

FilmHawaii

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Hollywood's Tropical Backlot

We are delighted to say that Hawaii is the only place in the United States where you can find tropical locations.

In about the time it takes to travel to New York to take a meeting, LA filmmakers can fly to Hawaii and find locations that duplicate the world's most remote tropical areas. In about five hours they can move from the urban sprawl of the Los Angeles Basin to the mountains and jungles of Central Africa, the Equatorial rain forests of South America, the central highlands of Southeast Asia, or the palm-shaded beaches of the South Pacific. And they can do it all without changing language, currency or their cell phone provider.

Sometimes, Hawaii appears as Hawaii, as it did in the Michael Bay epic, *Pearl Harbor*, in the all-time classic, *From Here to Eternity*, and in the long-running shows, *Hawaii Five-O* and *Magnum, P.I.*, two of the 20 dramatic television series which have filmed here since 1968.

More frequently, however, the USA's only tropical state has provided settings for films with other tropical locations, such as the recent Bruce Willis film *Tears of the Sun* in which Antoine Fuqua used Hawaii to double for Nigeria, or the soon-to-be-released *Hellorado* with The Rock in which Hawaii doubles for Brazil. Other examples where Hawaii has doubled for Africa include *George of the Jungle*, *Mighty Joe Young*, and *Outbreak*. Other tropical locations were featured in films such as *Windtalkers* (Saipan), *Jurassic Park III* (Costa Rica) and *To End All Wars* (Burma and Thailand). Not to mention *Six Days/Seven Nights* (Tahiti), *Krippendorf's Tribe* (Papua New Guinea), and *Godzilla* (Panama, Jamaica and Tahiti again).

Then there are the projects that don't fit into the mold of Hawaii's usual tropical positioning. Such as the mythical world depicted in Tim Burton's *Planet of the Apes*, shot on the Big Island of Hawaii, or the make-believe animated world of *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*, created in a world-class CGI studio overlooking Honolulu Harbor, rather than Burbank, Marin County, or Tokyo. Or even hyper-urban locations like New York City, San Francisco, Sydney, and London as depicted in flashbacks on ABC's *Lost*.

But for most of the filmmaking world, Hawaii, USA, exists as “Hollywood’s Tropical Backlot.” It is a role the state is delighted to play. The industry in 2004 directly spent an impressive \$164 million, which amounts to a \$262 million impact on Hawai‘i’s economy.

Collections of location photos and detailed information can be found on the websites maintained by the four county film offices: www.filmbigisland.com, www.filmhonolulu.com, www.filmkauai.com, and www.filmmaui.com. The Hawaii Film Office’s website, www.hawaiifilmoffice.com, can provide you with guidelines on permits for state-administered location, tax incentives, and other important information.

The Best Weather in the World.

Weather is one of the top reasons filmmakers flock to Hawaii. Basically speaking, there is no better weather. Anywhere.

Unlike most of the tropical world, which is characterized by extremes in heat, humidity and rainfall, Hawaii’s climate is consistently moderate. There are only small seasonal variations in the energy received from the sun and the tempering effect of the surrounding ocean. Honolulu International Airport has recorded temperatures as high as the mid 90s and as low as the lower 50s. Both are *extremes*.

Because of trade winds, even the warmest months are usually comfortable. Thunderstorms are infrequent and usually not intense.

How are we doing right now? If it’s daylight, we’ll bet it’s mostly sunny, with a high in the 80s, a low in the 70s, trade winds blowing lightly and relatively low humidity. There were probably some *mauka* (mountain) showers this morning, mostly on the windward side of whatever island. Check for yourself at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/pr/hnl/index.shtml>. Want *detailed* climatic data? Go to: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/pr/hnl/pages/hiclimite.html>.

