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Driving Hawaii's Big Island

Adventurous restaurants, newly renovated hotels, and a stunning landscape of volcanoes, cliffs, jungles, and beaches—on a drive around the Big Island of Hawaii, **JEFF WISE** maps out nine reasons to go now.

Illustrated by Kyungduk Kim



1 Ulu Ocean Grill
Set in a beachfront pavilion, the Four Seasons Resort Hualalai's newest restaurant uses more than 160 local suppliers in its mission to create regional seasonal, and artisanal cuisine—such dishes as crispy local octopus with pickled ginger and Japanese barbecue sauce. 72-100 Kaupulehu Dr.; fourseasons.com. \$\$\$

2 The Three Fat Pigs
Considered the agricultural capital of Hawaii, the Big Island is home to some of the state's most prominent chefs. Ippy Aiona, for example, one of the youngest *Food Network Star* contestants, opened the island's first gastropub, with menus inspired by his Italian and Hawaiian ancestry (think prosciutto di Parma served with Hawaii Nui Hapa beer). 250 Waikoloa Beach Dr.; thethreefatpigs.com. \$\$\$





3

3 Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows

The Mauna Lani's five villas, refurbished last year, are tucked away in a secluded area of the seaside hotel. The airy living quarters open out onto private swimming pools and gardens that overlook the ocean. mounalani.com. \$\$\$\$

4 Surfing

Where better to learn the quintessential Hawaiian sport than on the home island of King Kamehameha? The native watermen of Hulakai offer lessons at a beautiful reef break a short stroll from the Mauna Lani. hulakai.com.



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6 Mauna Kea Observatories

Exceptionally dry air and dark skies make this summit a premier site for astronomy, with two of the world's three largest optical telescopes. Now plans are under way to build a new record-breaker. From the visitors' station at 9,200 feet, smaller telescopes provide front-row seats to the vastness of the universe. ifa.hawaii.edu.

7 Hilo Farmers Market

Home to climatic zones ranging from tropical coast to misty plateau and bamboo forest, the Big Island generates a dazzling array of produce, on display in downtown Hilo. hilofarmersmarket.com.



8

8 Volcano House

The only hotel in America set on the rim of an active volcanic caldera, this iconic National Park Service property has just reopened after a four-year renovation. On a clear night, step outside your room and watch the glow of a subterranean lava lake reflected in the billowing plume. hawaiivolcanohouse.com. \$\$



9

9 Puu Oo Lava Flow

For more than 30 years lava has been spilling into the sea on the island's southeastern coast. Kalapana Cultural Tours leads two-hour hikes across a twisted, blackened landscape to a lookout above the spot where molten rock collides with steaming ocean. kalapanaculturaltours.com.



MAUNA LOA VOLCANO

KILAUEA VOLCANO

HAWAII VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

PACIFIC OCEAN

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