



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

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 (we start at 7 a.m. and strongly suggest you do, too), the less wind coming back, and you'll avoid crowds on the river and at the waterfall. To kayak this river *on your own* there are special logistical 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 Lihue 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 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.) 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 if you decide not to do the additional hike to Kalihiwai Falls. Put in at Kalihiwai Beach. You might 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 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 much harder to rent a kayak *on your own* to kayak the Wailua (which is the best one). They want you to go on a *guided* tour. (It's not a safety issue; it's a political one—long story.) So although we recommend doing river trips *on your own*, this may be hard to do on the Wailua. Of the companies mentioned below, only **Kayak Kaua'i**, **Wailua Kayak & Canoe** and **Wailua Kayak Adventure** have them for rent for the Wailua River.

(The last one has the best rates.) Call weeks in advance to maximize your chances of getting one. An alternative is **Kamokila Hawaiian Village** (823-0559), which rents kayaks for \$35 from a location so far up the Wailua River, that your paddle to Secret Falls is probably less than 10 minutes. They also *claim* they'll rent them on Sunday. (Nobody else is allowed.)

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On the Wailua River, first you kayak, then you hike...then you frolic!

