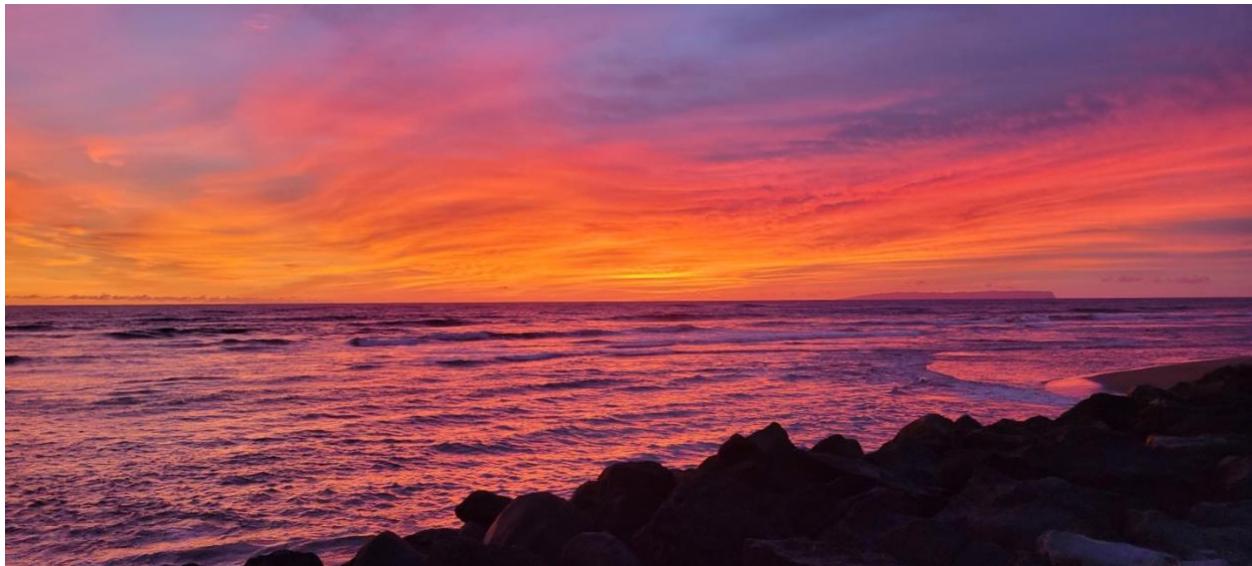


# My Solo Hawaii Trip

A trip that I can call Dream-Come-True...

December 22, 2022 – January 10, 2023



*Sunset at Kaua'i*



*Waimea Canyon*

***Anna Fariha***

Redmond, Washington

January 2023

## Chapter 1: Kauai



[Link to all Kauai Photos](#)

## Day 0

### I Made it to Hawaii!

I took a flight from Seattle to Lihue, Kauai. Due to airline troubles, flight was diverted to San Francisco. Overall, I faced 6 hours delay. I used Alaska Airlines. All the passengers and the cabin crews were very patient and understanding of the flight issues. Alaska, at the end of that day, even sent me an email saying they are going to compensate by giving me \$100, although, as of Jan 15, 2023, I didn't receive anything. Other than the extreme delay, the flight was fine. I pre-ordered a meal, and they served it properly during the flight from SFO to Lihue. I was sitting in the middle seat and the person to the right of me told me that few days ago one of the flights to Honolulu dropped 1000 feet due to some turbulence and I was scared the whole time about this. I never took off my seat belt unless I was using the restroom! When I arrived Lihue, I was exhausted, but it felt good. I finally made it! Many people were impacted by airline cancellation due to bad weather in Seattle within a couple days!

