

Event Calendar

Click Day
to View Event Details

August 2010

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

<< 111 events >>

Splash Magazines Worldwide

Now Available:

Los Angeles

New York	Chicago
Paris	London
Boston	Atlanta
Miami	Dallas
San Diego	Denver
Detroit	Las Vegas
Toronto	Tokyo
Barcelona	Bangkok
Amsterdam	Hawaii
San Francisco	
Washington D.C.	

Search

Go

[Advanced Search](#)

Entertainment : Hawaii Entertainment

[Email this Article](#)
[Printer Friendly Page](#)



Mauna Lani Bay Hotel Cultural Tours Review - Hotel Tours of Hawaii's Ancient Culture, Its Fish Ponds and Petroglyphs

By [Anne Z. Cooke & Steve Haggerty](#)

Cultural Tours Explore the Fish Ponds at the [Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows](#), on the [Big Island's Kohala Coast](#).



South Pacific sunsets are among the world's most spectacular.

HAWAII – In the five centuries before the first British ship arrived in the Hawaiian Islands, the **Big Island**'s royal family – the "ali'i" – treasured the spectacular coastal site that they called **Kalahuihua'a**," on what is now known as **Mauna Lani Bay**.



The Mauna Lani Bay Hotel hugs the high ground on the north side of the bay.

A rich menu of natural resources – the bay's white sand beaches, hidden caves, groves of palms, fresh-water springs and lava-rock pools – made the site an ideal place to build a series of interconnected fish ponds, the primary source of protein in the Hawaiians' daily diet. Convenient for a temporary settlement, it also provided a cool spot for a summer retreat.



Fresh-water springs and tidal in-flows fill these ancient fish ponds.

Today, the **Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows** occupies 29 of the site's original 3,200 private acres, with 1,800 acres designated as a historic park and preserve. Which is probably why the guests of the **Mauna Lani Bay Hotel** discover that there's much more here than the typical beach vacation. The hotel offers cultural tours of the site, or you can conduct your own self-guided tour.



Hotel guests follow the boardwalk trail across the fish ponds, at the Mauna Lani Bay Resort.

If you wander along the beach toward the south, beyond the lobby lounge and the hotel's three restaurants, past the inviting open-air bar and the swimming pool, you'll discover 1,800 acres of the original site, now a historic park and preserve, mostly on private property, where archaeologists have unearthed artifacts dating back to 1200 A.D.

Within a few steps you'll step from the present into the past, to a place where one of the South Pacific's unique cultures flourished. After you've down-shifted to island time, napped in the shade of a palm tree and helped the kids build sand castles, find out why the Hawaiians loved this place.

To unlock the site's hidden secrets, ask the concierge for the self-guided tour map and guide entitled "**The View Into The Past.**" Printed in sepia ink on wheat-colored paper

it opens doors to the past. Look for signs to the coastal path, following it south past rugged lava flows and sandy inlets, where **endangered green turtles** haul out to sun themselves.



Along the way a fork in the trail passes 15 acres of spring-fed ponds which the Hawaiians depended on for drinking and cooking, and the salt-water lagoons in which they raised and harvested local fish. Another fork turns inland to a dense flow of lava and a group of shelter caves and tool-making sites.



Resident green turtles bask on a quiet corner of the Mauna Lani Resort beach.

Another fork turns onto the Loop Trail through a more recent feature, the botanical garden planted with **native Hawaiian plants** and trees by **Francis H. I'i Brown**, the property's last owner and a descendant of royalty. Though the jaunt doesn't venture far from the hotel, you'll find you've slipped back through the years to another very different time.



Early morning on the beach at the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Resort.

FAST FACTS: Guests of the **Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows** have direct access to the trails that start near the hotel. But there is no public parking at the hotel. Non-hotel visitors can park in a public lot off the highway, south of the hotel, where signs indicate the Historic Access Trail. It's a half-mile walk from this point to the beach.



The beaches and ponds at Mauna Lani Bay are protected from ocean swells

The **Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows** is on Mauna Lani Drive, on the **Big Island's Kohala Coast**, three miles north of **Kona International Airport**. For more, go to www.maunalani.com, or call (808)885-1473.

(c) The Syndicator, by Anne Z. Cooke. Photos by Steve Haggerty/ColorWorld.