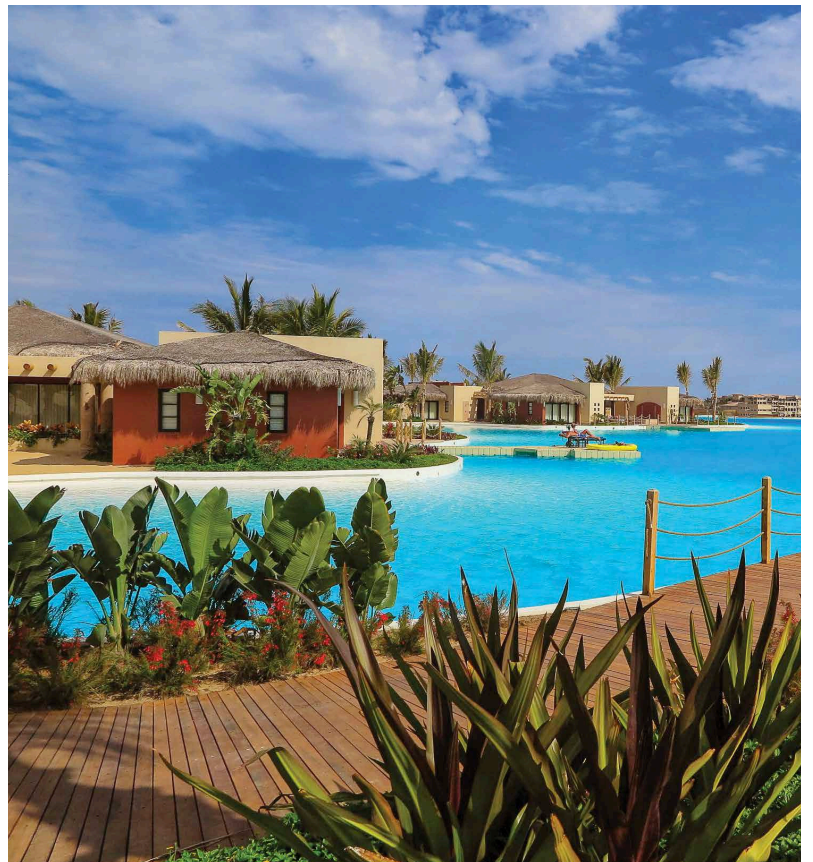


SUN and SAND

Mexico and Hawaii Getaways





HAWAII

DISCOVERING THE BIG ISLAND

One of the ultimate tropical destinations, count us lucky that the island of Hawaii, or the Big Island, and its northwest Kohala Coast is a relatively short plane ride away. This part of the island is set among black and red lava rock, much created by centuries of activity from Hualalai, one of the five volcanoes on the island. It is not only untouched beauty and splendor but also teaming with outdoor adventure and activities to make a vacay that is as beach bumming or action-packed as you like. What perhaps is the biggest pull to this part of the Pacific is the spectacular beach resorts with front row views that spill into the warm yet refreshing oceans on which they are perched.



Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows

We have to admit it would be very hard to get up and move from gently swaying hammocks on the beach overlooking what could only be described as the perfect water view. But maybe take baby steps, padding over to private beach cabana chairs while ordering drinks to be served to you there. That is a workout for one day. And it is bliss.

Other days at the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows are more active, taking advantage of activities both on and off this luxury Preferred Hotel & Resort property nestled on oceanfront beaches among spectacular lava formations. One idea? Explore the ancient Kalahuiupua's fishponds maintained by the green resort, where you'll see marine life from sea turtles to hammerhead sharks, eels and a variety of tropical fish. Other eco-friendly and eco-tourism programs on the property are recognized from solar energy innovations to the sea turtle program and environmental stewardship for maintenance of their award-winning gold course.

Whether you work up an appetite playing golf, sailing off on a catamaran ride, snorkeling or switching off from pool to beach and back again, choose from casual dining at the Bay Terrace restaurant, pool-side dining at the Ocean Bar & Grill or feast on Hawaiian cuisine at the oceanfront Canoe House.

