



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHAT'S NEW IN HAWAII FOR MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS & INCENTIVES

Aloha! There's always something new and exciting happening in the Hawaiian Islands. From hotel and meeting venue renovations to new and engaging activities and creative programs, there are endless opportunities to incorporate the Aloha Spirit into your next gathering.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND MEETING VENUES

International Market Place in Waikīkī welcomes meetings, conventions and incentives groups, wholesale groups, and more to the center's collection of retailers, chef-driven restaurants and cultural experiences. The March opening of its new bus depot located on Walina Street and Kūhiō Avenue, near Hawai'i's only full-line Saks Fifth Avenue store, offers convenience. Flexible venues accommodating up to 284 guests, International Market Place is able to offer groups individual curated experiences. In July, International Market Place will host its first-ever Mixology Month, which will highlight the cocktails and spirits of the center's various restaurants.

www.ShopInternationalMarketPlace.com

The Ritz-Carlton Kapalua resort, located on Maui's northwest coast, recently announced the completion of its multimillion-dollar transformative renovation. Designed to immerse guests in what the resort describes as "an authentic Hawaiian experience," the renovations include newly transformed guest rooms and suites, an enhanced lobby and pool experience, and new dining options. The AAA Five Diamond resort's meeting facilities are ready to host business functions, and its nearly 173,120 square feet of outdoor event space and indoor conference rooms are able to accommodate multiple types of event, including incentive trips and corporate-wide celebrations. www.ritzcarlton.com/kapalua

Boasting sweeping views of O'ahu's south coast, **Nutridge Estate** was built in the 1920's on a macadamia nut plantation. Managed by Millwood Ohana Productions, the estate can accommodate special events ranging from intimate gatherings to custom functions for up to 300 guests. Located in Pu'u'Ualaka'a State Park, with close proximity to Waikīkī, Nutridge Estate is available to residents and visitors for events.

www.nutridgeestate.com

Sheraton Maui Resort and Spa is undergoing a \$26.5 million renovation set to transform its 508 guestrooms and suites. Situated on 23 oceanfront acres near iconic Pu'u Keka'a (aka Black Rock) on Kā'anapali Beach, Sheraton Maui is the Kā'anapali Resort area's first property, having opened in 1963. According to the hotel, the new guestroom design aims to blend past with present, honoring Pu'u Keka'a's history and

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sense of place while modernizing living and bathroom spaces with new furnishings, textiles, decor and artwork. New colors and textures to be utilized throughout the resort's six buildings in the renovation are inspired by the culture and landscapes of Maui, Lāna'i and Moloka'i. The room refresh incorporates 464 guestrooms, 43 suites and the resort's presidential suite. Renovations are scheduled for completion this summer. www.sheraton-maui.com

Hilton Hawaii's Villages of Waikiki and Waikoloa have merged sales teams, allowing both large and small groups to more easily craft experiences at both properties. The new Villages of Waikiki and Waikoloa sales team offers a one-stop shop for planners wishing to compare options available between the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Resort on O'ahu and Hilton Waikoloa Village on the island of Hawai'i to make informed, budget-conscious decisions catered to the needs of their individual groups. In addition, according to Hilton Hawaii, the merging of teams will make it easier to arrange multi-island experiences at the two properties, opening opportunities for pre- and post-event hotel stays, and easing planning for organizers. One of Hilton's flagship properties, the Hilton Hawaiian Village offers more than 150,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting space for conferences and intimate gatherings. The Hilton Waikoloa Village boasts more than 120,000 square feet of on-site meeting, pre-function and exhibit facilities. www.hiltonhawaiianvillage.com and www.hiltonwaikoloavillage.com

ACTIVITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

Holo Holo Charters recently received certification as an Ocean Friendly Restaurant from nonprofit environmental organization the Surfrider Foundation. The foundation's certification program increases awareness of plastic pollution in our oceans, drives changes in human behavior and ultimately creates scalable impact to reduce our plastic footprint both in and out of the water. With Holo Holo's certification in place, groups looking for a socially responsible water activity on Kaua'i can now utilize the boat charter company in their programming. www.holoholokauaiboattours.com

Paradise Helicopters, a leading Hawai'i helicopter tour company, is expanding its fleet with the addition of a twin-engine Bell 430. The Kona-based Bell 430 helicopter is available for custom charters throughout Hawai'i, as well as flights operating under a partnership with Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts in Hawaii. The spacious Bell 430 offers seating for up to eight guests and two pilots, as well as cargo room allowing each guest to fly with a full set of luggage or up to four golf bags. www.paradisecoasters.com

