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Hawaii Beaches for Every Type of Beach-Goer

BY: Nicola McConnell | Feb 28, 2017

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If [Hawaii](#) conjures up images of turquoise waters and stretches of white sand, you'd be missing the whole picture. Ask any Hawaiian and they'll tell you: Hawaii beaches are not one size fits all. While some are ideal for a swim, others are best conquered only by board or admired safely from shore. With over 750 miles of coastline, Hawaii's got a beach for any of your seaside activities, whether that's snorkeling or stretching out on your own secluded patch of sand.

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Best Beach for Families: Poipu Beach, Kauai



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It's not always easy to find safe swimming beaches for kids, but Poipu Beach fits the bill. At the very eastern end of the shoreline lies Poipu Beach Park, with a shallow sand bar sheltered from rough surf by a rocky outcropping. Little ones can splash in these shallow waters under the watchful gaze of a lifeguard on duty seven days a week. Older kids can also get in on the fun by grabbing their [snorkeling](#) gear and looking for colorful triggerfish and butterflyfish.

- **How to get there:** The beach is easily accessed by car and has plenty of public parking nearby.
- **What to bring:** plenty of sunscreen and some sunflower seeds to feed the wild chickens that can be found wandering the beach

Best Beach for Snorkeling: Tunnels Beach, Kauai



Hawaii is stunning above water, but there's even more beauty just below the surface, and Tunnels Beach has one of the best underwater scenes out there. Grab your snorkeling gear and dive in to view the underwater caverns and tunnels that give this beach its name. The coral maze is a great shelter for sea creatures, meaning you're likely to see colorful fish and sea turtles swimming right by.

- **How to get there:** This beach is secluded, only accessible via a dirt road off of Highway 560. Parking is not allowed on the highway, but you can park on one of the dirt roads that lead to the beach. Parking fills up fast, so get there early to get a good spot.
- **What to bring:** snorkeling equipment and something to snack on—the seclusion means there are no restaurants or facilities nearby

Best Beach for Surfing: Banzai Pipeline, Oahu



Located off the shores of Ehukai Beach Park, the Banzai Pipeline doesn't just draw surfers from all over Hawaii, but from all over the world. A bucket-list item for many surfers, the secret to this surf beach lies below the waves, where a rocky bottom creates barreling waves that make up a "pipeline." Go in the wintertime for the gnarliest surfing.

- **How to get there:** You can easily drive to Oahu's North Shore, or take the Oahu bus 88A to Ehukai Beach Park.
- **What to bring:** your board, a wet suit, and and your expert-level skills—safety demands that newbies leave these waves to the pros

Editor's note: the Banzai Pipeline is only for experienced surfers. If you're new to the sport, we recommend taking a [surfing class](#).



Best Beach for Privacy: Waipio Valley Beach, Big Island



If you want to go where the crowds aren't, you might want to take a trek down a 2,000-foot cliff. It might sound extreme, but that's the only way to get to Waipio Valley Beach, and trust us, it's worth it. By nature of the location, few tourists take the time to travel to it, meaning you and your travel buddies may be the only ones walking along the black-sand shores. Enjoy the view of the surrounding volcanoes or the distant Kaluahine Waterfall.

- **How to get there:** You'll need to have four-wheel drive to make it down the winding road to the valley, but if you don't have your own wheels, consider hiking down or look into shuttle services.

- What to bring: good hiking shoes, a picnic lunch, and a [camera](#) to capture the views

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