For the record, the state features 11 of the 13 climatic zones. The volcanic mountains of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa on The Big Island, which both rise nearly 14,000 feet above sea level, are often snow capped during the winter months.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Lost

Created by J.J. Abrams, Damon Lindelof, and Jeffrey Lieber
Starring Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, Naveen Andrews, Emilie de Ravin,
Matthew Fox, Maggie Grace, Josh Holloway, Malcolm David Kelley, Daniel
Dae Kim, Yunjin Kim, Evangeline Lilly, Dominic Monaghan, Terry O’Quinn,

Harold Perrineau, Michelle Rodriguez, Ian Somerhalder, Cynthia Watros.
Touchstone Television/ABC

Hawaii doubles as a mysterious and cursed deserted island somewhere in the South Pacific. But, in flashback sequences, it also doubles as many familiar places, such as New York City, Sydney, London, New Orleans, and San Francisco. Bishop Street in downtown Honolulu was dressed up as a New York City avenue, complete with a subway station and pay phone booth. A pub on the Nimitz Highway was made to look like it was in London. An mansion in the Nuuanu neighborhood of Honolulu doubled as a grand, classic New Orleans plantation house. The sci-fi drama became an instant cult hit and ratings juggernaut, and is watched by 20 million Americans every week, and many millions more worldwide.

Tears of the Sun

Directed by Antoine Fuqua

Starring Bruce Willis

Revolution Studios/Cheyenne Enterprises

The jungles of Oahu's Windward side doubled for Africa in this action feature starring Bruce Willis as a Navy SEAL whose squadron is sent on a hazardous mission to rescue four people, including an American doctor, played by Monica Bellucci, working in a mission hospital in civil war-torn Nigeria. But the good doctor won't leave her patients to be slaughtered by vicious rebels...necessitating Willis and his men to rescue two dozen people, without the essential air support. Information on Oahu locations can be found at www.filmhonolulu.com.

Lilo & Stitch

Written and directed by Chris Sanders & Dean DeBlois

Walt Disney Pictures Animated feature

The storyline of the Oscar-nominated animated favorite *Lilo & Stitch* centers on an Elvis-loving Hawaiian girl, Lilo, who adopts an alien gremlin-like creature passing for a dog, Stitch, and teaches him the meaning of "ohana" (family). The lush, tropical setting of Kauai inspired the movie's setting where Disney background supervisor Bob Stanton was "overwhelmed by the incredible color and light of the island." It is the first Disney film since ***Dumbo*** to use watercolor backgrounds. The movie became a certified blockbuster almost immediately, and became the 17th film to pass over \$100 million in the overseas box office. The success of the film launched a regular TV cartoon series and a sequel. For more information on filming on Kauai, visit www.filmkauai.com.

Blue Crush

Directed by John Stockwell

A Brian Grazer Production

Starring Kate Bosworth and Michelle Rodriguez

Universal Pictures/Imagine Films

Hawaii's picturesque North Shore surf is a shining co-star in this feature about three young women who try to compete in the male-dominated world of professional surfing. Director/co-writer Stockwell, an avid surfer himself, used the best water and surf photographers to capture dramatic wave rides. The film opened August 16, 2002 and brought in \$29 million at the box office in the first two-plus weeks of release. Information on Oahu locations can be found at www.filmhonolulu.com.

Windtalkers

Directed by John Woo

Produced by John Woo and Terence Chang

Starring Nicolas Cage

Metro Goldwyn Mayer

Shot on the North Shore and Windward side of Oahu, John Woo's epic World War II film ***Windtalkers***, starring Oscar winning actor Nicolas Cage, is set on Saipan, a strategically vital island in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. Cage portrays a Marine who is assigned as a bodyguard to a Navajo Indian, whose language is used as an unbreakable code. Not only do parts of Oahu bear remarkable resemblance to Saipan, Honolulu International Airport is 3,924 air miles *closer* to MGM. And Hawaii, of course, has a professional film infrastructure that is lacking on Saipan. Producer Terence Chang (***Mission: Impossible 2, Anna and the King, Face/Off***) said, "Hawaii has fantastic locations and hardworking, experienced crew that made filming easy. We'd love to come back with another picture." Information on Oahu locations can be found at www.filmhonolulu.com.

