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Maui and Lana'i Activity News for the Winter of 2011

See What's New with Maui County Activities, Attractions and Tours This Winter

By [John Fischer](#), About.com Guide

There are a many reasons to choose Maui for your next vacation destination. It could be to enjoy its many world-class beaches, experience its breath-taking vistas including incredible sunrises and sunsets, discover a tropical paradise, or to just relax and get away from it all.

Part of Maui's lure is that it offers such a wide variety of activities, many family-oriented. What's equally great is that new activities and tours appear almost every month. Here's a look at what's new with activities, attractions and tours on Maui and Lana'i for the winter of 2011.

Tours and Activities

[22nd Annual Maui Onion Festival](#)¹

Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants hosts their signature event, the Maui Onion Festival, honoring Maui's most famous export Saturday, May 7, 2011. The fun, family event is open to the public, featuring a full day of celebrity chefs demonstrating cooking techniques followed by food sampling, best onion recipe contest, keiki and adult 'raw' Maui Onion eating contest, food and product booths, and entertainment. Chefs include Roy Yamaguchi, Roy's Restaurants; D.K. Kodama, Sansei Restaurants and Cane & Taro; Brian Etheredge, Capische? and 2010 winner James McDonald of Pacific'O and I'o and Oo Farm. For more information visit their website or call 808-661-4567.

[Cirque Polynesia](#)²

Cirque Polynesia, Maui's premier cirque show, has added a new death-defying act act – The Wheel of Death. This amazing contraption is a 35-foot-high structure that resembles a giant pendulum with a wheel on one end. The wheel rotates around a central axle without any gears or pistons but is instead powered by the performer's own leg strength. The artist performs a range of tricks while running, skipping and jumping. Cirque Polynesia continues to feature high-wire acts, contortion, aerial illusionists and acrobats, daredevil balancing and split second quick-change. For more information call 808-667-4540 or visit their website.

[Expeditions Maui-Lana'i Ferry](#)³

With five daily departures aboard Expeditions, visitors enjoy spectacular views of Maui County, including the islands of Maui, Lanai, Molokai and Kaho'olawe. On a clear day you may even see the Big Island of Hawaii, and from January thru April, you'll marvel at the magnificent presence of Maui's "gentle giants" and most loyal repeat visitors — the Humpback whales! Cost is \$30 per adult and \$20 per child (kamaaina or resident rates are available). For more information, visit their website or call 808-661-3756 or toll-free at 1-800-695-2624.

[ExploringMaui.com](#)⁴

ExploringMaui.com releases iPhone application for whale watchers. "The Humpback Whale Guide" iPhone application is intended for anyone that wants a reference guide to these beautiful mammals. It's a wonderful guide, written by Melissa Meeker and filled with the photography of Jim Tierney and Michael Sweet. Interactive features include allowing users to use GPS to track where they've seen whales (and post it on Facebook) and a Humpback Quiz Show game for kids where they can compete to see who knows more about these amazing cetaceans. The iPhone application is downloadable through iTunes for \$2.99. For more information, please contact jim@exploringmaui.com⁵.

[Four Seasons Resort Lanai at Manele Bay](#)⁶

Four Seasons Resort Lanai at Manele Bay offers guided hikes. Recently launched as part of Manele Bay's new fitness program, guests are invited on a guided hike to explore the Fisherman's Trail. The hike includes historical and island insight, with views of an ancient Hawaiian village site and heiau (temple). The hike is offered every Saturday at 8 a.m., with a suggested \$10 donation to benefit the Lanai Cultural & Heritage Center. For more information, please call their Concierge at 808-565-2388.

[Four Seasons Resort Lanai at Manele Bay](#)⁷

Four Seasons Resort Lanai at Manele Bay offers sunrise beachside Yoga. Experience a true Hawaiian yoga program with Manele Bay's Sunrise Beachside yoga, offered to resort guests on Wednesday mornings. The gentle lulling of the waves, combined with the fragrant trade winds, creates a relaxing setting for flow yoga on the beach. The complimentary program increases flexibility and awareness in the body. For more information, please call their Concierge at 808-565-2388.

[KPOA and Kaanapali Beach Hotel](#)⁸

Beginning January 23, 2011, Kaanapali Beach Hotel will be partnering with Maui's KPOA Radio to produce live broadcasts during their award winning Sunday Champagne Brunch. The live broadcasts will take place on the 4th Sunday of each month, and will include live entertainment, live guest interviews and lots of fun with Maui's favorite local deejays. For reservations, please call 808-667-0124 or visit their website.

[Lanai Activities](#)⁹

Western Adventures is a welcome addition to Lanai's fast-growing list of activities. They offer a variety of specially designed horseback riding adventures for the experienced rider, lessons for novices, easy scenic rides for the nature lover and lots more. Trophy hunts for Axis deer and Mufalon sheep are a specialty and they promise an experience like no other in the secluded, serene environment of the island of Lanai. For more information, please call Lanai Hospitality Partners at 808-565-7211.

[Maui Zipline Company at Maui Tropical Plantation](#)¹⁰

Come and soar over lush tropical gardens while learning about Maui's rich agricultural history. Experience spectacular views of the Tropical Plantation, West Maui Mountains, and Haleakala. The tour features five side-by-side ziplines, ranging from 350 to 900 feet, with the last line zipping through giant swaying palms and over the tropical lagoon. The zipline tour is a fun and exciting activity the entire family will enjoy. Participants must weigh between 50 lbs. and 260 lbs. For reservations or more information, contact Maui Zipline Company at 808-633-2464 or visit their website.