Lihue was a very small airport, and it was in an "open-air" building. I had to cross the road to take the shuttle to the rental car (Avis). Although it was barely a 5 min walk if you could walk directly to the rental car center, the usual method to go to the rental car center is to take a shuttle. I had to wait a bit to get the Avis/Budget shuttle. Although I was an Avis Preferred member, the Preferred booth closes at 5 PM, which means I was in the queue with all customers. I didn't mind as long as I was getting car. An interesting thing was that my original plan to fly to Lihue was to take a flight that lands at around 10 PM and the rental car center at Lihue is open only until 11 PM. Somehow my gut said I should advance the flight and instead of an afternoon flight, I took a morning flight, which eventually was 6 hours delayed, and I reached the rental car center at about 10 PM! I later checked what would be the case if I had taken the originally planned flight. I found out that the flight was delayed as well (not as much, about 2 hours), but it would be sufficient to ruin the first day of my trip as I would reach the rental car center after they were closed and probably would not be able to get the car. Lihue is a place where you can't move from one place to another without a car. There's practically no service like Lyft and Uber, let alone public transports (there may be some, but very limited). Especially the place I was staying (Princeville) is far north and you can reach there only by a car. Long story short, I was lucky (and smart) that I advanced the flight and things worked out as expected. I got a white Kia K5 and the car was new and decent.

I stayed at [AirBnB at Princeville](#). The place was a residential area in a very quiet neighborhood. I saw a few cats and chickens there. There was an open balcony, and I could see all the stars from there. The sky was incredibly clear, and I could easily spot the Orion's Belt. I freshened up and had a very good sleep at night!

## Day 1

### Into the lush greenery of Kauai

- [Koloa Zipline](#)
- [Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge](#) (requires [reservation](#))
  - [Kilauea Lighthouse, Nene](#)
- [Anini Beach, Kalihikai park](#) at Hanalei
- Ohiki Road, [Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge](#)
  - Okolehao Trail (did not hike, but seemed like an amazing trail to explore)
- Dinner at [AMA](#), a ramen restaurant at Hanalei Center
  - I loved their Grilled Ono. The ramen was very good too!



## Day 2

### Falling in love with Kauai

- [Haena State Park](#) (requires reservation)
  - Took shuttle from [Waipa Park and Ride](#). Stopped at a very small convenience store called Big Save Market to buy some snacks and water.
  - Visited [Ke'e beach](#), a very small beach, which was closed due to rough sea.
  - Hiked about a mile in the [Kalalau trail](#). The trail was quite slippery and rocky. I had to use my trekking poles while coming down. It was extremely nice and lush green but had some bugs at the beginning. I was a little late to use bug spray and had several bug bites in the first 10 minutes of the hike. I was an amazing hike, even though I did very little. I had a couple [Anahola Granola Bars](#) at a viewpoint of the trail. I must say this is the best granola bar I ever had!
- Lunch at [The Fish Express](#). I had Poke, which was very good!
- [Poipu Beach](#)
  - Saw a turtle resting on the beach!
  - Had some drinks at [Honu Bar](#)
- [Spouting Horn Park](#)
- [Kawai‘ele Waterbird Sanctuary](#)
- Sunset from Kaumualii Highway at Kekaha
- Dinner at [Tidepools](#) at [Grand Hyatt](#)
  - Had an awesome Crab dish called Shutome

