikau also famously served. The bay is also home to one of the world’s most prestigious (and infrequent) surf contests: The Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational.

While The Eddie is billed as an annual contest, there is a catch: The contest window runs from December through March, and it is only held when the waves are forecast to be a minimum of twenty feet, with favorable winds for an entire day. Shepardson is a lifelong North Shore resident with a well-earned reputation in massive surf, and he’d been on the contest’s coveted invitation list since 2017. But the last time the contest was held was in 2016.

Finally, after six years of waiting, Shepardson got his chance: Some of the largest waves ever surfed at Waimea were forecast to arrive on January 22. The swell was also perfectly timed to peak during daylight hours. The only problem being that Shepardson was scheduled to work that day. His supervisor came up with an elegant solution: Time his two daily breaks to coincide with his contest heats. This turned out to be a winning strategy: With his competition out in the surf at dawn catching practice reps and an estimated 40,000 spectators being menaced by waves washing far up the beach, Shepardson had other things on his mind from the moment he hit the sand.

“I’m really glad I was working because I’m a horrible contest surfer and I get the butterflies, just super anxious,” he said. “I didn’t even think about the contest at all—it was work, super busy keeping everyone safe; then ‘OK, it’s time for my heat, I get a break from work, I get to catch a few waves and enjoy myself and be a part of this special event.’ It’s always been a lifelong dream of mine.”

After his first heat of the day, Shepardson was near the top of the leaderboard. With the swell peaking during his second heat, he dropped into a wave so large it closed out across the entire bay ... and put him just ahead of two-time world champion John Florence, the 2016 event winner.

The Polynesian Voyaging Society's latest undertaking, "Moananuiākea: A Voyage for Earth," will take *Hōkūle'a*—pictured here off O'ahu's Lē'ahi, or Diamond Head—and sister canoe *Hikianalia* on a two-year, 43,000-nautical-mile journey. PHOTOGRAPH BY **ELYSE BUTLER**

In addition to being the exclusive airline sponsor of the Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational, Hawaiian Airlines is also proud to be a long-standing sponsor of the Eddie Aikau Foundation's Eddie Would Go Essay Contest, which helps spread Eddie's story of courage and compassion in saving lives, and his dedication to Hawai'i's people and culture. Visit eddieaikaufoundation.org for more on the foundation's work.

Voyage for Earth

Scores of well-wishers gathered at Honolulu Community College's Marine Education and Training Center in April to bid aloha to *Hōkūle'a* as her crew prepared to transport the iconic Polynesian voyaging canoe to the Pacific Northwest. It was *Hōkūle'a*'s last full day in Hawai'i before being loaded onto a cargo ship bound for Tacoma, Washington, and ultimately to Juneau, Alaska, the launch point for "Moananuiākea: A Voyage for Earth"—a nearly two-year journey throughout the Pacific.

This is *Hōkūle'a*'s fifteenth major voyage in her fifty-year history, and the trek is epic, not only in scope but purpose: To ignite a movement of 10 million "plenary navigators" who will then pursue efforts to better the planet. From Juneau, she heads to British Columbia and then Seattle, where she'll meet sister canoe *Hikianalia* in August. The canoes will travel along the U.S. West Coast to Central and South America before sailing east to Aotearoa (New Zealand), and then throughout Melanesia and Micronesia. The voyage is scheduled to end in Japan in the fall of 2026.

In all, the canoes will sail 43,000 nautical miles, and visit 36 countries and archipelagoes, nearly 100 indigenous territories and 345 ports. The expansive journey is an immense undertaking for the 400 crew members and the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS)—but with the future of the planet at stake, there's an urgency to act.

"How does the earth work? You cannot protect what you don't understand," Nainoa Thompson, master navigator and CEO of PVS, told well-wishers at the community send-off as he recalled the five-year Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage of *Hōkūlea* and *Hikianalia*, which concluded in 2019 after visits to more than 100 ports in 27 countries. "We came home from the worldwide voyage having learned so much. Every day was a story. Every day was a lesson. There were teachers across the planet that we never even knew existed."

PVS plans to turn those lessons into action with Moananuiākea, which will tap into the power of indigenous

knowledge to encourage mālama (care) and kuleana (responsibility) for the Earth. When Hawaiian was approached to support Moananuiākea, the company didn't hesitate to sign on as the official airline sponsor, donating 34 million air miles for crew travel and committing to transporting cargo associated with the voyage around the Pacific. Hawaiian was given the title of Moa'e Kū sponsor, named for the predictable, steady and reliable wind that navigators depend on.

