

ALOHA!!!

E komo mai... welcome! We're so happy you'll be coming to visit our paradise home. For some, this may be a first or second visit, so here's a few thoughts and bit of insider knowledge from your friends at NOAA's Pacific Services Center.

Once you arrive at the airport, get your things from baggage claim (more difficult to find that you'd think), and grab the designated transportation from the airport to the hotel, you may want to head out and about. Hard to believe, but there's more to see and do on O'ahu than just attend the SOS Users Group Meeting!

This list focuses primarily on the Waikīkī area, and particularly the good stuff near your hotel. There's just too much to capture about every part of O'ahu . Plus, these are a short trolley, bus or cab ride away from your hotel. Cabs are pricey, though. Or get there using my favorite mode of transportation around here – walking! But be forewarned... they take jaywalking very seriously here. You will get a ticket if you cross the street against the light or not in a crosswalk. Anyway, let's get started.

Dressing the part:

Shorts, slacks, short sleeve shirts, and long sleeves maybe at night... it gets neither very cold nor very formal around here. Bring an umbrella if you don't want to be caught in the inevitable sporadic rain showers. Can't have the rainbows without the rain! Comfortable shoes are a must, many people walk around in flip-flops (called "slippah" here) more than anything else. **Don't wear a tie!** Button up shirts are plenty formal. Sunglasses are always necessary, as is sunscreen if you're going to be outside for more than 20 minutes.

Getting around:

Important: For the meeting, a bus will pick you up from the hotel, transport you to the Bishop Museum for the meeting, and then return you to the hotel in the evening. This list is for getting around outside the designated meeting hours.

Don't jaywalk. Even a little bit. But walk as much as possible.



The best people to ask for directions anywhere are the bus drivers. So if you're lost and can get to a bus stop, usually the driver will extend the courtesy of helping direct you on your way!

Cab – easy to get, expensive to use. About \$15-\$20 for a ride from your hotel to the far end of Waikīkī.

Trolley – the Pink line stops right outside the hotel and heads into Waikīkī. <http://www.Waikikitrolley.com/> One way fares are \$2, a four day pass runs \$49 if you buy here or \$39 if you buy it online.

The Bus – Yes, it's called "The Bus" and it's a great way to get around the island. <http://www.thebus.org/> Picks up right outside the hotel, in fact. \$2 one-way with a free transfer. You can get a 4-day bus pass for \$20 at any ABC Convenience store.



Things to do and see in Waikīkī:

Hula mound – 6PM Th-Sun on Kuhio Beach Park near the statue of Duke Kahanamoku on the 2400 block of Kalākaua Ave. Best Hula on the island. Kids learn to hula there and are so cute. Good music, a different hula group every night. Super buff Hawaiian men running around lighting torches, too. Great spot for catching sunset.

Friday night at Hilton Hawaiian Village – celebration, dancing, hula, food, ends with fireworks. You can watch the fireworks on the beach in front of the hotel for free.

Zoo – <http://www.honolulu zoo.org/>

Aquarium – <http://www.waquarium.org/>

Things to do on or in the water of Waikīkī:

There's a booth on the beach behind the Duke Kahanamoku statue to make reservations for a few activities. Decent prices, don't worry that you're not getting a good deal.

Once you're done doing any of these activities in Waikīkī, go to Duke's on the beach (in the Outrigger Waikīkī building, next to Surfrider building, 2335 Kalākaua Ave.) for drinks on the patio.

Surf lessons – Waikīkī Beach boys. Best place to learn surfing in the US. Small group lesson (6-8 people). Get board and instructor for an hour.

Ourtigger Canoe paddle – Waikīkī Beach Boys do this too. Shows you how to paddle, surf a couple waves, for 8-10 people.

Catamaran rides – same group, different activity. Two types of trips, one active, the other less so.
<http://www.outriggercatamaranhawaii.com/>

Snorkel – All the way down on Queens Beach, (head toward Diamond Head) near the intersection of Kapahulu and Kalakāua streets, there's a jetty with gazebo at end. To the left of the



jetty is a stand that rents body boards, fins, snorkels, masks. That's a body board only beach, FYI.

