

# HAWAII A CULTURAL OVERVIEW

Presented by  
**Marc Silver**



A photograph of a tropical sunset. In the foreground, a bright yellow hibiscus flower is in sharp focus. Behind it, several tall palm trees stand silhouetted against a sky transitioning from deep blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow at the horizon. The ocean is visible in the distance.

# ALOHA

- Most of us know that “aloha” in Hawaiian means both hello and goodbye.
- But it has a deeper, richer meaning in Hawaiian culture.
- “Aloha” also means love, respect, compassion, mercy, and love. It’s a way of being in harmony with the land and others, creating relationships, kindness, and affection.

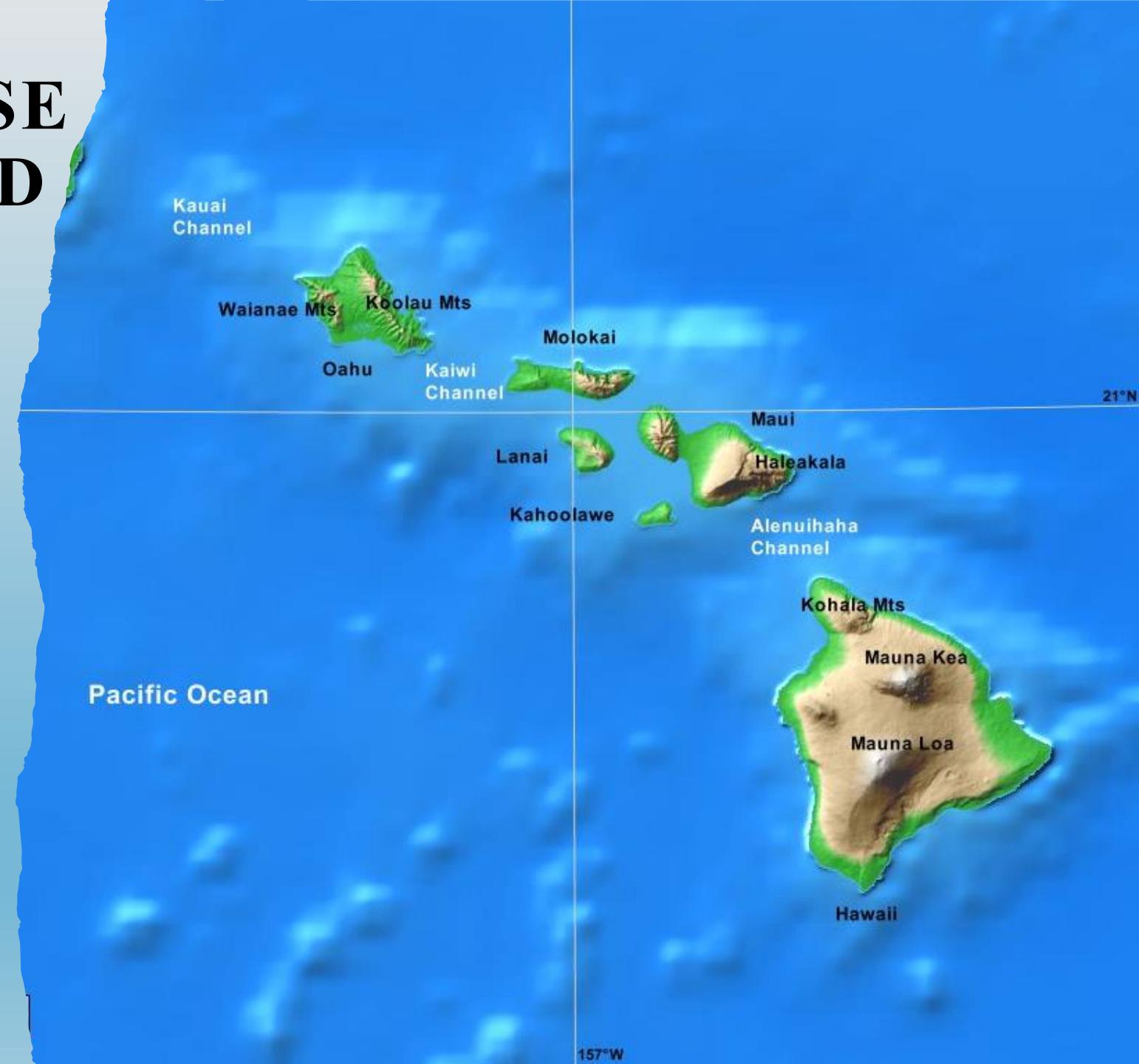
# HAWAII'S DIVERSE GEOGRAPHY AND NATURE

- Hawaii is the United States' most unique state. Not only is it thousands of miles west of California, but also contains the southernmost tip of the country.
- Other amazing facts about Hawaii are:



