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Maui Restaurants: The Best Places to Eat on the Island

By: **Debbi & William D. Kickham, Esq.**, Posted: Jun. 29th, 2011



Photo Courtesy of Sarento's on the Beach

To say that **Maui** has great restaurants well, that's like saying the sea is blue. On Maui we have eaten some of the most unbelievable food that you'll ever find.



At **Lahaina Grill**, owner Jurg Munch has created an excellent restaurant with some of the most exquisite food you'll find anywhere. We ordered the grilled opakapaka (snapper) with caper sauce and the delicious sides of roasted beets and hamakua oyster mushrooms. For dessert, try the signature sampler that includes the "Road to Hana" with Hawaiian

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vintage chocolate cake and chocolate sour cream mousse; a remarkable triple berry pie featuring raspberries, blueberries and

black currants; and a new offering: Auntie Sherie's Haupia (coconut), which we fell in love with two little triangles of coconut pudding with Molokai sweet-potato custard.

Pineapple Grill offers the casual elegance of modern Pacific island cuisine and most of the food is sourced locally. We started with a silky all-cucumber-pureed gazpacho, followed by a chop salad featuring Waipoli Farms butter lettuce, local grape tomatoes, roasted beets, Hana Herb Farms pohole fern shoots and applewood smoked bacon bits. Our entrees included the lemon porcini-dusted Hawaiian monchong (a signature dish) featuring a tarragon-lobster essence and gold mashed potatoes; and Maui Gold pineapple-miso-marinated wild King Salmon. The icing on the cake was the acclaimed pineapple upside down cake.



Want to eat one of the best things available on Maui? We have two words for you: fish tacos. At **Umalu**, the alfresco restaurant at the Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa, we had the mahi mahi fish tacos last year and couldn't wait to try them again on our fabulous foray this year. The list of edible delights at Umalu also includes kobe beef sliders; three kinds of pizza; Maui onion rings; huge upcountry salads and all kinds of sushi.

Oh Mama! Do we ever love **Tommy Bahama**. We started with the signature coconut-fried shrimp and also recommend the tortilla soup, made with yellow corn tortillas, onions, garlic, chicken stock, and a roux of blended tortillas and butter. Our entrees were equally marvelous - a grilled opah served with a slew of vegetables, which was grilled to perfection, and served with a miso butter sauce. Try the side order of the yams; they are a delectable concoction made with honey, brown sugar, nutmeg, and allspice, and topped with graham crackers and almonds. It could be eaten for dessert!



Leilani's is a TS Restaurants' open-air eatery, on the beachwalk in Whaler's Village fronting Kaanapali Beach. Selected pupus include the famous sunnyside zucchini sticks and baby Kula greens served with a papaya lime dressing. For entrees, there are four choices: a grilled fish and shrimp dish served with roasted Maui onion and red bell pepper cassoulet; pistachio roasted fish; sesame-crusted ahi; and the cracker-and-parmesan dusted fish. For dessert, there's nothing like the

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infamous Hula Pie with Oreo cookie crust, macadamia-nut ice cream, and fudge, topped with macadamia nuts and whipped cream.

What could be more Hawaiian than a dinner at the **Hula Grill**? Its chef is Bobby Masters, who recently was named Maui's 2010 Chef of the Year by *Maui Magazine*. We started our meal here with shrimp and scallops that were grilled on a kiawe fire, and the smoky wood flavor permeated the fish. For dinner, the piece de resistance was the ono - also kiawe-grilled - with a chili lime vinaigrette. For dessert, the Hula Grill serves an incredible flourless chocolate cake made by Stilwell's Bakery in nearby Wailuku, which is drop-dead delicious.



When you have a hankering for the perfect meal, head to **Black Rock Steak and Seafood**, at the Sheraton Maui at Kaanapali Beach. We started with a death-defyingly delicious order of coconut shrimp. For the entrée, we had the snapper, served with a variety of salsas: pineapple-papaya, tomato-basil, and sweet Maui Onion. All entrees come with chef's vegetable, and your choice of a baked potato, macadamia-nut rice pilaf, wasabi-garlic mashed potato or steak fries.

There's more, and its name is chocolate lava cake. This decadent dessert is worth every calorie and served with a spectacular Tahitian-vanilla ice cream.

When you wish to see a spectacular sunset - and have a great meal - **Sarento's On The Beach** is the place. We had mahi mahi grilled with zucchini linguine and a pesto sauce, and a delectable caponata that had great depth of flavor, thanks to sun-dried tomatoes and olives. Save room for dessert - the list of homemade specialties is impressive - such as chocolate dairy-free sorbet, citrus panacotta, and homemade profiterole dessert featuring puff pastries, chocolate sauce, and Tahitian vanilla bean gelato.



Nick's Fishmarket Maui is one of Maui's premier seafood restaurants offering the island's freshest fish, live Maine lobster and Maui Cattle Company steaks in a tropical ambience. We had salad with liliko'i (passion fruit) vinaigrette, followed by mahi grilled in sweet peanut oil. Signature items on the menu include an escargot sandwich; sashimi of the evening; and potato-scaled mahi mahi. It's always a



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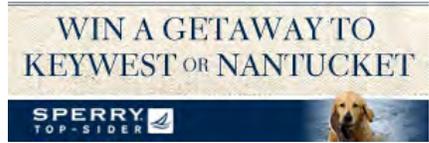
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