

Mahalo Month: Hawaii Agent Deals



Details of next year's Mahalo Month programme, which sees retail and reservation agents offered special industry rates in Hawaii, have been released this week.

Mahalo Month actually spans two months (01 Apr-31 May), and there's more than 100 special rates offered by airlines, accommodation, tours and attractions on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i, Hawai'i Island, and Lana'i.

It's designed for agents to take themselves on a self-famil and experience the islands first-hand so they can more confidently sell the destination, says the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Air New Zealand is releasing a special industry airfare in conjunction with Mahalo Month, and Hawaiian Airlines also has industry rates on offer.

Reservations for accommodation, tours or attractions must be made

directly, and to take advantage of Mahalo Month retail and other discounts, agents need to download a Mahalo Month for Travel Professionals card to present along with a business card or company authorisation letter and a valid picture ID. See mahalomonth.com

Mauna Kea Deals

Mauna Kea Beach Hotel on Hawaii Island's Kohala Coast is offering special deals to celebrate its 50th anniversary—including a USD50,000 Golden Anniversary package. Each quarter the hotel will offer enhancements that can be added to any package or BAR. The first quarter is unlimited golf and tennis for an extra USD150 + tax pn valid on three-night stays or longer, available for travel 04 Jan-31 Mar. The next quarter will see a focus on the beach at Kaunaoa Bay, followed by food and finishing with art and design.

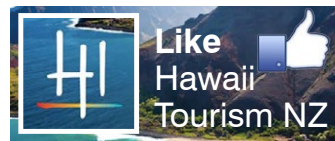
Clients with cash to splash can book the USD50,000 package available all year and including five nights in a suite, private helicopter transfers, VIP seating and access to 50th anniversary events, private stargazing experience, helicopter tour of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, spa treatments, golf lessons, meals and more. See timelessmaunakea.com

HNL Chinatown Tours

Hanai Tours has launched a new three-hour tour exploring Honolulu's historic Chinatown. The History & Food Tour ventures from Iolani Palace through Chinatown and includes sampling food at five different restaurants as tour guide Ed Korybski shares stories that helped shape downtown and Chinatown's former red light district. Each food sampling matches the story's theme, ranging from Hawaii's royal family and WWII, to native Hawaiian interactions with explorers. See hanaitours.com

Waikiki Spam Jam

The annual street festival celebrating the unusually high consumption of Spam in Hawaii is on in Waikiki next 02 May. Visitors can try out a variety of Spam-inspired creations from Honolulu's finest restaurants, and there's also food, entertainment and Hawaiian craft booths.



Aloha Food Tours

Clients can experience the restaurants, drive-ins, and food trucks that only locals know with Aloha Plate Food Tours, a new venture by *Great Food Truck Race* winner Lanai Tabura and Bruce Fisher of Hawaii Aloha Travel. There's two options—the Local Food Tour (USD 149) and the Hawaiian Style Food Tour (USD179)—both of which explore the many culinary traditions of the islands, including Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino and Japanese. They include visits to towns where popular foods originated and the stories behind beloved Hawaiian dishes. See goeathawaii.com



Lantern Floating At Ala Moana Beach

Every Memorial Day, more than 5000 candle-lit lanterns bearing remembrances and prayers illuminate the ocean off of Magic Island at Ala Moana Beach Park. Memorial Day is when people in the US remember and honour those lost in service to their country, and it's the norm for people in Hawaii to place flowers and offerings on gravesites. The Lantern Floating Ceremony was started in 1999 to promote cultural harmony and understanding. The next one is on 25 May, see lanternfloatinghawaii.com

Hawaii 5-0 Already

The number of Kiwis heading to Hawaii rose 6.1% to 5717 in Oct, bringing the total number for the 2014 so far to 54,291—a 26.3% increase on the same time last year. The figures mean Hawaii Tourism has already nearly cracked its initial 55,000 arrivals target for the year.

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