# HAWAII'S DIVERSE GEOGRAPHY AND NATURE

- Hawaii has 137 Islands not just the eight we all know about.
- The eight major islands include Hawaii (or the Big Island), Maui, Oahu, Kauai, Lanai, Molokai, Niihau, and Kahoolawe.
- But there are additional atolls and islets in the island chain. All told, it stretched 1,500 miles!



A group of people in traditional Hawaiian attire standing in a lush, tropical setting. There are four men and three women. The men are wearing red and yellow feathered capes and red skirts. One man is holding a long wooden staff with a large, colorful feathered headdress on top. The women are wearing red dresses and white dresses with leis. They are standing in a grassy area with tropical plants and trees in the background.

# HAWAIIAN CULTURE

- Hawaii is a group of islands with buckets of charm and unique history, with customs vastly different from the mainland.

# HAWAIIAN CULTURE

## Hawaii is nothing like the Mainland!

- Hawaii is one of the most geographically isolated and unique places on Earth. Located about 2,500 miles west of California in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.
- There is a lot to love about Hawaii.
- Activities include surfing, snorkeling deep sea fishing, hiking, horseback riding, sightseeing, dining, and much more. There is something for everyone in Hawaii. This is why Hawaii is a favorite travel destination.
- The remote location of this island chain has created a unique and unforgettable landscape that is a must-experience.
- Its fascinating culture and role in world history is what I will describe during this talk.





# HAWAIIAN CULTURE

- The oldest of Hawaiian chants describe the Hawaiian Islands, the spirits that inhabit them, the forces of nature that shaped them, and all the living things upon them as inextricably connected.
- This sense of connection is the foundation of Hawaiian culture: understanding that we all have a mandate to *mālama*, to care for our environment and one another.



# HAWAIIAN CULTURE

- Today, Hawaiian culture may hold many of the answers sought in a rapidly changing world. The spirit of aloha – being in the presence of and sharing the essence of life – teaches us lessons of peace, kindness, compassion, and responsibility to future generations.
- These lessons are expressed through chant, music, hula, arts, and cultural practices, and through the warm, genuine greetings that are a hallmark of Hawaiian hospitality.

# HAWAII'S HUMAN HISTORY BEGAN IN 400 C.E.

- Hawaii became our 50<sup>th</sup> state in 1959, but its history dates back many centuries. Even before humans arrived, geological forces were at work to create the islands now known as Hawaii.

## Polynesian Culture

- The earliest humans made their way to Hawaii back in 400 C.E. These explorers were Polynesians from the Marquesas Islands who traveled some 2,000 miles in open canoes.
- The first intrepid settlers were resourceful, navigating by the stars, fishing, and farming. They lived in small communities, ruled by chieftains, but were often at war with one another over territory.
- It was **Captain Cook** on January 20th, 1778, the first European explorer arrived on the shores of Kauai. The native Hawaiians were fascinated by the use of iron on British ships and even believed the Europeans were gods.
- Captain Cook named the island chain the Sandwich Islands after one of his benefactors, the 4th Earl of Sandwich. He ended up visiting the islands again in 1779 when the visiting Europeans were again welcomed and treated as deities.
- But after a crew member died the relationship between Hawaiians and Europeans deteriorated. Eventually, a battle broke out, and Captain Cook was killed in the ensuing fight.