[The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua](#)¹¹

Experience exclusive, intimate whale watching adventures that promise wondrous views. Revel in an opportunity to get up close and personal with Maui's most famous visitors, Humpback Whales, through three new voyages via a Zodiac, outrigger canoe or private sea kayak through April 15th. For further information, pricing and to book these limited seating tours, please contact Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ambassadors of the Environment Center 808-665-7292 or ambassadors.kapalua@ritzcarlton.com¹².

[Sea Escape Boat Rentals](#)¹³

Sea Escape Boat Rentals, Maui's only boat rental company allows you to be your own captain and navigate the waters of Maui on your very own boat. Spend your day on the water fishing, snorkeling, scuba diving, whale watching or enjoying the scenic Maui coastline. Choose between luxury 24' Glacier Bay Catamarans or a fun and fast 17' Rigid Inflatable. Hop over for a quick trip to Molokini Crater or private voyage to Lanai. Boating experience is required, although licenses are not. A truly unique Maui experience, boating memberships are also available for frequent Maui travelers.

[Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa](#)¹⁴

Join Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa Executive Chef Bryan Ashlock on his weekly chef demonstration and tour as part of the Sheraton Adventure Club. Guests are invited to explore the resort kitchens on a brief tour ending in the bake shop for a small treat from the resort's pastry chefs. After the tour, Chef Ashlock gathers participants for an intimate demonstration of vegetable and fruit carvings, or how to cook a signature dish. Each week is different. For more information visit their website.

[Spa Helani](#)¹⁵

The award-winning Spa Helani, a Heavenly Spa by Westin™ now offers a brand new outdoor relaxation lounge for spa guests to relax amidst serene surroundings with added privacy. The exciting transformation includes dark wood trellis with beautifully-designed partitions for cozy couple lounging areas and dining tables for spa guests to enjoy healthy spa cuisine. Bamboo water features with bronze artifacts complement the spa's overall earthy look and feel. Located at The Westin Kaanapali Ocean Resort Villas, Spa Helani signature amenities include a tree-house couple's spa suite with high-beamed ceilings and latticed windows. Visit www.westinkaanapali.com.

[Tour da Food Maui – and The Maui Food Bank](#)¹⁶

During the months of February and March 2011, a portion of the proceeds from all Tour da Food Maui tours will be donated to The Maui Food Bank. As food banks get most of their donations during holidays, TDFM is hoping to help after the holidays when the need may be just as great. Tour da Food Maui offers intimate excursions to Maui's hidden culinary treasures in Wailuku and Upcountry Maui. Guests "talk story" with locals and experience "broke da mouth" specialties not found in hotel or fine dining restaurants. Tours are customized for a maximum of four guests. Reservations required. Please call 808-242-8383 or visit the Tour da Food Maui website for more information.

Culture and Tourism

Responsible tourists takes time to learn about the people, history and culture of the places that they visit. Here are some great opportunities to learn a bit about Hawaiian culture.

[4th Annual Maui County Agricultural Festival](#)¹⁷

Maui's prime event to raise awareness about Maui agriculture while invigorating Maui agriculture, will take place on Saturday, April 2, 2011 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The entire industry, its allies, and supporters come together to share what each group does for the collective good of agriculture in the County, and to showcase agriculture's vital role in the economy, environment, and lifestyle of Maui. Taste Education celebrates Maui's famed regional cuisine based on locally grown produce. Meet local chefs and farmers and ranchers who are creating menus that matter. Tickets and more information on their website or call 808-243-2290.

[19th Annual East Maui Taro Festival Returns to Hana](#)¹⁸

The East Maui Taro Festival returns to Hana from April 30-May 1, 2011. This lively two-day event takes place at the Hana Ballpark, adjacent to Hotel Hana-Maui, and celebrates taro, a staple of the Hawaiian diet. Demonstrations of all aspects of taro and poi production, as well as feasting, live entertainment, dance, and arts and crafts make up this free event. Hotel Hana-Maui's executive chef Barry Villiarimo, a Hana native, plans to incorporate taro into his menus at Hotel Hana-Maui throughout the week. For more information, please visit their website.

[Four Seasons Resorts Lanai Launches Cultural Hookipa Program](#)¹⁹

Four Seasons is pleased to introduce the Hookipa Program, a series of interactive cultural classes created by Lanai's kupuna (Hawaiian elders) for resort guests. The kupuna are available to teach and share their cultural knowledge, oral history and tradition. Complimentary classes include ukulele lessons and lei making.

[Kaanapali Beach Hotel's Hawaiian Language Classes](#)²⁰

Kaanapali Beach Hotel's commitment to preserving and promoting Hawaiian culture continues with the addition of Hawaiian language classes to their array of complimentary Hawaiian activities offered to its guests. The language class is taught by guest services agents and is presented at a variety of times throughout the week. Guests learn pronunciation, diacritical marks, names, greetings, and more. This is just another reason why Kaanapali Beach Hotel has earned the title, "Hawaii's Most Hawaiian Hotel." To learn more or plan your stay now, visit their website or call 800-262-8450.

[Maui Artists Take the Challenge from Maui Coastal Land Trust](#)²¹

Maui ArtsSchaefer International Gallery presents "The Legacy of Land" exhibition, January 9 – February 19. It reveals a unique collaboration between 24 artists, open-space land tracts and two high-power nonprofits-Maui Arts & Cultural Center and Maui Coastal Land Trust. Together, they present a stunning art exhibit certain to raise public awareness about resource conservation and the preservation of culturally significant sites on Maui. The MACC gallery in Central Maui is open Wednesday-Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and before Castle Theater shows; admission is free. Call 808-243-4288 or visit their website.

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9. <http://lanaihospitalitypartners.com/index.html>
10. <http://www.mauizipline.com>
11. <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/KapaluaMaui/Recreation/Ambassadors.htm>
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