



Aussies say Aloha Hawaii!

Hawaii is returning to its heydays with recent statistics showing that Australians are visiting the islands more frequently, exploring more of the Hawaiian Islands, spending more and staying longer.

THE LATEST DATA from Hawaii Tourism Oceania shows Hawaii welcomed 153,086 visitors from Australia in 2010, representing a 26 percent increase over 2009. And the trend is continuing into 2011 with an 18.1 percent increase recorded for the first two months of the year, compared to the same period last year.

Much of the growth is attributed to increased air capacity, which is keeping airfares competitive and offering choice for travellers.

Research also indicates that Australians are increasingly more experiential, evidenced by the increased number of islands they include in their itineraries each visit, the longer length of stay and higher spend.

Overall there was a 23 percent increase in room nights, with Australians occupying 1.5 million room nights versus 1.09 million in 2009.

“These trends show the love affair Aussies have with Hawaii continues to strengthen and grow,” said Helen Williams, country manager Australia, Hawaii Tourism Oceania.

“Hawaii is a place where Australians feel very much at home, and as awareness around the unique attributes of the neighbour islands grows, they are discovering there is so much more to Hawaii’s than expected.

“With six islands to discover, there is always something new to see and do and this is what Australians are coming to realise,” said Williams.

After the gateway island, Oahu, the most popular islands for Australians are Maui; Hawaii’s Big Island, Kauai; Molokai and stunning Lanai.

All islands increased Australian room nights by more than 20 percent over the previous year.

There was also a 29 percent increase in the number of repeat visitors, with more than half the Australians who visited Hawaii in 2010 having visited the islands at least twice before.

“Australians quickly develop an affiliation for Hawaii and want to go back time and time again.

“There is no doubt that Hawaii has all the ingredients for a perfect holiday, honeymoon, wedding, or convention and with the Aussie dollar currently fetching around US\$1.05, there has never been a better time to say Aloha to Hawaii and discover what the rest of us already know,” said Williams.

Kris Madden

Image: World famous Waikiki Beach

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Disney Hawaii resort milestone

Disney’s new Aulani Hawaii resort hotel came a step closer to opening last month with the completion of major structural works on the property.

THE NEXT STAGE is to “add the magic” with final detailing, theming, landscaping and other touches which are the hallmarks of a Disney resort.

Theming is already underway with Walt Disney Imagineers working with local

architects, artisans and historians to “weave” Hawaiian stories into the buildings, interiors, art and gardens throughout the resort.

It is this style of theming and story-telling that is at the heart of Disney resorts and creates a point of difference from more traditional resorts.

Built on 21 acres adjacent to a crystal blue lagoon and white-sand beach in Ko Olina, Aulani, the Disney Resort & Spa will feature 359 hotel rooms and 481 two-bedroom equivalent Disney Vacation Club villas spread across two 15-story towers offering commanding views of the ocean, mountains and gardens.

Resort facilities include two on-site restaurants, an 1672 square metre spa, wedding lawn, conference centre and extensive water activities, including a central swimming pool, 300-metre tube floating watercourse, wading pool, body slides, sunset-facing hot tubs, a quiet adult pool, a snorkel lagoon and a conservation pool.

Aulani will also include a signature kids’ club – *Aunty’s Beach House* – where kids can explore Hawaiian culture through fun and games, arts, crafts and interactive activities.

The resort will also offer family excursions to discover other attractions and experiences across the island of Oahu, including surfing, rainforest hiking and learning how to prepare Hawaiian cuisine.

The resort is scheduled to open on 29 August 2011 and is now open for bookings.

<http://resorts.disney.go.com/aulani-hawaii-resort>

Image: Disney Aulani Hawaii Resort a step closer to opening



Hawaiian flies daily

Record peak season demand has seen Hawaiian Airlines increase its services to a daily frequency between Sydney and Honolulu.

THE FLIGHTS WILL REMAIN daily until 1 August 2011, after which time they will revert to five times weekly, using a two-class Boeing 767-300ER aircraft, seating 264 passengers.

Sherilyn Robinson, general manager, sales and marketing for Hawaiian Airlines in Australia said the seasonal increase is the first time Hawaiian Airlines has operated daily from Australia.

"Ever since we launched nonstop flights from Sydney to Honolulu in May 2004, tourist travel from Australia to Hawaii has continued to grow," she said.

"Now with our increased flights from Sydney, we will have the ability to carry

substantially more passengers during the peak travel season," she said.

As well as flying to Honolulu, Hawaiian offers onward service to the neighbouring islands of Maui, Kauai and The Big Island of Hawaii, and connections to 10 US mainland cities.

STANDS BY JAPAN

At the same time, the airline has confirmed it will stand by Japan, reaffirming its commitment to retain flights and launch new services to Osaka, while many other airlines are reducing capacity and cancelling services to Japan.

Destination: Hawaii



Mark Dunkerley president and chief executive officer Hawaiian Airlines said the earthquake and tsunami which hit Japan last month devastated the littoral communities in North Eastern Japan.

"While other airlines have announced service reductions to Japan, we have no plans to reduce our daily service to Tokyo, and we remain committed to launching new service to Osaka beginning 12 July.

"It is clear from our current results that we are seeing a significantly less severe downturn in traffic than is being reported by other companies in the airline and tourism sectors."

"The purposeful and business-like approach of Japan to recovering from these events is an example to us all. One cannot fail to be impressed by how quickly daily activity has returned to near normality in Tokyo and Osaka," said Dunkerley.

"In the initial period following the earthquake, we saw a number of cancellations and no-shows, but this activity has largely dissipated. Looking ahead, we are seeing a slowdown of less than 20 percent in forward bookings for the next two months," he said.

"We remain confident about our long term expectations for Hawaiian's role in the Japan-Hawaii travel market and are enthusiastic about our existing and planned services," said Dunkerley.

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