



GET BA'S  
TAKE ON  
MORE OF OUR  
TOP FOOD  
CITIES AT  
BONAPPETIT  
.COM/TRAVEL

## surf, sun, and shave ice

Oahu, Hawaii's most populous island, offers more than beaches: It's also home to a burgeoning food scene defined by local ingredients and traditional one-of-a-kind treats

*This is  
winter? It  
is if you're  
hanging out  
on Oahu's  
legendary  
North Shore.*



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN KUNKEL





#### SAY HELLO LIKE A LOCAL

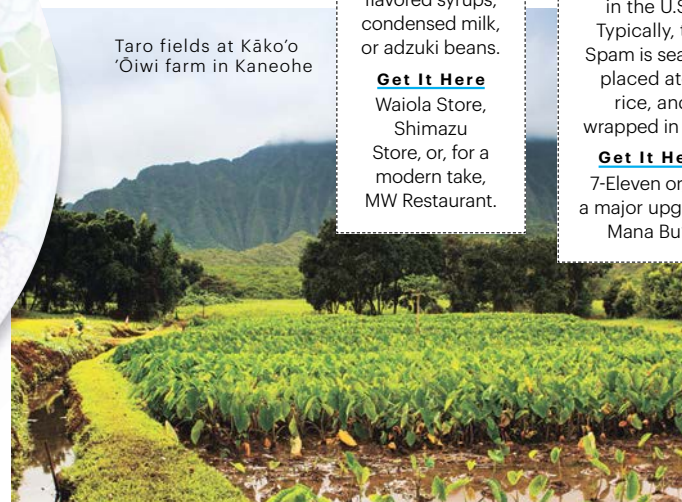
The shaka is the high five of Hawaii. It can mean hello, good-bye, or thanks. But unless you're a surfer or a native, use it sparingly (and keep it loose and casual).



From left: Shave ice at Shimazu Store in Honolulu; Diamond Head rising over Waikiki Beach; Romy's Kahuku Prawns & Shrimp shack on the North Shore.



Taro fields at Kāko'o 'Ōiwi farm in Kaneohe



➤ **Known as "the Gathering Place"** among the islands, Oahu boasts the best of what Hawaii has to offer: pristine beaches, priceless views, and a mix of old- and new-school eats. Native Hawaiian, Asian, and good ol' American comfort food have come together to create unique, laid-back riffs on island-style soul food.

You'll find a core group of young and creative chefs, dedicated farmers, and local artisans passionate about preserving Hawaii's very particular culture—and pushing it to the next level. That adage "the best food you'll have in Hawaii is on the airplane" no longer holds true. Oahu is the place to get your *ono kine grindz* ("good eats," in local speak) on. So relax, come hungry, and lotion up. You've just landed in paradise.

*Lunch after a morning on the North Shore means one thing: garlicky, buttery peel-and-eat shrimp served from a number of trucks. Giovanni's (right), Mackey's, and Romy's are our favorites. Grab extra napkins.*



#### > MAKE IT A COOKING VACATION

Don't neglect your rental's kitchen—stock it with island staples by hitting these vendors at the stunning **Kapiolani Community College farmers' market**, open Tuesdays and Saturdays.

#### HAWAII FISH CO.

Want to make tuna poke or grill mahimahi steak? The sustainably sourced seafood at this vendor is the island's best.

#### ONO POPS

Ideal for an après-beach snack, these handmade *paletas* come in flavors like Pickled Green Mango and Kalamansi Coriander.

#### FRANKIE'S NURSERY

Oh, the exotic fruits you'll see! Stock up on rambutans, matisia, and other produce you're not quite sure how to pronounce.

#### HAWAII BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Honeys offered vary, but the cream-colored variety from kiawe mesquite trees is a standout.

#### HANAIEI TARO & JUICE CO.

Poi, a paste made from cooked taro root, is eaten with almost anything. This farm is Hawaii's best producer.

## Get Schooled on Hawaiian Classics

There might be a farm-to-table movement happening on the island, but c'mon, you shouldn't miss these standbys.



### 1 SHAVE ICE Defined

Think of shave ice (never shaved) as a sno-cone that you're allowed to have past the age of six. Eat it as you would ice cream at the Dairy Queen: standing in the parking lot. Customize with abandon: flavored syrups, condensed milk, or adzuki beans.

#### Get It Here

Waiola Store, Shimazu Store, or, for a modern take, MW Restaurant.



### 2 POKE

#### Defined

A simple dish of raw fish, kukui nut, and sea salt, often served over rice, it's sold everywhere from liquor stores to supermarkets. While it may be ubiquitous, poke is only as good as the quality of fish used.

#### Get It Here

Kahuku Superette, where the fish is always fresh.



### 4 MUSUBI

#### Defined

The most famous version of this Japanese-style rice ball (a.k.a. *onigiri*) is topped with Spam. Yes, Spam. (Hawaii consumes the most per capita in the U.S.) Typically, the Spam is seared, placed atop rice, and wrapped in nori.

