

ranch without the nose-to-tail aspect. They also have a ride and glide, which interrupts your horseback tour with a few zipline rides for \$145.

They also have a 4-hour ride to a “secret” waterfall (Kalihiwai Falls—it’s the falls seen from the bridge right after the 25 mile marker on the north shore.) \$145 per person; includes 1 hour for swimming and lunch. There’s a 230-pound weight limit. Bring your camera and something to swim in. There’s also a 3-hour ride for \$125. Overall, nice scenery on this ranch. Past the 27 mile marker on Hwy 56.

JET SKIING

Jet ski rentals are outlawed on Kaua’i, so if this is what you came to the island to do, you’re out of luck.



A kayak can be a marvelous way to see Kaua’i. The quiet, peaceful nature of kayak travel appeals to many. There are four rivers on Kaua’i you can kayak and, of course, there is the open ocean.

River Kayak Trips

We’ve kayaked all the rivers in several kinds of craft. We prefer the rigid two-person, self-bailing kayaks for beginners, single person self-bailers for those who have kayaked before. Some use canoes, but we’re not as fond of them since they can fill with water if tipped. (Inflatables are terrible since they are easily deflected by wind—called weathercocking, in case you’re taking notes.)

Of the four rivers, the **Wailua** is by far the most popular. (See map on page 59.) It’s very scenic, and there’s a water-

fall called **Secret Falls** (sometimes called Sacred Falls) on the north fork you can hike to if you like. (Some brochures call it the most spectacular waterfall on the island. That’s bunk, but it’s a nice one just the same.) There’s a more dubious trail just before the falls that goes to the top and exposes you to the more beautiful upper falls, but the trail is pretty sketchy and not recommended. It’s 5 miles round trip and takes most people about 3 hours plus stopping or hiking time. Since large boats take passengers to the Fern Grotto, kayakers should always stay on the north side of the river. If you want to visit the Fern Grotto, consider pulling ashore *before* or *after* the docks. To be honest, the grotto is not the same as it used to be and is barely worth the effort to get there. The best part about kayaking this river is the scenery and hiking to the waterfall. Just enjoy the Wailua for its lushness, and watch out for the large boat tours.

Past the Fern Grotto, you *might* see a rope swing at a well-known swimming hole. (The state has an ongoing war with pesky rope swing builders. State workers, with marching orders from their lawyers, relentlessly cut ’em down almost as fast as people put up new ones.) People line up to jump off the cliff into the water there, despite a state sign warning them not to. If you do, too, make *sure* there’s nothing under the water first. The African village scene from *Outbreak* was filmed on a secluded plain here on your right; look for it. The wind will probably be in your face coming back, so hug the north bank tightly to minimize the wind. The earlier you leave, the less wind coming back, and you’ll avoid crowds on the river and at the waterfall. (We start at 7 a.m. and strongly suggest you do, even if you gotta rent the kayak the afternoon before.) To kayak this river *on your own*, which we prefer, there are special logis-

tical considerations—see RENTING A KAYAK FOR THE RIVER below. No kayak renting on Sundays.

The **Hanalei River** is the longest and goes mostly through plains. (Beautiful plains, but plains.) There are no powerboats past the mouth where you put in, so it’ll be quieter. It takes about 3 hours (6¾ miles) round trip for most people to kayak this peaceful river. After a heavy rain, waterfalls etched in the distant valley walls can enhance the trip. The wind usually helps you a little coming back.

The **Hule’ia River** in Lihu’e is 5 miles round trip (2 hours or more). It starts from Nawiliwili Harbor, and the water flow is not great, so expect ickier water here. There are majestic mountains on your left as you go out, and you will pass the easy-to-miss Menehune Fishpond and an area where they filmed the swing-on-a-vine-to-the-waiting-airplane scene from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. (Keep an eye out for the opening to the fishpond.) Lots of jumping fish in the shallow parts of the pond. The last navigable part is our favorite part of this river. This river goes through a wildlife refuge, but you’ll see and hear more birds on the Hanalei River. The wind will probably be in your face coming back. If you’re doing this on your own, you’ll run into large guided groups at times.

The **Kalihiwai** is short but *very* sweet. You can kayak it in an hour (taking your time) if you decide not to do the additional 10 minute hike (more like a grope up the river, then through the jungle on the right side) to Kalihiwai Falls. Put in at Kalihiwai Beach. You might not see the waterfall from where you

stop kayaking. The scenery is the best of the four, and you might want to do it if you have any juice left after a Hanalei River trip. Expect to be hassled if you visit the beautifully manicured falls in any way that doesn’t bring money to the horseback company that leases the land where the falls are.

Renting a Kayak for the River

You can rent a kayak and paddle any river you like, *except* the Wailua River. The state has rules making it harder to rent a kayak *on your own* to kayak the Wailua (which is the best one). They want

If the ocean surf’s up, how about a day on the river instead?

