

THE KANSAS CITY STAR

- ▶ Manage your account
- ▶ Click for special *Star* rates
- ▶ Subscribe to digital E★Star

KansasCity.com



Complete F



EXCLUSIVE
Reduced Deposits
Onboard Credits



1 WEEK SALE
GREAT Prices
Coupon Book
(\$120 Value)

Click Here for more information or call 913.248.0108

Search KansasCity.com Archives Web Search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

- Top Jobs
- Cars
- Real Estate
- Rentals
- Local Shopping
 - KC Auto Deals
 - ShopLocal
 - Newspaper Ads
- All Classifieds
 - Create an Ad
 - Find an Ad
 - Pets

- News
- Columnists
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Video | Photos
- Business
- FYI/Living
 - Columnists
 - Comics
 - Dear Abby
 - Faith
 - Food
 - Health
 - House & Home
 - Indulge
 - Occasions
 - Skiing
 - TeenStar
 - Travel
- Star Magazine
- Opinion

EXTRAS

- Press Release Central
- Past Articles
- The Star's Front Page
- Coffee Break
- Local Traffic
- Maps & Directions
- Yellow Pages
- Local Coupons
- Discussion Boards
- Visitor's Guide
- Weddings
- Hemingway
- The Star in Education

SERVICES

- RSS
- Place an Ad
- Contact Us
- Advertise
- About The Star
- Code of Ethics
- Star Speakers Bureau

FYI / Living > Travel

Friday, Jan 25, 2008

Travel

Posted on Sat, Jan. 19, 2008 10:15 PM

email print reprint or license

AIM del.icio.us Digg it

Amid the island beauty, kayaking in Kauai is a thrill

By ANNE Z. COOKE and STEVE HAGGERTY
Special to The Star

HANALEI, Hawaii | "How're ya' doin'," asked Wyatt Godinez, resting his paddle across the bow and waiting for us to catch up. "Feeling it in your shoulders?" He flashed that Hawaiian-style "hang-loose and chill out" smile that makes everything all right.

Our guide for the day, Godinez had noticed that we were feeling a tad anxious, even though the day was perfect for paddling, with the sun warming the water, the trade winds ruffling the palms and a few puffy clouds floating overhead.

But as anyone who has read the fine print in a Hawaii guidebook knows, the Pacific Ocean deserves respect. The currents between the islands can be tricky; more often they're treacherous.

Although you can drown as easily in three feet of water as you can in 30, it was sobering to know the Kauai Channel, between Kauai and Oahu, is more than two miles deep.

For a couple of amateur paddlers, we have bested some seriously dodgy waterways in less forgiving climates. We have kayaked in Alaska's remote Wood-Tikchik State Park on Lake Beverley, a mountain jewel utterly inaccessible except by float plane. People who venture there are on their own.

In northern British Columbia, we've kayaked — briefly — on a cloudy afternoon on the icy waters of Foch Lake, an alpine pool where an unpredictable down-canyon wind can change an outing from a nature idyll into a nightmare.

And we have braved the current along the mighty Snake River in Idaho's Hell's Canyon.

But our confidence faltered as we parked at Kayak Kauai, based in a rustic bungalow called the "Old Canoe House," in the town of Hanalei (meaning "where leis are made"), on the island's north shore.

The 22-year-old company runs a low-key business, but its owners, both experienced outdoorsmen, sport résumés that prove they've earned their chops. Among other accomplishments, Micco Godinez, 54, and his brother Chino, 56, have climbed Alaska's Denali Peak and kayaked from Seattle north to Skagway, Alaska.



Above: Novice paddlers pull together on the Hanalei River of Kauai. Right: The water is almost always calm on Hanalei Bay, so kayaking alone is safe.



YO
The C
Lea

Plus
Ap

Ov

CA



Visit other Real Cities sites

PROJECT



WARMTH

FOR KANSAS CITY AREA FAMILIES

REGISTER TO WIN

PRIZES!

KansasCity.com

- Movie Passes: "Over Her Dead Body"
- Super Sunday: PlayStation 3, Slingbox SOLO or iPod Nano
- Colorado Vacation



2-1-1

Get Help. Give Help.

TheKansasCityStore



Kansas City books, music, gifts and more

"You'll have an easy time today," said Chino, who was unpacking camping gear for sale in the store part of the building. "Not much wind out there. Wyatt will be your guide — he knows the bay inside and out."

A matter of degree

On the official tourist map, the Hanalei River looks big, a thick blue line that snakes down the slopes of 5,148-foot Mount Wai'ale'ale and turns north for 14 miles. It looks perfect for paddling. But in reality, the upper nine or 10 miles of the river are too shallow for navigation.

"You can paddle for two or three miles into the Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, but that's all," Chino said. "It's a peaceful trip, with easy paddling. Wildlife? Well, no grizzlies or anything like that, but birds nest in the refuge, and you'll see flowers and the taro fields. You'll like the bay better."

Although recreational kayaking isn't technically demanding — "anybody can do it," said Micco — paddling is less effort and more fun if you do it right. So unless you're experienced, Kayak Kauai insists on a brief orientation.

