

Hawaii Exceeding Kiwi Targets

Hawaii Tourism Authority is expecting to exceed its targets for the New Zealand market this year as new figures show almost 30% growth in Kiwi arrivals in the first nine months.

In the year to Sep, Hawaii has seen some 48,574 Kiwi visitors, an increase of 29.2%.

The number of seats has increased 21.8% in the same time.

"We were initially targeting 55,000

[Kiwi arrivals] but the additional Air New Zealand flights and strong demand and support from the market looks like we will be closer to 60,000 by the end of the year," says the HTA's New Zealand manager Daragh Walshe. "The pleasing aspect is that the year-to-date arrival increase is well exceeding the airlift increase." Overall, Hawaii's visitor arrivals and spending growth is slightly ahead of the record pace set in 2012 and 2013, and the HTA is confident 2014 'will be another record-breaking year for Hawaii's tourism economy'.



Whale Watch Cruise

Star of Honolulu is offering a whale watching cruise from Honolulu 15 Dec-15 Apr, with guaranteed sightings and a new interactive programme for children—and kids are free with paying adults. The ship offers the most outdoor space of any vessel for viewing whales, a crew of certified naturalists, displays, the new keiki (kids) programme, and cultural activities like lei making, hula and ukulele lessons. It's priced from USD51 for adults, free for children aged three-11 with each paid adult, and there's also a lunch buffet upgrade for USD68 adults and USD10 children. If a whale isn't spotted, clients receive a voucher to return at another time. See starofhonolulu.com



Lava Flow Update

Hawaii's Big Island is reassuring travellers that there is 'absolutely no reason at this time' to change their travel plans due to the Kilauea lava flow—but it is asking visitors not to treat the flow as a tourist attraction. The current flow activity is in the district of Puna in the rural town of Pahoa, says the Big Island Visitors Bureau. It's on the opposite side of the island from West Hawaii, where most accommodation is found, and all businesses outside of the isolated area are operating as normal.

A section of Pahoa Village Rd, between Apaa St and Post Office Rd, has been closed and while it's expected that people will want to get an up-close view of the active lava, officials are asking everyone to avoid the area for safety reasons and out of respect for the residents. The front of the flow cannot be accessed for viewing by land; but other sections can be seen from the air.

To see updates on the lava flow, head to gohawaii.com/nz/big-island

HA Most On-Time In US

Hawaiian Airlines has once again been named the most on-time of the largest US carriers, posting OTP of 90.8% for Sep. The carrier also posted the fewest flight cancellations over that period—seven out of 6179 total flights.

National Park Pass

For visitors who like to explore Hawaii's outdoors—especially repeat visitors to the state—Hawaii has launched a new Hawaii Tri-Park Pass.

The pass gives visitors access to the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Pu'uuhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park, and Haleakala National Park for one year from the date of purchase. The pass covers a whole vehicle or for pedestrians, the purchaser and immediate family. Photo ID is required. It costs USD25 and can be bought at the park entrances.



Ala Moana Christmas

Holiday festivities kick off Fri at the Ala Moana Center, with family-friendly entertainment, daily hula shows, gift with purchase and of course, the chance for visitors to have their photos taken with Santa. A Santa stocking holder can be picked up at the Customer Service Centre if guests spend USD500 or more, and on 07 Dec clients can also pick up a savings pass at the centre for special deals across the centre. On 28 Nov Ala Moana officially opens at midnight for Black Friday, the largest shopping day of the year in the US—and some stores will open on Thanksgiving Day the day before. For more details and holiday shopping hours, see alamoanacenter.com

New Hawaii Family Guide Launched

The Hawaii Tourism Authority has launched a new Family Hawaii guide, with suggestions for free and inexpensive family activities, the best accommodation options and top tips for family dining. The guide covers Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii Island and includes maps and information on getting there, getting around the islands, weather and more. The keiki (child) friendly Hawaiian culture means there's plenty of activities available and many properties offer keiki programmes such as lei making, ukulele playing and hula lessons, says the HTA. Download the guide at gohawaii.com/nz/statewide/family-guide



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