

Destinations

THE LATEST LOCAL TRAVEL DEALS AND GETAWAYS PLUS JOURNEYS AROUND THE GLOBE

Toasting on the eighth floor of the Outrigger Reef with a view of Diamond Head.



THE BIG 5-0

Follow four Marinites who chose to take their party to Hawaii, our 50th state.

EDITED BY MIMI TOWLE

OAHU

TURNING 50 WASN'T a big deal for me, as I was more focused on getting my daughter ready for college. Even so, I knew I wanted to plan something just for me with a few girlfriends. This trip would be about doing what we love: surfing, dancing and dining with good friends. The Outrigger Reef was an obvious choice. I grew up in a large family in the Bay Area and especially enjoyed time with my grandmother, Margie. She loved the beach and Hawaii in particular. Every year Margie would take one or two cousins to Waikiki to stay at her favorite hotel, Outrigger Waikiki. When it came time to plan my 50th, I asked a couple of friends to join me in a whirlwind weekend. Once we booked the rooms, we worked with the concierge to create the

celebration. I was serenaded by two of the most famous musicians in the state (they both play at the hotel) and met and had a surf lesson from former pro surfer Tony Muniz, whose sons have also become pros. We love to stand-up paddle here in Marin, and in Waikiki we took boards far offshore, where we jumped into the ocean to cool off. Highlights included a show at Blue Note, which felt like a little slice of Vegas but had better food than I remembered. Because of the time difference, we were up before dawn and walked the entire length of the beach every morning. We were only there three days and two nights, but we started the party on the flight over. On a tip from the concierge, we paid a little extra to be part of the Voyager Club 47, which gave us access to a nice outdoor patio for breakfast and a happy hour — it was totally worth it. **KRISTEN ADDICKS »**

JACK WOLFFORD



Surfing Waikiki and enjoying the live music featured every Sunday at Outrigger Waikiki.



📍 **Outrigger Reef** The Outrigger Hawaii “5-0 Celebration” room package includes a deluxe three-night oceanfront suite, private VIP transportation to and from the airport, in-suite sunset champagne celebration with appetizers for up to 10 people at an Outrigger restaurant, and access to the Voyager 47 Club Lounge (\$50 value, per person). Packages start at \$2,500. outrigger.com

📍 **Four Seasons Ko Olina** Appropriate for a big birthday, the “wahine getaway” package includes an ocean-view suite, access to a pool cabana, a spa treatment, and/or activities including outrigger canoeing, hiking, SUPing and more. Rates start at \$645. fourseasons.com/oahu

📍 **Hyatt Regency Waikiki Resort and Spa** The “Suites Set Sail” is ideal for celebrating a milestone birthday in style. The presidential suite overlooking Kalakaua Avenue, on the 40th floor, features six lanais, a gourmet kitchen and elegant dining room. The package features two nights, as well as a private sunset yacht cruise and round-trip transportation in a private Bentley from the resort to the yacht launching site, all starting at \$5,600 per night. hyatt/waikiki.com

📍 **Royal Hawaiian** For your birthday take advantage of the Royal Hawaiian’s “90th Anniversary” package, which includes three

nights (minimum), commemorative swag and a \$90 resort credit to be used for dining, pool cabana or spa. Plan ahead and pair this adventure with one of four two-day epicurean events for the ultimate beach foodie experience. Rates start at \$430 per night. royalhawaiian.com

📍 **The Kahala Resort** This iconic resort is the go-to destination when you want to be near Waikiki, but not in Waikiki. The “Celebration” package includes a daily breakfast buffet for two (\$96 value), \$100 resort credit and all of the regular amenities, as well as a 45-minute beach portrait session, are included. Rates start at \$475 per night. kahalaresort.com

📍 **Hilton Hawaiian Village** The resort is encouraging visitors to have their own “Hawaii Five-O” experience with a new five-night package in an ocean-view or higher-category room, which includes a \$50 dining credit at Tropics Bar & Grill and two signature Hawaii Five-O cocktails. Starting at \$300 per night. hiltonhawaiianvillage.com

📍 **Coconut Waikiki** Recently refreshed by award-winning San Francisco-based designer Anthony Laurino, this family-friendly offering is a vetted value spot in Waikiki. The “Kids Rule” package includes an island-themed art contest, as well as choice of a visit to the Discovery Children’s Museum or a ukulele, lei-making or surfing lesson, all

starting at \$908 for a four-night-minimum stay. coconutwaikikihotel.com

📍 **Ilikai Hotel and Luxury Suites** Fans of *Hawaii Five-O* can celebrate the big 5-0 at the Ilikai Hotel (pictured in every opening scene of the famous TV show). The waterfront property is offering a 10 percent discount for those who have ID verifying they are 50 or older upon check-in. Rates start at \$219 per night. illikaihotel.com

