

HOORAY FOR HAWAII

OK! enjoys Christmas with the stars in Maui...



Where do the Hollywood A-list decamp to during the festive season? You'll find them hopping on their private jets and heading to Aspen for skiing, St Bart's for the social scene and Hawaii for the surf and beaches. OK! opted for the later to hang out with celebs and surfer dudes...

WHEN SHOULD I VISIT?

Although Hawaii is marooned in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, more than 2,000 miles west of Los Angeles, this string of islands (eight large ones and 124 tiny volcanic islets), attracts the A-list crowd. The island of Maui is a particular celebrity favourite, and it's all about sun, sea, surf! It's carved up into three distinct areas: the hotel-studded Kaanapali Beach, near Lahaina Harbour, on the west coast, the exclusive Wailea to the south and the quiet unspoilt Hana to the east. Part laid-back cool, part glamorous, part outdoorsy, there's something for everyone in this American state.

WHERE SHOULD I STAY?

The sprawling Sheraton Maui Resort (www.starwoodhotels.com) in Kaanapali is laid out as a mini village interspersed with water features. It's a large, child-friendly hotel that offers poolside bars, tennis courts, a spa and it's own catamaran.

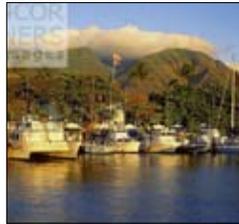
Hide away from the crowds, as Jim Carrey and Woody Harrelson do, at the Hana Maui resort (www.slh.com) located at the end of the Hana Highway, a stunning coastal drive. The rustic-chic cottages sprinkled around this beachfronted-resort are ideal for lovebirds looking for an intimate retreat.

The luxurious Four Seasons Resort Wailea (www.fourseasons.com) is where Jake Gyllenhaal, Britney Spears, Lindsay Lohan and Paris Hilton like to lay their heads. Scary Spice recently visited with then-boyfriend Eddie Murphy, as has Denise Richards, who had a poolside massage.



WHERE SHOULD I EAT?

There's everything on offer from fine dining to surfer burger joints along Lahaina Harbour. At posh restaurant Ferraro's, at the Four Seasons Wailea, fresh sushi is served up with a sea view and a side helping of celebrity-spotting. Watch out for Britney Spears or *Desperate Housewife* Felicity Huffman. Whaler's Village, in Kaanapali, offers seafood, steak houses and fast food if that's your scene. If you dine at Italian eaterie Longhi's in Lahaina Harbour, you might bump into Owen Wilson and Kate Hudson who enjoyed a meal there recently.



WHERE CAN I SHOP?



Shopping in Maui is American-style, with mini malls dotted around the island. Other than the must-have souvenir Hawaiian shirt, you can pick up some great surf-wear from Quicksilver, Honolua Surf and Roxy (all at Whalers Village) or head to The Shops At Wailea mall to splash out in Coach, Louis Vuitton and Tiffany & Co.

Above: Britney's shops till she drops in Hawaii. Top left and right: Magnificent Maui. Top right: Dine at Lahaina Harbour

WHICH STARS WILL I SEE?

Britney Spears is a frequent Maui visitor. Also spotted on the island in September were Kate Hudson and her son Ryder, who stayed at the Fairmont Kea Lani resort. At the same time, her reportedly new boyfriend actor Owen Wilson was staying at a nearby house. Meanwhile John Travolta, Ashlee Simpson and Nicollette Sheridan have all stayed at the Kahala Mandarin Oriental.



WHERE SHOULD I SPA?

Hawaii is famed for its lomi lomi massages so there's no excuse not to indulge! At the Four Seasons Manele Bay, try the exotic Ki pola ko'olu (cooling ti-leaf wrap) or the Ali'i banana coconut scrub, an extravaganza once reserved for Hawaiian royalty. If you prefer the laid-back vibe, try one of the local treatments at the Hana resort's Honua spa. The Pacific Rim Volcanic Body Scrub and the Honua Rainforest Mist Facial were the OK! favourites.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

There's something for everyone – diving, whale-watching, horse riding, helicopter tours. Early birds should join a sunrise trekking expedition up to the top of the 10,000ft Haleakala volcano – beautiful, if you can bare the early start at

