



CLAUDIA CAPOS PHOTOS FOR THE TORONTO STAR

The warm sands and cool shade of Anini Beach make it a pleasant spot to soak up the salt air. Scenes from *Honeymoon In Vegas* and *The Thorn Birds* were filmed at Anini Beach.

See film locales by car

KAUAI from T1

The Descendants has been nominated for five Academy Awards.

Boisterous tourists are perched on the carved-wood tiki stools at the bar where Clooney often sat, cooled by ceiling fans and surrounded by woven-mat-covered walls plastered with hula girl posters, photos of Hawaiians wearing flower leis and surfer memorabilia. Whitford, dressed in a black tank top and slacks with a white crystal on a black ribbon tied around her neck, lowers her voice to share behind-the-scenes scuttlebutt with us.

"The filming of the movie was delayed for a while because the film writer's laptop computer, with the script, was stolen," she confides. "They never recovered it."

The Descendants eventually finished up and so did we, draining the last rummy goodness from our mai tais and politely declining Whitford's invitation to linger over a platter of home-smoked ribs.



The Tahiti Nui in Hanalei, where *The Descendants* was filmed, features music by local ensembles, hula lessons and traditional luaus every week.

During our three-week stay on Kauai, we visited many scenic locales that have appeared in more than 60 major films and numerous TV shows shot on the "Garden Island" since the 1933 filming of *White Heat*.

Three other 2011 releases — the sequel *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*, the Adam Sandler-Jennifer Aniston comedy *Just Go With It*, and *Soul Surfer*, based on Kauai surfer Bethany Hamilton's life — also feature Kauai's beaches, waterfalls and Na Pali coastline. Tour operators offer movie-sight-seeing excursions, but you can hit the highlights in a rental car.

From the Tahiti Nui, we retrace the footsteps of *The Descendants* to Hanalei Bay Beach, a broad swath of golden sand cupped by shark's-tooth peaks and teeming with

boogie boarders and surfers. Historic Hanalei pier, silhouetted against the sparkling water, was featured in *South Pacific*, *King Kong* and *Wackiest Ship in the Army*.

To reach the most famous *South Pacific* location, Lumahai Beach, you have to take route 560 west just past Hanalei Bay, park on the roadside and climb down to the shore.

A far more enchanting sunset view of Bali Hai (known as Makana Peak to native Hawaiians) can be savoured from the outdoor terrace of the St. Regis Princeville Resort, crowning Hanalei Bay's eastern promontory. Don't be surprised to catch sight of a movie crew while you sip your Blue Hawaii. Hollywood filmmakers and stars love to stay and shoot at this posh hotel.

Claudia Capos is a freelance writer based in Brighton, Mich.

JUST THE FACTS

ARRIVING United Airlines, Continental Airlines American Airlines, Alaska Airlines and WestJet offer one-stop flights from Toronto to Kauai's Lihue Airport. Car rentals are available at the airport from Avis, Budget and Hertz.

DINING Hanalei Dolphin Restaurant, 5-5016 Kuhio Highway, Hanalei (at the Hanalei Dolphin Center) specializes in fresh fish and sushi. Dinner entrees, \$25 to \$40. Phone 808-826-6113. Web: hanaleidolphin.com. Mediterranean Gourmet, 5-7132 Kuhio Highway, Hanalei (at the Hanalei Colony Resort) serves Greek-style rack of lamb, gyro wraps and other Mediterranean specialties, and holds Hawaiian luaus seaside. Dinner entrees, \$23 to \$35. Phone 808-826-9875. kauaimedgourmet.com. Duke's Kauai, 3610 Rice St., Lihue, honours legendary surfer Duke Kahanamoku and offers fresh fish and steak dinners with an all-you-can-eat salad bar. Dinner entrees, \$22 to \$32. Phone: 808-246-9599. DukesKauai.com

SLEEPING Wyndham Bali Hai Villas Resort, 4970 Pelelani Loop, Princeville, rents mountain-view and garden-side one-bedroom (\$259.30/night) and two-bedroom (\$311.90/night) condominiums with kitchens. Phone: 808-826-2802. wyndhamvacationresorts.com

Kauai Beach Resort, 4331 Kauai Beach Dr., Lihue, has doubles (two

persons) beginning at \$149/night. Phone: 866-406-2782.

www.aquaresorts.com
Aston Islander on the Beach, 440 Aleka Place, Kapaa, has doubles (two persons) beginning at \$165/night. Phone: 866-774-2924. www.astonislander.com

DOING Take an ATV tour on 4,200-acre Kipu Ranch to see the filming locations of *The Descendants*, *Jurassic Park*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and many other box-office hits. Tour prices begin at \$100/person. Kipu Ranch Adventures, 235 Kipu Rd., Lihue. Phone: (808) 246-9288. www.kiputours.com

Kayak or canoe the placid, flower-strewn Hanalei River down to Black Pot Beach (east side of the river), where sailors sang "Nothing Like a Dame" in *South Pacific*. Kayak Kauai, 5-5070 Kuhio Highway, Hanalei. Phone: (808) 826-9844. www.kayakkauai.com

Hike the legendary Kalalau Trail along the dramatic Na Pali coast to savour views of jungle trails, crashing surf and jagged peaks that created a stunning backdrop for *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*. The trail head is located at "the end of the road" where Kuhio Highway dead-ends in Haena State Park, a setting for "Bali Hai" in *South Pacific*. Park entry is free.

WEBSURFING
gohawaii.com/kauai
letsgokauai.com, kauai.com
kauaivacationresorts.com
beachvillaskauai.com

Oscar picks holiday hot spots

They still talk about the impact that *Sideways* had on the wineries near Santa Barbara, Calif. This year, the Oscar/travel talk is about *The Descendants*, also directed by Alexander Payne, and the potential impact on Hawaii.

But there are other movies with travel themes or components involved in Sunday's Oscars.

MIDNIGHT IN PARIS: Not that Paris needed a boost, but the city has seldom looked more lovely than it does in Woody Allen's film. Check out the stunning Le Bristol Hotel, where Owen Wilson and the naggy but lovely Rachel McAdams bed down at night (when Wilson isn't patrolling nightclubs and bars with the likes of Ernest Hemingway

and F. Scott Fitzgerald, that is).

WAR HORSE: Stephen Spielberg's film about the friendship between a boy and horse was filmed in the relative wilds of Dartmoor, Devon and Castle Combe, Wiltshire, England. Dartmoor locations include the villages of Meavy and Sheepstor. Also check out Haytor, Ringmoor Down, Combestone Tor and Hexworthy Bridge.

THE HELP: Set in Mississippi. According to the website Skyscanner, most of the film was shot in a town called Greenwood, situated deep in the Mississippi Delta, north of New Orleans. With its evocative mix of grand *Gone With the Wind*-style Southern houses and 1960s archi-

ture, Greenwood lives up to its celluloid form in reality. There are tours for folks who want to see where the film was made.

THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO: You can take special tours to find out where parts of the movie were shot in Sweden. Check out a former beer hall that's now a trendy bar called Kvarnen, as well as Mellqvist Kaffever. Both are on the island of Sodermalm in the beautiful city of Stockholm.

Star staff



A scene from *Midnight in Paris*. It's the City of Light. Need we say more?

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