

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HAWAII IN THE FALL: YOUR ULTIMATE DREAM VACATION

HONOLULU – Fall in the Hawaiian Islands. Days are suspended in golden sunshine. Temperatures are typically tropical. From mountaintop to ocean beach, each one of the six major Hawaiian Islands offers an arms wide open sense of “Wow!” This is the time for new experiences, time to take the ultimate Hawai‘i dream vacation. It is the perfect season for the avid traveler, the grown ups from newlyweds to empty nesters, and groups of friends traveling together seeking an island adventure. First step, make a list.

- ❖ Swim with a wild dolphin
- ❖ Meet a manta ray
- ❖ Catch an endless wave
- ❖ Zip through treetops
- ❖ Bike down a volcano (dormant!)
- ❖ Dive to the bottom of the ocean

Accomplishing all that should fill more than a few vacation days. With kids back in school, adventures, tours, beaches and parks are less crowded. Reservations for island fun or fine dining are easier to book. Airport lines move quicker. Dual or multi-island tours are easy to book. Island-hopping is a perfect way to enjoy the ultimate Hawaiian dream vacation.

Here’s something new: right now you can construct your own “Ultimate Hawai‘i Dream Vacation” online at **GoHawaii.com/Vacation**. It’s easy to navigate and showcases 180 activities, attractions and experiences throughout the Hawaiian Islands that help you customize your next trip. While you’re at it, before October 31, enter your personalized itinerary in the “Ultimate Hawai‘i Dream Vacation” sweepstakes and realize your dream with a free trip of a lifetime to the Islands of Aloha. Visit GoHawaii.com/Vacation now.

And what makes Hawai'i the ultimate dream vacation? A recent *Associated Press* poll determined that the #1 vacation choice for Americans was Hawai'i. Among the reasons: safety, beauty and ease of travel. In *Modern Bride* magazine's annual survey of 6,000 travel agents Hawai'i held the number one spot. Honolulu was a top city, joining Paris and Venice, and Hawai'i's Big Island was voted "best place to unwind after the wedding." Recently the *Travel Industry Association of America* surveyed Americans on their picks for the top ten U.S. treasures. It was no surprise that the Hawaiian Islands was high on the list, topped only by the Grand Canyon, the Statue of Liberty, and Niagara Falls.

For some, the dream vacation begins with the beach. Dr. Stephen Leatherman, professor of environmental studies at Florida International University, is better known as **Dr. Beach**. Gathering data from experts, using 60 criteria, each year he compiles the top ten beaches in the U.S. In 2005 Hawai'i scored with Hanalei Bay on Kaua'i, and Fleming Beach and Hamoa Beach on Maui. Why not more? Because, since 1991, ten of Hawai'i's great beaches already took the title of National Winner and are no longer eligible.

Beyond the great beach-chair, fun-in-the-sun days, Hawai'i's beaches offer a multitude of adventures. In the fall the Waikiki waves are gentle enough for even a non-athlete to enjoy surfing lessons. Paddling out, waiting and watching for a wave and then going for it gives a much greater appreciation of the skill involved when the pros take to the water in the November/December **Triple Crown of Surfing** on O'ahu's North Shore. For a totally predictable wave, **Hawaiian Waters Adventure Park** has opened Da' FlowRider. A thin sheet of water flows over a fixed wave form. Predictable, yes. But still a challenge to stay on the board. Kailua Beach, on the Windward Side of O'ahu, is the place to learn windsurfing.

Even light tradewinds offer success as the sail fills and the novice windsurfer skims the waves. On heavy trade wind days the mega-jock kite boarders arrive. Perfect timing to break out the zoom lens for action shots. Kailua Bay is also a perfect spot for a beginner's guided kayak trip.

Newly recruited kayakers will want to head straight for the island of Kaua'i. **Outfitters Kaua'i** offers a vacation adventure that would please Indiana Jones. The safari includes a downwind kayak trip on a jungle stream, a covered wagon ranch ride, and a wild ride on a 275-foot zipline over a waterfall and a river. The adventure continues with a walk back, via 80-foot suspension bridge. Cool off in swimming holes at the base of waterfalls, drop into a mountain pool from a rope swing or relax in the pristine beauty.

Ziplines are Hawai'i's newest adrenaline rush. Both Kaua'i and Maui offer treetop soaring on the edge of flight. No need to panic. Both are designed by standards set by ACCT (Association for Challenge Course Technology). On Maui, **Skyline Eco-Adventures** gives great information on the flora and fauna then latches visitors onto the first of three lines that will take them on a 40-mile per hour "scenic tour" of the treetops.

More airborne fun is waiting on the quiet island of Moloka'i. The **Big Wind Kite Factory** has kites of every color and size. Wind permitting, and it nearly always is, visitors can step out to a neighboring park for a lesson in a pastime to please any generation. Only minutes away, find the view of a lifetime on a trail ride at the top of the world's tallest sea cliffs. Visitors aim high on neighboring Lāna'i where the sport of the day is a 14-station clay-shooting course designed to ease beginners into becoming accomplished shooters.

