

Blogs

# Maui: A peek at the Honua Kai Resort

Honua Kai is not just a luxury resort, it's an example of sustainable Hawaii living

By **Melissa Chang** on February 9, 2012

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As some of you may know, I have a real estate blog at *Honolulu Magazine*, so I sometimes get into looking at properties. The *Honolulu* blog only focuses on Oahu real estate, though, so I thought I would share this blissful piece of Maui with you here on this blog.

For the first part of my trip to Maui last week, I was fortunate to get a sponsored stay at **Honua Kai Resort**. From the moment I landed, whenever I told someone where I was about to stay, they'd exclaim, "Oh, niiiice!" Turns out, Honua Kai is one of the newer resorts in Kaanapali. Since it was designed to have condo units, all the rooms are fully-furnished luxury residences—some are for hotel guests' use, some are purchased. Here's what some of the available units look like:



Here's the view from my two-bedroom unit at the Honua Kai. The lanai was huge! At night, Julie and I sat out on the lanai drinking wine and talking story, and you could see everyone else doing the same. Funny how the clientele is different, though — no one was rowdy at all.

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There were some things that their PR consultant, Yvonne Biegel, pointed out that overwhelmed me as much as the rooms did. I'm not just telling you this because they let me stay there; I feel strongly that Hawaii businesses should try to incorporate at least some of these practices to protect and preserve our island lifestyle.

The resort was developed from the ground up, so they took the time to remove the invasive species of plants and replace them with indigenous beach plants, creating a healthy habitat that draws increasing numbers of migratory and water birds, and even some endangered sea turtles. This makes them the only Maui resort with its own wetland pond right on the property.

Honua Kai is so dedicated to energy conservation and sustainability, they have a crazy, high-tech system that both generates and saves energy, resulting in their getting Maui Electric Company's largest-ever rebate for energy savings. Has **Kanu Hawaii** looked into this place? I've never even heard of such initiatives at Hawaii businesses:

- Heat generated from the air conditioning cooling system is captured and used to heat the pool water.
- Honua Kai installed the solar powered restrooms at North Beach.
- The resort's green compactor is only the second one on Maui, and is run on soy oil and solar power.
- The air conditioning system allows for the monitoring of every unit installed in the resort including suites via a central control, ensuring energy efficiency without sacrificing personal comfort.

Isn't that amazing? I found the resort's press room, [here](#), so you can read more about their sustainable practices.

I'll get off my soapbox now, so you can read about it all yourself. One more thing about my stay there — the staff was amazing. People will say that almost everywhere they go, but I have to tell you one story about the valet/bell staff, which was neat: Dania Katz (@**DaniaEdibleHI**) and I pulled into the wrong tower upon check in. The guy who greeted us whipped out his list of everyone expected to check in, found my name and said we needed to go to the other tower. A minute later, as we pulled into the Konea Tower driveway, a bellman ran up to the car and said, "Ms. Chang, welcome to Honua Kai!" The first guy had already radio'ed his coworker to expect us (although he claimed he was a little psychic!).

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You can read all of Melissa's blogs at [www.nonstophonolulu.com/UrbanMixPlate](http://www.nonstophonolulu.com/UrbanMixPlate). Follow Melissa on Twitter @**Melissa808**, on Foursquare as **Melissa808**, or email at [Melissa@nonstophonolulu.com](mailto:Melissa@nonstophonolulu.com).



### About Melissa Chang

Melissa has more than 20 years' experience in marketing and public relations. She is currently a freelance writer and independent marketing consultant, specializing in social media.