

# Monthly Newsletter



MPI ALOHA CHAPTER  
01 May 2025



## PAWS FOR PORTRAITS

By Aaron Rego, VP of Communications - MPI Aloha Chapter

Have you been dreaming about getting professional high quality photos of your pet? Our pets are more than just our furry and feathered companions, they are a part of the 'Ohana!

Like many of us, you probably have a camera roll full of photos of your pets. Whether it be lounging at home on the couch, walking your favorite beach, or hiking that epic trail.

What better time than now to capture these special moments?

Each pet has their own personalities, and we have found that these personalities make for the most perfect wall art!

Nothing brightens up a day like walking into your home or office and seeing that funny, sassy, or even stoic photo of your pet hanging on the wall.

In partnership with our MPI Aloha Chapter President Elect, Keith Uehara, Owner and Operator of [Keith Uehara Photography](#) and [Barefoot Adventures](#)

the MPI Board of Directors invites you, your family, and friends to participate in **"Paws for Portraits"**.

How it works:

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE](#)

Your "Paws for Portraits" session is valid from May 2025 through June 2026.

Location:

881 4th Street  
Pearl City, O'ahu, HI 96782

Cost: \$195 per Session

What's Included:

- 30 Minute Studio Session
- 20 High Resolution Files for One (1) Furry Friend
- Images Available Online for Viewing, Sharing, and Downloading
- Copy Right Release

*Aloha Always* 

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FESTIVAL



## HAWAII AIRLIFT

Both Delta and American Airlines have announced that they will both be heavily investing on new airlift routes to Hawai'i this coming winter. Both airline carriers will be adding new and or expanding services across multiple islands from the North American Continent.

Delta will launch nonstop flights between Salt Lake City and Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keāhole starting December 19, alongside a second daily Salt Lake–Maui route during peak travel season. Additional flights from Atlanta and year-round service from Minneapolis to Honolulu round out Delta's 22-route winter schedule to the Islands.

Additionally, American Airlines will be adding new round-trip routes from the Windy City of Chicago to Honolulu and will finally be resuming the non-stop service from Dallas-Fort Worth to Kahului and Kona. By this coming winter, American Airlines will operate more than 15 daily flights between Hawai'i and the North American Continent. Read more about it in [Beat of Hawai'i](#) - Hawai'i Travel News.



## MAY DAY - LEI DAY

May Day is Lei Day in Hawai'i!

Lei Day is a statewide celebration in Hawai'i. The celebration begins in the morning of May first every year and continues into the next day. Lei day was established as a holiday in 1929. Each island in Hawai'i has a special flower that represents that island. The island of Hawai'i, commonly known as The Big Island, has the red blossom of the 'Ōhi'a tree, called the lehua blossom, for its flower. The island of Maui's flower is called the Lokelani and is pink. The island of O'ahu's flower is called the 'Ilima. The 'Ilima's color is golden and can be seen all across the island. Molokai uses the flower of the Kukui tree which is green. Lāna'i,

has a grassy flower called Kauna'oa, which is yellow. Hinahina, the flower of the island of Kaho'olawe, has a silver-gray color across the top. Kaua'i pays homage to the Mokihana berry, and light purple flower found on the tree. The island of Ni'ihau's "flower" is actually shells called Pupu.

It is never a bad day to wear a lei!



## NOBU ON MAUI

The [Grand Wailea](#), a Waldorf Astoria Resort has opened Nobu, the first on Maui and the second one in Hawai'i.

The restaurant is under the direction of executive chef Kyle Marston, who has worked with chef [Nobu Matsuhisa](#) for 10 years.

## NEW MPI MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



**BETTY JEAN ARIAS**

ENCORE GLOBAL

Betty Jean Arias is a Sales Manager at [Encore Global](#), the global event production partner for event, technology, exhibit, and tradeshow services. Betty Jean has over 25 years of hospitality experience. She enjoys outdoor activities, yoga, hula, and mountain biking with her family. In addition to her Sales Manager position at Encore Global, Betty Jean is also a real estate agent.



**KENDALL BOSSERT**

THE O MIDYAR GROUP, LLC

Kendall Bossert is a Event Coordinator at [The Omidyar Group](#). The Omidyar Group empowers people around the world. Founded by Pierre and Pam Omidyar, The Omidyar Group is a diverse collection of companies, organizations and initiatives, each guided by its own approach, but all united by a common desire to catalyze social impact.



