

MUSEUMS AND GARDENS

Beyond our global image as a place of beaches and sun, Honolulu is a major American metropolis. The Hawaii Opera Theatre, now-in limbo Honolulu Symphony, and many theatres are just part of our cultural offerings. We also have a diverse group of museums that preserve and promote the history of our islands and the talents of our people. Pearl Harbor, the Honolulu Academy of Arts, Bishop Museum, and Contemporary Art Museum are the better known ones, out of many located here in Honolulu. Oahu also has many scenic gardens for those who appreciate nature, besides the dozens of hiking trails and beaches already enjoyed by many. So when you have some free time and want to explore and enjoy our islands, why not pay a visit?

IN ITS OWN CATEGORY

Lucoral Museum. See what it's like to walk through a cave as well as all the many precious stones that are mined and turned into pretty jewelry that we admire. This small museum on Kuhio Avenue is a fun place for school field trips after visiting the nearby Honolulu Zoo. Open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., admission is free. Relax by making a take home souvenir bracelet, \$2.

Hawaii Children's Discovery Center. The popular children's museum is a fun place for young children to play as well as for parents to throw birthday parties. The Center also provides educational themed day camps during school breaks and other events (Tooth Fairy Day, Robotics Day, and many others) throughout the year.

OUTDOOR GARDENS

Board of Water Supply. The xeriscape garden in Halawa is a learning center for the Board of Water Supply. Here school groups learn about how important it is to use water carefully because it takes 25 years for the rain to filter through the mountains down into Hawaii's precious freshwater reservoir. The elliptic path features many plants that help conserve water while adorning home lawns with their attractive features. The large, shaded lawn also gives school children a scenic surrounding for eating their brown bag lunches.

Lyon Arboretum. Nestled in splendorous Manoa Valley, this University of Hawaii treasure rewards hikers with a well-worth-it view of the southeast coast upon ascending the top of its two refreshing, rain forest trails. The Children's Garden displays flora planted by children in its nature education camps. Classes for grown-ups are also available on a variety of garden related topics, especially cooking!

Urban Garden Center. Ever drive out west and see a big garden below Home Depot and wonder about it? That's the University of Hawaii's other garden. Children can enjoy the themed

sections (pizza, bugs, bunny, sun dial, to name a few), take an adventure along the boardwalk, and even challenge each other to find their way out of the hedged maze.

Senator Fong's Plantation & Gardens. Revered Senator Hiram Fong loved the natural beauty of Hawaii. He established the plantation and gardens to preserve and display the fragrant, colorful fauna of our islands. Visitors can enjoy the different areas named in honor of the presidents under whom Senator Fong served in his long Congressional career. Lei making classes are also available. Open 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. daily.

Waimea Falls. A hop, skip, and jump across the famous Waimea Bay, the famed valley gives visitors a place to escape the big city, with lush tropical greenery and at the end of the trek, large waterfall cascading into a very deep pond.

The City and County of Honolulu operates five botanical gardens: Liliuokalani, Foster, Hoomaluhia, Koko Crater, and Wahiawa.

Liliuokalani. Along Kuakini Street across from Rehabilitation Hospital, Liliuokalani Garden is a smaller sister to the larger Foster Garden on the other side of the H-1. The stroll is an easy one, leading to a low waterfall. The lawn makes for a quick picnic getaway in urban Oahu.

Foster. Site of the annual Midsummer Night's Gleam, visitors to the event find that the garden is just as beautiful at night as it is in the day. Other summer events for the family to enjoy are its story / craft / tour for young children on Thursday mornings and its concert in the park on Thursday evenings. The large garden features fragrant mock orange, cannonball and cotton trees, a large Buddha statue, and a greenhouse.

Hoomaluhia. Set just north of the Koolau Mountains, the expansive Hoomaluhia is the one park that visitors can drive through instead of walking. Weekend fishing for children, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., is popular, as well as just plain old chasing the ducks. Hoomaluhia is home to a lovely art gallery featuring local artists.

Wahiawa. A few miles before the well known Dole Plantation is a garden tucked away in Wahiawa that provides a quiet walk along its easy, paved trail. The bridge on the west end of the garden gives a lookout view of the whole layout of the very tall trees that make their home in this California Avenue setting.

Koko Crater. The striking feature of Koko Crater Garden is the feeling that you're walking in a science fiction movie, and that at any turn, an alien might just appear. For those who like that kind of fun, the foliage in Koko Crater is a real contrast to the lush tropical rain forest plants of its four sister gardens. The dry paths are lined with xeriscape type palms and other flora.

Next week: Oahu's other museums.