#### Get It Here

7-Eleven or, for a major upgrade, Mana Bu's.



### 3 LOCO MOCO

#### Defined

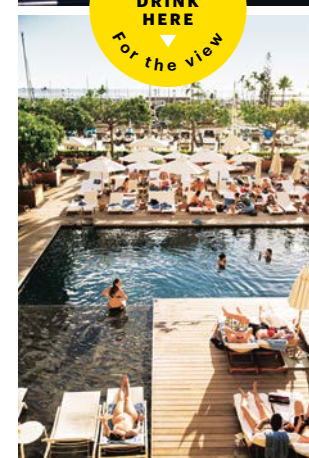
It's rice, a hamburger patty, an egg, and gravy piled high. It is to Hawaii what poutine is to Canada: a gut-busting, kitchen-sink, beige-colored dish best enjoyed late night or the morning after a few too many.

#### Get It Here

Anywhere and everywhere.



Introduced by Portuguese workers, the *malasada* doughnut is a local obsession. Kamehameha Bakery's taro-root version is tops. Warning: They open at 2 a.m. and often sell out.



#### ▲ LA MARIANA SAILING CLUB on Ke'ehi Lagoon

For a tiki bar time warp complete with rum punches and coconut shrimp, go on Thursday evenings when legendary blind pianist Ron Miyashiro takes the stage.

#### ▼ SUNRISE POOL BAR at The Modern

Even locals venture into touristy Waikiki for the postcard-worthy views at this chic poolside bar. Despite its name, the bar is best during sunset for happy hour.





Koko Head Cafe



Opah fish belly with Meyer lemon and seaweed salsa verde at Town



## CHANNEL YOUR INNER KELLY SLATER

Everybody in Hawaii surfs. No, really—everyone. You should too. Steve at **Sea & Board Sports** Hawaii will have you fighting for waves in no time.

## Honolulu Hot List

Hit the beach, get a spa treatment, go for a hike, but if you're not visiting the capital for a meal or two, you're not getting the most out of your vacation.

### TOWN Dish: Gnocchi with sunchokes, capers, and lemon

"Local first, organic whenever possible, with aloha always" has been Town's mantra since opening in 2005. Chef Ed Kenney's unpretentious food matches the casual atmosphere.

### KAIMUKI SUPERETTE Dish: He'e (octopus) roll

Sister restaurant to Town, this new kid on the block has become the neighborhood fave for fresh salads and sandwiches using locally sourced ingredients.

### THE PIG & THE LADY Dish: Pho French dip banh mi

What was first a tasting-menu-only pop-up and then a popular farmers' market stall is now a brick-and-mortar. All hail the Le family's take on Vietnamese food.

### MW RESTAURANT Dish: Mochi-crusted opakapaka

Wade Ueoka and Michelle Karr-Ueoka revitalize Hawaiian cuisine with a fresh take on traditional flavor combos.

### AGU Dish: Any ramen

With toppings from Parmesan to seasonal *tebichi* (braised pig's feet), Agu spins the classic bowl of Japanese noodles.

### KOKO HEAD CAFE Dish: Koko Moco

Chef Lee Anne Wong's brunch-only spot updates comfort food dishes, including rib-sticking loco moco using local grass-fed beef, mushroom gravy, and tempura-fried kimchi.

For addresses of the restaurants and other spots in this story, see Sourcebook on page 102.



△ Going for a hike on Diamond Head? (Yes, you are.) Takeout from Kaimuki Superette is the pro move.

### > SOUVENIRS

Try harder than macadamia nuts at the airport. Show friends you care with these **omiyage** (gifts).



### MANOA CHOCOLATE

These bean-to-bar sweets are from cacao grown locally in Kailua.



### ADOBOLOCO HOT SAUCE

The spicy, smoky Hamajang version is made with the oh-so-hot ghost pepper.



### HAWAIIAN CHIP COMPANY

Light-as-air taro chips come lightly salted or in bold flavors like zesty garlic.



## Anatomy of a Hawaiian Plate Lunch

Ask any islander and she'll happily reveal her ultimate Hawaiian plate lunch. In the no-frills island classic, eaten day or night, you'll find zero vegetables but always two scoops of rice (1), macaroni salad or slaw (2),

and meat. Customization is key, and at the best places, you can mix and match two or more entrées. At the legendary **Rainbow Drive-In**, the "mix plate" includes a combination of BBQ beef (3), boneless chicken (4), and mahimahi (5). For added flavor, douse with chile pepper water or add a scoop of chili or gravy. Then loosen your belt and dig in.



### LIVE LIKE A LOCAL

No matter what your preference—resort, condo, or Airbnb—skip touristy Waikiki and stay in the mellow Kailua or Haleiwa areas of the island.