

Head over heels for Hawaii

NATALIE MOURAD travels to the heart of Oahu to discover innumerable delights for families.

Lying on the warm sand outside of the **Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort**, I listen to crashing waves as the sunrise glistens over the ocean. Pulling me out of my reverie are like-minded early-risers tackling the morning waves and children building sandcastles. This is my idea of serenity.

Aloha Honolulu

Greeted with leis, "alohas" and a tangy, tropical island juice, our welcome to Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort leaves us in no doubt that we are in heavenly Hawaii. Located in central Waikiki, the all-inclusive resort spoils us for choice, with everything from cultural experiences and walking tours where kids are enchanted with tales of Hawaii's 'Merrie Monarch' King Kalākaua and Princess Kaiulani, to in-resort shopping and a sprawling pool.

Wonderfully located, with the restaurants, bars and shops of the **Waikiki Beach Walk** nearby, guests of the resort can explore the precinct with ease using their room card to access Outrigger's own connection trolley. As an added bonus, guests receive discounted admission (free Junior admission per paying adult) to nearby **Waikiki Aquarium** to learn about Waikiki Beach and its fragile coral reefs.

Making waves in Waikiki

Hawaii offers plenty of classic must-do activities and a slight sprinkle of rain doesn't deter me from braving the waters of Waikiki Beach by canoe with **Faith Surf School**. Our lesson begins with moderate paddling and we increase our tempo only when it's time to catch a wave. We float back to shore before going for round two. There's no age limit for





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the experience so, if the waves aren't too big, you and the little ones can hit the water.

Outrigger's global conservation initiative, OZONE, focuses on the protection of oceans and coral reef that surround Outrigger Resorts. To find out more, we head to Turtle Canyon Reef with **Sail Holokai**. On deck with the crew, I take a moment to soak in the panoramic view of Waikiki and Diamond Head. With vest, snorkel and flippers in place, I join schools of *manini* (convict tang) and *Humuhumu'ele'ele* (black triggerfish) in the water. I am stunned into stillness by a sea turtle coming to the surface for air directly beside me. It's the highlight of my trip.

This experience is perfect for beginners of all ages, as even infants can join in with the snorkelling fun, with parents assisting, of course. On the sail back, to a soundtrack of island music, a young family happily confirms that this is an epic experience for first-timers.

A feast of flavours

There's no better way to start a day of Waikiki adventures than with a buffet breakfast at Outrigger's **Voyager 47 Club Lounge**. With tummys full, **Royal Star Hawaii** whisks us off to explore a little more of Waikiki.

At **Dole Plantation** we ride the Pineapple Express, a train that delivers a historical overview of the plantation as well as amazing views (kids under four ride for free). Then it's time to get lost in the Pineapple Maze, and discover its secrets. Once I escape, I opt for ice-cream from the pineapple-based menu.

On our return, we stop at some of the island's iconic surf spots. Ideal for kids and beginners is the protected **Hale'iwa Beach Park**. **Waimea Bay Beach** and **Sunset Beach Park** on the North Shore are the spots for grommets, especially during surf season.

We make a pit stop at **Giovanni's Shrimp Truck**, known for its 'pond to plate' mantra, to nosh on garlic-and butter-infused shrimp and scampi with a side of rice before roaming the remainder of the precinct's food trucks..

We finish at the Outrigger Waikiki with sundowners at the famous **Duke's Waikiki** as a band serenades us with a Hawaiian tune. An appetiser of Ahi Poke is followed by Huli-Huli Chicken and for dessert, Kimo's Original Hula Pie. It's a sweet finish to a perfect day.