Then, there's always another day. And the world-ranked spa is full service and the ideal spot to stop off before heading back to the hammock whispering your name.

Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows
maunalani.com (808) 885.6622



Mauna Kea and Hapuna

Celebrating its 50th anniversary last year, the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel is a luxury landmark here, but it's anything but stuck in the past. Modern guest rooms, an award-winning 18-hole championship golf course, the latest beach equipment and activities, beachside dining, soul-soothing spa treatments and more make the resort perfectly situated to meet today's discerning travelers.

That's not to say, though, they still don't bring it with the Hawaiian traditions travelers also enjoy (we are so hard to please!) including twice weekly luaus, lei-making and hula classes and a museum-quality Pacific and Asian art collection gathered by founder Laurance S. Rockefeller, who built this hotel around the concept that Hawaii was the perfect spot where east meets west.

Also on the Mauna Kea Resort, its slightly younger sister resort, Hapuna, is strategically spread out so all beautifully appointed rooms have ocean views. The crystal blue waters call boogie boarders and waders alike, as the snorkelers hug the rocky coastline that wraps around to turtle point—a lagoon a short walk from the main beach where turtles and other fish frolick among the rocks and waves. The Ocean Terrace (with, yes, ocean views) is the perfect brunch spot and the Coast Grille at night is ideal for watching the sun set over a multi-course dinner.

A sure-to-be-favorite activity at Mauna Kea is the evening standup paddle boarding trip, Glow SUP. The group takes off from the beach at Mauna Kea on boards equipped with LED lights along the bottom to attract plankton who then attract manta rays—these beautiful and large animals swim under, next to and around the boards, performing what can only be described as underwater ballet allowing visitors to relish in being in the “wild” with these amazing creatures.

Mauna Kea Beach Hotel

princeresortshawaii.com/mauna-kea-beach-hotel (866) 977.4589

Helicopter Heights

With so much of Hawaii covered in lava flow, deep valleys and rain forest, more than 70 percent of the island is only accessible to be viewed by air. So up, up and away in a helicopter you must go. Seasoned pilots (many former marines from California and Hawaii marine bases) educated in the island's history, topography and ecology lead a tour as you soar over active volcano and lava lakes, green and black sand beach coastlines, rain forests and waterfalls. The lucky ones even get to see a rainbow on the ride.

Paradise Helicopters

paradisecopters.com (866) 876.7422



1 Mauna Lani Bay Golf Course. 2 Mauna Kea Beach Hotel (photo by Mauna Kea Resort). 3 Hapuna Resort lobby (photo by Mauna Kea Resort). 4 Mauna Kea evening paddle boarding (photo by Sydney Nebens). 5 Zip line (photo by KapohoKine Adventures). 6 Helicopter over falls (photo by Paradise Helicopter Tours).



Zipping and Volcanoes

Spend a full day exploring the wet side of the island (about a 2-hour drive from the Kohala coast) near the town of Hilo. KapoHokine Adventures can pick you up at your hotel and whisk you off for the day (taking the single cross island road and then a bit of off-roading with a narrated tour along the way) with you soaring above treetops, over waterfalls, the Honolii River and more. You'll ride along 8 dual track zip lines (a proprietary pulley braking system means relatively soft landings that ease you on to the next platform), stopping for lunch with a picturesque view of waterfall No. 1 and some of the local wild pigs if they happen to be hanging around.

After the last—1/4 mile—ride, you'll load back in the van and head off to Volcano National Park—home to the active Kilauea volcano. Take a guided walk through trails along the crater rim, experience lava tunnels and steaming vents that release this active volcano's heat. Night is the best time to see the lava glow, so you'll circle back for that later. It's an early BBQ dinner at a nearby winery (wine tasting and winery tour included) first, then the short trip back for the nighttime spectacular before the evening is through. An absolutely amazing day that's a must-do on our list.

