

USA – HAWAII

Available daily year-round

6-day / 5-night inn-to-inn **SELF-GUIDED** cycling from Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii



The Big Island of Hawaii is known for volcanoes, white-sand beaches lined with palm trees, surf breaks and the world-famous Ironman triathlon. You don't have to be a hardy triathlete to cycle here though – this self-guided cycling tour offers a choice of routes, from easy to epic, carefully selected to offer the best blend of weather, scenery and local culture. Discover hidden gems such as the vibrant artist community in Hawi, the quiet back roads and cattle ranches in the highlands around Waimea and the temple of King Kamehameha. Take time too to relax at the lovely beaches surrounding Waikoloa.

These self-guided tours are ideal for independent travellers. You have the freedom to cycle at your own pace, and you decide whether you want easy or challenging cycling, using the supplied route maps, notes and guidebook for direction. Bicycle hire is included and support is available in case of emergency, just a phone call away. Your luggage is transferred to each night's accommodation, reserved and prepaid. You choose where to eat – bring provisions for a simple picnic lunch or discover a hidden café en route; have dinner at a fine-dining restaurant or relax at a casual eatery – it's entirely up to you.

Cost from: US\$2925 per person twin share Single room supplement available on request.

Departs: Daily on demand year-round from / to Kona

Includes: 5 nights' accommodation in 2, 3 and 4-star hotels, inns and B&Bs; 4 breakfasts; hire of 21-speed hybrid bicycles; inn-to-inn luggage transfers; return transfers from/to Kona airport; emergency support and on-call roadside assistance; detailed maps, route notes and guidebook (1 set per room); introductory briefing and bike fitting on Day 1 of tour.

Not included: Lunches and dinners; breakfast on Day 3; excursions, activities, and entrance fees; travel insurance, gratuities and personal expenses. Transfers from / to Hilo airport or other Big Island locations can be arranged at extra cost. Transfers to sites of interest (e.g. beaches, volcanoes) that are not on your cycling route can also be arranged at extra cost – ask for details when booking.

Level of Difficulty: Easy to challenging. Each day you are offered a choice of routes, from as little as 6 miles (10km) over flat terrain, to 100 miles (160km) with routes of up 8500 feet (2590m) of ascent. On average cycling routes are 20-30 miles (32-49km) daily over flat or gently rolling terrain.

When to go: This self-guided cycling tour is offered year-round. There's no bad time to go: the Big Island enjoys a mild climate year-round, with average temperatures on the coast of 20 - 27C. Winter is from November to April and is slightly cooler and wetter. However the island has several microclimates so the temperature and rainfall vary significantly depending on which part of the island you're on.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details and reservations



Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Kona to Waikoloa

You will be transferred from Kona International Airport for the 30-minute drive to Waikoloa. After an introductory briefing and bike fitting at your hotel in Waikoloa you are free to stretch your legs with a bike ride or take part in one of the many other optional activities available in Waikoloa – paddle boarding, windsurfing, snorkeling, diving, and golf among them. This is a renowned area for viewing green sea turtles; you could also stroll to the Royal Fish Ponds at Aneaeho'omaluu Bay or to the Puako Petroglyph Park to view ancient rock art. Or just relax on the palm-fringed beach and watch the sunset. Your 4-star hotel and resort has an outstanding beachfront location, along with swimming pool, spa and fitness centre, and recently renovated guest rooms.

Cycling options range from 6 miles (10km) up to a moderate ride of 25 miles (40km), both over mostly flat terrain; or if you want to start your holiday with a challenge, ride up to 100 miles (160km) with 2500 feet (765m) of ascent.

Day 2: Waikoloa to Hawi

Cycling @ 25 miles (40km) or detour 45 or 70 miles

Leave 'Tourist Hawaii' behind and head into 'Old Hawaii' following the Ironman route to Hawi. As you ride, volcanic lava fields give way to high grasslands then the landscape becomes lush and tropical as you draw closer to Hawi. The route passes by Pu'ukohola Heiau National Historic Site, where the temple-turned-fortress of King Kamehameha rises majestically above the turquoise waters of the Pacific. Further along, at Lapahiki State Historical Park you can get a taste of how ancient Hawaiians once lived – the ruins of this 600-year-old fishing village have been partially restored and an interpretative walking trail tours through the site. Hawi is at the northern tip of the Big Island and has a vibrant artists' community and a number of art galleries. Just before you reach the town you may get a glimpse of Maui in the distance, or perhaps see majestic humpback whales (December to March).

