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## » Features

### Oh, Hāna

Don't hurry on the drive to Maui's eastern tip

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### Grindz on the Go

Dramatic vistas, lush foliage, waterfalls, and cool freshwater pools have always attracted travelers to the curvy road to Hāna. But there's also delectable fare along this famous 52-mile drive. Bring a cooler. There will be leftovers. Note: Sometimes places simply won't be open when you expect them to be.

Drive on. There's more good food ahead.

Skip the hotel breakfast buffet. Head instead to [Huelo Point Lookout](#) (between mile markers 4 and 5) and have a crepe. Get into tropical fruit mode with Da Kine, a made-to-order, very French-style pancake filled with fresh, local apple bananas, sweet juicy pineapple, and a drizzle of honey. You can stock up on fresh fruit, too. 1-808-573-1850, 1-808-280-4791.

Funky is the word to describe [Nahiku Marketplace](#) (mile marker 29). Don't be deterred. You can have a good cup of coffee, shop for souvenirs, and eat at this hodgepodge of half a dozen stalls. Try Up in Smoke BBQ for a soft taco or two stuffed with kalua pork or fresh local fish and topped with two kinds of cheese, black beans, salsa, shredded cabbage, and a lime wedge.

The food at [Hāna Fresh](#) (between mile markers 33 and 34, at the Hāna Community Health Center) is healthful and beautifully prepared; the organic produce is grown at a nearby 6-acre farm. Early birds get made-to-order omelets and waffles. For lunch, long tables are laden with salads and entrées. Recent options included a chicken salad loaded with natural goodies and a fish burger made from Hāna-caught 'ahi, mahimahi, and ono: Both are as outrageously delicious as they sound. 5707 Hāna Highway. 1-808-248-7515, ext. 26.

If you see a picnic table full of happy county workers on their lunch break, have what they're having from Da Chow Wagon (mauka, just past Hāna Ranch Center). The teriyaki beef sandwich with fries, the hamburger steak plate, or roast pork with gravy explain why this town is often referred to as "Heavenly Hāna."

Be hungry when you reach Braddah Hutts, or save room in your cooler, because the enormous portions border on the ridiculous. The unmistakable aroma of Hawaiian-style barbecue emanates from the well-worn white truck (makai, just past Da Chow Wagon). A pile of meat—chicken, pork, or pork ribs—shiny with teriyaki barbecue glaze is sweet, salty, pungent, and scrumptious. 1-808-264-5582.

The most unlikely spot in the most unlikely spot is Nutcharee's Authentic Thai Food. Grab one of the few tables in the garden, then dig into some of the best Thai food on Maui. Crispy 'opakapaka salad is the house specialty. Pad thai and drunken noodles are also mouthwatering. Open Tuesday–Friday. Another Thai chef takes over the space Saturday–Monday and it becomes Thai Food by Pranee, which is also good. 5050 Uakea Road, across from the Hāna ballpark.

### Top Bananas

The road to Hāna is famously linked to banana bread, simply because folks here always have too many bananas. You'll encounter almost as many different loaves as bridges.

For purists, the classic bread at Aunty Sandy's is light in color and dense in texture, well worth the short detour to the Ke'anae Peninsula, just past mile marker 16. 1-808-248-7448. For complexity, Aunty Nita's über-buttery bread at [Halfway to Hāna](#) (mile marker 17) is dark with a perfect crumb and concentrated flavor. 1-808-248-7037. For variety, they do it six ways at [Hāna Farms](#) (just past mile marker 31). The best seller is mac nut; in addition to plain, there's also pineapple, chai spice, chocolate chip, and coconut lime. 1-808-248-7553.

—Bonnie Friedman