

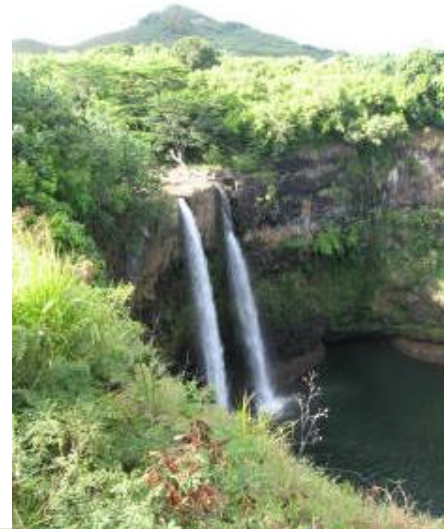
Here's the Kauai section of our trip report.

We arrived around 4:30 PM Friday May20. First stop Walmart to pick up some water, snacks and goodies for our outings (our diet consisted of dried mango slices, granola bars, peanuts and trail mix for most meals because we out in the boondocks half the time). I also bought a \$7pair of long pants to wear over my others in case we were able to squeeze Mauna Kea into our plans.

We stopped at Wailua Falls on the way to the B&B in Kilauea. Then we went to the Polynesian Cafe in Hanalei for an excellent dinner. Then since we had access to a fridge, we made a quick trip to the grocery for a half gallon of triple chocolate fudge ice cream-yum!

### Day 1

We had planned to head out to a popular snorkeling beach early Sat am but it was pouring rain when we woke up again at 5:30 so we decided to chill out and have breakfast at the B&B (most of the time we left before the places served breakfast- it was really killing Wayne to miss his free food ;-). Then about 6:30 it started clearing up so grabbed up our gear and hit the road. On the way we saw a gorgeous rainbow and the damn thing wouldn't go away. We stopped to get pics and head down the road and see a better shot and get out and take more pictures. Then we saw it was a double rainbow and took more. Then we saw it across the valley lookout and took even more.



We finally got to the Tunnels (Makua) Beach at about 7:15 and snorkeled for a couple of hours. When we were talking to Toby that evening he told us that you can free dive on the left side of the reef there to a shelf about 15 feet below the surface where white tip sharks (?) sleep during the day. I think it's just as well that I didn't know that before we went there. Thank goodness the water was so clear everywhere that I felt no need to dive down. I may not have returned to the water if I'd seen them.



I tried my camera with the underwater housing but I couldn't see what I was taking pictures of very well and didn't know my camera well enough to run it without being able to see the button labels ;-). Luckily I figured it out for the next snorkel photo-op. BTW the directions for the housing were



pretty amusing. After almost every line of the instructions was followed by "or the housing may leak". We were scared to death to put our \$400 camera in there!

Next we headed a couple miles down the road to Ke'e Beach, the last beach on the North end of Kauai adjacent to the Napali coastline. We were chilling out at Ke'e Beach before hiking and this Hawaiian guy walked by with a harpoon gun and snorkle mask. I tapped Wayne to point out the guy and then forgot about it. About 30 seconds later Wayne taps me. The guy just walked by with a fish in his hand! It was about 15" long with a head the size of my fist. Very cool.



Napali contains a gorgeous series of green ridges, cliffs and valleys that are only accessible by helicopter, boat or hiking. That's where Lost and the 3 Jurassic Park movies (and several others) were shot. After snorkeling another hour or so, eating some granola bars and trail mix and lying on the beach for awhile, we headed out on the first section of the Kalalau Trail, a 2 mile hike up over the first ridge and back down again to Hanakapi'ia Beach. It took us 2 hours to hike out there.



We spent about 30 minutes on the beach. There were little stacks of rocks everywhere. Naturally, Wayne had to get the most rocks in a stack. He also wants you to know that all the good, flat rocks were already taken which made his stack of 13 stones even more impressive. ;-)



I spent my time trying to get a picture of the endangered Monk Seal that was basking on the beach. As we were hiking there, we heard that one was on the beach and figured he'd be gone by the time we made it. When we crossed the stream right before the beach we could see him but he was lying there so still the whole time, that we thought he was sick or dead. Just as I was getting my camera out to take his picture a big wave came up and hit him in the face and he lifted up his head and moved around. I spent the next 20 minutes waiting for another wave to make him move again. I finally gave up and we headed back out- another 2 miles and 2 LONG hours.