Hawaiian's support of PVS goes back decades, and as the voyaging organization has broadened its mission, it has helped the airline better understand global efforts to protect natural resources. Hawaiian was the lead sponsor of the Mālama Honua voyage, whose lessons helped shape and inform our own thinking and actions.

"We've taken steps to be kinder to the planet and to care for this beautiful place that we are so lucky to call home," said Peter Ingram, president and CEO of Hawaiian Airlines. "The vessels we navigate are different, but we both connect people to each other and to places that hold meaning for them."

Homegrown

Each August, the Made in Hawai'i Festival celebrates local products, music, food and beverages. This year's event features 450 vendors, along with live music, chef demos and tastings, and a Made in Hawai'i beer garden. In addition to being the event name, "Made in Hawai'i" is a requirement to participate, with at least fifty-one percent of any given item being manufactured, processed or produced within the Islands, in keeping with a state law of the same name.

"I'm so proud to be a part of this festival because it shows the importance of supporting local business in Hawai'i," said Alexis Akiona, founder of Lexbreezy Hawai'i. "It supports entrepreneurs, artists and innovators, providing a key source of income for local communities and helping to ensure a sustainable future for the Islands."

Hawaiian is honored to be the official airline sponsor for the Made In Hawai'i Festival, which takes place at the Hawaii Convention Center from August 18 through 20. For more information, visit madeinhawaiifestival.com.

Knowledge Bridge

Once on the brink of extinction, 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) is now in an era of revitalization. Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language month) is celebrated statewide each February, including at Hawaiian Airlines. But this year, the Hawaiian Airlines Community and Cultural Relations team extended the celebration through a new partnership with local nonprofit Awaiaulu.

Since 2003, Awaiaulu has developed educational resources (and people) to bridge Hawaiian knowledge from past to present and into the future. The group of language experts is training fluent speakers to translate a massive repository of nineteenth-century 'ōlelo Hawai'i texts, including formal letters, books, manuscripts, government documents and newspapers. The most recent product of its efforts is *Ke Kumu Aupuni: The Foundation of Hawaiian Nationhood*, a bilingual (Hawaiian/English) edition of newspaper articles originally published in 'ōlelo Hawai'i by Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau, a 19th-century Hawaiian historian and scholar.

To recognize Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i 2023, Hawaiian Airlines contributed $12,240 to Awaiaulu to fund its donation of 272 copies of the book—which the nonprofit describes as an "invaluable catalog of data about Hawai'i, Hawaiians and the nature of national and cultural identity in the Pacific"—to thirty-four Hawaiian language immersion schools throughout Hawai'i. Workgroups across our network were also gifted a copy of the text, including at thirty airport stations, in our Phoenix IT Center and our Honolulu-based maintenance and cargo hangar and headquarters.

"Throughout the Hawaiian language revitalization movement, which started in the 1970s, people have worked off of the knowledge passed down from their kūpuna (elders) or what's been shared in English versions of Hawaiian books—which weren't always translated accurately," said Manakō Tanaka, senior community and cultural relations specialist at Hawaiian. "So having 'ōlelo Hawai'i speakers translate and create access to the information in these newspapers and documents opens up an entirely new library of knowledge for current and future generations. Those documents give us insight into the kūpuna of our kūpuna, and they are the oldest resources that we have to look back on when we try to understand what our kūpuna were doing and thinking." For more information on Awaiaulu's work, visit awaiaulu.org.

Dynamic Duos

There is no better feeling than starting a Hawai'i holiday—or returning home to the Islands—than boarding a flight on Hawaiian Airlines. As soon as our guests step aboard our aircraft, they're greeted with the distinct sights, smells, flavors and music that define Hawai'i. In April we began rolling out a new series of boarding videos that showcases pairings of Island music legends with up-and-coming talents they have mentored.

The initial launch of seven videos includes "Legacy" by the Royal Hawaiian Band and the Kamehameha Schools Children's Chorus; "Ālika" by Pōmaika'i Keawe and Mālie Lyman; "The Pueo, Tara and Me" by Brother Noland and Blayne Asing; "Catch a Tan" by Kimié Miner and Tiara Gomes; "Mama's Lil' Baby" by John Cruz and Tavana; "Honolulu I Am Coming Back Again" by Robert Cazimero and Keauhou and "Kawika" by Nathan Aweau and Jake Shimabukuro. Three additional videos will be released this fall.

