

you order the massive 3-pound lobster), **\$15–\$25** for lunch, **\$10–\$20** for breakfast. On Front Street at Papalaua. Reservations recommended. They usually don't open up the (preferred) upstairs tables until 6 p.m. We could have put them in either the American or Italian category (they call it Mediterranean).

Penne Pasta Café

180 Dickenson St. • 661-6633

Lahaina—Ah, so you *can* eat in Lahaina without paying a fortune. The food quality/price ratio is fairly good here, but they've slipped a notch; enough that we grudgingly removed their ONO. Pasta, sandwiches and salads with a little flatbread pizza. (The latter has an ultra-thin crust and makes a good appetizer for two.) Portions are more than fair, and the flavors work. It's not great. But you're not paying for great. Order at the counter, and they'll bring it to you. On Dickenson near Wainee. **\$9–\$15** for lunch and dinner.

Pizza Paradiso


3500 Lwr. Honoapiilani • 667-2929

Honokowai—The hype is pretty big at Pizza Paradiso. Signs and ads proclaim they were voted "best pizza on Maui," and reviews from a guidebook saying theirs was the "best pizza I ever had." After repeatedly eating here, we can't help but wonder—were they eating in the same place? In fairness, the crust is fairly good and unusual: spongy but effective. But the pizza is lifeless and tasteless, as well as overpriced. It's on par with a really good frozen pizza, but does that impress you? Even if two people order by the slice, four slices and two sodas for \$22 is *steep*. They have a pretty good Greek salad here. Desserts are either the delicious but expensive homemade tiramisu or something less remarkable. **\$5–\$15** for lunch and dinner. At Honokowai Marketplace (between 25 and 26 mile marker on Hwy 30).

WEST MAUI JAPANESE

Kobe Steak House


136 Dickenson St. • 667-5555

 Lahaina—This is a teppan-yaki restaurant. That is where you and seven other people gather around a grill as a talented, knife-wielding chef prepares your food in front of you. This restaurant seems to encourage the chefs to exuberantly engage the guests. The results can be fun. The food is mostly steak, seafood and veggies. Although the food isn't great, it's fairly good and, combined with the lively atmosphere and joking style of some of the chefs, it's a place we like to return to on occasion. Sushi bar also available. Prices are **\$15–\$45** for dinner. Big spread, we know. But it depends on what you want. Reservations required. Between Luakini and Wainee.

WEST MAUI LOCAL

Aloha Mixed Plate

1285 Front St. • 661-3322

 Lahaina—This is a particularly great place for lunch. Good and varied local style food, meaning it may be a bit fattier than mainland tastes, but most visitors seem to like it. Items like kalua pig sandwich, lomi lomi salmon and chow funn noodles. If these sound a little too alien, don't worry. There's something for pretty much everyone. Prices are reasonable for what you get, and portions are large for most (though not all) items. Service is usually friendly but understaffed. They have an outdoor deck and beachside tables. (No alcohol allowed at the beachside tables due to Maui's goofy liquor laws.) They sometimes let the hedge grow high enough to block the surf, and flies can be a problem at times. Reader e-mails are unusually passionate about this place. Two thirds love them; one third hates them. We side with the lovers. **\$9–\$15**

for lunch and dinner. North of downtown Lahaina near the Mala Ramp.


Da Kitchen at the Wharf

658 Front St. • 661-4900

 Lahaina—A menu unlike what you're accustomed to. Unrelated items such as chicken katsu Parmesan, deep fried chili cheese dog (in tempura batter), kalua pork sandwich, loco motion, won fat guy chow funn, etc. It's a local menu on steroids served in a courtyard setting plus some indoor tables. Dinner works best here in the cooler Lahaina evening. Service can be a bit blank, but you have to evaluate this place for what it is: Flavors are between-the-eyes simple and unhealthful. If that's OK, don't hesitate to stop. Prices are reasonable for the location, and portions are dependably generous. **\$10–\$20** for lunch and dinner. At the Wharf Cinema Center.

Honokowai Okazuya Deli


3600 Lwr. Honoapiilani • 665-0512

 Honokowai—How refreshing! A place in northern West Maui that serves good food but doesn't feel the need to soak you. Ambiance is...well, none, actually. Best to get it to go. The original owner was a former executive chef at Mama's Fish House and the Kea Lani, so they knew how to cook here. But instead of opening another highbrow (and high-cost) restaurant, they channeled their energies toward the lower-end market. The menu is diverse enough to eat here repeatedly. Teriyaki steak, spaghetti and sausage, fresh fish, kung pao chicken, steamed tofu—the menu is all over the place, and we weren't sure how to classify them. We like to take food over to nearby Honokowai Beach Park if it's not too windy. (There are a few stools inside, but it's hot.) This place doesn't change much from year to year, and we're glad. **\$8–\$15** for lunch and dinner. North of Ka'anapali on Lower Honoapiilani Road

just north of Honokowai Beach in the AAAAA Rent-A-Space Mall. No credit cards. Closed Sundays.

No Ka Oi Deli


222 Papalaua St. • 667-2244

 Lahaina—Huge sandwiches and salads served with a big smile at a great price. What more can you ask for? The prices are a welcome relief from the sticker shock that goes on just a block away on Front St. Sandwiches are basic but built on a grand scale, and the ingredients are fresh. Eat at the outdoor tables or take it away to a beach. On Wainee St. and Papalaua in Anchor Square. Only open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Open Monday through Friday. **\$5–\$8**. Cash only.

WEST MAUI MEXICAN

Cilantro


170 Papalaua Ave. • 667-5444

 Lahaina—Paper plate prices (and presentation) but with pricier flavors. In addition to tasty standard Mexican items, they have rotisserie chicken, sandwiches and some seafood items. The food's excellent. Consider the taco al pastor—slow-cooked adobo pork with grilled pineapple salsa. And the nachos del sol are a great appetizer. Don't overlook the salsa bar to the right. Prices are not bad for the quality. Atmosphere is basic and simple. **\$9–\$15** for lunch and dinner. In the Old Lahaina Center. BYOB.

WEST MAUI PACIFIC RIM

Mala

1307 Front St. • 667-9394

 Lahaina—Dine right next to the water in an uncrowded part of Lahaina. Boat-lovers will enjoy the close proximity to the moored boats offshore backed by Lana'i and the nearby Mala Pier. They seem to really know how