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The Maui Handbook: Including Molokai and Lanai (Review)

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It is clear that Don Jesús is a fervently religious man who wants to put on record the work of the Catholic missionaries and priests who have done so much for and to the island. This book will surely please those to wish to read about their exploits. Furthermore, the section on the slave raids is excellent and brings to light for the first time a number of significant facts. The 56 reproduced documents are often of inestimable value and at times fascinating to read. (See, for example, the 4½ page report, "Germans", by the island manager Henry P. Edmunds, written about the 1914 arrivals of German warships.) Finally, the abundant photographs are excellently reproduced and frequently of considerable interest.

However, the interested reader who wants to have a "Documented History" of the island will find the book extremely spotty of information (Katherine Routledge is barely mentioned) and crammed with virtually irrelevant details. Spelling out the hour, day, month, year and exact place of inconsequential events in a text not much longer than the Sports Section of the Sunday *El Mercurio* is not exactly how one wants to spend US \$52.

📖 *The Maui Handbook: Including Molokai and Lanai* by J. D. Bisignani. 1995. Fourth Edition, Moon Publications, Chico, Calif. 393 pages, 36 maps, drawings photographs (some in color). ISBN 56691-057-9. Price: \$14.95. Phone: (800) 345-5473.

Review by Kay Kenady Sanger, Calabasas, California

Seasoned travelers look for three things in a guidebook: it must be crammed with useful information as thick as one-fingered *poi*, but small enough to pack in carry-on luggage for easy reference; it needs to have well-organized, accessible format; and it should contain accurate, thoughtful background information to help readers appreciate the place.

Moon Publication's *Maui Handbook*, fourth edition, which also includes Molokai and Lanai, covers the first two points pretty well. For a book about an island that most *haoles* visit just to loaf on the beach, it suggests plenty of action. Chapters in the pocket-sized book divide the island into geographic sections, each of which concisely describes and provides insider's tips about the same topics: beaches, accommodations, food, entertainment, and shopping.

An eight-page index allows readers to quickly peruse sightseeing options ranging from air tours to zoos. I'm not an authority on Maui, although I've been there a few times to snorkel and relax in the last 10 years. To test the book's accuracy, I looked up "snorkel" in the index, and sure enough, I found my favorite snorkel beaches faster than I could say *humuhumunukunukaapua* 'a. Similarly, the separate indexes on hotels and restaurants listed the spots I've visited, but I must add that as a writer of a couple of guidebooks myself, I know how quickly a guidebook can go out of date. One good hurricane or hotel bankruptcy and the author is left with *pu pu* on the face, so to speak. It's always best to call first before

heading to a place suggested in a guidebook.

Readers can easily find these destinations on the book's 38 maps. One of the maps places Maui in a broader context, at the top of the Polynesian triangle, with "Easter" on the eastern side.

A glossary presents a few well-used Hawaiian words, like *wiki* (fast) and *wiki wiki* (very fast). The book also has a 60 page introductory section that covers history, flora and fauna, government and the people. The breezy text in the history section moves *wiki wiki* from Marquesan migrations to Statehood, although it is certainly more comprehensive than the other Hawaiian guidebooks on my shelf.

But for those interested in the pre-history of the island and the Polynesian remnants that remain, the book has a few shortcomings. The background information is designed for tourists, with little thought given to the local or original island population.

For example, I discovered "petroglyphs" in the index and then read with horror as the author advises the reader to "claw your way up the hill to the petroglyphs, which are believed to be 300 years old." There is no mention of preserving the site or discouraging readers from adding to the graffiti that already occurs there. Directions to another site guide tourists up an overgrown trail to the left of a "No Trespassing" sign, with a warning to "be very careful of your footing" while climbing among the petroglyphs rocks because the crumbly ground and vegetation are slippery. What about being careful of the petroglyphs?

Readers who want to know more about the island won't find the five-page booklist very useful. For example, the History/Political Science section suggests 21 books for further reading, but more than half were published during the 1960s or before. The main work recommended for background on the origins of Hawaiian population is Thor Heyerdahl's *American Indians in the Pacific*, published in 1952. Thank Pele, the author didn't use it as a reference for his chapter on the historic background on Hawaii. Why then, would he want to confuse his readers by suggesting this book for background reading? Better choices would be Patrick Kirch's fine book on Hawaii, *Feathered Gods and Fishhooks*, University of Hawaii Press (1985) and J. Halley Cox and Edward Stasack's classic *Hawaiian Petroglyphs*, Bishop Museum Special Publication 60 (1970).

In summary, the *Maui Handbook* is a useful guide for the casual visitor. It's a *wiki* read, and will help tourists get around the island easily. But for my anthropological taste, some of the background information is about as thin as three-fingered *poi*.

📖* *Ancient Egyptian Survivals in the Pacific*, by R.A. Jairazbhoy, 1990. Karnak House, Billing & Sons Ltd., Worcester, England. 78 pages, Black and white drawings and a 3 photos. ISBN 0-907015-49-2.

Review by Georgia Lee