**MICHELLE HA**

HAWAII FOREST & TRAIL

Michelle Ha is the Groups & VIP Experience Manager at [Hawaii Forest & Trail](#). Michelle has over 20 years of Hawai'i Island activity experience. Hawaii Forest & Trail knows that a great tour begins with a great guide, and has hand-selected a roster of friendly, knowledgeable and capable interpretive Guides. Their job is to share the natural and cultural wonders of Hawai'i, while ensuring complete comfort and safety.



**LAUREEN NAUMU-BALOCAN**

E HAWAII (DMC)

Laureen Naumu-Balocan, is the Co-Founder of [E Hawaii](#) (DMC). Growing up on Kaua'i, her deep love for the islands is integral to her success and reflected in every aspect of her work. She values attention to detail and focusing on anticipating needs to deliver exceptional service. With over 42 years of experience in the Hospitality and DMC industries, Laureen is a wealth of knowledge!

### NEW MEMBER?

If you are a **NEW** MPI member, be sure to register for this 45-minute webinar! You'll learn all about the benefits available to you, and how to utilize them to accomplish your unique goals.

Friday, May 23, 2025

[REGISTER HERE](#)

All sessions take place on Zoom at 10:00am-10:45am, CST.

Connect with the connectors, people just like you, and reap the rewards of MPI membership.

MPI has what you need to grow your network, expand your skillset and advance your career.



PHOTO CREDITS: UH ATHLETICS

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND HAWAII

[OUTRIGGER Resorts & Hotels](#), the Hospitality Industry Partner of The Big West Conference, was the title sponsor of the 2025 OUTRIGGER Big West Men's Volleyball Championship which was held from April 24<sup>th</sup> - April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the SimpliFi Arena at Stan Sheriff Center in Mānoa.

This multi-year partnership which was renewed in 2023 will run through the 2026 Men's and Women's Volleyball seasons.

In addition to its commitment to UH Volleyball, as a Diamond Sponsor of UH Athletics, OUTRIGGER also sponsors University of Hawai'i baseball,

men's basketball, women's beach volleyball, football, women's soccer, softball and women's water polo. Beyond collegiate sports,

OUTRIGGER is an official hospitality partner for year-round athletic events that support the local community and bring travelers to the Aloha State looking for sun, surf, sand and sports. This includes Duke's OceanFest, The Hapalua Half-Marathon, Honolulu Marathon, Sony Open and more.

In a nail biter of a match, Hawai'i claimed the title over the Nation's No. 1 seed, Long Beach State in four sets! Congratulations to the Bows!



PHOTO CREDIT: DAVE MIYAMOTO

## HOW TOURISM IS CHANGING FOR HAWAII

This past month, at the Travel Weekly Hawai'i Leadership Forum, the CEO of the Hawai'i Visitor and Convention Bureau, Aaron J. Salā, PhD, made a profound sentiment on how Hawai'i tourism is changing... and in the best possible way.

Salā, who joined HVCB in September of 2024, refers to the HVCB as "becoming a destination futures enterprise, a force for cultural stewardship, economic innovation and geopolitical fluency."

To read more about these efforts, please visit [Travel Weekly](#) for a full article.



## RENOVATIONS OF THE FIRST LADY OF WAIKIKI

The Moana Surfrider, A Westin Resort & Spa, a staple of world-famed Waikīkī Beach, will be celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary. With this milestone, the hotel announced that it will unveil a \$70 million renovation, which is already underway; rolling out in phases through spring 2026. The resort's 791 guest rooms and suites will be renovated across three distinct wings, its elegant historic lobby will be refreshed, and a new oceanfront event space will debut. This full-scale renovation will enhance this iconic property which is inspired by the timeless romance of travel to Hawai'i. To read more, please [CLICK HERE](#).



1 HOTEL HANALEI BAY

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

[Mauna Lani, Auberge Resorts Collection](#), on Hawai'i Island is seeking a Senior Events Manager. The resort invites qualified candidates to apply for this amazing opportunity. As a Senior Events Manager, this position is a pivotal role in the planning and execution of high-level events, from magnificent weddings to engaging corporate retreats and everything in between. Mauna Lani – meaning “mountain reaching heaven,” is an inspiring spiritual haven that captures a distinct sense of place deeply rooted in rich cultural traditions. [CLICK HERE](#) to apply.