"When we share our music, we are not only bringing Hawai'i to the world, but we are also welcoming everyone to Hawai'i, our home, in the way that we know best," said featured musician Pōmaika'i Keawe. "Performing 'Ālika,' my tūtū (grandmother) Genoa Keawe's signature song, alongside my daughter in Kualoa was an incredible way to honor her legacy and my kūpuna, who are from the nearby town of Lā'ie. This opportunity with Hawaiian Airlines reminded me of the kuleana (responsibility) I have, through my music, to spread aloha across generations and throughout the world."

STORY BY **LUKE WAIKS**
PHOTOGRAPH BY **ELYSE BUTLER**

Breathless Participation

A freediver navigates Elaine Hicks' underwater obstacle course during a meetup at Electric Beach on O'ahu.

In my fight against the inevitable—the middle-age dad bod—I've modified my fitness routine. It used to be jogging and jiu jitsu, but my joints and my budget health insurance plan mean that high-impact is now a bad idea. So I've hit the water—distance swimming, freediving and spearfishing. Gentler on the body but hard on a social life: Aside from spluttering a few words between gasps to a dive buddy, there's not a lot of interaction. Freedivers are often solitary creatures anyway, and spearfishers are defiantly antisocial despite the requirement that you dive with a buddy. Maybe "buddy" is the wrong word. You don't have to like your buddy; you only have to trust them with your life. Get skunked? Blame your flailing, fish-scaring buddy. Sharks show up? Just swim faster than your buddy.

The search for the aquatically like-minded is why Elaine Hicks, a freediving instructor who's obsessed with the sport, created a group freedive meetup on social media (@theunderwatertherapist, if you're similarly aquaverted). "I noticed a gap in the community, and it was really hard to find dive buddies," she says. Hicks is also a social worker and research psychologist, which is helpful because we freedivers are all kinda nuts.

To make the meetups more interesting, she created an underwater obstacle course inspired by her mentor, pro freediver Adam Stern, because holding your breath for minutes at a time while diving to a hundred feet or deeper isn't sufficiently interesting. But the course fulfills Hicks' two primary aims: "to bring people together to dive in a safe environment," she says, "and to have fun."

I caught wind of Hicks' submerged gauntlet and joined a gathering of about two dozen freedivers on a calm Saturday morning at Mākaha, in Leeward O'ahu. The underwater obstacle course is made from hula hoops at different depths and pool noodles, all weighted down at about fifteen feet and roped out across about twenty-five yards between two safety buoys. It takes Elaine and four friends about a half-hour to swim it out and set it up.

It's just the right amount of challenge for a fairly competent freediver. To complete the course you start on the surface with a big breath, duck-dive down and assume the streamline position—arms up and tight to your head. Finning along, you have to contort your body to steer through the hoops and weave to either side of the vertical pool noodles, becoming more dolphin than human.

You surface at the safety buoy on the other side, signaling an OK to the safety diver who's watching you for signs of hypoxia—low oxygen, which often looks a lot like passing out. Everyone takes turns as safety divers. When a diver snags her weight belt on one of the hula hoops, two divers are there in seconds to untangle her. Everyone else repairs the course and keeps on swimming.

It's not about speed—no one runs the course for time, because speed is contrary to the essence of freediving, which is to chill out underwater. Relaxing and slowing down are, ironically, how you win the race. Economy is key: Every muscle contraction burns oxygen, so you try to navigate the course with as few movements as possible. There's a broad mix of abilities: Some breeze through, others struggle to complete the course in a single breath, some surface midcourse.

What you won't find, besides actual air, is an air of competition—it's about fun and, for a real athlete or an aging salt like me, training value. I'll run the course a few times as a warm-up. Then I'll ditch my fins and run it CNF (constant weight, no fins), or hold my weight belt in one hand and a rock in the other to see if I can make it halfway through on one breath. While waiting our turns, we dive down to check out the wildlife or practice blowing bubble rings. Some wander over to Mākaha Caverns to check out the reef sharks living there.

Of course, nearly everyone has an underwater camera, so the surface conversations start with "Did you get a shot of me?" followed by exchanges of contact information and promises to follow each other on social media. And that, folks, is how you make freediving social. **hh**

LOUIS VUITTON