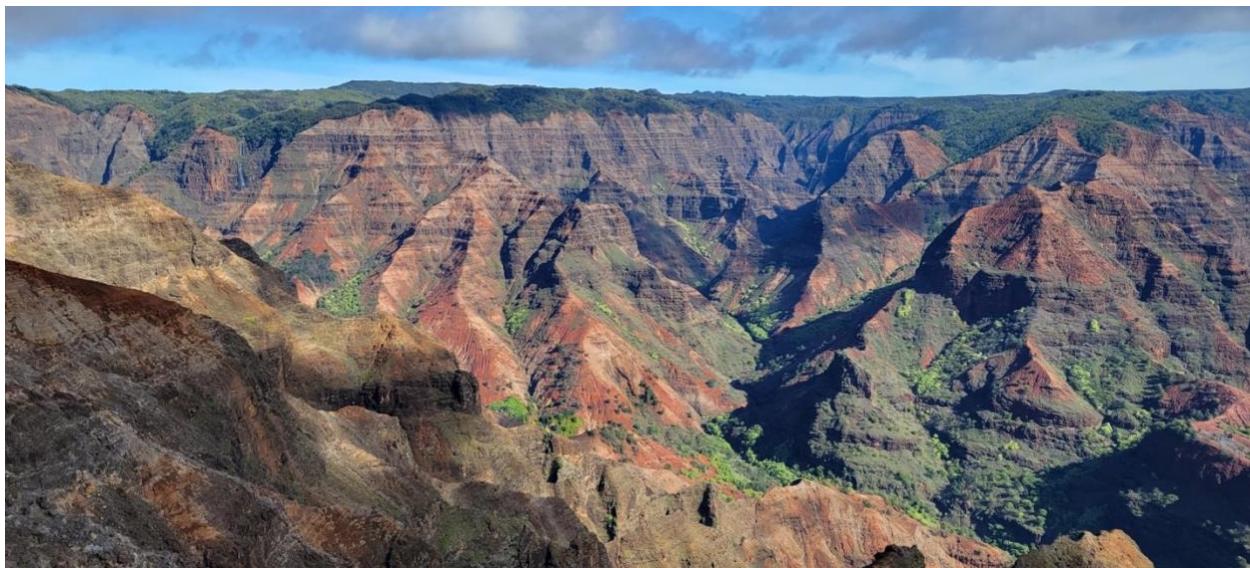




## Day 3

### Muddy Christmas

- [Waimea Canyon State Park](#)
  - [Waimea Canyon Lookout](#)
- [Koke'e State Park](#)
  - Pu'u O Kila Lookout
  - Kalalu Lookout
  - [Pu'u Hinahina Lookout Cliff Trail](#)
  - [Canyon Trail to Waipo'o Falls](#): A fantastic trail. Was very muddy and slippery at the beginning but I made it. While coming back, took an alternative dirt road to avoid the mud. A family in the trail started saying “muddy Christmas” to everyone since the trail was so muddy and people started responding to it too! I found a lot of wild guavas in the trail, including the pink ones (strawberry guava). They tasted amazing!
  - Makaha Ridge Rd: Did some birding there!
- [Waimea Theatre](#): A very small, cozy theatre where I watched Avatar: [The Way of Water](#). The movie had a weak story, but I liked it nevertheless because excellent visuals. Also, the reason I went to watch it in the first place was its connection to Hawaii. I strongly felt like watching Avatar after being at Kauai and as it was inspired from many things at Hawaii!





## Day 4

### Crossing Rivers and losing my favorite hiking boots

- [Uluwehi Secret Falls via Wailua River](#). I took this tour from [Viator](#). I met a German woman named Annette and bonded very quickly. The tour guide was also amazing and had a great time with folks there. First we had to Kayak a few miles followed by the hike. We had to cross a river multiple times and my favorite hiking boot was all wet. The hike was beyond amazing and one of the best hikes I ever did. I never did a kayak/river-crossing hike (in more than knee-deep water), but I am so glad I did it. It was so worth it. I took my hiking poles, and everyone was telling me "You came prepared!". Yes, the poles helped a lot, and I made it without any glitch. I wish I could go in the fall water, which I didn't prepare for because of personal reasons and ended up wearing contacts. But next time, I am definitely going into that inviting water, especially after the hike! On our way to the falls, the tour guide showed a place where he gathers flowers 4 times every day (during his morning and afternoon tours). It was fascinating how he loves his job, he shared how he ended up in Hawaii and how he met half of his family on his father's side as an adult on our way back from the fall.
- I thought I knew how to dry my wet hiking boots (and the tour guide also suggested that) and used hair dryer to dry it. Unfortunately, it didn't work this time, possibly because of the hair dryer OR the boot, it burned through the boot and the hair dryer. The hair dryer was still functional, but I threw the boot. I spent the night researching over where I can purchase a new pair at Oahu!
- I got a recommendation from the tour guide about a local store called [Papaya's Natural Foods](#). I bought a bunch of interesting food items, including some turmeric elixir, passion fruit, some other kinds of fruits, papaya, etc. I also had a popsicle there!