# HAWAII'S HISTORY CONTINUED

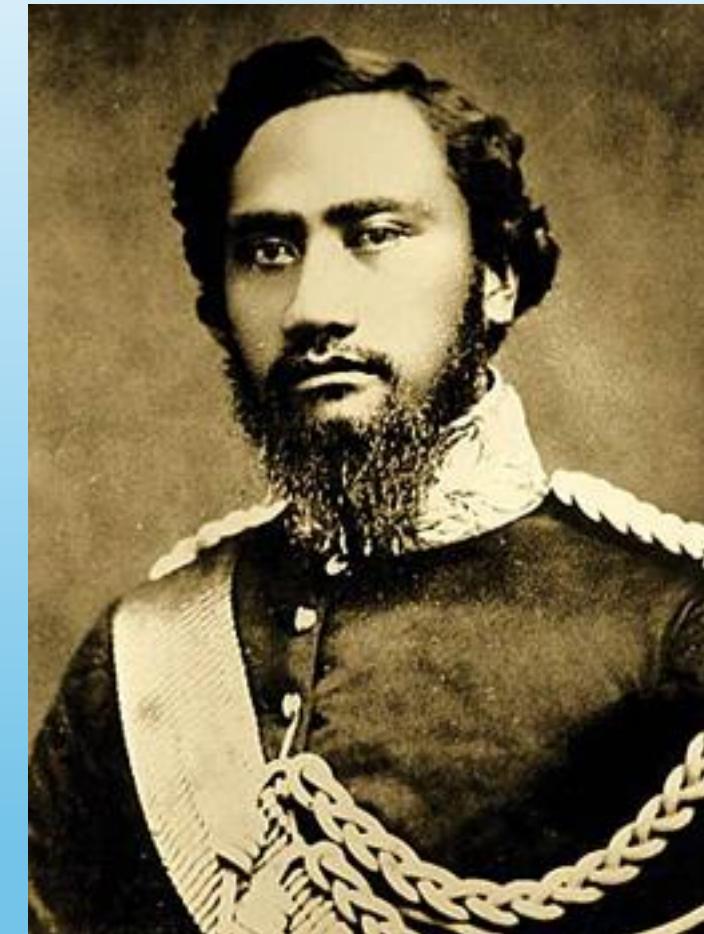
- **1790:** The Battle of Kepaniwai was fought between forces from the islands of Hawaii and Maui.
- **1795:** Battle of Nu‘uanu takes place on the southern shores of O‘ahu. It was a key battle in Kamehameha's campaign to unite the islands.
- **1795-1874:** The Kamehameha dynasty reigns over Hawaii.
- In 1866, King Kamehameha V created a leper colony at Kalaupapa on Molokai. Now known as Hansen's Disease, Hawaiians had no immunities and the king decreed that the best way to isolate those affected was to exile them to an isolated peninsula. They traveled to the leper colony by boat, and supplies were only brought in once a year. Once there, patients were there for life. Today, you can go visit the colony, which is run by the National Park Service.
- **1810:** Kamehameha I unites the Hawaiian Islands.
- **1819:** Liholiho, son of Kamehameha, defies the tradition of men and women eating separately during a feast, which leads to the abolishment of the *kapu* (taboo) system.
- **1820:** The first missionaries arrive in Hawai‘i.
- **1820-1845:** Lāhainā was the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom
- **1835:** The first sugar plantation opens on Kaua‘i. The Hawaiian Islands garner recognition for their prime agricultural land. Agriculture has become a dominant economic force.



# HAWAII'S HISTORY CONTINUED

## King Kamehameha

- One of the most famous and revered Hawaiians is King Kamehameha. He is best known for uniting the islands of Hawaii and serving as their first monarch.
- Between 1782 and 1810, Kamehameha the Great conquered first the island of Hawaii (his home), followed by the rest of the Big Eight islands. Under his rule, there was relative peace, international trade, and unity.
- **1836:** The “King’s Band,” is created by King Kamehameha III, becoming a staple of daily life. The band, presently called the “Royal Hawaiian Band,” continues to entertain audiences in Hawai‘i and around the world today.
- **1830s-1848:** The Great Mahele Kamehameha III sought to keep the land in Hawaiian hands by adopting a western allodial system with a new system that would divide the land into thirds – one-third to the Hawaiian crown, one-third to the chiefs, and one-third to the people. In the end, the people received less than 1% as the law required land claims to be filed within two years under the Kuleana Act and many Hawaiians made no claim. This was largely because ownership of land was not a common concept.
- **1845:** Honolulu becomes the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom



