

THE OAHU TRAVEL GUIDE PRESENTS

3-Day Weekend Itinerary

Your Essential Guide to the Gathering Place

From sunrise hikes and legendary North Shore breaks to farm-to-table brunches and Chinatown cocktails — every hour of your Oahu weekend, planned perfectly.

UPDATED APRIL 2026

oahutravelguidehi.com

Before You Go

Everything you need to know before landing on the island.

4 Packing Essentials

1. **Footwear** – Comfortable shoes for hiking. Slippahs for the beach.
2. **Sun Protection** – Hawaii-approved reef-safe sunscreen, hat & sunglasses.
3. **Swim Gear** – Swimsuit, towel, goggles & rashguard.
4. **Light Jacket** – Evenings can be cool near the ocean in winter.

Movies to Watch First

Get in the island mindset before you arrive:

Moana

Finding Ohana

Blue Crush

50 First Dates

Jurassic Park

Lilo & Stitch

Oahu Fun Facts

- Oahu is called "**The Gathering Place**" due to its central location and history as a hub for the Hawaiian islands.
- Approximately **1 million people** live on Oahu – home to around 70% of Hawaii's total population.
- Average temperatures range from **75°F to 85°F** year-round. Pack light.
- Oahu holds the record for the **longest rain shower in history** – 247 consecutive days from August 1993 to April 1994.
- The **Pali Highway** is said to be haunted by ancient Hawaiian spirits. Local legend: never carry pork over the Pali Pass.

Exploring Honolulu & Waikiki

Morning

DIAMOND HEAD HIKE

Kick off your weekend with a **sunrise hike up Diamond Head Crater**. This moderately challenging trail rewards you with panoramic views of Honolulu and the Pacific Ocean.

Tip: Reservations required — book up to 30 days in advance. Alternative: walk up to **Amelia Earhart's Marker via Diamond Head Road** for the same views, no crowds.

BREAKFAST

Head to Waikiki Beach. Try **Kona Coffee Purveyors** or **The Sunrise Shack - Waikiki**. If you walked Diamond Head Road, stop at **Barefoot Beach Cafe**.

Afternoon

WAIKIKI LANDMARKS

Visit the **Moana Surfrider Hotel** ("First Lady of Waikiki") and the **Duke Kahanamoku Statue**. Then explore **Iolani Palace** (the only royal palace in the U.S.) and the **Bishop Museum**.

Tip: Reservations are always a good idea for Iolani Palace.

LUNCH

Casual: **The Steak Shack**. Sit-down: **Duke's** or **The Hula Grill**.

Evening

SUNSET — ALA MOANA BEACH PARK

Less crowded than Waikiki with stunning ocean sunsets. **Magic Island** (east end) is the prime spot.

DINNER

Senia (modern Hawaiian, Chinatown) · **The Pig and The Lady** (Vietnamese-Hawaiian fusion) · **Fete** (creative local). Also consider **Morimoto** or **Mud Hen Water** in Kaimuki.

DRINKS — DON'T SKIP THIS

Drinks by the Banyan Tree at the Moana Surfrider. A must for all visitors. Non-negotiable.

North Shore Adventure

Morning

SCENIC DRIVE TO NORTH SHORE

Head out along the **Windward Coast**. **Leave by 8am** to beat traffic.

WAIMEA VALLEY

Wander lush botanical gardens and hike to **Waimea Falls** for a refreshing swim. **Bring water shoes**.

BANZAI PIPELINE + SUNSET BEACH

Watch world-class surfers at **Ehukai Beach Park** in winter. Then relax at **Sunset Beach** — golden sands, incredible views.

Afternoon

LUNCH IN HALEIWA

Giovanni's Shrimp Truck — garlic butter is non-negotiable. Or **Farm to Barn Cafe** for fresh farm-to-table with local ingredients.

HALEIWA TOWN

Explore surf shops, art galleries & local boutiques. For shave ice: **skip Matsumoto's line — locals go to Aoki's** instead.

LANIAKEA BEACH — SEA TURTLES

Hawaiian green sea turtles (honu) often bask on shore. **Stay 10 feet away. It's the law.**

Evening

SUNSET COCKTAIL + DINNER

Head to **The Ritz-Carlton, Oahu** (formerly Turtle Bay). Cocktail at **Beach House by Roy Yamaguchi**, dinner at **Lei Lei's Bar & Grill** — a local favorite.

Heads up: Drive back takes ~90 minutes. Plan ahead — or better yet, book a night on the North Shore.

Windward Coast & Cultural Sites

Morning

LANIKAI PILLBOX HIKE

Short but steep — breathtaking views of **Lanikai Beach** and the Mokulua Islands. Street parking on Kaelepulu Drive.

LANIKAI BEACH

One of the world's most beautiful beaches. **Zero facilities** — no bathrooms, no lifeguard, no parking. Use Kailua Beach Park facilities before walking over. Pack everything in and out.

KAILUA TOWN + BYODO-IN TEMPLE

Coffee at **Morning Brew**, local shopping, then the serene **Byodo-In Temple** in the Valley of the Temples. Ring the 3-ton brass bell for good luck. **\$5 entry**.

Afternoon

LUNCH

Over Easy in Kailua — the loco moco is legendary. Or kick back at **Lanikai Brewing Company**.

MAKAPU'U POINT LIGHTHOUSE TRAIL

Scenic coastal hike with incredible ocean views. Spot whales December–April. **Fully paved, zero shade — bring water.**

WAIMANALO BEACH

3-mile stretch of turquoise water and soft sand. Uncrowded and picturesque. Don't leave valuables in your car.

Evening

DINNER IN CHINATOWN

Back to Honolulu's vibrant Chinatown. Try **The Pig and The Lady** or **Fete** for local and Asian-inspired dishes.

NIGHTLIFE

Live music or cocktails at **Sky Waikiki** rooftop bar. If you missed the Banyan Tree on Night 1 — **tonight is your last chance. Don't miss it.**

Final Tips

Book in Advance

Diamond Head, Hanauma Bay, and Iolani Palace fill up fast. Make reservations before you leave home.

Respect the Aina

Respect local customs and natural sites. Always practice "Leave No Trace" principles.

Talk Like a Local

Aina (eye-nah)

The land. Hawaiians have deep respect for it. You should too.

Slippahs

Flip flops. Don't call them sandals.

Pau (pow)

Done, finished. "You pau with that plate lunch?"

Shaka

The hang loose hand sign. Throw one when someone lets you merge. Required.

Mahalo (mah-hah-low)

Thank you. Use it everywhere.

Da kine

Basically means "the thing." Can mean anything. You'll figure it out.

Ono (oh-no)

Delicious. If someone says the food is ono, order it.

A hui hou (ah hoo-ee ho)

Until we meet again. The local way to say goodbye.

Enjoy your time on Oahu! Whether you're soaking up the sun on a pristine beach or exploring the island's rich history, this itinerary offers the perfect mix of relaxation and adventure.

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