Things to do just outside Waikīkī Beach:

Visit other beaches! Just kidding, there's so many I can't even begin to start listing them. One I will mention is the [Ala Moana Beach park](#) right down the street from your hotel. I love it here because it has calm protected waters in which to take a long swim, especially pretty for a sunset workout. Many other swimmers second (and third) these thoughts. It's a nice spot to jog or walk, too. Even paddle board or surf if you're inclined.

I could list and describe a bunch of activities, but the Outrigger Hotel website does a MUCH better job.

<http://www.outrigger.com/destinations/hawaiian-islands/oahu-Waikīkī> and click on "Oahu Attractions and Sightseeing." That website is organized in better fashion than the also very good <http://www.gohawaii.com/oahu/> website.

But, if I were picking a few little activities relatively local to the hotel or easily accessible by bus, I'd visit Hanauma Bay on July 26th for the night time snorkel, hike up Diamond Head, go "play" at Ala Moana beach park near your hotel, and grab a surf lesson in Waikīkī.



Things to eat:

You may see some of these things on a menu or just out and about. They are definitely local and mostly worth trying.

Manapua – steamed or baked dough balls with meat inside. Try the Char siu (sweet seasoned pork) or any other flavor that sounds familiar.

Malassadas – similar to a doughnut, these slightly chewy dough balls are covered with sugar. Best from Leonards on Kapahulu, but most other bakeries (Napoleons, etc) have them too.

Musubi – a brick of rice with a slab of Spam on top, wrapped in a ribbon of seaweed and sometimes sprinkled with furikake (sprinkle of seaweed, sesame seeds, other seasonings).

Kalua pork – slow cooked pulled pork, salty, stays pink, not smoked, either by itself or often cooked with cabbage

Plate Lunch – a huge portion of rice and macaroni salad with a variety of meat dishes. I don't know why macaroni salad is huge here and served with everything. Rainbow Drive In is THE local place to go – on Kapahulu Avenue at the far end of Waikīkī

Loco Moco – Two scoops of rice topped with hamburger patties, topped with gravy and a cooked egg or two. Hearty meal.

Huli Huli Chicken – found mostly in parking lots at roadside stands, you'll smell the barbecued chicken before you see it. Check the Ward Farmers Market parking lot, near Starbucks and Jamba Juice, or near the Buca de Beppo end. The barbecue is a sweet and savory thin coating of flavor. Yum.

Lau Lau (pork or chicken) – meat wrapped in ti and taro leaves and steamed.

Lomi salmon – chopped up tomatoes, onion, salted salmon, and other seasoning. Reminds me of pico de gallo with salmon mixed in.

Poke – fish or other seafood mixed with strong flavored ingredients and served cold. Many varieties but a few of my favorites are:



Ahi Poke – shoyu type. It's raw tuna with seaweed, soy, ginger and sesame oil and seeds. My favorite.

Tako poke – cooked and sliced octopus with onion and vinaigrette type coating

Mussel poke – I like mussels. Not everyone does.

Sushi – you know what this is and it's found in abundance here. But word of caution if you're going to a sushi stand rather than restaurant - they put mayo in the handrolls or California rolls and some tuna rolls use canned tuna if you don't know what you're buying. No, I don't know why. Welcome to Hawai'i.

Places to eat:

I'd have a hard time picking the must-visit places. There are SO MANY good restaurants and eateries here for all tastes and budgets. I'm almost afraid to list a few, for fear that you'll be missing a bunch of good eateries if you just stick to this list. Explore!

Very near your hotel:

Tsukiji Fish Market and Restaurant – second floor in Ala Moana Center. good food, casual environment, is a buffet of sushi and yummy food. Call in for group seating.

Macy's, The Pineapple Room - in Ala Moana Center. Has a restaurant with a menu created by the famous Chef Alan Wong. Pricey.