# HAWAII'S HISTORY CONTINUED

- **1850s:** With Hawai‘i's plantation production on the rise, a need for more labor is realized. The first workers are recruited from China. Workers also make their way to the islands from Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Portugal.
- **1874:** William Charles Lunalilo (grandnephew of King Kamehameha) dies leaving no heirs. The Kamehameha dynasty comes to an end. David Kalākaua is elected as Lunalilo's successor.
- **1878:** Lydia Kamaka‘eha (later Queen Lili‘uokalani) pens "Aloha ‘Oe"
- **1881:** King Kalākaua becomes the first monarch in history to circumnavigate the globe.
- **1882:** ‘Iolani Palace, the official residence of the Hawaiian monarchs, is completed. The Palace was outfitted with the most up-to-date amenities, before even the White House and Buckingham Palace, including the first electric lights in Hawai‘i, indoor plumbing, and even a telephone.

## Queen Liliuokalani

- The last monarch of Hawaii was Queen Liliuokalani. She was overthrown in 1893 by American businessmen who were invested in the Hawaiian sugar industry.
- Queen Liliuokalani was imprisoned in the Iolani Palace, the only palace in the United States, for eight months after being forced to abdicate her throne. In 1898, the U.S. officially annexed Hawaii and organized it as an official territory two years later.



# HAWAII'S HISTORY CONTINUED

- **1887:** The 1887 Constitution of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i is signed stripping King Kalākaua and therefore the Hawaiian monarchy of much of its authority, empowering the legislature and cabinet of the government. This became known as the Bayonet Constitution due to the force used to gain the King’s cooperation.
- **1889:** Joseph Kekuku from Lā‘ie, O‘ahu invents the steel guitar. He later moves to the US Mainland to share his music with the rest of the world. Steel guitar becomes incredibly popular with country music and is still heard today.
- **1893:** The overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i begins. Queen Lili‘uokalani is placed under house arrest at ‘Iolani Palace.
- **1898:** Hawai‘i is annexed by the United States through the Newlands Resolution.
- **1900:** The Organic Act establishes the Territory of Hawai‘i.
- **1901:** The first Waikīkī hotel, The Moana Hotel, opens on March 11. The resort is affectionately named “The First Lady of Waikīkī.”
- **1917:** Queen Lili‘uokalani, the last sovereign of the Hawaiian Kingdom, passes away.
- **1941:** On December 7, 1941, the Japanese launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on O‘ahu during World War II.
- **1945:** On September 2, 1945, Japan signed its unconditional surrender in Pearl Harbor.





