

Pu¹ uhonua o
Hönaunau

power, open only to ali^_1 i and
those serving them. Beyond the Great
Wall, the Pu^_1 uhonua served as
a place of refuge for those who
broke kapu, the sacred laws and
beliefs by which all lived. These
wahi pana (legendary places)
and ancient Hawaiian culture
endure here as Pu^_1 uhonua o
Hönaunau National
Historical Park.

Guardians

Two ki^_1 i (wooden images
of Hawaiian gods, pictured)
stand on shore to alert everyone of the
great mana here.

Royal Grounds

The sound of a pū (conch
shell blown by Hawaiian man,
pictured) announces the approach
of ali^_1 i. Skilled paddlers
maneuver wa^_1 a (canoes)

around the lava rocks to land ³
at Keone[^]₁ ele Cove.
Ali[^]₁ i step onto the Royal
Grounds with their advisors and
priests. For the next several
months, they will hold ceremonies and
host gatherings. They might engage in
negotiating war or peace, meeting
in the shade of a hālau (thatched
shelter, pictured). They
participate in amusements like
kōnane (a board game) or
the sport he[^]₁ e hōlua
(sled riding). Attendants and
servants perform daily tasks,
hurrying between hale (houses),
serving the ali[^]₁ i or perhaps preparing
fish taken from the royal fishponds.
Priests consult with the ali[^]₁ i on
matters of spirituality, and conduct
rituals here, at Hale o
Keawe, and in the Pu[^]₁ uhonua.

Defeated warriors could also 5
seek safety in the refuge. When
the battle ended they were free to
return home and resume their
lives regardless of the battle's
outcome.

The Pu^uuhonua o
Hōnaunau, like all
pu^uuhonua in the islands, served
Hawaiians for hundreds of years
until kapu ended in 1819. It
remains a sacred place of peace,
calm, and refuge to
Hawaiians, open to all who
find their way here.

Explore Two Sides of Hawaiian Life

Follow numbered posts on a
half-mile self-guiding tour through
the Royal Grounds and the
Pu^uuhonua. Check the
regulations and safety tips at the
end of this brochure before you begin.

Please be respectful of this sacred

site.

site.

Picture: Aerial

photograph of the Royal Grounds

and Pu¹uhonua with numbered

stops.

stops.

List of stops in the Royal

Grounds follows:

1 Royal Grounds Here, in

ancient times, workers pound kalo

(taro), take fish from the

ponds, or prepare the grounds for

ali¹i. On the far side of the

Royal Grounds is the Great

Wall (stop 7), the boundary

of the Pu¹uhonua. Follow the

sandy path to the right.

2 Temple Model This

structure is a small

reconstruction of Hale o

Keawe, the heiau at stop 8.

This model shows details of the

heiau. Its frame is

öhi¹a wood, the roof is

thatched with kī leaves, and 7
the trim is of ama[^]1 u
(fern).

3 Konane This

Hawaiian strategy game is
played with black and white
pebbles on a papamū (stone
playing surface). Papamū
can be any size and are carved into
a lava surface. If you would like
to play kōnane, ask for
rules at the visitor center.

4 Kānoa These bowls,

carved into rock, may have been
used for dying kapa (bark
cloth), tanning fishing nets,
or pounding [^]1awa root to
make a ceremonial drink.

5 Tree Mold When hot

lava surrounds a living tree,
moisture in the tree causes the
lava to harden before it burns.
Sometimes this leaves tree molds
like those here. Many molds in the park
are of loulu palms. Loulu were

once abundant, but now are
endangered.

6 Keone[^]_1ele This

protected cove was kapu; only
ali[^]_1i could land canoes here.
At times, honu (sea
turtles) rest on the shore.
Please keep your distance; they are
protected by law.

7 The Great Wall Up to

12 feet tall, 18 feet
wide, and over 950 feet long,
this wall defines the sacred
space of the Pu[^]_1uhonua. The
wall was constructed over 400
years ago using uhau humu
pohaku (dry-set
masonry)—stones fitted without
mortar.

List of stops in the

Pu[^]_1uhonua follows:

8 Hale o Keawe This

heiau was a royal mausoleum

housing bones of 23 9

ali^_1i, including Keawe-^_1

ī-kekahi-ali^_1i-o-ka-more

oku, Kamehameha's

great-grandfather. These bones give the

heiau immense mana.

Hawaiians still revere this place

and sometimes leave ho^_1okupu

(offerings) on the lele

(tower). These wooden images

are ki^_1i representing

Hawaiian gods.

