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travel



Texas Mardi Gras

➔ Mardi Gras is one of those few celebrations that just isn't bigger in Texas. But if you can't make the trek to New Orleans, consider heading to the Louisiana of Texas. The four-day Southeast Texas Mardi Gras in Port Arthur, just west of the state border, begins on Feb. 12 and includes concerts, parades and trinkets galore. The Big Easy also comes to Dallas on Feb. 21 with 28 bands on five stages plus plenty of mixed drinks and New Orleans-style fare.



Island Affair

Recharge your relationship with the many waves of Hawaiian romance

BY BECCA HENSLEY

When Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr kiss on Oahu's Halona Beach Cove in *From Here to Eternity*, the romance of Hawaii is epitomized. That was filmed more than 60 years ago, but time can't diminish the island state's allure for amor. Sparkling crescents of sand, waves that pound like a heart astir, waterfalls, palm trees, rainforests and potent tropical drinks combine to create fireworks aplenty in these mid-Pacific islands. With six islands, the romantic possibilities can be overwhelming. No need to worry. We've done the Romeo and Juliet research for you. All you have to do is follow your heart.

ROMANCE IN THE GARDEN

The northernmost Hawaiian island and the oldest of the archipelago, Kauai is known as the Garden Isle for its verdant rainforest, foliage and plethora of waterfalls. Containing Waimea Canyon—the Grand Canyon of the Pacific— and the hauntingly beautiful Napali Coast, which is accessible only from the sea, this island attracts sports enthusiasts intent on exploring its trails and water routes. Charming hamlets, shave ice stands and mom-

and-pop eateries keep things simple and authentic, though plenty of upscale hotels, world-class golf courses and top restaurants put on the swank. For couples yearning for casual elegance, stay at the Koa Kea, which reflects Kauai's down to earth personality and aloha spirit. Literally at ocean's edge, it sits on Poipu Beach, one of Hawaii's most popular crescents of sand. With a spa that delivers with indigenous treatments and the gourmet restaurant Red Salt, valentines won't need to leave the property to nosh—though a variety of restaurants and bars await nearby. Book an oceanfront room on the second floor to take advantage of eye-popping sunsets, and watch as the water seems to encircle the hotel at high tide, giving you that on-the-cruise-ship-magic-carpet sensation.



LOVE, THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY
The home of pineapple plantations until the 1980s, Lanai still doesn't have a single

Find adventure, great food, beautiful scenery and the spirit of romance in Hawaii's top spots for couples. Surf in Oahu (top left), or see a waterfall in Kauai (bottom left). While exploring Kauai, hike its Waimea Canyon and feast on the local delicacies (right), or watch the sunset on the beach by Sweetheart Rock in Lanai (bottom right).

traffic light. Deeply manifesting a Hawaiian culture that's charmingly stalled in time and blessed with otherworldly red-colored rocks, crystalline waters and a slower-than-syrup pace, Lanai captures the spirit of old Hawaii. Take your pick of the many ways to experience the romance of a

simpler time. Try an early morning hike to watch the sunrise over Pu'u Pehe or Sweetheart Rock, embark on a sunset sail, learn to hula and make each other flower leis under the supervision of a Hawaiian

auntie, or gallivant atop horses into the hills. Golfers can tee off at Manele Bay's stunning cliff-edge golf courses and then unravel the knots with a couple's macadamia sugar polish in the spa at Four Seasons Lanai at Manele Bay. The hotel (one of only three places to stay on the entire island) boasts some of the best snorkeling in Hawaii.

WHEN YOU GO

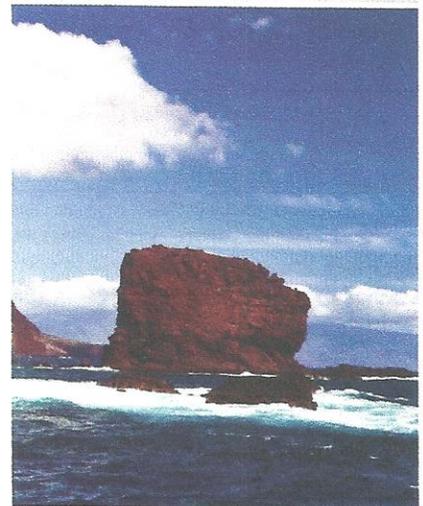
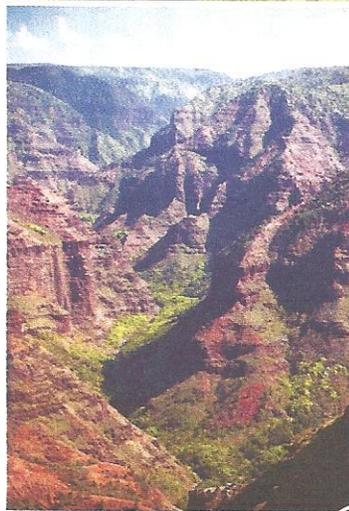
FLY Most major airlines fly to Hawaii from San Antonio via the West Coast. For Lanai, you'll stop in Honolulu then board **Island Air**, owned by Oracle's Larry Ellison, who also owns the entire island of Lanai.

STAY Lanai: **Four Seasons Lanai** at Manele Bay, Kauai: **Koa Kea**, Oahu: **Halekulani Hotel** fourseasons.com/manelebay, kokoakea.com, halekulani.com

EAT Dine on the local fare. Try **huli huli chicken** (a teriyaki infused rotisserie), **shave ice**, **loco moco** (rice, egg, meat and gravy), and **kalua pig** (pork smoked underground).

DO On Lanai, visit the **Mike Carroll Gallery** in Lanai City for local art. On Kauai, kayak down the **Napali Coast** for the thrill of a lifetime. On Oahu, take a **Pearl Harbor tour**. mikecarrollgallery.com, napalikayak.com, pearlharboroahu.com

shippers lounge and beach boys teach surfing novices how to hang 10. Beyond the popular



beach, Oahu is a lush and beautiful island with remote, undeveloped shorelines and beloved local parks aplenty. Take an hour's drive along the Pali Highway to Oahu's North Shore, best known for its gargantuan winter waves and surfing competitions. Stop at Waimea Bay, Sunset Beach or Haleiwa to watch the pros surf and then indulge in a plate of huli huli chicken from a roadside food trailer. Just 20 minutes from Waikiki, you can snorkel the crystal clear waters of Hanauma Bay, known for its abundance of reef fish, including Moorish idols. Nearby, watch the Halona Blowhole burst through the lava rock—a sight you and your sweetheart will never forget. ★