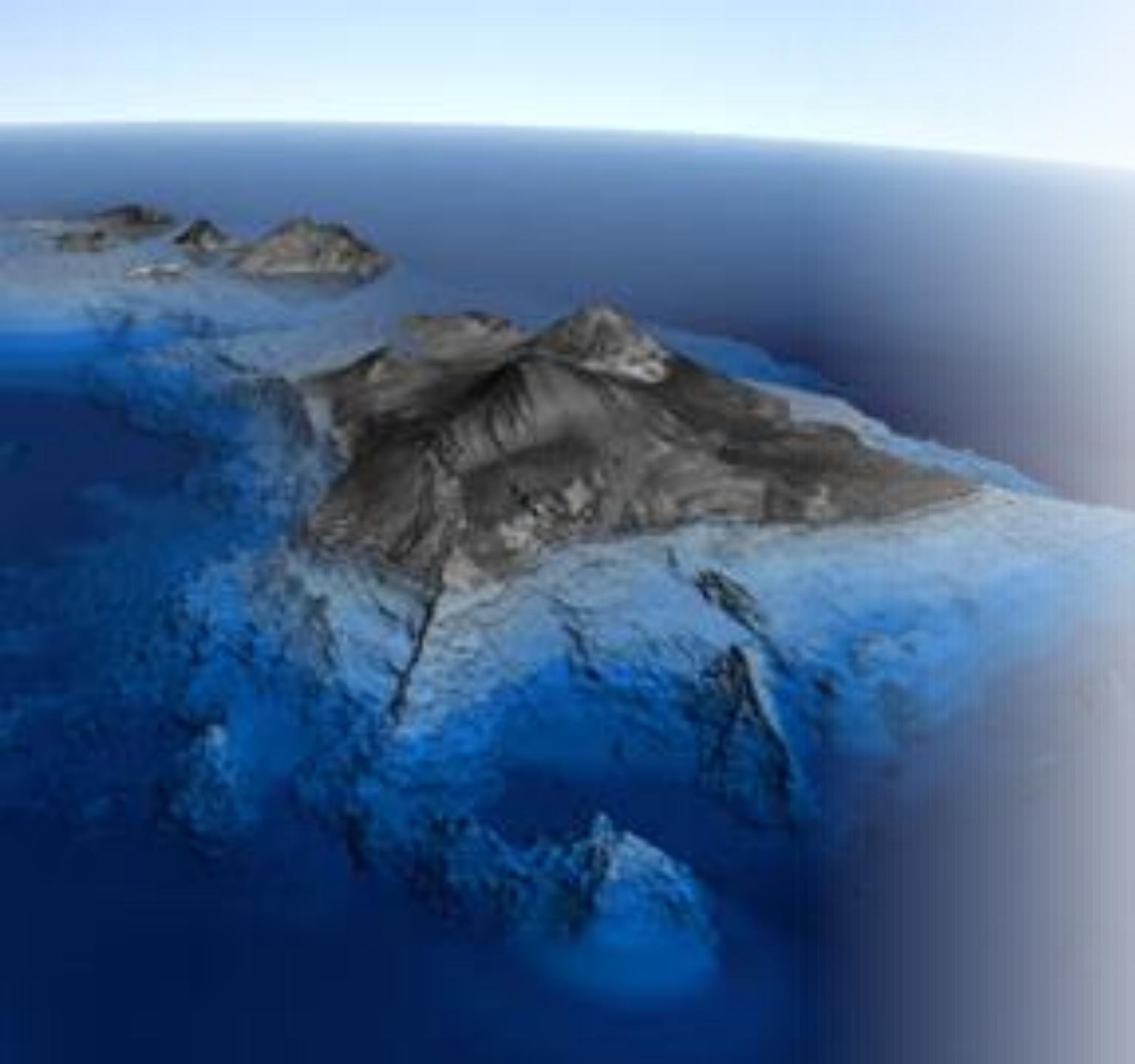
# HAWAII'S RECENT HISTORY

- **1959:** August 21, 1959 – After a popular vote, Hawai‘i becomes the 50th State of the United States of America.
- **1978:** The Hawai‘i State Constitutional Convention makes Hawaiian the state's official language (the only state in the U.S. with a non-English official language).
- **1980:** Hawai‘i becomes the home of the NFL Pro Bowl. The Pro Bowl is hosted in Hawai‘i for 26 years, until 2017 when it moved to Orlando, FL.
- **1990:** Kīlauea, one of the world's most active volcanoes located on the island of Hawai‘i, erupts sending lava through the town of Kalapana.

# HAWAII'S RECENT HISTORY CONTINUED

- **2009:** Senator Barack Obama is inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States. Obama was the first African American to have served as president, and he was born in Honolulu, Hawai‘i.
- **2011:** Hawai‘i hosts the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.
- **2013:** The Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage begins. The four-year voyage covered over 60,000 nautical miles, 100 ports, and 27 nations, including 12 of UNESCO’s Marine World Heritage sites. The mission was to take Hawaii’s iconic cultural sailing canoe *Hōkūle‘a* the world and her sister canoe Hikianalia around the Pacific and the Hawaiian Islands, to grow a global movement toward a more sustainable world. The voyage sought to engage all – practicing how to live sustainably, while sharing Polynesian culture, learning from the past and from each other.
- **2017:** Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage completes its journey.





# HAWAII IS HOME TO THE WORLD'S TALLEST MOUNTAIN

- Most people think the tallest mountain is Mount Everest in the Himalayas towering 29,031.7 ft above sea level.
- But the world's tallest mountain is Mauna Kea found on the Big Island of Hawaii.
- This dormant volcano's summit is 13,796 feet above sea level but extends an additional 19,000 feet below sea-level to the base of the ocean floor. The total height? 33,500 feet, or nearly a mile taller than Mount Everest.

