

## Travel blog

# HAWAIIAN CUSTOMS: 10 DOS AND DON'TS FOR VISITING HAWAII

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It's 85 degrees, the sun is shining, and the ocean breeze carries just a hint of coconut-scented sunscreen. It's true that there's never a bad day in paradise, but that doesn't mean a slip up in etiquette or a misstep in planning can't cloud what would otherwise be the perfect trip. However, with these 10 common sense dos and don'ts, you'll be well on your way to understanding the local culture, and ensuring the Hawaiian vacation of a lifetime:



**1. Flower Lei Etiquette**—Do accept a lei gratefully, and never take it off in the presence of the person who gave it to you. Pregnant women will be given a long, open-ended lei meant to symbolize good luck for a safe delivery.

**2. Barefoot Rules**—Don't forget to remove your shoes when going inside someone's home. It's considered bad manners to keep them on.

**3. Spam, It's a Thing**—Do try Spam in the islands. Commonly served in convenience stores, Spam musubi consists of a grilled slice of Spam served on top of rice and wrapped in seaweed. Spam remains a common grab-and-go snack that arrived in Hawaii in World War II when food from the mainland was rationed.

**4. Protect the Coral**—Don't damage the delicate coral reef by touching or stepping on it while diving or snorkeling.

**5. Extend your Stay**—Do stay a while longer. Since such a large portion of your vacation budget is spent on getting here, why not stretch your travel dollar further by adding on an island cruise, visiting multiple islands, or enjoying a few extra days in the sun? YMT Vacations' Hawaiian Islands Cruise & Tour is a 12-day itinerary that pairs a cruise with a land tour for the best value.

**6. Try Mobile Dining**—Don't miss the food trucks. Throughout Hawaii, you'll find street food vendors incorporating fresh island ingredients in their adventurous menus. Many of these gourmet trucks are parked beachside right on the sand—what more could you ask for?

**7. The Meaning Behind the Dance**—Hula is far more than just a dance for tourists, it's part of the Hawaiian culture. Often featured at family gatherings and special occasions, it's a true slice of native Hawaiian life.

**8. Keep Clear of Protected Marine Life**—Don't approach sea turtles, humpback whales or other forms of endangered marine life since these species are protected by law.

**9. Respect Private Property**—Do use public beach access ramps. Often a homeowner's backyard may reach all the way down to the beach, so keeping to approved walkways will prevent you from unknowingly trespassing across their property.

**10. Let it Lie**—Don't remove lava rocks or black sand from beaches or volcano fields. Not only is it bad for the environment, it's considered to bring bad luck.

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