

Plenty To Discover At Hawaii's Parks

Hawaii's seven national parks will have the spotlight shone on them as the National Park Service (NPS) prepares to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2016.

The US is honouring its parks in a number of ways over the coming years—including through a new IMAX movie currently being created by Brand USA, which will screen in New Zealand.

The Hawaiian parks see some five million visitors a year and while there's no way of knowing how many of those are Kiwis, most will head to Pearl Harbour and the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park at some point, says Hawaii Tourism's Darragh Walshe.

"Most people are only familiar with the Volcanoes National Park and Pearl Harbour, but there are five other parks on Hawaii that many Kiwis wouldn't have heard of—and they're all well worth a visit," says Walshe.

... Rich History

As well as plentiful hiking trails and wildlife, Hawaii's national parks are rich in history such as serving as





refuge for ancient lawbreakers or sufferers of Hansen's disease.

Haleakala on Maui (pictured) is the best place to watch the sun rise or set, and will resonate with Kiwis familiar with the story of the demigod Maui capturing the sun, says Walshe. Local legend says the crater was home to Haleakala, Maui's grandmother who helped him with his task.

Other parks include Puuhonua o Honaunau National Historic Park, rich in Hawaiian culture; Kalaupapa National Historical Park, which has a sad but ultimately hopeful past; Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail; Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park; and the Puukohola Heiau National Historic Site. See nps.gov/state/hi



Pride Of Maui In Dry Dock During Oct

The Pride of Maui ship is going into dry dock for most of Oct, with the last Molokini morning snorkel trip to be held 08 Oct. Until her return on 28 Oct, clients can instead opt for the six-hour Best Day on Maui snorkel trip on sister vessel Leilani, which is the same as the Molokini trip but includes an extra hour of dolphin watching on the coast. It's priced from USD79.95 for adults and USD65.95 kids. See mauiboattrips.com

Aloha Festivals On

This month is Aloha Festivals 2014, a celebration of Hawaiian music, dance and history intended to preserve island traditions. On 20 Sep (1900-2200) is the Waikiki Hoʻolauleʻa, Hawaii's largest block party which sees thousands of people take to Kalakaua Avenue for food, fun and entertainment. There's also the Floral Parade (0900-1200 27 Sep) from Ala Moana Park along Kalakaua Avenue to Kapiʻolani Park, featuring an equestrian procession, floats, Hawaiian music, hula halau and marching bands. For the full event line-up see alohafestivals.com

Modern Stay Pay

The Modern Honolulu has pay four stay six and pay three stay four deals available for sales and travel through to 19 Dec. The hotel is also offering a Sweet Suite Credit deal of USD100pn when staying four nights or less, and USD200pn for stays of five nights or more. The credit can be used at the spa, Morimoto restaurant, valet parking, in-room dining or cocktails and light meals at The Grove, Passageway, The Study or the Sunset Pool Bar.



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Sea Life Family Day

The Sea Life Park Hawaii is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a special Family Fun Day on 08 Nov-and admission will be just USD2.64 on the day, the same price it was when the park opened in 1964. Shows and special activities on the day include revamped Dolphin Cove, Hawaii Ocean Theatre and Kolohe Sea Lion Shows; the opening of the new 3D Interactive Sea Life Experience; a conservation expo with guest speakers and arts and crafts activities; and a special concert from 1700-1900.The 22-acre park is located north of Hanauma Bay on Oahu, see sealifeparkhawaii.com