KapoHokine Adventures

kapohokine.com (808) 964.1000



MEXICO

CABO'S NEW JEWEL-THE DIAMANTE

The word Diamante is known to mean diamond or jewel, and indeed this is exactly what you will find at the new spectacular Diamante golf resort and spa, located just six miles from downtown Cabo San Lucas, Mexico and a quick 2-hour flight from Los Angeles. It didn't take long for this extraordinary region of the world to bounce back after Hurricane Odile swept through the southern tip of Baja California peninsula almost two years ago. As a matter of fact, it is thriving stronger than ever!



Last month, Powerhouse Lux Media gathered up a few LA locals to visit the extraordinary Diamante golf resort and spa. This astonishing property and all that it had to offer captivated us. Nestled on 1,500 acres of stunning coastline and magnificent dunes along 1.5 miles of Pacific coastline, Diamante is a paradise of beauty, privacy, luxury and world-class service. And along one of the most pristine beaches anywhere by the Pacific Ocean, you'll find the ultimate in spectacular golf courses and facilities—The Dunes Course at Diamante, designed by Tiger Woods in 2014 and is ranked No. 38 in the world by "GOLF Magazine." The complex is complete with an awe-inspiring 14-acre practice and performance center.

Another highlight of the property is a 10-acre manmade turquoise blue crystal lagoon where guests can paddle board, kayak, swim, enjoy a swim-up bar and large Jacuzzi or lounge on the beautiful sandy beaches. Guest villas line the lagoon with private docks and are simply magnificent. With dramatic long-range views of the Pacific Ocean, natural arroyos, mature vegetation and native dunes, the Diamante's handcrafted hacienda-style architecture of the villas, estate homes, beach houses and penthouse suites are exquisite.

1 The Diamante Resort in Cabo San Lucas. 2 The Dunes Golf Course at Diamante designed by Tiger Woods. 3 The 10-acre crystal lagoon. 4 The pool area at one of the various villas located right on the golf course. 5 Hacienda-style villas on The Dunes Course. 6 Full spa services at the Diamante spa and resort. 7 Colorful and spicy vegetables from the organic garden on property. 8 Romantic horseback rides on the beach.



Also on property for guests to take advantage of is a premier sports complex with facilities for tennis, training, baseball and soccer and their world-class spa and fitness center. Los Angeles native and real estate executive/fitness model, Kim Kanner says, "Diamante Fitness center is one of the best gyms I've seen in a very long time with fantastic state-of-the-art equipment and gorgeous views of the 25-meter, 82-foot-long lap pool. I felt like I was working out in an Olympic training center." Diamante recruited International fitness trainer Modu Seye to oversee the fitness center and design a variety of fitness modalities. If you're not one for weights, another option is to sign up for Modu's fit camps using Diamante's sand dunes and your own body weight for low-impact training.

Los Angeles chef and wine expert Kristine Bocchino found her sweet spot on the property the minute she came across the organic vegetable garden filled with ripe and colorful heirloom tomatoes, chili peppers and a field of exotic, spicy and peppery greens. "The squash blossoms that are frequently an elusive and seasonal 'hot commodity' at Los Angeles farmer's markets were in abundance here, and immediately thoughts of a 5-course squash blossom tasting menu started racing through my head...crab stuffed and tempura battered squash blossoms over a light tomato sauce, squash blossom risotto with organic tarragon and seared sea scallops," she exclaimed. Moving on to the Club House, we ran into one of Diamante's chefs, Jose, who had cooked dinner for us the night before. Bright-eyed and ready for the new day, Jose was helping out behind the counter, putting up beautiful plates of Eggs Benedict and a perfectly cooked omelet bursting with some of those greens, vegetables and herbs that we had just seen in the garden.



Whether it's refined cuisine under the stars or casual fare after a round of golf, their chefs can prepare the perfect 4-course meal, or just the ultimate snack. And for those nights when you'd rather stay in, their concierge can arrange for a personal chef to prepare dinner for you in your own property home.

And when you are not eating, there is no shortage of activities, whether you prefer the crystal salt-water lagoon, golf, horseback riding on the beach or a trip into Cabo San Lucas for shopping among village artisans or hitting one of the restaurants/nightclubs for dinner and dancing... there is plenty of opportunity for excitement or simply rest and relaxation at this jewel of a property.



To learn more visit:
diamatecabosanlucas.com