9 Pu^_1uhonua Imagine

scrambling out of the waves onto

the rough lava. Although exhausted and

out of breath, now you are safe. In

a few days you will be absolved by

a priest and can go home.

10 Keōua Stone According to

local tradition, this was a

favorite resting place of

Keōua, a high chief.

Holes in the lava surrounding the

base may have supported a

coconut leaf canopy. Walk

back to the sandy path to continue

the walking tour.

the walking tour.

11 ^_1 Āle^_1 ale^_1 a

This may have been a principal

heiau long before Hale o Keawe

(stop 8). The platform was

built in seven stages. After

Hale o Keawe replaced this

heiau, oral tradition

describes ali ^_1 i relaxing and

watching hula on the platform.

watching hula on the platform.

watching hula on the platform.

12 Ka^_1 ahumanu Stone

Legend holds that Queen

Ka^_1 a-hu-manu, a

favorite wife of

Kame-ha-me-ha, swam to the

Pu^_1 u-honua after they

quarreled. She hid under this stone,

but her barking dog revealed her

location. Fortunately, she and

her husband reconciled.

her husband reconciled.

13 Papamū Small

poho (depressions) were carved

into flat lava rock to

create this surface for playing

create this surface for playing

kōnane (stop 3). 11

The skills mastered in this game
could be used in battle or other
pursuits.

14 Old Heiau Site

Long ago, another heiau was
built here. It may have been the
first heiau for the refuge.
Ravaged for centuries by ocean
waves, only remnants
remain. They are among the oldest
structures in the park.

The path now leads back toward the

Royal Grounds. Just before the Great
Wall, you pass a pond on the
right. It is an anchialine
(an-kee-uh-line) pool, fed
by a freshwater spring and the ocean.

The tour continues through a modern
opening in the wall.

List of stops in the Royal

Grounds continues:

15 Royal Fish Ponds

These anchialine pools held
fish to be eaten by the
ali[^]li.

The next stop is the large
thatched shelter.

16 Hālau In ancient
times, this structure would have been
made of ōhi[^]li a wood
tied with cord and thatched with
pili grass. Today it serves
as a hālau wa[^]li a, or
canoe house. Artisans work
in the smaller hālau.

Other features highlighted on the

- aerial photograph: Ala
- Kahakai National Historic
- Trail (1871 Trail),
- Coastal Access Road,
- Picnic Area, Visitor
- Center, and Amphitheater.

Picture: Woman playing

drum, boy dancing hula;

Ali ^_1 i and boy

Exploring Through Time,

chronology follows:

900-1100 CE

(Common Era)

Polynesians arrive in the

Hawaiian islands, likely from the

Marquesas Islands 2400 miles

south. Their voyaging canoes carry

plants, animals, and supplies

needed to live here. People settle in

hereditary groups led by a chief.

Their farming, hunting, and gathering begin

to change the land.

1100-1400

Tradition tells of ali ^_1 i

(chiefs) voyaging back and forth

between Hawaii and ancestral

Kahiki (eastern Polynesia and

Tahiti). They bring new ideas

and traditions like temple 15

drums, wooden images, and

ritual human sacrifice.

Tradition also says voyaging ends

by 1400. Afterward, Hawaiians

live in isolation for several

hundred years.

1400-1600

As the population expands,

ali[^]₁ establish land boundaries and

centralize their power. They begin

enforcing kapu (sacred laws), which

separates them from the

maka[^]₁ āinana (common people)

by controlling all aspects of

life. During this time, people settle

Hōnaunau, establish a

pu[^]₁ uhonua (place of

refuge), and build the first heiau

(temple) here.

1600-1778

Hawai[^]₁ island is united

under one ali[^]₁ in the early

1600s. Hōnaunau becomes a
royal center. Hale o Keawe
heiau is built to house the
bones and mana (spiritual power) of
the ruling ali¹ i, Keawe-¹
Ī-kekahi-ali¹ i-o-ka-mok
u. Ali¹ i continue to expand their
power and influence. In the
mid-1700s, Kamehameha is
born. His uncle
Kalaniopu¹ u was the ruling
chief of the island by the late
1770s.

