

Agent Deals For Mahalo Month(s)



Pic: Tor Johnson

Hawaii Tourism is encouraging those in the trade to take advantage of the rainbow state's Mahalo Month agent discounts, as Kiwi arrivals to Hawaii are forecast to continue to grow.

"Our Hawaii tourism partners are ready to welcome agents and both Air New Zealand and Hawaiian Airlines have introduced industry levels—so we're really urging agents to make the most of it and visit or revisit Hawaii, and experience the destination first hand," says Hawaii Tourism New Zealand manager Darragh Walshe.

"[The travel patterns of] many New Zealand travel agents reflect the consumers', many have either never

been [to Hawaii] or went 15 plus years ago during the boom. But as Hawaii is increasingly becoming a repeat destination for Kiwis, agents need to understand the differences between each of the islands and what they have to offer," says Walshe. Highlighting the depth and diversity of product and experiences available across the islands, Walshe says just under 30% of Kiwis visiting Hawaii now include a Neighbour Island in their itineraries.

Oahu too continues to evolve. "It's a lot different, even Waikiki which has undergone a large scale rejuvenation project. There's more shopping and dining options and there's actually more of a Hawaiian flavour and feel that visitors can't get anywhere else."

... Stay, Play In May

The Mahalo Month initiative runs Apr-May and Walshe says it is an ideal time for Kiwi agents to visit. "There's generally flight availability and the deals are open to retail travel agents, tour operator staff and wholesale reservations staff." There are over 150 offers available, which those in the trade may combine to form a self-famil of the islands. For details, see mahalomonth.com

Biggest Ever Aloha Event

Hawaii Tourism is set to stage what the tourism body say is its largest ever Hawaii tourism delegation to visit New Zealand with its 2016 Aloha Downunder event. Events are planned in Wellington (breakfast) and Auckland (evening) on Mon 09 May, and the STO is also staging an event in Auckland 10 May, ahead of the departure of Air New Zealand's inaugural scheduled 787-9 service between Auckland and Honolulu. "It's our regular event but we have had interest from a record number of suppliers, it's going to be our biggest delegation ever," says Hawaii Tourism New Zealand manager Darragh Walshe.

Hilo Hotel Closure

Uncle Billy's Hilo Bay Hotel is reportedly set to close 01 Feb. The 150-room property's land lease is said to be expiring in Mar, and the hotel will close 01 Feb after more than five decades of operation on the east coast of the Big Island of Hawaii. Uncle Billy's Kona Bay Hotel in Kailua-Kona is operating as normal.



Outrigger Vow Renewal

Outrigger's Waikiki properties are offering free beachfront vow renewal ceremonies for guests this Valentine's Day. Couples staying at Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort or Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort can take part in the Hawaiian ceremony on the shore fronting the Outrigger Reef. The ceremony includes a chant, vows and a performance of the Hawaiian Wedding Song, as well as champagne and a complimentary photo. Guests need to sign up at their respective hotel's front desk by 1500 on 13 Feb.



HA's Record 2015

Hawaiian Airlines welcomed a record 10,672,667 passengers in 2015, a 4.7% increase on the year before. The figures mark 11 straight years of passenger growth. Average load factor for the year was 81.6%, up 0.1 percentage points.



HNL Coffee Experience Opens In Waikiki

The Honolulu Coffee Experience Center has opened in Waikiki and offers what it says is the world's only 'multi-dimensional Kona coffee experience from farm to cup'. The attraction sports a vintage roaster, art installations and also offers visitors the chance to observe coffee being evaluated and certified baristas participating in daily training sessions. There's also a café and gift shop. See honolulucoffee.com

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