[1 Hotel Hanalei Bay](#) is hiring a Director of Food & Beverage... and this position reports directly to Mother Earth. A career at 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay is more than punching a clock. It's about changing the world - little by little. This luxuriously sustainable hotel is rooted in a love for nature. If you strive to be a leader second-to-none, know how to motivate a team, elevate standards, and cultivate an environment for learning as we all continue to grow, this is a position for you! If you are passionate of progressive Food & Beverage in an high-pace upscale environment, please apply online at [1 Hotel Hanalei Bay](#).

RITZ CARLTON TURTLE BAY



The iconic [Ritz Carlton Turtle Bay Resort](#) is hiring a Director of Marketing. This position directs the development, production and implementation of all marketing strategies and related projects associated with the property's revenue and marketing objectives. Poignantly posed on sacred land in Kahuku on O'ahu's North Shore, this position is best suited for Ladies and Gentlemen who create experiences so exceptional that long after a guests' stay, the experience stays with them. Attracting the world's top hospitality professionals who curate lifelong memories, The Ritz Carlton believes that everyone succeeds when they are empowered to be creative, thoughtful and compassionate. For more information and or to apply, please visit [Marriott Careers](#).



FOUR SEASONS RESORT HUALALAI

The world-famed resort, the [Four Seasons Resort Hualalalai](#) at Historic Ka'ūpūlehu is looking for a Sales Manager. Candidates with a passion for excellence, expertise in hospitality sales operations and proven territory leadership experience are invited to apply for a career with Four Seasons. As a member of the Sales team, the Sales Manager drives a strategic plan and purpose towards account growth across multiple hotel disciplines to deliver exceptional experience and retention. Oceanfront splendour in perfect harmony with nature. Surrounded by white-sand beaches and black-lava landscapes, Four Seasons Resort Hualalalai is perfectly situated for all kinds of island adventures. For more information apply online at [Four Seasons](#).

# TOURISM INDUSTRY IN Q1 2025



## FACT SHEET: BENEFITS OF HAWAI'I'S TOURISM ECONOMY DATA PROVIDED BY [HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY](#)

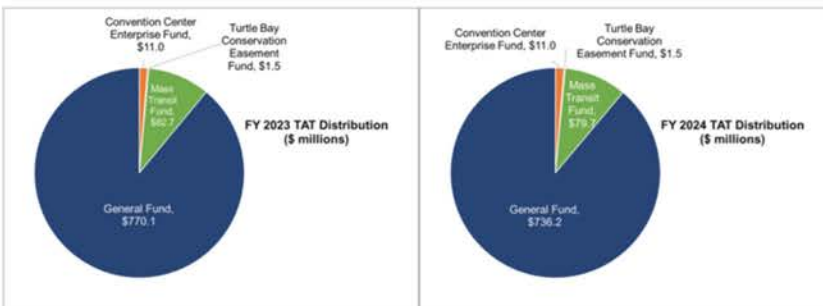
### Hawai'i Tourism Industry in the First Quarter of 2025:

- **Total Visitor Spending: \$5.61 billion**, which was an increase compared to the first quarter of 2024 (\$5.27 billion, +6.5%) and first quarter of 2019 (\$4.49 billion, +24.9%).
- **State Tax Revenue (direct, indirect, and induced): \$651.2 million**, compared to \$615.3 billion (+5.8%) in the first quarter of 2024 and \$524.6 million (+24.1%) in the first quarter of 2019.
- **Visitor Arrivals: 2,455,747 visitors**, compared to 2,413,809 visitors (+1.7%) in the first quarter of 2024 and 2,527,277 visitors (-2.8%) in the first quarter of 2019.
- **Average Daily Census<sup>1</sup>: 244,675 visitors**, compared to 239,802 visitors (+2.0%) in the first quarter of 2024 and 253,382 visitors (-3.4%) in the first quarter of 2019.
- **Total Air Service: 14,950 transpacific flights with 3,315,344 seats**, compared to 14,884 flights (+0.4%) with 3,328,299 seats (-0.4%) in the first quarter of 2024 and 15,214 flights (-1.7%) with 3,337,280 seats (-0.7%) in the first quarter of 2019.