# Each Island Has Its Own Lei

- Hailing from the Polynesian islands, the leis of ancient times represented wealth and royalty.
- The early settlers of the Hawaiian islands brought the leis as a greeting. The leis were also used to signify peace agreements between feuding chiefs.
- In the modern tourism industry, the lei symbolizes a welcome to the islands.
- Visitors to Hawaii can even order a lei to be picked up upon arrival at the airport.
- Not all leis are constructed with flowers. Although most modern leis contain flowering buds such as the orchid or plumeria, ancient leis were often made with nuts, shells, seeds, and even bone.



- **Maui** – Lokelani; pink
- **Hawaii** – Lehua; red
- **Kauai** – Mokihana; purple
- **Niihau** – Pupu; white
- **Molokai** – Kukui; green
- **Lanai** – Kaunaoa; orange
- **Kaho’olawe** – Hinahina; silver
- **Oahu** – Ilima; yellow or gold

# **THERE ARE NO PRIVATE BEACHES IN HAWAII**

- Even the most private-looking beaches are open to the public. This concept, also known as aloha aina (or love for the land), demonstrates a connection with nature that is key to Hawaiian culture.
- So that means you can stroll along Kauai's Barking Sands Beach, go snorkeling in Maui at Turtle Town, or even try your hand at surfing on Oahu's south shore. And no one can tell you you're not allowed!
- However, in fragile reef areas, certain sunscreens are banned. The chemicals they contain are damaging the health and well-being of the reefs and other marine life. Be sure to check what's allowed before you go!



# HAWAIIAN AGRICULTURE

- Hawaii's tropical climate and rich volcanic soil mean that it is one of the only places in the United States that grows certain tropical crops.
- Hawaii is the only U.S. state to grow coffee beans. Kona coffee is produced only in a small part of the Big Island. It's also prized for its smooth taste and full-bodied flavor.
- Cacao is also grown on the islands and is used to create rich, decadent Hawaiian chocolate. Which pairs great with the macadamia nuts Hawaii is so well known for producing!
- Pineapple and the Dole company are what we often think of when Hawaii comes to mind, sugarcane played a much bigger role in the state's history.
- The introduction of sugarcane brought many immigrants to the islands, creating one of the most diverse populations in the United States.
- Hawaii's last sugar mill closed down in 2016, after almost 150 years.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Do Follow Flower Lei Etiquette



- Do accept a lei gratefully, and never take it off in the presence of the person who gave it to you.
- Pregnant women will be given a long, open-ended lei meant to symbolize a safe delivery during childbearing.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Do Try Spam.

- Commonly served in convenience stores, Spam musubi consists of a grilled slice of Spam served on top of rice and wrapped in seaweed.
- Spam remains a common grab-and-go snack that arrived in Hawaii in World War II when food from the mainland was rationed. It's still a delicious, affordable, and authentic Hawaiian treat.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Do Buy Sunscreen In Hawaii Rather Than Bringing It.

- It might seem strange to leave a super important safety item at home but there's a good reason for it. The state of Hawaii has officially banned any kind of sunscreen or products that could be harmful to the reefs that surround it, which is why not every sunscreen is permitted.
- Rather than getting caught pulling out something with dangerous or harsh chemicals, it's better to just buy sunscreen on the island so you'll know that it's certified safe. If it's better for the environment and you, too.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Do Learn the Meaning Behind the Hula

- Traditional **Hula** is far more than just a dance for tourists, it's part of the Hawaiian culture.



Often featured at family gatherings and special occasions, it's a true slice of native Hawaiian life.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Do Respect Private Property

- When you go to a public beach be sure to use posted access ramps and walkways.
- Often a homeowner's backyard may reach down to the sand, so keeping to approved walkways will prevent you from unknowingly trespassing across their property.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

## Try Hawaiian Food Trucks

- Don't miss the **Hawaii cuisine** food trucks. Throughout Hawaii, you'll find street food vendors incorporating fresh island ingredients in their adventurous menus.
- Many of these food trucks are parked beachside. Delicious foods and great views—what more could you ask for?



# WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

## Don't Enter Someone's Home with Shoes On

- Just like in Japan, don't forget to remove your shoes when going inside someone's home.
- It's considered bad manners to keep them on.