Punch-Drunk Love

Directed by Paul Thomas Anderson

Produced by Paul Thomas Anderson and Joanne Sellar

Starring Adam Sandler and Emily Watson

Revolution Studios

In this edgy drama, which won a best director prize at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival, Adam Sandler plays a man emotionally damaged and prone to violent outbursts, having grown up with seven domineering sisters. His quirky character uses air-mile coupons, won from purchasing hundreds of boxes of pudding, to travel to Hawaii for a rendezvous with a woman one of the sisters sets him up with. The resort area of Waikiki, the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and the Prince Kuhio Day Parade were used as settings during several weeks of production in 2001, when the working title for the film was "The X-4 Project," in reference to the fact that it is Anderson's fourth feature film. Information on Honolulu locations can be found at www.filmhonolulu.com.

Pearl Harbor

Directed by Michael Bay

Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer and Michael Bay

Starring Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett, Kate Beckinsale, Cuba Gooding, Jr.

Touchstone Pictures and Jerry Bruckheimer, Inc.

“I had an awesome experience shooting in Hawaii,” Director Michael Bay said after wrapping ***Pearl Harbor***. In his words, “the filming environment was great. My crew was proud to be working in the actual Pearl Harbor location. There could be no substitute.” His crew included Hawaii film professionals in department after department, and hundreds of extras recruited from the ranks of local residents. His film has sparked renewed interest among younger generations in the history of World War II’s Pacific Theater. And it has caused significant increases in visitor counts to the Arizona Memorial and the USS Missouri Memorial. ***Pearl Harbor*** is the seventh feature film produced by The Walt Disney Company to be shot in whole or in part in Hawaii in recent years. The others were ***George of the Jungle***, ***Krippendorf’s Tribe***, ***Mighty Joe Young***, ***Six Days/Seven Nights***, ***Meet the Deedles***, and ***Dinosaurs***. (*Dinosaurs* used photography from The Big Island, Maui and Kauai as background templates for the CGI animated film.)

Planet of the Apes

Directed by Tim Burton

Produced by Richard D. Zanuck

Starring Mark Wahlberg, Tim Roth, Helena Bonham Carter

Twentieth Century Fox

In addition to the rainforests, pristine beaches and verdant mountains that one might expect from the island of Hawaii, there is an “other worldly” quality to the Big Island which is extraordinary. It made for the perfect setting for Tim Burton’s ***Planet of the Apes***. After the picture wrapped, Executive Producer Ralph Winter asked rhetorically, “Where else can you find such diversity of locations like the stunning black lava fields and the lush tropical jungles so close to Hollywood?” The answer, of course, is nowhere else. “The people of The Big Island were so gracious,” Winter said, that “I’ll definitely go back.” Unlike the Big Island, the planet of the apes is a brutal, primal place where apes are in charge and humans scavenge for subsistence, hunted and enslaved by the tyrannical primates. Enter American astronaut Leo Davidson (Wahlberg), a reluctant hero with a non-conformist spirit, to challenge the planet’s social order. Visit www.filmbigisland.com for more information about filming on the Big Island.

Jurassic Park III

Directed by Joe Johnston

Produced by Steven Spielberg and Kathleen Kennedy

Starring Sam Neill, William H. Macy, Téa Leoni

Universal Pictures

Anxious to fund research for his new theory of velociraptor intelligence, renowned paleontologist Dr. Alan Grant is persuaded by a wealthy adventurer and his wife to accompany them on an aerial tour of the infamous Isla Sorna off the coast of Costa Rica. When an accident maroons the party of seven, Grant discovers the true reason his deceptive hosts have invited