### TAT Collections (Fiscal Year)

- FY 2018: The state collected \$554.9 million in TAT; an increase of 9.2 percent compared to FY 2017. (The TAT rate was increased to 10.25 percent, effective January 1, 2018. Tax revenues generated to be allocated to the Mass Transit Special Fund).
- FY 2019: The state collected \$600.3 million in TAT; an increase of 8.2 percent compared to FY 2018.
- FY 2020: The state collected \$564.3 million in TAT, down 6.0 percent compared to FY 2019.
- FY 2021: The state collected \$215.3 million in TAT; a decrease of 61.8 percent compared to FY 2020.
- FY2022: The state collected \$738.7 million in TAT; an increase of 243.1 percent compared to FY 2021.
- FY2023: The state collected \$865.3 million in TAT; an increase of 17.1 percent compared to FY 2022.
- FY2024: The state collected \$762.4 million in TAT, compared \$865.3 million (-11.9%) collected in FY 2023.
- For FY2025 (July 2024 – March 2025), the state collected \$611.2 million in TAT, compared \$627.2 million (-2.6%) collected in FY 2024 (July 2023 – March 2024), and \$516.8 million (+18.3%) collected in FY 2020 (July 2019 – March 2020) (Preliminary data from Dept of Taxation).

<sup>1</sup> Average daily census measures the number of visitors present on any given day.



### HISTORICAL VISITOR SPENDING & JOB SUPPORTED DATA:

Year	Total Daily Expenditures, Includes Sup Business	# of Jobs Supported
2023	\$57.2 million	213,000
2022	\$54.3 million	202,000
2021	\$36.0 million	160,000
2020	NA	NA
2019	\$48.9 million	217,000
2018	\$48.3 million	215,000
2017	\$46.0 million	205,000
2016	\$43.5 million	194,000
2015	\$41 million	177,000
2014	\$41 million	168,000
2013	\$40 million	163,000
2012	\$39 million	161,000

### Hotel Occupancy Rates:

Occupancy Rate	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State	73.3%	74.7%	73.6%	57.5%	37.6%	80.7%	80.3%	80.2%	79.1%
O'ahu	79.8%	79.6%	75.4%	55.6%	39.2%	84.0%	83.7%	83.5%	84.2%
Maui County	61.6%	66.1%	67.6%	60.3%	34.6%	77.7%	75.9%	77.0%	75.8%
Island of Hawai'i	67.0%	70.2%	74.9%	60.5%	39.7%	77.0%	74.6%	74.8%	68.7%
Kaua'i	73.2%	74.6%	77.7%	57.2%	33.2%	72.5%	77.5%	75.7%	72.6%

Source: STR, Inc.



PICTURED ABOVE HULA HĀLAU 'O KAMUELA  
PHOTO CREDIT: MERRIE MONARCH FESTIVAL

## MERRIE MONARCH FESTIVAL

The 2025 Merrie Monarch Festival wrapped up in beautiful Hilo Hawai'i on Saturday, April 26.

The Merrie Monarch Festival is a week-long event held each spring. The event perpetuates the Hawai'ian culture and features the world's longest running and largest hula competition.

The festival, which is a 501(c)(3) non-profit was started by the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce in 1963.

A real community affair, the week-long festivities include an invitational arts fair, hula performances, cultural demonstrations, and a parade that meanders through downtown Hilo.

Dedicated in honor and memory of King David La'amea Kalākaua, known as the "Merrie Monarch", the hula competition features the crowning of the coveted Miss Aloha Hula title, Hula Kahiko (traditional hula), and Hula 'Auana (contemporary hula). Hālau (hula groups) from

across the Pae 'āina (Hawai'ian archipelago) and as far away as the North American Continent graced the center stage at this year's festival.

The Kaua'i born, Jaedyn Janae Puahaulani Pavao, was crowned Miss Aloha Hula 2025 under the direction of Kumu Leinā'ala Pavao Jardin of Hālau Ka Lei Mokihana o Leinā'ala. This was a first for the island of Kaua'i and Pavao Jardin who consistently places in the festival in recent years.

The wahine (women) of Hula Hālau 'O Kamuela and the Kāne (men) of Hālau Nā Kamalei O Līlīehua, both of O'ahu, took top honors for Hula Kahiko. Additionally, the wahine of Hālau Ka Lei Mokihana o Leinā'ala of Kaua'i and the kane Hālau Nā Kamalei O Līlīehua of O'ahu took top honors in Hula 'Auana.

This year's overall winner title went to Hula Hālau 'O Kamuela solidifying their place in the hula community. It is never too early to start planning your Merrie Monarch trip to Hilo!

*mahalo for reading!*



**ALOHA**  
CHAPTER



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