Finding Nemo isn't just for kids. On Hawai'i's Big Island, Maui and in Waikīkī, **Atlantis Submarines** can take visitors to the bottom of the sea. This is no peek-through-a-glass kind of boat trip. We are talking a 100-foot plus dive with picture windows for wrap-around underwater wonders like fish of every color, giant green sea turtles and coral right out of a National Geographic TV special. For topside-water adventure, take a pleasure boat trip where you can almost always count on some dolphin friends to "race" the ship, as if it were their personal, really big, "tub toy."

In the waters off Lāna'i and O'ahu, the **Pacific Whale Foundation** or **Wild Side Specialty Tours** allow visitors to get wet and wild in the Pacific Ocean with a group of "Flipper's" cousins for an encounter of a lifetime. This is very different from the training pool dolphin swim you might be thinking of. It's an opportunity to observe these wild animals glide and frolic unrestrained in the deep blue ocean. It's enough to leave you speechless. This is the real deal.

To "catch some rays" on Hawai'i's Big Island, visitors need only check in at the **Kona Manta Ray Night Dive**. The waters off the Kona Coast are famous for encounters with manta rays and **Jack's Diving Locker** offers unbelievable six-hour snorkel, scuba or viewing experiences. From the boat or in the water, the magic is watching these mammoth creatures "fly" through the ocean.

For an exhilarating ride down a volcano, **Maui Downhill** bike tours are among the most popular land tours. Starting at the 10,000 foot peak of Haleakalā Crater at sunrise, enjoy a 38-mile spin down the world's largest dormant volcano with only 400 yards of actual pedaling. Stops along the way offer picturesque upcountry Maui moments.

Fall is the season to watch, or participate, in three major athletic challenges. In September, the **Maui Marathon** is undoubtedly one of the most scenic 26.2-mile road races in the world with more than 17 miles of oceanfront running. In October, the Kona Coast of Hawai'i's Big Island hosts a field of 1,800 professional and amateur triathletes for the **Ironman Triathlon World Championship**, consisting of a 2.4-mile ocean swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run. In December, the **Annual Honolulu Marathon's** 26-mile course is one of the most picturesque you'll find anywhere. Through Waikiki, around Diamond Head, to Hawai'i Kai and back, elite runners to Sunday walkers take the challenge. Visitors are welcome volunteers.

More only-in-Hawai'i moments are waiting aboard the **Battleship Missouri Memorial**, across Pearl Harbor from the famous **USS Arizona Memorial Museum**. On September 2, a free public observance will take place to honor the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Priority seating will be offered to war veterans attending the event, commemorating the Japanese surrender in 1945 aboard the "Mighty Mo" in Tokyo Harbor.

A really unique taste of Hawai'i is waiting on Maui. The island's new **Mālama Maui** agritourism campaign launched with a checklist of delicious travel options. Visitors who drive "upcountry" can munch and sip their way from **Surfing Goat Dairy** cheeses, through lavender scones and lavender tea at the **Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm** and on to a wine tasting experience at **Tedeschi Vineyards**.

Hawai'i is the only state with its own music, its own language and its own dance. Visitors are encouraged to participate, view and understand cultural experiences on every island. Great architecture can be combined with great adventures when a hike leads to the monuments that celebrate the ancient culture of the Polynesian voyagers. The ancient *heiau*, or sacred temples, were built of stone with no mortar. Every island showcases the artistry of the stone masons. Cultural specialists tell the ancient stories. Those hungry for more history, or a lesson in Hawaiian language or hula, can find classes offered free at **Native Books/Nā Mea Hawai'i** in Ward Warehouse on O'ahu. Native guides and eco-tour companies on all islands work to share the unique cultural experiences found only in Hawai'i.

For a total immersion in a totally Hawaiian cultural celebration, join the fun at the 59th annual **Aloha Festivals**. At the only statewide festival in the U.S. visitors and locals have the opportunity to experience over 300 events, on six islands, lasting six weeks. Can't do every party? Check out AlohaFestivals.com and pick a favorite event.

A royal court is selected to represent the kings and queens of Hawai'i. The court from each island is "crowned" with elegant ceremony. The spectacular royal court investiture on Hawai'i's Big Island takes place at the rim of Halema'uma'u Crater in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, high above the 20-plus year continuous lava flow. This event is like stepping back in time, presented in the manner of ancient royalty, entirely in the Hawaiian language. In Waikiki, the ceremonial king arrives by catamaran. He steps to the stage and signals, "let the party begin!" And begin it does. One-night block parties close the main streets of Waikiki and downtown Honolulu with giant stages filled with music and dance.

Visitors are welcomed to join the local folks as they spend the night attaching blossoms to the giant flower covered parade floats. Many thousands turn out to sit curbside and watch one of the world's largest floral parades as it winds through Waikiki. Hawaiian Airlines is the major sponsor of the Festivals, and provides the way to follow the party from Honolulu to each of the neighbor islands.

To locate an adventure, easy or more challenging, and a complete calendar listing of every type of event, visit GoHawaii.com/vacation for more information about Hawai'i, Islands of Aloha.

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