## Day 5

### Goodbye Kauai and entering the overwhelmingly busy Oahu

- [Limahuli Garden and Preserve](#) (requires [Reservation](#), I was lucky to have vacancy for a walk-in spot): I postponed my flight from Kauai to Oahu to visit this botanical garden. It was so worth it. Amazing botanical garden. Small, but full of varieties.
- [Maniniholo Dry Cave](#): Didn't get out of my car, but saw it.
- [Na 'Aina Kai Botanical Gardens & Sculpture Park](#): I was only able to visit their visitor center. There I found a wallet in the restroom, which I returned to the cashier. The park looked amazing even from outside. They did not have any tours available as they strictly operate on reservation. They had none available. This seemed to me like a must-see place in Kauai and I felt sorry that I missed it. Next time I visit Kauai, this will be on my top todo!
- [Anahola Beach Park](#)
- [Kaiakea Point](#)
- End of the day I arrived at Oahu. It was an overwhelmingly busy city. I found it extremely difficult to park at the [Airbnb](#) at Honolulu where I stayed there. I found a post office nearby and was able to post a few postcards from there. I ended up going nowhere outside that night and instead ordered food using Uber Eats from [a local restaurant](#). The perks of being at Oahu is that you get all the amenities that a developed city would offer, so I thought I would take the advantage of it. However, the interstate highways at Oahu felt crazy to me as there were multiple ramps to merge into the highway that were just relying on a "yield", so basically no ramp! You stop and wait to merge into that busy highway, seemed crazy. Fortunately, I never had to use one of those. I must say I was quite disappointed to come to Oahu from the beautiful Kauai. Although later I discovered that Oahu has to offer so many cool things, but those were more cultural/human-made stuff than raw wilderness. I got a Nissan Altima here, and Android Auto wasn't working. I was too lazy to go back to the rental-car counter and just stayed with it. I thought it's just two days and I will deal with it. I wasn't that big of a problem anyway.



## Chapter 2: Oahu



[Link to all Oahu photos](#)

## Day 6

### Exploring Oahu East

At Oahu, I decided to get out of the busy area and headed right towards the east side. I had a reservation for [Pearl Harbor USS Arizona Memorial Programs](#) but had to miss it because of heavy traffic.

- [Nu'uana Pali Lookout](#)
- [Kailua Beach](#)
- Had a fantastic breakfast at [Over Easy](#). They did have a pretty long wait-time, but I felt it's worth it.
- [The Byodo-In Temple and the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park](#)
- [Kualoa Regional Park](#)
- [James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge](#)
- [Waimea Botanical Garden](#): It ends at Waimea Falls and the only way to get to the falls is via this botanical garden. The garden was amazing, quite big, and I saw peacocks and geese.

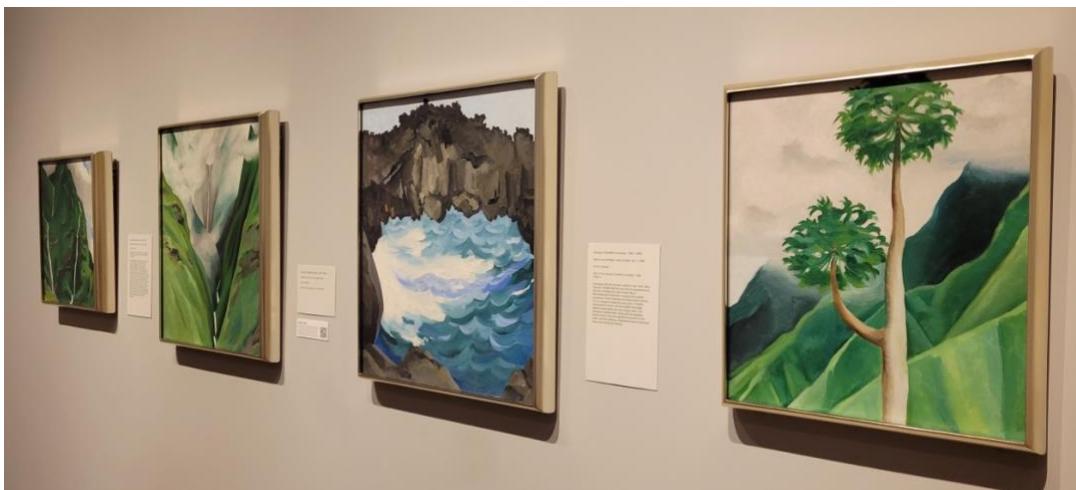


## Day 7

### Getting my Boots back, and exploring Culture

I was able to find a store to get my boots back (buy a new pair) today. I parked on the street next to Honolulu Museum of Art and walked to the shoe store [Uloha](#). I also had a nice breakfast at [Raintree Bakery Coffeehouse](#).

