

TYPES OF HEIAU

Heiau were constructed under the direction of the *ali'i nui* (high chiefs) and *kāhuna* (priests). They were dedicated to different gods for various purposes which could change over time with a new *ali'i*. The *mana* (divine power) of the *ali'i* dictated strict *kapu* (prohibitions) at these sites. These are some of the types of *heiau*:

- *Heiau ho'ōla* are for treating the sick and training in the art of healing. An example is Keaīwa Heiau in 'Aiea, O'ahu.
- *Heiau luakini* tend to be the largest and most elaborate. Dedicated to the war-god Kū, these are the *heiau* of the ruling chiefs. Examples are Mo'okini and Pu'ukoholā Heiau on Hawai'i Island and Pu'u O Mahuka Heiau on O'ahu.
- *Heiau māpele* are dedicated to Kāne and Lono for peace, fertility, and agricultural productivity. Ulupō Heiau in Kailua has been rededicated as this type of *heiau*.

NĀ AKUA

Nā Akua, Hawaiian gods, spirits or deities, took various forms in nature referred to as *kino-lau*. There are four major gods and thousands of other gods and spirits (*kini akua*).



KANALOA

God of the ocean and voyaging, represented by the *he'e* (octopus).



KĀNE

A creator, associated with freshwater, the source of life. Kāne is often represented by an upright stone.



KŪ

God of politics and warfare, both a builder and a destroyer, represented by the wide-mouth *ki'i* (image).



LONO

God of fertility, peace, and harvest, represented by the tall, pearl-eyed *ki'i*. Makahiki, the annual harvest festival, is dedicated to him.



Pi'ilanihale Heiau, Hāna, Maui

National Tropical Botanical Garden

SITES TO VISIT

A number of *heiau* and *wahi pana* can be visited in national, state, and county parks, botanical gardens, and resorts. Before visiting, check websites for hours, directions, fees, and possible restrictions.

HAWAII ISLAND

- Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site
- Mo'okini Heiau State Monument
- Ku'emanu Heiau, Kaha'u Beach Park
- Hāpaiali'i Heiau, Keauhou Resort
- Hikiau Heiau, Kealahou State Historical Park
- Hale O Keawe, Pu'uuhonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park

KAUAI

- Wailua Complex of Heiau, Wailua River State Park (Hikinaakalā, Kalaeokamanu, & Poliahu Heiau)
- Kauluapā'oa Heiau, Hā'ena State Park

MAUI

- Haleki'i-Pihana Heiau State Historic Site
- Ohala Heiau, Wai'anapanapa State Park
- Pi'ilanihale Heiau, Kahanu Garden

O'AHU

- Keaīwa Heiau State Recreation Area
- Pu'u O Mahuka Heiau State Historic Site
- Ulupō Heiau State Historical Park
- Kū'ilioloa Heiau, Pōka'i Bay Beach Park
- Kūkaniloko Birthstones State Historic Site
- Hale O Lono, Waimea Valley

NOTICE

It is unlawful to take, excavate, destroy, or alter any historic site on state land. Violation is subject to a fine of \$10,000 (HRS, Chapter 6E-11). Sites on federal land are protected under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

FRAGILE RESOURCES

Rocks collected from beaches, streams, and the mountains provide an abundance of building material for fishpond walls, house platforms, enclosures, and religious sites. Hawaiians use a technique called *pā pōhaku* or dry stone masonry. Their skill at locking the stones in place without any mortar is evident in the massive fishpond walls and *heiau* that remain hundreds of years after their construction.

Without the use of mortar, these stacked stone structures are now fragile and subject to collapse. **Do not walk on or over any of these structures** for your safety, the protection of the site, and respect for their cultural value. Help preserve these sacred places for the future.



TO LEARN MORE & GET DIRECTIONS

Department of Land & Natural Resources
Division of State Parks
www.hawaiistateparks.org

National Park Service
Hawai'i Parks
www.nps.gov/state/HI

National Tropical Botanical Garden
Kahanu Garden, Hāna, Maui
<http://ntbg.org/gardens/kahanu>

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NĀ WAHI PANA

RESPECTING HAWAIIAN SACRED SITES



Ulupō Heiau, Kailua, O'ahu

Culturally appropriate behavior
when visiting *heiau*, *wahi pana*, and
sacred sites in Hawai'i

WAHI PANA

Wahi pana are celebrated and storied places in the cultural traditions of Hawai'i. They may be *heiau*, royal birthing sites, legendary sites, and places of significance for the people who live there. These sacred places have *mana* (spiritual power) and are treated with great respect, honor, and reverence.