After all that work, where do we go to dinner? Bubba's Burgers !?!?! Wayne got a chili burger and the chili tasted like Hormel- yuck! In Wayne's defense it was given a good rating but after eating two meals of bird food, I deserve better than a burger! Good thing we had ice cream in the freezer to make up for it.

## Day 2

We headed out to Lihue (East Kauai) for our 7:30 am check-in for the helicopter tour. Bird food for breakfast again. The flight had some gorgeous views but not really anything we didn't see on our hikes or from the look-outs. The pilot was really good, gave interesting tidbits along the way and turned the chopper and waited to make sure everyone got good views and photos each place but it was a little too calm for my taste. After hearing many people say that they got sick on their heli ride, I was thinking it would be a little more exciting. Now I didn't want to get sick but, for \$400 I could have used a little more pizzazz in the flight department ;-)

If we hadn't gone on all the hikes we did, I probably would have appreciated it more.



Next we headed to the south side of Kauai and checked out Opaeka'a Falls and the Wailua River outlook and Spouting Horn (a blowhole). A blowhole is a whole in the lava shelf. As a wave comes in, water is forced through that hole and shoots up into the air like a geyser. In this case it also made a sound like a horn. The surf was pretty low so it was less dramatic than usual but it was still neat. Naturally, every time I'd turn to say something to Wayne, it would spout like a



maniac! ARGH! This was where we saw butt crack woman.

Next we drove over to Maha'ulepu Beach (actually a series of 3 beaches) and hiked along the shore for a mile or so. We saw ANOTHER Monk Seal (there are ~20 on the Hawaiian islands). This one was a little more lively but not much. There were some really



neat eroded lava formations in the water there and a cool horn with no spout. Then we picked up lunch at a hole-in-the-wall called Tacos Nortenos. It was a recommended place and the

food was pretty good but definitely could have used some salt.



After lunch we headed back north toward the B&B. I wanted to see the lava tidepools next to Secret Beach. Wayne wanted to go to too because they reportedly have nude sunbathers there ;-)  
Unfortunately it was raining by the time we got there so we picked up some apple bananas and lychees at Banana Joe's fruit stand and then headed out to the Kilauea Lighthouse and bird sanctuary instead.



It sits on a gorgeous bluff on the northernmost tip of the main Hawaiian islands and has a nice waterfall and great views of the beach. Too bad it closes before sunset because I'm sure it would be spectacular from there. Birds are not my thing but they had several unusual types there including tons of Nenes. Speaking of birds, Kauia has feral chickens ALL OVER the place. After that we had a very nice dinner at Zelos Beach House in Hanalei (good food, large portions, Wayne was in heaven) and headed back home for ice cream and a nice, hot whirlpool bath-ahhhh!!!!

### Day 3

Monday morning we got up early to head out to Queen's Bath before breakfast. This is a really cool place. It's about a ½ mile hike to a fairly hidden lava pool with 2 nice waterfalls along the way- best bang for my hiking buck ;-). The surf hits the rocks and then spills over into the pool and refreshes the water.



If you sit near the shelf where the waves are crashing, you can get a quasi massage. Unfortunately the surf was real low and wasn't reaching the pool so the water was a little green and there weren't as many fish but it was still a nice place to snorkel with a gorgeous view and the best part is that we had it all to ourselves. After snorkeling a while and catching several more rainbow pics, we headed back to the B&B to shower off and take advantage of at least one of our breakfasts before heading south and then west to Waimea Canyon (the Grand Canyon of the Pacific)

After a nice breakfast and headed around to Waimea Canyon on the opposite end of the Island. Along the way we stopped at the remnants of the Menehune Ditch- which was described as a smooth, lined irrigation ditch designed to bring water from the Waimea River to the taro fields. Since it was built with "dressed" stones they think it was built by the original native Hawaiians that came from the Marquesas Islands around 300 AD and not the current Hwaiians that came form Tahiti around 700 AD. So were driving around looking for this "ditch" and can't see it anywhere. But there is a really cool swinging wooden footbridge across the river with a sign that says "Menehune Ditch" with an arrow pointing left toward a steep rock cliff. Then we see a little plaque on the wall talking about the ditch. Apparently the "remnant" of the ditch is a 12" high stone lined up along the street for about 20 feet. Good thing the sign was there! Oh well, we had fun running across the wooden footbridge.