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a dark, porous lava rock. The rock has a rough, irregular surface with many small, circular holes and some larger, irregularly shaped cavities. A small, dark hole is visible in the center. The background is a plain, light color.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

## Don't bring home lava rocks.

- Although usually done with harmless intentions, please do not take lava rocks home.
- There is an old legend that bringing home lava rocks from Hawaii will give you bad luck.
- Although it isn't illegal, to many locals it is considered disrespectful.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

**Don't cross protective barriers or ignore warning signs by the Beach.**

- This is a very important part of the Hawaii Do's and Don'ts. It should go without saying, but amazingly, people do this all the time.
- The protective barriers and warning signs are for your own protection.
- Visitors may not understand the risk they pose to their safety by failing to heed these warnings. The ocean is powerful, and many times waves crash against rocky coastlines with much more power than meets the eye.

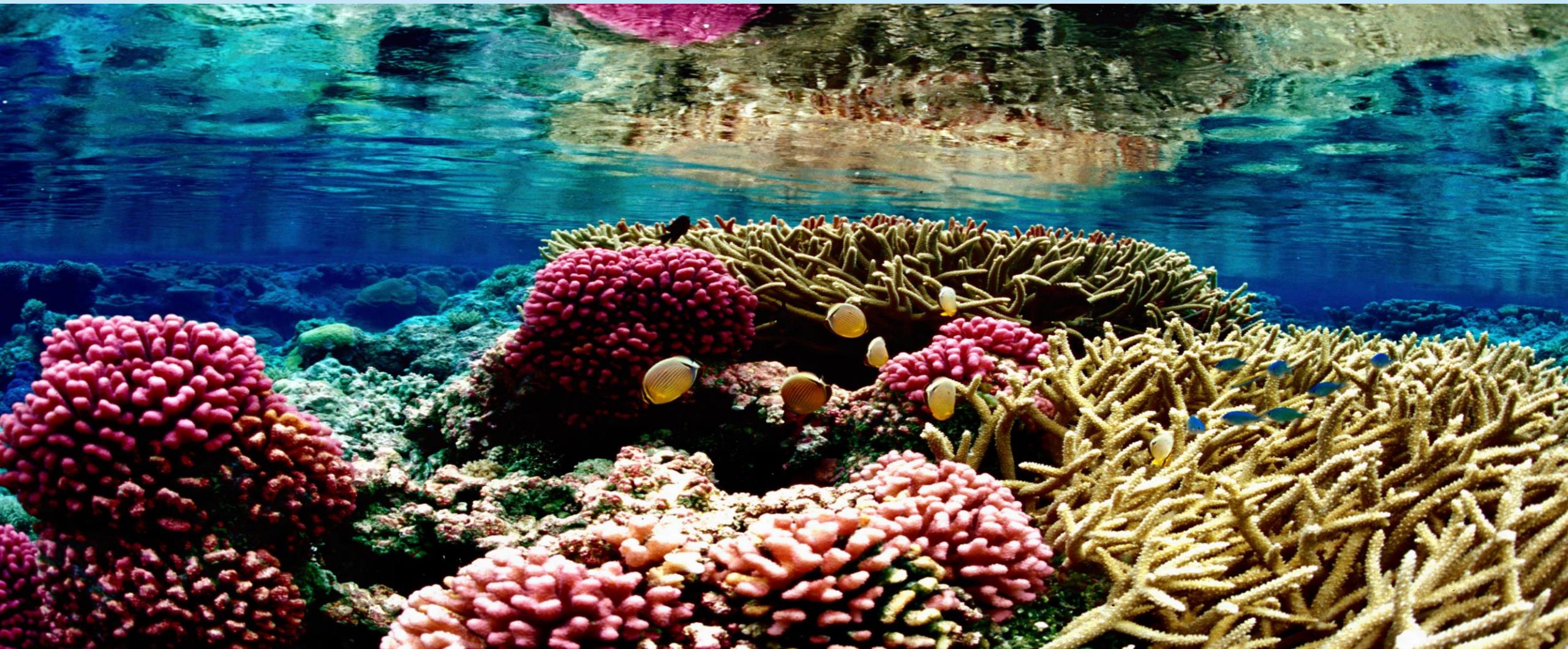
**Please don't risk your life over a selfie.**



# WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

## Don't walk on coral reef

- Coral reef sustains fragile marine ecosystems. Please never sit, stand or walk on them.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

## Don't go to Lahaina Town

- Until Lahaina is rebuilt, please do not attempt to enter the off-limit areas.
- This is a sacred area where people died, lost homes and suffered unimaginable trauma. Please be respectful and avoid this area when visiting Maui.