- [Honolulu Museum of Art](#): Has a very nice collection of different Asian country's arts (Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Islamic, etc.) and had some arts I liked by Georgia O'keeffe. The most amazing thing was an installation by [Rebecca Louise Law](#) called the [Awakening](#).
- [Spitting Cave](#): A very short hike from a quiet neighborhood to an amazing sea cave.
- [Makapu'u Point Lookout](#)
- [Ka Moana Luau](#)
- I passed [Polynesian Cultural Center](#) but didn't get a chance to visit it.



## Chapter 3: Maui



[Link to all Maui Photos](#)

## Day 8

### Road to Hana is No Joke!

I reached to Maui in the morning and stayed at Kihei in [this AirBnB](#). Got a Chevy Malibu this time which had no issues!

- [Hookipa Lookout](#)
- [Aloha 'Aina BBQ](#)
- [Kamuahina state wayside park](#)
- [Road to Hana](#)
- [Halfway to Hana](#): It is a very hard road to drive, but worth it!
- [Pu'a Ka'a Falls](#)
- [Hanawi Falls](#)
- [Wai'ānapanapa State Park](#) (Requires [Reservation](#))
  - Black Sand Beach
  - Sea Cave
  - Sea Arch
  - [Trail around that area](#)
  - [Another short trail](#)
- [Hasegawa General Store Inc](#): Stopped here for some stuff at Hana. This is the only place in Hana that I have been to. I wish I knew better and planned an overnight stay at Hana and didn't have to rush back right after going there. Also, wanted to drive down and complete the full circle around Maui, but didn't want to drive in that crazy road at night so had to turn back.
- Dinner at [Monkeypod Kitchen by Merriman](#)



## Day 9

### Under the Sea

- [Molokini Crater Zodiak Adventure Snorkel and Turtle Cove Swim](#)
- [Lava Fields](#)
  - Did a very little of the [Hoapili Trail](#)
- [Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge](#)
  - [Kealia Coastal Boardwalk](#): It was a fantastic place to say tons of black-crowned night herons. I was able to take a number of excellent photographs of Herons.
  - [Maalaea Beach](#)
- [Dinner at Nalu's South Shore Grill](#)



## Day 10

### Haleakala National Park on the New Year

- [Submarine tour from Lahaina Harbor](#)
- Had Shaved Ice at [Breakwall Shave Ice Co.](#)
- [Haleakala National Park](#)
  - [Red Hill Overlook Summit Trail](#): Elevation 10023 feet.
  - [Pa Ka'oao Trail \(White Hill Trail\)](#)
  -
- Kealia Coastal Boardwalk (again!)
- [Dinner at Ohana Seafood Bar and Grill](#) with Sonela and Sammie!



## Day 11

### Haleakala National Park once Again!

- [Hosmer Grove Campground Trail](#): Did this trail 2 and a half times. It was an amazing trail for birdwatching, I saw so many 'I'iwi, an endangered species in Hawaii.
- [Sliding Sands \(Keonehe'ehe'e\)](#): Did part of it, about a mile or so.
- Saw sunset! Sunrise at Haleakala is more popular but requires a [reservation](#). I couldn't manage one.
- Dinner at [Coconut's Fish Cafe](#).