Being the dessert queen that I am, I made sure we stopped at Jo-Jo's Clubhouse for Shave Ice. For those that don't know, it is a cup with about 1" of ice cream on the bottom and topped with 5" of shave ice (not shaved) with flavored syrup on top. It is supposed to be an island delight and Jo-Jos is supposed to be the best- 100+ flavors. They say it's not like a snow cone because it's shaved instead of crushed but it tasted like a snow cone to me. Where I come from, ice cream with bits of ice is considered the cheap crap. To each his own I guess. No more shave ice for this girl.

Next we drove up to Koke'e State Park and stopped at several scenic look-outs along the way. Chickens were all over this place like white on rice. They must come for food from tourists because we must have seen 30 chickens at one look-out and when we went back there at sunset after all the tourists had left, there wasn't a single chicken to be found. It was 1:00 and they wouldn't give us our cabin key until 2:00 (and they leave at 4:00!) so we looked around in the museum a little and had a nice lunch at the lodge.



After we put all our stuff in our "luxury" 2 BR cabin, we hiked the Awa-awapuhi Trail (6.2 miles round trip) to one of the ridges on the Napali Coast. The trail was pretty strenuous with fairly gradual but constant decline going out and not much payoff until you reach the end. There was a

pretty hill along the way that was about 100 feet high and completely covered in lantana. I took a picture of it but you couldn't really see the flowers. Fog was rolling in and out of the valley the whole time we were walking but people that we met along the way kept saying it cleared up every few minutes while they were out there. When we were about 20 minutes away we passed up some people that said the group just ahead of them had given up and left right before it cleared up.



I told Wayne that after that hike we were staying as long as it took to see the valley below. It started raining just as we made it to the clearing and lasted just long enough to get everything wet and force me to open up my poncho. Thank goodness it only rained a few minutes because I don't know how we'd get back if that trail was wet and slippery. There were a few bands of rain still falling in the valley that were pretty neat because you could see the individual raindrops against the green backdrop and follow their path down into the valley. Wayne was counting how long he could follow the path of section of drops and got to about 12 secs. The goofy parks put railings up at the edge but they put them about 15 feet from the edge and you CAN'T see the valley from there!!!! Idiots! So we walked around in front of them 3 feet or so and could see everything. Oh, and we saw a rooster and hen up there at the ridge. I guess people must stop and have snacks when they get to the end of the trail just like the top of Angel's Landing (?) in Zion where all the chipmunks hang out. The view was spectacular but I'm not sure it is worth the 3.1 mile climb out (especially since we saw it from the air-conditioned comfort of the helicopter the day before ;-). I was soooo happy to see our car at that trailhead! By the time we got back it was close to sunset so we drove about halfway out of the canyon to try and catch the sunset at a look-out we'd seen earlier but the sky didn't co-operate ;-(. Headed back to the cabin for a HOT shower, ibuprofen, trail mix, peanuts, dried mango slices and to bed- ahhhh!!!

Day 4

6:30 am we headed out to the Pihea Trail. It runs along a ridge overlooking the Kalalau Valley on the coast side and interior forest and swamp on the other. The first half mile of the trail is nice and easy and had lots of lookouts on each side. However, it was mostly out in the open so I imagine it would get pretty

hot midday. Shortly after a little section with a boardwalk, you start getting into some serious



climbing (and sliding) through rocks and clay mounds. They make you work to get out to Pihea Vista (1 mile). Thank goodness for dry trails and strong tree roots to grab a hold of. The goofy park had closed the paved road to Pu'u o Kila Look-out (where the trailhead starts) so we had to park back at the Kalalau Look-out and walk an extra mile along the road before we even got to the trail. Our guidebook said they do that when the potholes get bad and it has taken as long as a year before they send someone up to repair it! It took us 15 min to get to the trailhead and another 45 minutes to hike the mile out to Pihea Vista. We then headed toward the Alaka'i Swamp Trail hoping to see some of the swamp but time ran out before we got there.

After showering and changing clothes, we left my handy dandy bamboo hiking stick behind and headed for the airport to catch our flight to Honolulu and then to Kona, Big Island. To be continued.....