Handing us our paddles, Wyatt demonstrated the preferred form: With your arms out straight and parallel to the ground, you grip the handle with blades at right angles to the ground. Digging the paddle down into the water is a no-no, he said. Instead, you dip it in at a 30-degree angle, as if you were rowing.

[Next page >](#)

Anne Z. Cooke and Steve Haggerty write from their home in Marina del Rey, Calif.

Recent Comments

Be the first to post a comment using the form below

Post Your Comment

Name:

Submit Your Comment

Refinance \$300,000 for Only

\$300,000 Mortgage for only \$965/month.
Save \$1,000's - No
www.HomeLoanHelpLine.com

Free Credit Report with All 3

Free 3-bureau Credit Report includes
Transunion,
FreeCreditReportsInstant!

Ads by Yahoo!

Get The Star **99¢** /week^{+TAX}

Click here for this special offer >

THE KANSAS CITY STAR

- ▶ Manage your account
- ▶ Click for special *Star* rates
- ▶ Subscribe to digital E★Star

KansasCity.com



Complete F



EXCLUSIVE
Reduced Deposits
Onboard Credits



1 WEEK SALE
GREAT Prices
Coupon Book
(\$120 Value)

Click Here for more information or call 913.248.0108

Search KansasCity.com Archives Web Search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

- Top Jobs
- Cars
- Real Estate
- Rentals
- Local Shopping
 - KC Auto Deals
 - ShopLocal
 - Newspaper Ads
- All Classifieds
 - Create an Ad
 - Find an Ad
 - Pets

FYI / Living > Travel

Friday, Jan 25, 2008

Travel

Posted on Sat, Jan. 19, 2008 10:15 PM

email print reprint or license

AIM del.icio.us Digg it

Amid the island beauty, kayaking in Kauai is a thrill

< Previous page
Next page >

- News
- Columnists
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Video | Photos
- Business
- FYI/Living
 - Columnists
 - Comics
 - Dear Abby
 - Faith
 - Food
 - Health
 - House & Home
 - Indulge
 - Occasions
 - Skiing
 - TeenStar
 - Travel
- Star Magazine
- Opinion

EXTRAS

- Press Release Central
- Past Articles
- The Star's Front Page
- Coffee Break
- Local Traffic
- Maps & Directions
- Yellow Pages
- Local Coupons
- Discussion Boards
- Visitor's Guide
- Weddings
- Hemingway
- The Star in Education

SERVICES

- RSS
- Place an Ad
- Contact Us
- Advertise
- About The Star
- Code of Ethics
- Star Speakers Bureau

"You don't want your arms to do all the work," said Andrew Belt, a kayaking guide at Kauai Waterski, Surf and Kayak, on the Wailua River. "Sit up straight, anchor your legs and use your abs and the muscles around your waist. If you're doing it right, you'll feel it."

Some of Kauai's outfitters have to truck their kayaks to the water, but the Godinez brothers are lucky enough to be 30 feet from the Hanalei River on a small canal — a former irrigation channel, actually. Wyatt put the kayaks into the water next to the dock, we climbed in, and the adventure began.

'Keep going'

The advantage to kayaking in Hawaii is that the water here is warm. In Alaska, where the water is always icy, your legs fit down into the kayak and a water-tight skirt fits over the hole, keeping both boat and paddler dry. But if the kayak tips over, you'd better know how to hold your breath and barrel-roll back up, a trick that neither of us has ever mastered.

In Hawaii, where you expect to get wet, most kayaks are the sit-on-top type.

"If it capsizes and you fall out," said Belt, "you grab it, flip it right side up, climb back in and keep going."

Trapped air pockets make the kayaks buoyant, and extra water drains out through holes in the hull. Some models even have watertight hatches to hold "dry bags" for storing cameras and lunch.

We could have rented a "deluxe" model with a rudder controlled by foot pedals for easier steering. But our standard two-seater had no such luxury. Following Wyatt, we paddled clumsily down to the river only to find a half-dozen beginners flailing the water and learning that paddling in tandem can be a mixed blessing.

Two paddlers can share the work. But team kayaking demands compromise. The lead paddler has to adjust the pace to match his partner's, and that partner, sitting in the rear, has to maintain the rhythm. After running up into several weedy clumps, we hit our stride and reached the entrance to Hanalei Bay.



Above: Novice paddlers pull together on the Hanalei River of Kauai. Right: The water is almost always calm on Hanalei Bay, so kayaking alone is safe.



YO
The C
Lea

Plus Ap

Ov

CA

REAL Cities

Visit other Real Cities sites

PROJECT



WARMTH
FOR KANSAS CITY AREA FAMILIES

REGISTER TO WIN

PRIZES!

KansasCity.com

- Movie Passes: "Over Her Dead Body"
- Super Sunday: PlayStation 3, Slingbox SOLO or iPod Nano
- Colorado Vacation



2-1-1
Get Help. Give Help.

TheKansasCityStore



Kansas City books, music, gifts and more

water. Four movies, including *South Pacific*, were filmed nearby, and filmmakers keep coming.