him along. Kathleen Kennedy, the producer of “JP3,” said, “Filming in Hawaii has always been a great experience for us. The state’s wealth of locations and the cooperation we have received have made us want to return again after every film.” And return she has. The original ***Jurassic Park***, which grossed \$919.7 million worldwide, was shot on Kauai and Oahu in 1992. The second in the series, ***The Lost World***, was back on Kauai in 1996 to shoot scenes with Director Steven Spielberg. The box office totaled \$614.3. JP3 was shot on Kauai, Oahu, and Molokai. Spielberg, of course, directed ***Raiders of the Lost Arc*** on Kauai in 1980, and Kennedy produced ***Joe Versus the Volcano***, starring Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan, on Oahu in 1989. For more information on filming on Kauai, visit www.filmkauai.com. For more information concerning filming on Oahu and in the City of Honolulu, visit www.filmhonolulu.com. For more information about filming on Molokai and elsewhere in the County of Maui, visit www.filmmaui.com.

Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within

Directed by Hironubo Sakaguchi

Produced by Square Pictures, Inc.

Starring the voices of Ming-Na, Alec Baldwin, Steve Buscemi, Peri Gilpin, Ving Rhames, Donald Sutherland

Columbia Pictures

It is 2065 and alien creatures are laying waste to Earth. Barrier cities have been built to protect the survivors of the initial onslaught, but time is running out. The spirit of humankind is resilient, however, and embodied in the brilliant and attractive Aki Ross. She and the people around her are Earth’s last hope against extinction. ***Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within***, is their story, but it is also the motion picture that raises the standard by which all animation of human characters and their environments will now be judged.

Hironobu Sakaguchi, the director of ***Final Fantasy***, said, “Hawaii’s pristine natural surroundings, the warmth of its people and the infrastructure available to us, all played an important role in inspiring our artists to create the absolute best in computer generated imagery.” Part of the infrastructure that attracted Sakaguchi was the Hawaii Film Studio complex, where he found a stage perfect for shooting motion capture, and a visa waiver program that allowed him to bring Japanese animators to Hawaii, to work side-by-side with the best from the United States and more than 20 other countries. To learn more about the state-owned Hawaii Film Studio, the Immigration and Naturalization Service visa-waiver program, and Hawaii tax incentives for the film and high tech industries, visit www.hawaiifilmoffice.com.

To End All Wars

Directed by David L. Cunningham

Produced by Jack Hafer and David L. Cunningham

Starring Kiefer Sutherland, Robert Carlyle

Argyll Film Partners in association with

Pray For Rain Pictures, Inc. and Gumshoe Productions

The Huleia River on Kauai doubles as the fabled River Kwai in this true story of four Allied POWs who endure harsh treatment at the hands of their Japanese captors during World War II, while being forced to build a railroad through the Burmese jungle. Director Cunningham, who grew up in Hawaii, describes his film as an epic of courage and forgiveness. "It's about the triumph of the human spirit over inhumanity, and the journey from the prison of self-survival to the freedom of self-sacrifice." The Grove Farm Homestead Museum made fully operational period locomotives and railroad cars available to the project, which were easily and convincingly dressed as Japanese Army trains. The rainforests of Kauai required no alteration to duplicate those of Burma and Siam (Thailand). Information on Kauai locations can be found at <http://www.filmkauai.com>.

Dragonfly

Directed by Tom Shadyac

Produced by Tom Shadyac for Spyglass Entertainment

Starring Kevin Costner and Kathy Bates

Universal Pictures

After the tragic death of his wife, a man starts working as a grief counselor for terminally ill children. When a child undergoes a near-death experience and claims to have seen the man's wife on the other side, he becomes convinced that she's trying to contact him from the next world. He then goes to dangerous extremes to validate his belief. With locations on Kauai, ***Dragonfly*** is a Spyglass production, for Universal release. This is the first film with Hawaii scenes from Director Tom Shadyac (***Patch Adams***, ***Liar, Liar***, Eddie Murphy's ***The Nutty Professor***, ***Ace Ventura: Pet Detective***), who is also the producer of the picture. Information on Kauai locations can be found at <http://www.filmkauai.com>.

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