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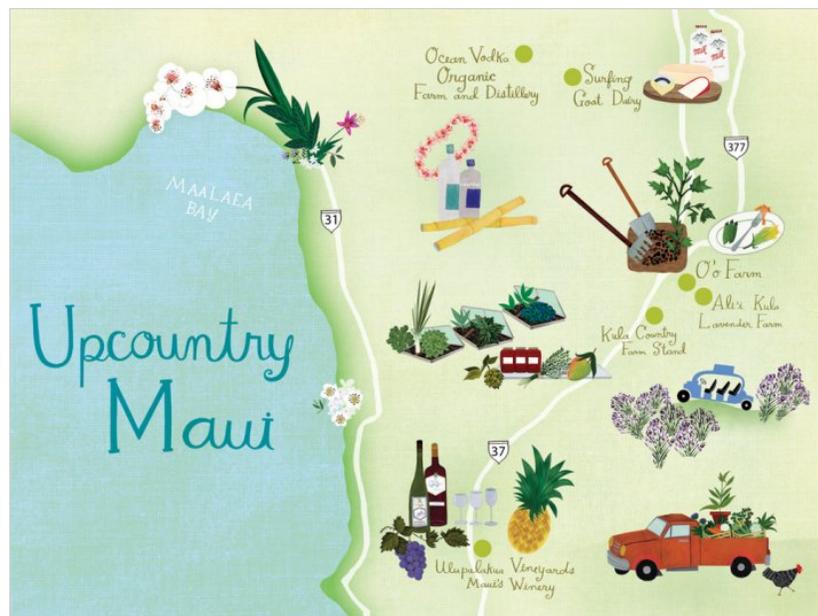
Français

6 Foodie Tours to Take in Maui

May 12 2014 by Tim Johnson 0 comments Add your comments

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Head Upcountry for the very best farm-to-table food in Hawaii



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While Maui may be best known for its dreamy, palm-lined beaches, upscale resorts and gorgeous sunsets, the island's burgeoning culinary scene has recently become another highlight for sun-seeking visitors—thanks, in large part, to a handful of farmers and chefs who are focused on developing an artisan food movement that is dedicated to providing the best in seasonal, organic and locally grown ingredients.

The epicentre of this farm-to-table, tip-to-tail movement is an area known loosely as "Upcountry." Comprised of several communities—including the charming town of Kula—on the vast, fertile flanks of the dormant Haleakala volcano, this area boasts a number of productive spreads that supply many of the restaurants in the island's resorts down on the coast.

Upcountry's farms, fruit stands and dairies are all within a few minutes of one other, connected by steep and rambling two-lane roads. And many offer tours of how fresh is done—Hawaiian style. These spots, coupled with the expansive views over Maui's famous valley, make Upcountry a pleasant place to drive up and while away the day.

Ocean Vodka Organic Farm and Distillery

Just opened last year, this "vodka farm" grows organic, sustainable sugar cane,

which is watered by an artesian spring and harvested by hand. Walk amongst the cane, then see how it is distilled with desalinated deep-ocean water and bottled on site in a solar-powered facility. The result is a high-end product with a unique flavour profile.

Surfing Goat Dairy

This 42-acre farm is home to 158 goats that produce the milk for some lovely cheeses, aged right on site. Come to watch the twice-daily milking, feed the kids or sample a few of the farm's award-winning products. And, yes, the goats here really *do* surf (sort of)—they like to take turns standing on a surfboard in one of the pens.

O'o Farm

The farmers at this modestly sized operation grow their crops to meet the demands of the chefs at Pacific'O, an upscale restaurant down on the coast. Visit the farm for its very popular (and frequently sold-out) interactive tour, which includes a gourmet lunch, complete with the opportunity to harvest part of the meal. (oofarm.com)

Ali'i Kula Lavender Farm

A splash of deep purple at an altitude of 4,000 feet, Ali'i Kula grows 45 different types of lavender amongst its more than 55,000 plants. Tour on foot, by golf cart or, even better, bring the kids on a treasure hunt that takes them to hidden parts of the farm.

Kula Country Farm Stand

More than just a simple roadside stand, this busy, family-owned place hosts special seasonal events and includes a children's garden where kids can get their hands dirty. But the heart of the operation is the stand's range of fresh produce, most of which is grown on the proprietors' own 135 acres. Pick up everything from radishes and kale to exotic dragon fruit and homemade jams.

Ulupalakua Vineyards, Maui's Winery

While you wouldn't expect that fine wine could be made in the tropics, the high mountain climate and rich volcanic soil on Ulupalakua Ranch combine to produce some very good syrah, malbec and merlot. But the highlights at Maui's only commercial winery are its fresh, sweet pineapple wines. You can choose your own favourite—tastings here are free. (mauiwine.com)

Getting There: WestJet flies to Maui six times a week from Vancouver.



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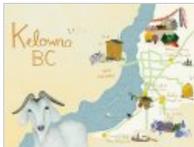
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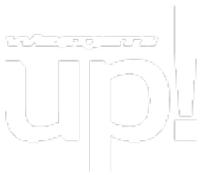
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