Protected by submerged reefs at the entrance, the bay is almost always calm, making our loop trip easier than we'd expected. After a long loop around, we pulled into a deserted cove on the east shore.

"This is a good place to look for kahelelani shells, like the ones on (the island of) Niihau that they string into necklaces," said Wyatt, kneeling down and digging his fingers through the sand.

"If the colors are good, a film canister of these can go for as much as \$80," he said, dropping a few of the pinhead-sized pink and tan shells into my hand.

"But these aren't valuable," he said, laughing. "They have to be perfect."

Back at the Old Canoe House, we asked Wyatt to recommend his favorite kayak outing, something a little more strenuous.

"Do the Na Pali Coast trip," he said. "But you'd have to get in shape."

"I agree," said Andrew Belt. "The Na Pali Coast trip is rated among the top 10 kayak trips, but it's not for everybody. It's 17 miles of paddling, but that's not all. There's the van ride to the put-in at Haena State Beach. Then the sun beats down, the kayaks rock in the swells and even the strongest guys get seasick. When you're puking all over it's hard to have fun.

[< Previous page](#)
[Next page >](#)

Anne Z. Cooke and Steve Haggerty write from their home in Marina del Rey, Calif.

Recent Comments

Be the first to post a comment using the form below
Post Your Comment

Name:

Submit Your Comment

[Travel to Vietnam?](#)

Want to Visit Hanoi & All Vietnam? Let Us Customize Your
traveltovietnamnow.com

[Refinance \\$300,000 for](#)

[Only](#)
\$300,000 Mortgage for only \$965/month. Save \$1,000's - No
www.HomeLoanHelpLine.com

[Free Credit Report with](#)

[All 3](#)
Free 3-bureau Credit Report includes Transunion, FreeCreditReportsInstant!

Ads by Yahoo!

Get The Star now for only **99¢/week**+TAX

[Click here for this special offer >](#) ★

THE KANSAS CITY STAR

- ▶ Manage your account
- ▶ Click for special *Star* rates
- ▶ Subscribe to digital E★Star

KansasCity.com



Complete F



EXCLUSIVE
Reduced Deposits
Onboard Credits



1 WEEK SALE
GREAT Prices
Coupon Book
(\$120 Value)

Click Here for more information or call 913.248.0108

Search



KansasCity.com



Archives



Web Search

powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

Go

- Top Jobs
- Cars
- Real Estate
- Rentals
- Local Shopping
 - KC Auto Deals
 - ShopLocal
 - Newspaper Ads
- All Classifieds
 - Create an Ad
 - Find an Ad
 - Pets

FYI / Living > Travel

Friday, Jan 25, 2008

Travel

Posted on Sat, Jan. 19, 2008 10:15 PM

email print reprint or license

AIM del.icio.us Digg it

Amid the island beauty, kayaking in Kauai is a thrill

[< Previous page](#)

- News
- Columnists
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Video | Photos
- Business
- FYI/Living
 - Columnists
 - Comics
 - Dear Abby
 - Faith
 - Food
 - Health
 - House & Home
 - Indulge
 - Occasions
 - Skiing
 - TeenStar
 - Travel
- Star Magazine
- Opinion

"Sure, the guides are sympathetic, but once you've passed Ke'e Beach there's no turning back. Still, the scenery is magnificent, with huge cliffs and empty beaches. You'll stop to look at waterfalls and explore arches and sea caves.

"About three-quarters of the way you'll stop at Miloli'i Beach for lunch and a swim, and by then you're almost there, at Polihale Beach. Do it if you can. Next time."

Kayak Kauai, in Hanalei, rents kayaks for 24-hour periods. Double kayaks start at \$52 and single kayaks at \$28. On-site facilities include showers, bathrooms and a changing room.

Guided three-hour trips, including a lunch stop and snorkeling, cost \$60 per person. The full-day Na Pali Coast trip, with van transportation at both ends, is \$214 per person, including tax. Call 800-437-3507, 808-826-9844, or visit kayakkauai.com.

Kauai Waterski, Surf and Kayak, in Wailua, leads guided half-day trips on the Wailua River, with an hour of kayaking and a hike to the waterfall, at 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Deluxe trips include an orientation, lunch and drinks for \$80 per person. The regular guided trip costs \$55 per person. Call 808-822-3574.

For additional kayaking, visit the Kauai Visitors Bureau at kauaidiscovery.com.



Above: Novice paddlers pull together on the Hanalei River of Kauai. Right: The water is almost always calm on Hanalei Bay, so kayaking alone is safe.



EXTRAS

- Press Release Central
- Past Articles
- The Star's Front Page
- Coffee Break
- Local Traffic
- Maps & Directions
- Yellow Pages
- Local Coupons
- Discussion Boards
- Visitor's Guide
- Weddings
- Hemingway
- The Star in Education

SERVICES

- RSS
- Place an Ad
- Contact Us
- Advertise
- About The Star
- Code of Ethics
- Star Speakers Bureau

Recent Comments



[< Previous page](#)

Anne Z. Cooke and Steve Haggerty write from their home in Marina del Rey, Calif.