📍 **The Lotus Honolulu Hotel** For a budget-friendly option with a fitness twist, this 50-room property offers guests sunrise yoga classes, unlimited beach cruiser use or a private workout session. In addition, a daily wine reception in the lobby makes for a free daily birthday happy hour. Rates start at \$197 per night. lotushonoluluhotel.com

📍 **Turtle Bay Resort** Looking for a surf safari? The “Hans Hedemann Surf and Stay” package includes unlimited board rentals daily for guests at the newly renovated North Shore favorite. Rates start at \$299 per night. turtlebayresort.com

HAWAII ISLAND

WHEN IT CAME to planning my 50th birthday, I knew I wanted to return to the place I was born. I’m sure if I was born in Fresno, this would not have been as

JACK WOLFORD



From top: Kaunaoa Bay at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel; enjoying poke at Umeke's after swimming with dolphins.



much of a reason to travel. Most of all, I wanted to share my old stomping grounds with my friends and family. The Mauna Kea Beach Hotel was the backdrop to much of my childhood, and when I saw its fall specials, I jumped on the opportunity to go. The itinerary unfolded naturally: we would summit Mauna Kea, swim with dolphins at Kealahou Bay, get massages from Autumn Johnson (an amazing therapist based in Kona), listen to live music at Lava Lava Beach Club, plant Koa Legacy trees near Waipio Valley and spend hours sifting the sun-bleached white sand through our toes. To say Kaunaoa, the beach fronting Mauna Kea Beach Hotel, is special is like saying Stephen Curry is a decent basketball player. Kaunaoa Bay has long gotten the vote for having the islands' most beautiful beach in publications around the planet. For me it feels like home. Forty years ago, my grandmother and I would swog (swim jog) the beach to earn our lunch. This trip I did that with my friends and even made a few new ones — a new friend is taking the practice home to Canada and promises to send photos. The long weekend

exceeded expectations, as our corner suite provided entertaining space as well as a place for Autumn to set up shop. My husband planned a beautiful dinner, where he read letters from relatives, and Danny Akaka (this was a big deal!) sang happy birthday to me. We did swim with dolphins in South Kona and had amazing poke bowls on the way back to the hotel. The only thing we didn't accomplish was the Mauna Kea summit. It turns out my friends didn't consider a hike through snow at 13,803 feet part of an ideal weekend on the Big Island. Not a problem; I'll save that one for my 60th. **MIMI TOWLE**

📍 **The Mauna Kea Beach Hotel** The hotel opened in 1965 and has hosted many family events and milestone moments. The big news here is the new view decks, a renovated Manta restaurant and new Discovery Center. The "Family Plan," ideal for milestone celebrations, includes a golf vista guest room with a large furnished balcony, breakfast for two (\$70 value) and rental car for the day, all starting at \$575. maunaakeabeachhotel.com

📍 **Four Seasons Hualalai** Arrange a "Barefoot Dinner" with 22 of your closest friends and family. Enjoy a family-style customized meal on the beach, cooked tableside, for \$150 per person (including wine pairings). Combine this with the "Experience More" package and receive up to \$200 resort credit per night. Rates start at \$735 per night. fourseasons.com/hualalai

📍 **Puakea Ranch** Staff at this award-winning intimate estate will create a package just for you and yours, whether that means close girlfriends or family. Enjoy horseback riding, massage, a painting class, and a private chef or just a kitchen stocked with delicious treats from local purveyors. Stay in historic

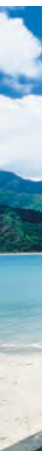
bungalows with access to hiking and swimming. A full buyout of the property is available, accommodating up to 20 guests (four cottages) for a private birthday getaway starting at \$7,600. puakearanch.com

📍 **Holualoa Inn** Celebrate your big birthday in the heart of the Kona coffee belt on the slopes of Hualalai. Combine your stay with one of many adventure options, including evening snorkeling with manta rays, a helicopter trip to Kona coffee country, or a tour of the volcano. Buy out the entire inn (four guest rooms, two suites and one historic cottage) starting at \$4,190. holualoainn.com

📍 **Kalaekilohana Inn and Retreat** Looking to go beyond the resorts? This four-room property makes a great centrally located destination between Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Puuhonua o Honaunau National Historic Park. Up to eight guests can schedule a day at each park, a hike out to the Papakolea green-sand beach, or a visit to the nearby Kahuku area of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, all starting at \$972 for the group. kau-hawaii.com

MAUI

LAURA AND I have been together a long time, and as Joe Walsh once sang, life's been good to us so far. When it came time to figure out where we would celebrate her 50th, we didn't have to think too hard: the Manele Bay Hotel on Lanai [in Maui county, a short boat ride away]. Our first unofficial date was on her 15th birthday at Ciao, her dad's restaurant in San Francisco, and a quick 35 years later we were hardly the near-strangers to each other we had been back then. The island of Lanai and this particular resort weren't new to us either — we'd returned every year since we fell in love with the place on our honeymoon in 1993. We didn't know what to expect from the new Manele Bay Hotel, now officially the Four Seasons Resort Lanai, which had been closed for renovations for quite some time after Larry Ellison bought it. We hoped that it would be as peaceful and beautiful as ever and that long-time staffers who had grown to be friends, like Josh at the beach and Gerald at the pool, would still be there. Once we arrived at the property I heaved an immediate sigh of relief — there were a bunch of nice physical changes, like the new adults-only serenity pool and the handsome,