## Day 12

### Exploring West Maui

- [Turtle Town Snorkel with Photo and Video](#)
  - [Link to snorkeling video](#)
- [Lāhainā Banyan Court](#)
- Ice cream at [BanyanTreats](#)
- [Makaluapuna Point](#)
  - Dragon's Teeth
  - [Dragon's Pointe](#)
  - [Dragon's Teeth Access Trail](#)
- [Magical Enchanted Forest](#)
- [Nakalele Blowhole](#)
- Dinner at [Humble Market Kitchin](#)





## Day 13

Last day at Maui – Couldn't have enough of it

- [Wailea Oceanfront Boardwalk Trail](#)
- [Jungle Zipline Maui](#)
- [Kanaha Pond State Wildlife Sanctuary](#)
- Flew to Kona, Big Island at the end of the day. I got an SUV this time (Jeep Compass) and stayed at [this AirBnB](#) at Kailu-Kona, which is by far the best place I ever stayed in! Did some grocery at Safeway there which includes some frozen food including Quiche.



## Chapter 4: The Island of Hawaii (Big Island)



[Link to all Big Island Photos](#)

## Day 14

### Vacation from vacation

I stayed at the AirBnB the whole day as I was craving a rest day. I swam in the pool for a little while, took some walks in the neighborhood, enjoyed the vinyl records at the AirBnB and mostly relaxed the entire day. It was refreshing!



## Day 15

### Snorkeling in the Big Island

- [Snorkeled at Captain Cook/Kealakekua Bay](#)
  - Saw dolphins and turtles
  - [Link to video](#)
- [Pu'uhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park](#)
  - Saw mountain goats and yellow birds
- Dinner at [Jackie Rey's Ohana Grill Kona](#)



# Day 16

## Hiking and Exploring Big Island

- [Waipi'o Valley Lookout](#)
- Hawaiian Purple Potato Icecream at [Kings View Cafe](#)
- Pololū Valley Lookout
  - [Pololu Historic Trail](#)
- [Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park](#): I went there but it was closed by the time I arrived.
- [Night Manta Ray Adventure on the Big Island, Hawaii](#)
  - [Link to video](#)



## Day 17

### Volcanoes!

I moved to a different [AirBnB](#) for the last two days. This place was very close to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.

- [Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Kahuku Unit](#)
  - [Lower Palm Trail](#): Did part of it
- [Punalu'u Black Sand Beach](#)
- [Kilauea Overlook](#)
  - Saw the Volcano for the first time!
- [Kilauea Iki Trail and Crater Rim Trail](#)
- [Thurston Lava Tube Trail](#)



## Day 18

### Volcanoes are better at night!

- [Kilauea visitor center](#)
- [Hilina Pali Overlook](#)
- [Halema'uma'u Steam Bluff and Sulfur Banks](#)
- [Pu'upua'i Overlook via Devastation Trail](#)
- [Hōlei Sea Arch](#)
- [Mauna Ulu Lookout](#)
- [Keanakako'i Overlook](#)
- [Uekahuna](#)



## Day 19

### Last day at Hawaii

- [Rainbow Falls](#): The fall was very accessible, right next to the road. Didn't spend too much time there.
- [Hawaii Tropical Bioreserve & Garden](#): This was an amazing botanical garden that has sea views, a water fall, and a large variety of plants and flowers. I saw some colorful geckos there, and there was boardwalk at the beginning of the trail, which I loved. I saw some birds near the water body. There was a cage for macaw but I was happy seeing the notice that all macaws were moved out of that cage and released to a wildlife sanctuary.
- [Onizuka Center for International Astronomy Visitor Information Station](#)
  - Mauna Kea access road: I didn't drive all the way up to Mauna Kea, which requires 4WD. Mauna Kea is above 10K feet and it is likely to have some lack of oxygen issue there. Someone at the Volcanoes national park told me that when Mauna Loa erupts, it is amazing to see it from the top of Mauna Kea. There was a 4WD car in front of me who were planning to go to the summit and the officer there were instructing them on some tips and giving them some warnings.
- Dinner again at [Jackie Rey's Ohana Grill Kona](#). Loved their seafood trio and [Hawaiian Purple Sweet Potatoes](#).
- Back to Kona airport and flew to Seattle in a Delta flight. The flight was very good, I was able to sleep almost the entire time and arrived much earlier than scheduled!