Tanaka of Tokyo – Ala Moana Center, Hookipa Terrace, Fourth Floor. Japanese steakhouse. Walk down Atkinson toward Ala Moana Park, on the left there... Watch the flying knives once you sit down to eat. Pricey.

Pho One – 1505 Kapiolani Blvd. Vietnamese food on front side of Kapi'olani. Small place where only half the people speak English (read: good food)

Angelo Pietro's – 1585 Kapiolani Blvd Ste 110. Italian Japanese fusion, have to try it to believe it. Small place, intimate casual atmosphere. The ume sauce is worth trying.



Shokudo – good Japanese food, neat, interesting Japanese décor, super yummy bread waffle desserts. Fun place to go. Right next to Angelo Pietro's

Less near your hotel, but still walkable or worth mentioning:

Irifune – 563 Kapahulu Ave. Good food, Japanese with Hawaiian slant, good garlic ahi. You will smell of garlic for a while. BYOB is great because you can have a drink with friends while you're waiting outside for a table. The place is small and busy, so don't go in large groups. Interesting atmosphere and when there's a birthday, they turn off the lights and ask everyone to look at the stars on the ceiling. Yes, it's twinkly lights.

Mekong Thai Restaurant - 2 locations, 1295 S. Beretania St. and 1726 S. King St. King Street site is a bit better, little cozy place. Good Thai, no liquor license so BYOB

L&L Hawaiian Barbecue – a fast food chain that features many local favorite fried foods, a few "healthy" options. Can't go wrong with Chicken Katsu (fried chicken using panko bread crumbs)

Not so close to the hotel:

E&O Trading Company – a cool vibe here, the second floor of Ward Center mall. I only mention because Wednesdays feature half price bottles of wine and super cheap pupus (appetizers). It has decent unique food that is a hodgepodge of Asian fusion, middle eastern flavors, Hawaiian touches.

Olive Tree Café – Near Kahala Mall, 4614 Kilauea Ave. Greek food, cool atmosphere, busy place. If you're in the mood for good Greek. Trolley accessible.

Shorebird – airport O'ahu tourist magazines have a 50% off coupon for this restaurant located within the Outrigger Reef Hotel. It's on the beach with a beautiful view of Diamond Head, grill your own meat (and pineapple, yum), 'local food' at the food bar, local musicians play. One of my mom and dad's favorites. It cracks me up, but is delicious.



Things to buy:

There is a scad of **“normal” shopping** near the hotel at Ala Moana Center. Typical mall, except visitors are often surprised that it’s an “outdoors” mall. You can also step across Pi’ikoi St (away from Diamond Head) to Ward Center or Ward Warehouse, which features many unique shops.

For **super high end**, Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center is in Waikīkī. It spans the whole of Kalākaua Ave and holds Fifth Ave type eye candy or super delight for shoppers with penchant and purse for those type of goods.

For more **souvenir flavor or trinket items** in Waikīkī try International Marketplace (2330 Kalākaua Ave., next to Waikīkī Town Center) <http://www.internationalmarketplaceWaikīkī.com/> in the center of Waikīkī across from Outrigger Reef or drive down to the Aloha Swap Meet at Aloha Stadium on Saturday. `tis entertaining to bargain at table after table of aloha items. Also, don’t be afraid to pick up things at any ABC convenience store. Seriously, there’s as many ABC stores in Waikīkī as there are coffee shops in Seattle. Well, it seems that way.

Art on the Zoo Fence – Saturdays, literally hanging on the outside of the zoo fence at Montserrat and Kalākaua Aves. (Queens Beach)

Craft fair - Saturdays in Kapi’olani Park, down just a bit from the Art on the Fence.

To all our guests,

Hope this is a helpful start to a fantastic visit. We want you to enjoy yourself as much as possible at the SOS Users Group Meeting and on our little island!!!

- NOAA Pacific Services Center

PS - The “I” in the above list is me, Alyssa Gundersen, so if the “I” in the above missive is dead wrong, let me know your experience! I’ll see you at the meeting.