Hawaiian Legacy Tours offers guests an opportunity to tour, experience and plant a native Hawaiian tree in its legacy forest, located at Kūka'iau Ranch along the Hāmākua Coast. The company utilizes state-of-the-art radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology to record the growth, health, location and sponsorship details of each tree planted in its forest. Groups of up to 24 guests at a time can tour the forest via utility task vehicle (UTV) and plant a native Hawaiian tree to help the company's reforestation efforts on the island. www.hawaiianlegacytours.com

Waimea Valley, located on O'ahu's North Shore, offers a unique off-site venue for

receptions, corporate retreats and galas, or dinners under the stars. Rich in Hawaiian history and cultural sites, Waimea Valley is also home to a botanical garden allowing visitors to walk or take a shuttle along a three-quarter-mile paved road, viewing cultural sites on the way to the valley's 45-foot waterfall. There, they can swim in the waterfall's plunge pool under the supervision of lifeguards. Waimea Valley staff offers visitors mini tours and demonstrations, and opportunities to talk with artisans and cultural practitioners as they demonstrate and share their knowledge. Visitors can also play Hawaiian games at the valley's game site. Special admission rates are available for convention attendees, and customized events can be planned for groups.

www.waimeavalley.net/

DINING

Aqua Kauai Beach Resort is now offering private cooking lessons with its new executive chef, Alexander Dale. The hands-on cooking lessons feature island-inspired dishes, and reservations are available for groups from two to up to 30 people. Chef Dale sources his ingredients from family-run farms and utilizes globally procured culinary techniques in his cooking, with a nod to his Italian roots.

www.kauaibeachresorthawaii.com

The Ritz-Carlton Kapalua resort recently announced the opening of 'Ai 'Ono Tacos + Tequila, its new poolside restaurant offering hand-crafted tequila cocktails and tacos, signature Buddah Bowls, and a variety of appetizers incorporating fresh, local ingredients. Guests lounging poolside can even order 'Ai 'Ono lunch and cocktails from the Ritz-Carlton mobile app and have them delivered to their lounge chairs.

www.ritzcarlton.com/kapalua

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

The 37th annual **Kapalua Wine and Food Festival** will be held at Maui's Kapalua Resort from June 7-10. Master sommelier Michael Jordan will again oversee a festival lineup of winemakers from around the world, Maui chefs and celebrity chefs – including Hubert Keller, Nancy Oakes and Nancy Silverton – for a weekend of tasting dinners and vino. Topics for the festival's interactive wine-tasting panel discussions will cover wines from California's Santa Maria Valley, Cabernet Franc wines, famous Pinot Noir wines, international wines and more. The festival schedule also includes a champagne and caviar wine seminar and tasting. www.kapaluawineandfood.com

The **Pan-Pacific Festival**, a three-day, international cultural celebration, will take place June 8-10 throughout Waikīkī. With its mission to cultivate intercultural friendships and understanding through the sharing of cultures, the Pan-Pacific Festival features a wide range of performances from hula to street dancing, as well as eclectic arts, crafts, and cuisine. www.pan-pacific-festival.com

'Iolani Palace will host the 41th annual **Prince Lot Hula Festival** on July 21-22. The two-day, noncompetitive hula festival celebrates Hawai'i's history and honors Prince Lot Kapuāiwa, who was instrumental in the revival of hula in the mid-1800s and reigned as

Kamehameha V from 1863 to 1872. Opening ceremonies take place on July 21, followed by performances from halau hula from Hawai'i and the mainland U.S. throughout the weekend. www.moanaluagardensfoundation.org

The Joy of Sake, the largest sake-tasting event held outside of Japan, will take place on August 4 on O'ahu. The event celebrates Hawai'i's love of sake and features hundreds of premium sakes paired with sake-themed culinary offerings. This year, 21 of Hawai'i's top chefs will present an innovative lineup of sake-inspired cuisine to compliment the event's featured sakes. www.joyofsake.com

TRANSPORTATION

Hawaiian Airlines begins daily nonstop flights between Long Beach, California, and Honolulu this summer, offering Southern California travelers another option for direct air service to Hawai'i. The route launched on May 31 on the carrier's new Airbus A321neo aircraft, complementing Hawaiian Airlines' current daily flights from nearby Los Angeles International Airport. In addition, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota-based carrier **Sun Country Airlines** will launch a new Minneapolis-Los Angeles-Honolulu route in May with flights offered through August. www.hawaiianairlines.com www.suncountry.com

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About Meet Hawai'i

Meet Hawai'i is a collaboration of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), HTA's Global Marketing Teams and Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) to reinforce the brand of the Hawaiian Islands as a world-class destination for global business meetings, conventions, and incentive programs. The marketing efforts of the Meet Hawai'i team are overseen by HTA, the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency. HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires and visitor industry needs. For information about Meet Hawai'i and the hosting of meetings, conventions and incentives, please visit MeetHawaii.com.

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