



**"The Valley Isle"**  
**Flower = Lokelani**  
**Population = 125,000+**  
**Area = 727 mile<sup>2</sup> (1883 km<sup>2</sup>)**  
**Rank = 2nd largest Hawaiian island**  
**Highest Point = Haleakala (Over 10,000 ft.)**



"Maui" is the second-largest of the Hawaiian Islands at 727 square miles (1883 km<sup>2</sup>;). Native Hawaiian tradition gives the origin of the island's name in the legend of Hawaiiokeanailoa, the Polynesian navigator attributed with discovery of the Hawaiian Islands. The story relates how he named the island of Maui after his son who in turn was named for the demi-god Maui (mythology). According to legend, the demi-god Maui raised all the Hawaiian Islands from the Pacific Ocean sea. The Island of Maui is also called the "Valley Isle" for the large fertile isthmus between its two volcanoes.

Maui is part of the Hawaii State of Hawaii and is the largest island in Maui County, Hawaii Maui County. The island had a resident population of 117,644 in 2000 ;third within the state behind the islands of Oahu and Hawaii (island). The population is diverse, with many ethnic groups having originally arrived in the islands to work sugar cane and pineapple plantations from countries of the Western Pacific rim. Maui is part of Maui County, the other islands comprising the county being Lanai, Kahoolawe, and Molokai. The larger towns on Maui Island include Kahului, Wailuku, Lahaina, and Kihei.

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## History

Polynesians, from Tahiti and the Marquesas, were the original peoples to populate Maui. The Tahitians introduced the kapu system, a strict social order that affected all aspects of life and became the core of Hawaiian culture. Modern Hawaiian history began in the mid-1700s. King Kamehameha I of Hawaii, took up residence in Lāhainā (and later made it his capital) after conquering Maui in the bloody Battle of Kepaniwai in 1790 in the Iao Valley.

On November 26, 1778, Captain James Cook became the first European explorer to discover Maui. Cook never set foot on the island because he was unable to find a suitable landing. The first European to visit Maui was the French admiral Jean François de Galaup de La Perouse, who landed on the shores of what is now known as La Perouse Bay on May 29, 1786. More Europeans followed: traders, whalers, loggers (e.g., of sandalwood) and missionaries. The missionaries began to arrive from New England in 1823, choosing Lāhainā because it was the capital. They clothed the natives, banned them from dancing hula, and greatly altered the culture. They tried to keep whalers and sailors out of the bawdy houses. The missionaries taught reading and writing, created the 12-letter Hawaiian alphabet, started a printing press in Lāhainā, and began writing the islands' history, until then existing only as oral accounts. Ironically, the work of the missionaries both altered and preserved the native culture. The religious work altered the culture while the literacy efforts preserved native history and language for posterity. They started the first school in Lāhainā, which still exists today: Lāhaināluna Mission School. The Mission school opened in 1831 and was the first secondary school to open West of the Rockies. It now serves as a high school above the town of Lahaina.

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At the height of the whaling era (1840-1865), Lāhainā was a major whaling centre. In one season over 400 ships visited Lāhainā, the greatest number of ships berthed at one time was about 100. A given ship tended to stay months rather than days which explains the drinking and prostitution in the town at that time. Whaling declined steeply at the end of the 19th century as crude oil (petroleum) replaced whale oil.

Kamehameha's descendants reigned in the islands until 1872. They were followed by rulers from another ancient family of chiefs, including Queen Liliuokalani who ruled in 1893 when the monarchy was overthrown. One year later, the Republic of Hawaii was founded. The island was annexed by the United States in 1898 and made a territory in 1900. Hawaii became the 50th state in U.S. in 1959.

Maui was centrally involved in the Pacific Theatre of World War II as a staging centre, training base, and for rest and relaxation. At the peak in 1943-44, the number of troops stationed on Maui exceeded 100,000. The main base of the 4th Marines was in Haiku. Beaches (e.g., in Kihei) were used for practice landings and training in marine demolition and sabotage.

At one time in the not too distant past, Sugar cane cultivation used over 80% of the island's water supply, according to a 1992 report. One pound of refined sugar requires a ton of water to produce. The water used for sugar cultivation is taken mostly from the streams of East Maui, routed through a network of tunnels and ditches hand dug by Chinese labor over a century ago.

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### Maui County Population, 1960-2000

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Total	42,576	45,984	70,847	100,374	128,094
Change		3,408	24,863	29,527	27,720
Change (%)		8.0%	54.1%	41.7%	27.6%



There is a great deal of discussion about the meaning of and the way to achieve smart development. There clearly exists a tension between economic growth and urbanization on the one hand, and the wish to preserve the beauty of Maui and a relaxed way of life on the other. In the past there existed a pro-growth bias in policy with developers and politicians working together to stimulate the economy; now the balance has swung toward more sensitive consideration of community concerns about the dangers of uncontrolled growth and development.