Strumming and swaying

A highlight of Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort is its daily cultural experiences. Hale O Noe'au (House of Knowledge), embellished in Hawaiian carvings, is the location for my first ukulele lesson. Our teacher, Kahoaka, begins by educating us on the history of the ukulele, I'm surprised to learn its name means 'dancing flea'. As a professional pianist, I thought it would be easy but my fingers struggle to move along the frets

01 Family at Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort
02 Playing on Waikiki Beach 03 View from an oceanfront suite at Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort

while strumming and I am out-ukuleled by the kids, who pick it up with ease. With a little guidance from Kahoaka, I too am soon playing the song 'Ulupalakua' with fingers that do indeed resemble dancing fleas.

While guests busily make leis in the same area, we venture outside for a hula lesson with Luana Maitland, who tells us to call her Auntie. With the youngest student only three years old, we get our hula groove on. Traditionally a dance to honour the Gods, each movement is symbolic and we finish with our hands placed over our hearts because, as Auntie Luana informs us, "Hawaiians do everything from the heart".

They do indeed, and Hawaii has stolen mine in the process. ▲

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Escape Ordinary.

Immerse in Hawaii's local culture at the beachfront Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. Learn the art of lei-making, dance a traditional hula and play an ukulele without ever losing sight of the shore.

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Win! A family getaway to Hawaii

Say 'Aloha' to the magic of Oahu with this fantastic prize for a family of four, travelling to Honolulu with Hawaiian Airlines, staying five nights at Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and spoiling yourselves with shopping and dining at Waikiki Beach Walk®.

Hawaiian Airlines flies daily from Sydney and three times weekly from Brisbane to Honolulu with onward connections to Hawaii's neighbouring islands and 12 US mainland cities. Now in its 89th year, Hawaiian is Hawaii's longest-serving airline. From the moment you step on board, experience the airline's signature *mea ho'okipa* (I am host) hospitality with its warm and friendly celebration of the culture, people and Aloha Spirit of the Hawaiian Islands. Fares from Australia include a free checked baggage allowance of 64 kilograms per person (two 32-kilogram bags), complimentary meals, drinks and entertainment. hawaiianairlines.com.au

Set along a stretch of sand that was once a gathering place for Hawaiian royalty, Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort embraces local culture in its architecture, decor and cuisine. The air is filled with authentic island music and beachfront dining awaits you at The Reef Bar & Market Grill. Guests also have the opportunity to learn the art of lei-making, hula or the ukulele, all without ever losing sight of the sea. outriggerreef-onthebeach.com

Waikiki Beach Walk® is an open-air shopping, dining and entertainment precinct in the heart of one of Waikiki's liveliest districts. Stroll through the eclectic boutiques and pick up a locally made souvenir and sample the fare of the award-winning restaurants before catching one of the outdoor cultural performances, popular with visitors and residents alike. waikikibeachwalk.com

Prize includes:

- 4 return economy tickets flying Hawaiian Airlines from Sydney or Brisbane to Honolulu •
- 5 nights for two adults and two children in a Club Oceanfront room at Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, including exclusive access to the Voyager 47 Club for morning continental breakfast and evening appetisers with beverage offerings, including select wine, local craft beer and signature cocktail

Dining and shopping gift cards for Waikiki Beach Walk®:

- US\$100 Yard House restaurant gift card •
- US\$100 Giovanni Pastrami gift card •
- US\$200 Quiksilver family shopping gift card •



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All entries will be subscribed to the *Holidays with Kids*, Hawaiian Airlines and Outrigger Hotels & Resorts mailing lists. Competition ends 11.59pm 30 September 2018 and the prize will be drawn shortly after. Holiday must be booked and ticketed by 30 November 2018. All travel must be completed by 31 October 2019. Blackout periods apply, bookings are subject to availability. The prize is non-transferable, non-exchangeable, non-replaceable, non-upgradable and non-changeable. Further fare rules may apply. Any taxes or other charges applicable are the responsibility of the prize-winner. Visitors to the USA will need to apply for a Visa Waiver via the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) prior to travelling to the United States. A fee will apply to new ESTA applications and renewals. For full terms and conditions please visit the *Holidays with Kids* website.