

Renewing Your Spirit

and finding Heaven on Earth The Honua Spa In Maui

BY LISA ARCELLA

Although there aren't many spots in Hawaii that aren't worth visiting, even the most seasoned travelers agree that the Hana Highway—often called the Highway to Heaven because of its breath taking vistas—in Maui, is one of the most beautiful spots on the planet. The narrow road (it's more of a country lane than a highway) takes you over 54 one-lane bridges and 600 hairpin turns dotted with gorgeous waterfalls and endless views. The road winds its way to a lovely little Hana town—known as the birthplace of Queen Ka'ahumanu.

Also at the end of the Highway is the Hotel Hana-Maui, a four star resort frequented by celebrities and everyone else looking for a tranquil spot to truly get away from it all. The resort skillfully blends Hawaiian heritage and modern conveniences, while maintaining a balance with nature and the unspoiled beauty that surround the property on every side. Guests can stay in the large Bay Cottage Suites with private patios or the plantation-style Sea Ranch cottages that offer dramatic ocean and mountain views.

Of course, there are the usual things to do at a big resort—tennis, swimming and horseback riding along the stunning coastline. But on an acre of landscaped grounds is the Honua Spa (<http://www.hotelhanamaui.com/spa.shtml>) and its spectacular views of Hana Bay (Across the street is Luana Spa Retreat which is also definitely worth checking out. Try their Lomi-lomi treatment, an age-old healing massage in Hawaii, characterized by long, deep strokes.)

The Honua, aptly named after the Hawaiian word for Earth, carefully interacts with the environment. This is especially important here because since the days of the ancient Hawaiians, Hana has been considered a place of natural healing energy.

Local plants, minerals, and water are used in the spa's teas, baths, and natural body and face products, and treatments.

The relaxation begins as soon as you walk through the door and see the waterfall that trickles down the wall opposite the entrance.

Each of the spa's massage rooms averages 500 square feet, with Hawaiian art on the walls, a Hawaiian quilt on the treatment table and sliding shoji screen doors. Four of the massage suites look out on pretty

gardens and two are especially designed for couple treatments.

After checking in at the reception area, guests enter the changing areas with beautiful mahogany lockers and travertine tiles inlaid with island stones. From there you have access to a cold plunge, whirlpool, steam rooms and outdoor lava-rock showers. There's also a Watsu pool. In water heated to body temperature, therapists glide guests through gentle therapeutic movements.

For most people, this is a once in a lifetime excursion. So if you decide to visit, make the most of this romantic location. There are lots of wonderful treatments to choose from, including:

The couples Indulgence dinner and spa evening (\$500). This is 60-minute couple's massage, a bottle of Domaine Ste. Michelle, Cuvée Brut, Sparkling Wine, Columbia Valley, dinner and one dozen chocolate-covered strawberries.

A Couple's Retreat Spa Package (\$570) In the privacy of the couple's spa suite, share in a 60-minute spa treatment followed by a 90-minute massage treatment of choice.

The Ultimate Luxury Spa Package (\$380 pp) Q 60-minute facial treatment, a 60-minute spa therapy, a 60-minute massage treatment and a spa luncheon.

Head to toe spa package (\$240) A facial therapy of choice followed by a spa body therapy will leave you glowing from head to toe. **Hawaiian Lomilomi** (60 minutes - \$125) Lomilomi is a powerful native healing tradition. Rhythmic strokes, joint movement, and deep kneading opens the body and soothes the soul.

Traditional Thai Massage (90 minutes - \$190) This ancient healing art of Thailand uses gentle compression, acupressure on specific energy lines, rhythmic stretching, and warm herbal compresses. Massage is done fully clothed with garments we provide. This is the yoga of massages, as it eliminates toxins.

Ali'i Hot Stone Massage (60 minutes - \$140) In the traditions of old Hawaii, smooth, heated lava stones and soothing ti leaf apply the elements of earth, air, fire, and water to achieve a healing, centering, rejuvenating treatment as muscle tension melts - a favorite with gentlemen.

Polynesian Body Glow (60 minutes - \$135) This exhilarating mineral scrub of Hawaiian sea salt, native alae clay, and kukui nut oil exfoliates, cleanses, and nourishes.

Awa and Spirulina Body Wrap (60 minutes - \$130) Tension and stress cannot persist under the sedating effects of native 'Awa. Paired with the nutrients of Hawaiian Spirulina, this is a unique therapy that is sure to leave a lasting impression.



IF YOU GO....

WHERE TO STAY:

Hotel Hana Maui room rates range from \$375-\$1,195. Call (800) 321-4262, or visit: <http://www.hotelhanamaui.com/>

The Westin Maui room rates range from \$350-\$660 depending on location. Call (808) 921-4655, or visit: www.westin.com/maui.

The Old Wailuku Inn at Ulupono room rates range from \$120-\$180. Call (800) 305-4899, or visit: <http://www.mauiin.com/>

WHERE TO EAT:

The Hotel has three great restaurants and an award winning chef.

I'O, 505 Front St., Lahaina, Maui, (808) 661-8422, or visit: <http://www.iomai.com/>

Sansei, Kihei Town Center, (808) 879-0004, or visit: <http://www.sanseihawaii.com/>

Nahiku Coffee Shop and Smoked Fish Stand...no phone or website!

THINGS TO DO:

Kahanu Garden (808)-248-8912, The garden houses the world's largest collection of breadfruit and the largest ancient place of worship for the Polynesian people.

Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm, (808) 838-3004, or visit: <http://www.aliikulalavender.com/>

Wailua Falls. A beautiful stop along the highway that features magnificent volcanic landscape, endless beaches and scenic hiking trails.

Hana Coast Gallery (808) 248-8636. A 3,000-square-foot gallery has fine art and jewelry on consignment from local artists

BEST BEACHES TO VISIT:

Hamoia Beach—The sand is salt-and-pepper.

Koki Beach—A great place to watch Hana's master surfers.

Ho'okipa Beach—An ideal spot for wind-surfing. **BE**