Heiau are religious sites and places of worship where ceremonies and rituals are conducted. The design and size of these sites range from small *ko'a* (shrine) to large, massive platforms and walled enclosures. Construction of a *heiau* requires engineering and expertise in the stacking of *pōhaku* (rocks) of various sizes and shapes for stability and structural integrity.

As you visit these sites today, you will see the stone foundations and walls that define the sacred area. The pole and thatch structures placed within the walls or atop the platform have long since perished.



Rendering of Pu'u O Mahuka Heiau with ceremonial structures such as the wooden *ki'i* (images), *lele* (altars) for offerings, and thatched *hale* to house the ceremonial items. The *heiau* today with only the stone walls and interior paving remaining.



Keaīwa Heiau, 'Aiea, O'ahu

HANA KŪPONO

Hana kūpono is

- the right behavior
- conducted at the appropriate time
- by the proper people
- presented to the correct recipients
- toward a positive and significant goal.

Hana kūpono evokes respect in the form of silence and attention on the part of the recipients. It prepares the participants to engage seriously in what is to follow and initiates a set of responses from those who know the protocol.

It transforms the mood from the mundane and ordinary into something deeper and more important. It links all participants together and to their surroundings via an enhanced sense of place.

It expresses and confirms a living and vital Hawaiian culture, making each person a bit more appreciative of and more connected to these islands we call home.

MĀLAMA

Mālama (care for) is a concept central to Hawaiian culture and values. To *mālama* is to show respect and help preserve Hawaiian cultural sites, sacred places, and *wahi pana* for future generations.

WHEN VISITING . . .

Before visiting any place, it is important that we understand where we are going – the history, the usage and the spirituality of the place. And we need to realize that wherever we go – the forest or the ocean – we are entering as guests and we cannot automatically assume that we are welcome there. From this perspective, we may develop a proper attitude – one of humility, one that shifts our focus from ourselves to our surroundings, and one that allows us to blend with the elements of nature such as the sun, the clouds, the wind, and the rain.

Before approaching any sacred place, traditional protocol requires that we silently ask permission of the *kūpuna* (ancestors), we give thanks for the privilege of visiting, and we offer apologies for any negativity we may unwittingly bring or do at the site.

While near *wahi pana*, continued silence is the best behavior so as not to disturb the harmony of the place or the fauna and flora that reside therein. Silent prayers may be offered in recognition of the spirituality of the place with an understanding that anything we bring with us affects that spirituality. We need to be aware that we become a part of the place and the place becomes a part of us simply because of our presence.

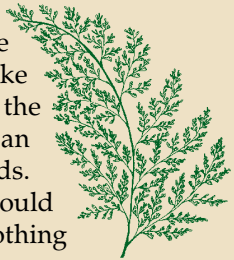
We should always respect the boundaries and *kapu* (off limits) areas of these sacred sites. If not marked, use the outer edge of the stone or wood structure as your limit for viewing.



Pu'ukoholā Heiau, South Kohala, Hawai'i

HO'OKUPU

Our quiet, respectful prayers or chants are our *ho'okupu* (offerings). Nothing physical is required. However, simple, non-meat gifts such as ferns or other greenery may be appropriate, but be aware that this type of offering is traditionally made within the context of ritual and ceremony. Realize that if no one takes care of the place, any offerings we make may accumulate and litter the area rather than serve as an enhancement for the gods. Put simply, if unsure, we should offer nothing spoken and nothing physical.



When you visit a site, you may see offerings of various kinds. Wrapping a rock in a ti leaf is not a traditional offering and it alters the integrity of the site when left on the *heiau* walls and platform. Incense, crystals,

candles and coins are also inappropriate and can damage the *pōhaku* (rocks) of the sacred site.

In some cases, a *lele* structure is built for the placement of these *ho'okupu*. While physical offerings are not encouraged, the *lele* avoids the need to walk onto sacred areas or damage the site.

Physical disturbance is to be avoided as well. This includes moving of *pōhaku* and the removal and/or addition of *pōhaku* and plants.

Heed all signs denoting restrictions and proper behavior when visiting. *Mahalo*