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## Economy

The major industries are agriculture and tourism. Maui Land & Pineapple and Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar (HC&S, a subsidiary of Alexander and Baldwin Company) dominate agricultural activity. HC&S produces sugarcane on about 37,000 acres (150 km<sup>2</sup>;) of the Maui central valley, the largest sugarcane operation remaining in Hawaii. The cane is irrigated mostly with water drawn from aqueducts that run from the windward (northern) slopes of East Maui Volcano (Haleakalā) that receive considerable rainfall. A controversial feature of sugarcane production is the burning that is done for about 9 months of the year. These are controlled burns of fields to reduce the crop to bare canes just before harvesting. The fires produce smoke that towers above the Maui central valley most early mornings, and ash (locally referred to as "Maui snow") that is carried downwind (often towards north Kīhei).

The retail center for Maui residents is Kahului .

Maui is also an important center for astronomy with the Haleakalā High Altitude Observatory Site being one of the five best astronomical and space surveillance sites in the world. In modern times, Tourism is the dominant contributor to Maui's economy.

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## Topography

Maui is a volcanic doublet : an island formed from two volcanic mountains that abut one another to form the isthmus between them. The older volcano, Mauna Kahalawai, is much older and has been eroded considerably; it is now called the West Maui Mountain. The larger volcano in the East, East Maui Volcano (more commonly called Haleakalā after its famous summit depression) ; rises above 10,023 feet (3,050 m). The last eruption occurred around 1790, and the lava flow can be viewed between Āhihi Bay and La Perouse Bay on the southwest shore of East Maui. Both volcanoes are [[shield volcano]]es and the low viscosity of the Hawaiian lava makes the likelihood of large explosive eruptions negligible.

## Climate

At sea level Maui has a remarkably stable tropical climate with highs in the region of 29 °C (80 to 85 °F) and lows around 20 °C (65 to 70 °F); rainfall is greater in the northern hemisphere winter (wet season is November through April). However, because of the two volcanic mountains that dominate the topography, Maui has a very wide range of climatic conditions depending on elevation and whether an area faces toward or away from the prevailing Tradewinds (blowing from the northeast). For example the top of the West Maui mountain receives over 400 inches (10 m) of rainfall per year, whereas Kīhei receives less than 10 inches (250 mm), being in the rain shadow of East Maui Volcano ; Kahului airport (the main airport on Maui) has average rainfall of about 19 inches (480 mm), whereas Olinda (upslope from the airport) receives about 73 inches (1.8 m).

Maui has an unusual weather feature known as the "Maui vortex", an area of clear sky that often forms over Pukalani due to the swirling of air (a vortex) as it enters the central valley after being forced to move around Haleakalā.



**Maui, like the whole of the Hawaiian Islands, has a hurricane season in the late summer and fall, with tropical storms typically approaching from the southeast. Storms initiated by hurricanes or tropical depressions that approach from the southeast are known locally as Kona storms.**

### **Tourism**

**Maui welcomed 2,225,060 tourists in 2002. The main tourism centres are Lahaina to Kapalua and Kihei-Wailea, each of which has several luxury resort hotels. Whereas Oahu is most popular with Japanese tourists, Maui tends to appeal especially to visitors from the US mainland and Canada.**

**Maui is a leading whale-watching center in the Hawaiian Islands due to the fact that many Humpback whales winter in the sheltered [[Hawaiian islands Auau Channel between the islands of Maui county. The whales migrate approximately 3,500 miles (5,600 km) from Alaskan waters each autumn and spend the northern hemisphere winter months mating and birthing in the warm waters off Maui. The whales are typically sighted in pods: small groups of several adults and one or more calves. Humpbacks are an endangered species protected by U.S. federal and Hawaii state law. There are estimated to be about 3000 humpbacks in the North Pacific.**

**Among the many features on Maui popular with tourists are the "Road to Hāna" (the drive from the central valley to Hāna and beyond), the drive up to Haleakalā crater, Makawao (and Maui's Upcountry region), the Iao Valley, and Lindbergh's grave (near Kaupō on East Maui).**

**A few popular sporting events bring fans from all over, including the Maui Invitational college basketball tournament in November.**

**The Maui Chamber of Commerce issues medals, called Maui Trade Dollars, that can be used as currency in local shops and are valued as collectables.**

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