Clockwise from top left: Laura and Steve Reinertsen enjoying a Four Seasons Resort lanai; the new villas at Fairmont Kea Lani; the pier at Hanalei Bay on Kauai is a popular destination.



super-smart rooms, but there were also many warm and familiar faces at every turn. Things were spiffier, which was nice, but thankfully the island's heart and soul — its peace, beauty and people — remained unchanged. We can't wait to return. **STEVE AND LAURA REINERTSEN**

➔ **Four Seasons Resort Lanai** The news here is the opening of the exclusive Four Seasons Lounge at the Honolulu Airport and the expanded on-site Hawanawana Spa. The "Love Lanai" package includes a 60-minute spa treatment, access to championship golf, Polaris off-road adventures, horseback riding, snorkel sail and more, all starting at \$1,375. fourseasons.com/lanai

➔ **Fairmont Kea Lani** The newly renovated luxury beach villas are ideal for a group celebration. Choose from two- or three-bedroom villas featuring a full gourmet kitchen with dining space for six, two master bedrooms, and a private furnished courtyard with plunge pool and barbecue grill. Packages include luxury oceanfront or ocean-view villa accommodations and a buffet breakfast for four or six people in Kea Lani Restaurant, all starting at \$1,675. fairmont.com

➔ **The Westin Nanea Ocean Villas** Take advantage of the introductory offer from Kaanapali's newest property. The "Discover Nanea" package includes a complimentary activity as well as a \$250 resort and spa

treatment credit. Four nights (minimum) start at \$779. westinvillas.com
 ➔ **Kaanapali Alii** This beachfront property is one of the value spots on the island. Book a Kaanapali Alii condo with a den and you get the privacy of a master bedroom and fully enclosed den, which sleeps two additional guests at no charge. Rates start at \$600 per night. kaanapalialii.com

KAUAI

EVER SINCE MY parents brought our family to Hanalei for a week when I was in middle school, Kauai has been our family's go-to destination. For my 50th birthday, my family of four and my sister's family of five all stayed together at the Westin in Princeville and then it was off to the Hyatt for three nights in Poipu. The kids ranged in age from 7 to 20, and I would describe the adults as athletic foodies. Usually we rent a house, but this time we wanted to be in a hotel where someone else would come in and clean our rooms daily and we would have access to a multitude of activities. I made a list of what we had to do, which included at least one dinner at Dolphin in Hanalei, hike the first part of the Kalalau trail on the Na Pali coast, surf and SUP in Hanalei Bay, and try new restaurants. We did all this and more. We hadn't stayed in Poipu for a few years and loved the new food options. We ended up having breakfast at Living Foods in the Kukuila shops a few times. We had one sushi dinner at Stevenson's at the Hyatt, made it to Sheraton's Rum Fire to sample the goods from chef Michael Young (we saw him on the television show *Cutthroat Kitchen* last year) and were thrilled to finally try Eating House

1849, Roy Yamaguchi's latest. All exceeded expectations. As a special treat and nod to my next 50, my wife made appointments for all the adults to experience the new flotation pods at the Hyatt spa. She said it was to give us all an hour to meditate on milestone birthdays. This might have been a highlight, but it's hard to choose just one. On the way home, my daughter declared that for the next big family event we'd be doing the same things at the same exact places — I'd say it was a success. **TIM JONES**

➔ **Kauai Marriott** Create your own outdoor adventure at Kauai Marriott Resort on Kalapaki Bay with the "Experience Kauai Outdoors" package, which includes accommodations and four activity vouchers including a zip line adventure, three-hour ATV tour, Na Pali snorkel sail or a backcountry tubing adventure. Rates start at \$374 per night. kauaimarriott.com

➔ **The Westin Princeville Ocean Resort Villas** Nestled 200 feet above the Kauai coastline, the Westin is offering a "Stay Connected" package. Book a deluxe island-view one-bedroom villa (including a fully equipped kitchen or kitchenette, full-size refrigerator, washer/dryers and access to barbecue grills) at full price and get a connecting studio villa with bedding for up to eight people, all starting at \$648 per night. westinprinceville.com

➔ **Koloa Landing** After completing a \$100 million expansion and joining the Autograph Collection by Marriott, Koloa Landing can boast the largest accommodations on the island. And to help you celebrate your milestone stay, the resort is offering a \$100 resort credit if you mention that it's your 50th birthday upon check-in. Rates start at \$220 per night. koloalandingresort.com **M**