

Luxury Travel in Lana'i

Written by Written by: Melissa Larsen

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Aloha, Luxury

Sumptuousness-seeking jetsetters have two unique properties to choose from on the private, yet plush, island of Lana'i.



Though it is now a world-class vacation destination, the Hawaiian island of Lana'i didn't always have a desirable reputation. In the 1500's, Maui chief Kaka'alaneo condemned his mischievous son, Ka'ululā'au, to the island, which was thought to be inhabited by evil spirits. After Ka'ululā'au banished the dark spirits from the island, residents of nearby islands started to make their way to Lana'i—and it has proven to be a popular getaway for world-wide travelers ever since, with two of the island's most plush properties being Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay and Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele.

Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay

At the serene beach paradise of Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay, world-class golfing, ocean-front fun and A-plus dining is all at each guest's beck and call. Filled with East Asian influences and warm, inviting colors, the resort and its 236 deluxe rooms offer plenty of eye candy and extravagance, each with its own private balcony and picture-perfect views.

The most impressive view of all, naturally, is that of the ocean, mere steps from many of the rooms. Manele Bay offers its guests their own stretch of white sand, along with a beach butler to help prepare a luxe lounging setup or gear for snorkeling and other water sports. November through May, beach bunnies might even catch a glimpse of whales and spinner dolphins in the distance. The resort's pool is another H2O hot spot where guests can wade away the afternoon. While kicking back with some pineapple water and a good book, Dr. Shades and TLC for PDA might just stop by to give guests' sunglasses and iPhones, respectively, a little attention.

Whether guests are craving Italian fare, fresh-caught fish or a hearty steak, Manele Bay offers several mmm-inducing dining destinations. Fresco dishes up casual poolside seating and a menu of contemporary Italian fare where the guava-braised short ribs reign supreme. Those with a hunger pang for steakhouse cuisine enjoy Hulopo'e Court, where guests can get only the most scrumptious local surf and turf. For breakfast, the restaurant whips up a divine spread of a.m. eats. (Be sure to save room for a warm waffle with coconut syrup or a fruit-topped danish.)

Lunch is best enjoyed at The Challenge at Manele Clubhouse, where the house-made salt-and-pepper chips are a welcome start to the meal, and the Makai salad provides fuel for golfers in the form of fresh seafood, juicy mango and crunchy greens. As good as it is, people don't come to The Challenge just for the grub. The celebrated course offers 18 holes of primo golfing, from three holes that are located on cliffs to the have-to-see-it-to-believe-it Pacific panoramas. (Bill Gates even tied the knot at The Challenge's picturesque 12th hole.)

Though the fare and fairways are two of Manele Bay's biggest attractions, one of the resort's most unforgettable experiences is an oceanside massage. With crashing waves providing background music, a therapist transports guests to a tropical paradise where the most stressful situation is choosing a flavor of shave ice.



Luxe lodge: Sky-scraping trees and pretty gardens decorate the grounds at Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele.

Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele Though only a few-minute drive from its sister property, Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele, is a stark contrast from the beachy appeal of Manele Bay. The Lodge seems to be plucked from the pages of a fairy-tale, comprising a sprawling estate, with 101 guestrooms and suites, surrounded by lush, colorful gardens, tall trees, a beautiful golf course and a fish-filled reflecting pond. The tropical-inspired accommodations, each with its own private lanai, are just as eye-popping.

Though many travel to The Lodge at Koele to take a swing at The Experience at Koele, the resort's respected Greg Norman-designed course, guests soon find out that the property offers days-worth of other outdoor pursuits. Apart from tennis courts and a fabulous pool (where guests are surprised with complimentary snacks, drinks and cool towels throughout the day), Koele offers a slew of family-friendly lawn games, from lawn bowling to croquet to a putting course. Once-in-a-lifetime horseback riding opportunities draw many equine enthusiasts of all experience levels, as the wooded trails offer jaw-dropping views, and the horses are as gentle as they are majestic. Cultural activities (think lei-making and ukulele lessons) are also popular attractions at the resort. Because all that swinging and horsing around is bound to result in some soreness, the Banyan Spa Suite is a prime place to book a muscle-melting massage. (Koele doesn't have its own spa; however, the pamper pros at

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Manele Bay are available to perform treatments in its sister resort's on-site suite.) Or for a one-of-a-kind souvenir, the Four Seasons spa offers custom fragrance-blending sessions, allowing guests—with the direction of a spa professional—to craft a scent that is unique to them using oils from Ajne Rare & Precious. (Celebs have been known to stop by Ajne's shop in Carmel, Calif., to craft their own custom blend.) After a few simple questions, the spa pro leads participants through a scent experience and, right in front of their eyes, creates an all-natural, plant-derived fragrance for the guest to take home—in a gold, filigree-accented bottle, no less.

As at Manele Bay, the dining at Koele is a vacation highlight. The menu at the American bistro, Terrace, spotlights local ingredients in dishes like the Belgian waffle topped with golden Maui pineapple syrup or the popular Maui onion soup. For a more fine dining experience, the Dining Room offers a limited but luxurious bill of fare that boasts Keahole lobster with whipped potatoes, and lava rock-seared Kobe wagyu beef. And the best way to wash down such elegant eats is with Koele's mouthwatering guava-mint mojito. Now if only you were able to stow a few sips in your suitcase.

Motorin'

While massages and mojitos sure are nice, the best way to make yourself at home on Lana'i is to hit the road. Though the itty bitty island has only 30 miles of paved roads, visitors can explore the 100-plus miles of unpaved trails via a Jeep courtesy of Dollar Rent a Car (next to Lana'i's only gas station). One of the most popular off-roading destinations is the peaceful Garden of the Gods, a breathtaking collection of rock formations that offers vivid views of neighboring islands as well as a chance to take a deep breath and soak in the aloha spirit.

www.dollarlanai.com.

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Four Seasons Resort Lana'i, The Lodge at Koele www.fourseasons.com/koele.

Four Seasons Resort Lana'i at Manele Bay www.fourseasons.com/manelebay.