# Useful Apps in Hawaii

## WiFi Finder - WiFi Map

- The first thing you're going to need when the ship docks is a WiFi Finder. This app helps you find Fast Wi-Fi wherever you go. The offline functionality makes it possible to download places you are traveling to, so you can locate Fast WiFi anywhere. Most WiFi scanners are overcrowded with outdated or private hotspots. WiFi Map contains only verified Hotspots. Hotspot information includes the type of venue and its speed.

## Surf Report

- Since 1991 Surf Report has been the reference for surfing weather sites with photos of the day in France and forecasts of wind and swells to 7 days. Discover now the new version of its application, completely redesigned to help you best in your daily sessions. This streamlined app tells you everything you need to know about the conditions of pretty much any beach on your island: weather forecast, the temperature of the water, wind conditions, a tide chart spanning the entire day, and the last time all this information was updated. Best to use right as you're starting your morning, so you can better schedule various activities that may revolve around a beach day.



# THE HAWAIIAN ALPHABET HAS ONLY TWELVE LETTERS

- Hawaii is the only state in the U.S. with two official languages: English and Hawaiian. While the Hawaiian language has undergone a revival in the last fifty years, it was once banned in schools and the government.
- The letters of the Hawaiian alphabet are A, E, I, O, U, H, K, L, M, N, P, and W.
- There is also another letter, called the ?okina, which represents a break in a word. It's depicted as a backward apostrophe and is why you sometimes see the state's name written as "Hawai'i."

<b>HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE ALPHABET</b>				
<b>A</b>	<b>Ā</b>	<b>H</b> <i>(hē)</i>	<b>N</b> <i>(nū)</i>	
<b>E</b>	<b>Ē</b>	<b>K</b> <i>(kē)</i>	<b>P</b> <i>(pī)</i>	
<b>I</b>	<b>Ī</b>	<b>L</b> <i>(lā)</i>	<b>W</b> <i>(wē)</i>	
<b>O</b>	<b>Ō</b>	<b>M</b> <i>(mū)</i>	<b>‘</b> <i>(‘okina)</i>	
<b>U</b>	<b>Ū</b>			

# LEARN SOME HAWAIIAN

## Hawaiian

- Aloha ahiahi!
- Aloha awakea!
- Aloha e \_\_\_\_\_!
- Aloha ‘auinalā!
- Aloha kakahiaka!
- Aloha kākou!
- E ‘ai kākou.
- E kala mai.
- E komo mai!
- Hana hou!
- He aha ka mea hou?
- He aha kēia?

## English

- Good evening!
- Good day! (11am - 1pm)
- Greetings \_\_\_\_\_!
- Good afternoon!
- Good morning!
- Greetings to all!
- Let's eat.
- Excuse me/us. Pardon me/us.
- Welcome!
- Do it again! (Encore!)
- What's new?
- What is this?

# LEARN SOME HAWAIIAN

## Hawaiian

- He mea iki.
- ‘A ‘oia!
- ‘A‘ole maopopo ia‘u.
- ‘O \_\_\_\_\_ ko‘u inoa.
- ‘O wai kou inoa?
- ‘O wau kekahi!
- ‘Oia mau nō.
- ‘Ono loa kēia!
- I lā maika‘i!
- Mahalo nui loa!
- Maika‘i au.
- Pehea ‘oe?

## English

- A small thing. (not a problem - response to mahalo)
- That's it!
- I don't know.
- My name is \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is your name?
- Me too!
- Same as usual.
- This is very delicious!
- Have a good day!
- Thank you very much!
- I am good.
- How are you?

# Thank You for Coming!

I hope I've educated  
and entertained you today.

I can be contacted by e-mail at [marc@soundscapeav.com](mailto:marc@soundscapeav.com)