Perhaps ride past the town to Pololu Valley, where you can walk a trail down to a stunning black-sand beach. Stay tonight at a simple but comfortable plantation-style inn in the centre of town (room only).

The easy cycle route today is 25 miles (40km) along mostly flat or gently undulating terrain. Add a detour to Pololu Valley for a moderate ride of 45 miles (73km), or detour inland for a challenging ride of 70 miles (113km) with 5400 feet (1645m) of ascent.

Day 3: Hawi to Waimea

Cycling @ 15 miles (25km) or detour 35 or 60 miles

Breakfast is at your own arrangements today (the Kohala Coffee Mill and CSC Café are both recommended locally). The ride from Hawi to Waimea is a little over 20 miles (32km) with a long climb over 15 miles up to 3500 feet (1070m) – if this sounds daunting, you can arrange to catch a lift part or all of the way up the hill with the luggage transfer van (arrange this 24 hours in advance). Those who do cycle the whole way are rewarded with a ride on a quiet, tree-lined road and exceptional views down the coast. In just a few miles you transition from lush, tropical surroundings to the open cattle ranches of Waimea highlands. Waimea is a charming country town surrounded by the Parker Ranch, at 100,000 hectares one of the largest ranches in the US. During World War II part of the ranch was used as a military training base. *Paniolo* cowboy culture dominates and this small community also boasts some excellent restaurants. Stay in a cosy 3-star hotel/motel, recently renovated, just a short walk from shops and restaurants.

If catching a lift with the luggage van, the easy option is 15 miles (25km) mostly downhill. The moderate ride today is 35 miles (57km) with 3475 feet (1060m) of ascent. Add a detour onto the slopes of Mauna Kea for a challenging ride of 60 miles (97km) with 5600 feet (1710m) of ascent.

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Day 4: Waimea to Kailua-Kona

Cycling @ 20 miles (32km) or detour 60 or 85 miles

Bid farewell to the highlands and head to the coast and Kailua-Kona, the main town of the Big Island. From Waimea it's 50 miles (81km) and for most of the ride the terrain is open with stunning views to the ocean. Vegetation is sparse on this dry part of the island where volcanic lava flows are relatively recent.

Kona is where the 'action' is on the Big Island. Once a sleepy fishing village, now the centre of tourism, Kona retains a seaside charm despite the bustle. You can snorkel off the beach, try your hand at outrigger canoeing, or simply enjoy one of the many restaurants and an after-dinner stroll along Ali'i Drive. Kona also has a number of historic sites, including King Kamehameha's private temple and the Hulihe'e Palace and Museum with an extensive collection of Hawaiian artifacts. You stay 2 nights in Kailua, in a centrally-located 3-star resort hotel with a pleasant white-sand beach, swimming pool and spa.

For an easy ride, arrange a van transfer (arrange at least 24 hours in advance) for a mostly flat 20-mile (32km) ride. The moderate ride takes in the whole route from Waimea to Kailua-Kona, 50 miles (81km) with 2500 feet (765m) of descent and 1000 feet (305m) of climbing. For a challenging ride, head over the pass to Hawi before following the route of the Ironman south to Kona – 85 miles (137km) with 2500 feet (765m) of ascent.

Day 5: Kailua-Kona loop rides or rest day

Cycling @ 15 miles (24km) or detour 45 or 80 miles

There are many riding choices today. The easy route cruises out and back along the coast road, passing several small beaches, with plenty of opportunities to stop for a swim, a local coffee or a fresh tropical fruit smoothie – up to 15 miles (24km) over mostly flat terrain. Longer rides will take you south to Captain Cook and on to the Place of Refuge, an ancient Hawaiian religious sanctuary, where those who broke *kapu* (taboo) could seek absolution (45 miles / 73km with 3500 feet / 1070m of ascent). Or there is a local challenge ride up the slopes of Hualalai Volcano, climbing 5000 feet (1525m) in just 16 miles (26km), total route 80 miles (130km) with 8500 feet of ascent (2590m)

For those looking for a rest from cycling, options include a dive excursion to the lava tubes and airplane wreck, or a deep-sea fishing trip in search of marlin, mahimahi or tuna.

Day 6: Tour ends in Kailua-Kona

Have a relaxing breakfast and perhaps a stroll along the waterfront this morning then be collected at your hotel for your transfer back to Kona International Airport, where your tour arrangements end.

Extra nights before, during or after your holiday can be arranged at extra cost – please ask when booking. Extend your stay to explore Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, arrange a star-gazing excursion to the observatory at Mauna Kea, go whale-watching in the bay, or snorkel or dive off the coast.



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Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations

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