1779-1810

In 1779, English explorer
Captain James Cook sails
into Kealakekua Bay, north of
Hōnaunau. His is the first
recorded contact with Hawaiians
on this island. In 1782,
Kalaniopu¹ u dies.
Kamehameha defeats his rivals
and rises to power. He unifies
the Hawaiian islands by 1810

through treaty and conquest. 17

through treaty and conquest. 17

1819

Kamehameha dies. During the

mourning period, two of his

wives—Ka[^] I ahumanu and

Keōpūolani—and his son

Liholiho (Kamehameha

II) defy kapu by eating

together. Their action begins the

collapse of the kapu system. More

profound changes in Hawaiian

society follow as Christian

missionaries arrive along with other

Europeans and Americans.

Today, the Hawaiian story

continues to evolve through the sharing of

traditions and the work of

archeologists, anthropologists, and

other specialists.

Pictures: Captain Cook's

pistol, Hawaiian weapon

pictured) was one of many reef fish
they harvested with nets and spears.
Along shore, they gathered
delicacies like
hä ^ 1 uke ^ 1 uke (sea
urchin) and ^ 1 opihi (limpet,
both pictured). And they prized
honu (green sea turtle,
pictured) for its meat and beautiful
shell.

Ua ola no o uka ia uka

Life Comes from the Land

Food, medicine, clothing,

ritual—Hawaiians had many
uses for ^ 1 canoe plants?
brought by their ancestors. Niu
(coconut palm, pictured)
provided food, drink, and fiber for
cord. It also provided fiber for
sturdy cord used on containers
made of ipu (gourds,
pictured). ^ 1 Ulu
(breadfruit), ^ 1 uala
(sweet potato), and kalo

(Indian mulberry, all 21
illustrated) were staple foods.
Kalo (taro), is the source of
poi. Ki leaves
(illustrated) could be made into
sandals and capes, among other
uses. The stiff leaves of hala
(pandanus, pictured) were made
into mats, baskets, and sails.
Noni (illustrated) was one of
many medicinal plants. Olonā,
now a rare plant, was used to
make fine, strong cord for fishing
implements (pictured).

E komo mai
Welcome

The National Park Service
welcomes you to Pu¹uhonua o
Hōnaunau National
Historical Park, established in
1961. We invite you to
explore the culture and enjoy the
coastal landscape (pictured) that

speaks of people who lived here for
centuries.

Getting Here

Pu[^]luhonua o Hōnaunau

National Historical Park is in
the South Kona district of the island
of Hawai[^]i. Take
Māmalahoa Highway (Hwy.
11) to Ke Ala o Keawe
Road (Hwy. 160), between
mileposts 103 and 104. Follow
Hwy. 160 to the park entrance.

Visitor Center

Open daily. Information,
exhibits, gift shop. Call or
check the park website for hours.

Immerse Yourself in Hawaiian

Culture

- Walk the self-guiding tour in
this brochure.
- Take the cell phone tour.
- Talk to people demonstrating

activities, crafts, 23

and games.

• Attend a ranger program.

• Enjoy a film.

• Search for native plants and

animals.

• Play a game of kōnane
(tour stop 3).

• Children ages 3 and up can become
Junior Rangers.

• Attend our annual cultural
festival on the weekend before the
Fourth of July.

1871 Trail to
Ki^_ilae Village

Pick up a trail guide at

the visitor center for this

2.25-mile roundtrip hike that

passes ancient and historic

sites, and volcanic features

along the coast. Wear sturdy shoes

for walking on lava.

Wildlife and Plants

- Feeding, touching, and harassing wildlife—including those in water—is prohibited.
- Federal and state law protects threatened or endangered sea turtles, monk seals, and some plants.

Regulations and Safety

- Emergencies call 911
- Honor and respect ceremonies, protocols, and practices. Keep your distance and refrain from photographing and recording.
- Ask at the visitor center for other special rules and regulations.
- Stay on the trails.
- Federal law protects all cultural objects.
- Firearms regulations and fishing guidelines are on the park website.

- Food is allowed only 25
in the picnic area.
- Pets are allowed only in the
picnic area and on the Coastal
and 1871 trails. They must be
restrained and under control by a
leash no longer than six feet.
- Wear sun protection; bring
plenty of water.

Accessibility

We strive to make
facilities, services, and
programs accessible to all.
Beach wheelchairs are available
at the visitor center. For more
information go to the visitor center,
call, or check the park website.

Related Sites

Explore traditional
Hawaiian life at other
National Park sites on this
island: Kaloko-Honokōhau
National Historical Park,

Pu^u u-ko-holā Heiau
National Historic Site, Ala
Kahakai National Historic
Trail, and Hawaiⁱ
Volcanoes National Park.

For More Information

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one of over 400 parks in the
National Park System. To
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