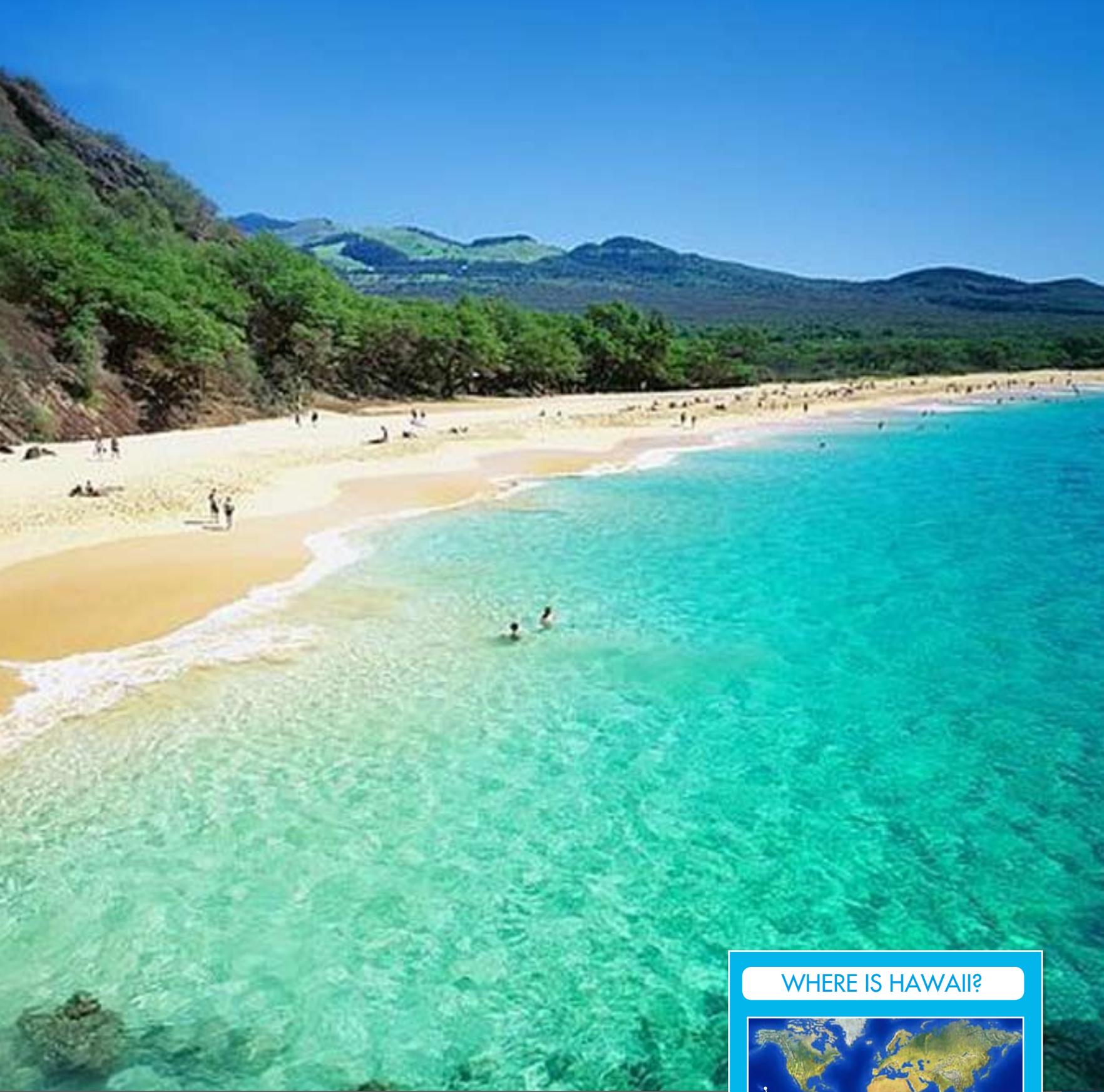


2.30am! The best bit is getting to the bottom. You can hop on a bike and whizz the 28 miles (www.maui-downhill.com) home.

Hire a convertible and cruise along the 52-mile, lava-sculpted coastline nicknamed the Road To Hana. Here you'll pass through lush valleys (stop off to walk to one of the numerous

waterfalls and gorges along the route), beside shiny black pebble beaches with their wild surf.

From November to April, take a boat trip out from Lahaina to watch the magnificent humpback whales (www.pacificwhale.org).



CAN I VISIT THE SMALLER ISLANDS?

Take a ferry (about an hour's ride) to the tiny, unspoilt island of Lanai. The gorgeous island has one tiny town, two resorts, one B&B, but loads of sandy beaches. This didn't stop American billionaire Bill Gates booking the entire island for his wedding in 1994!

Celebrities like to check into the Four Seasons Manele Bay. By day, the main entertainment is snorkeling and watching the spinner dolphins. When the sun sets, the chic clientele can indulge in a gourmet feast. *OK!* loved the local coconut shrimp pupus (appetisers) and seafood laulau (steamed wrap) at the hotel's Hulopo'e Court restaurant.

Meanwhile, when Michael Douglas and Arnold Schwarzenegger come to play golf on the island, they stay at the revamped The Lodge at Koele.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Flight Centre (www.flightcentre.co.uk; 0870 499 0040) offers flights from London Heathrow to Honolulu, Hawaii, including a stopover in Los Angeles, from £660 with United Airlines. Flight Centre can also arrange you hotel stay. Island Air (www.islandair.com) flies (45 minutes) from Honolulu to Kahului Airport in Maui from £25.

If you want to rent a car while you're there, visit www.hertz.com for rates. **OK!**

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Left: Enjoy a sunrise trek up Haleakala volcano. Above left: Bikini-clad Kate Hudson is a Hawaii fan. Far left: *OK!* hung out with the surfer dudes on Maui

WHERE IS HAWAII?



FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call the Hawaii Tourism Europe
on 020 7202 6384 or visit
www.hawaii-tourism.co.uk