

**1 Mar ~ Saturday, The Big Island, Volcanoes National Park.**

Our last internal flight takes us to Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii, built from five volcanoes, two of which are active. Two Tsunami have hit Hilo, the first in 1946 rose 56ft and traveled at 496mph, the second in 1960 consisted of 7 waves peaking at 36ft. Both caused loss of life and as a result many buildings have been moved back from the shore.

Eleven of the thirteen possible climatic zones exist on Hawaii which is 93miles N-S, 76 mile E-W and situated at latitude 19°N.

From Hilo we drive south to Volcanoes National Park stopping first at steam vents then around the rim to Kīlauea Overlook. The caldera is a vast lifeless reddish brown depression.



299. Puff...



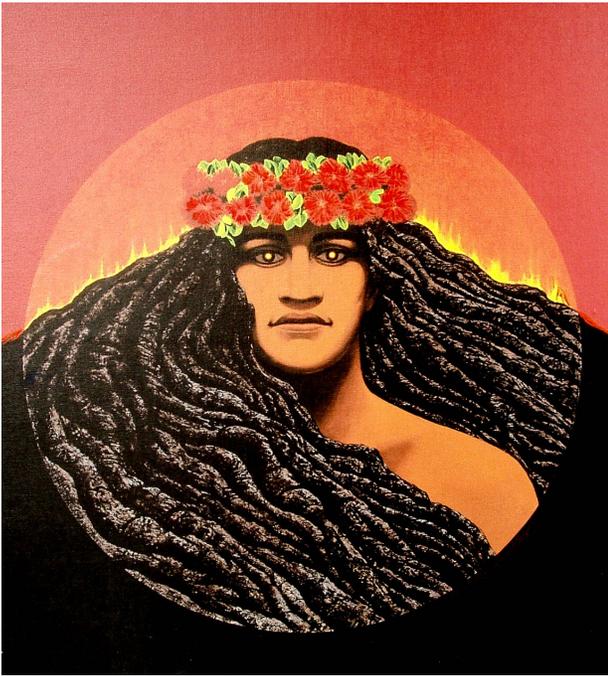
303. Christine explains volcanoes.



300. Steam Vents.



301. Kīlauea Overlook the Caldera.



306. Pele.

At the Thomas Jaggar Museum a picture of Pelé, the Hawaiian goddess of fire & volcanoes, greets us. Her hair is painted as a lava flow. The museum shows examples of the different forms of lava, Pahoehoe, which resembles a batter mix, and A'a, which are clinkers. There are even examples of Pelé's hair, fine basaltic glass threads and Pelé's tears formed when molten basaltic lava is quenched in air to form teardrop-shaped glass lapilli.

Southeast of the museum lies the Halema'uma'u Crater at Kilauea's summit.



307. Pahoehoe.

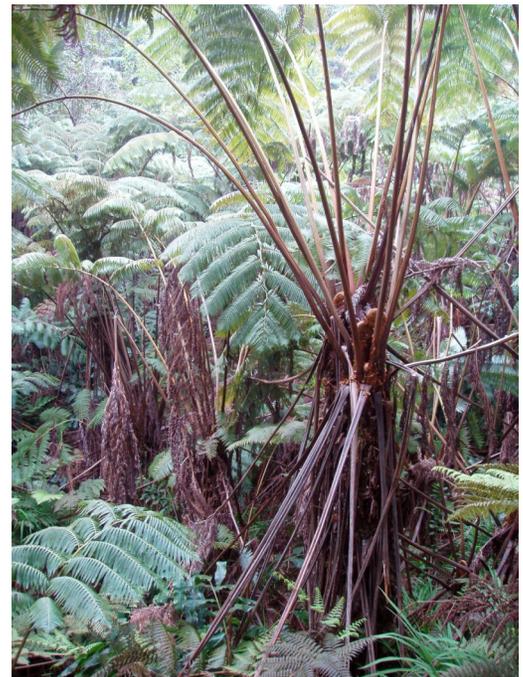


308. A'a.

Due to high levels of sulphur dioxide, the southern loop of Crater Rim Drive is closed, so we retrace our route east to the Thurston Lava Tube. A lava tube forms when the outer crust cools allowing the molten inner core to drain out. The approach is through tropical rain forest, a winding path and steps. Interesting but damp.



317. Thurston Lava Tube.



312. Tropical Rain Forest.



318. The exit, cane in mouth.

From the Pu'u Pua'i Overlook we stare down into the Kilauea Iki Crater then follow Devastation Trail a 5/8 mile walk. The forest in this area was buried in 1959 by falling pumice. What vegetation there is, has grown back since that time.



322. Most vegetation gone.



321.



323.



325. Dwarfed by the cinder cone.

Kīlauea has been erupting continually since 1983 with the loss of 190 homes. We sadly watch a DVD showing the evacuation and burning of homes in the Royal Gardens Subdivision. Many residents were treated badly by insurance companies.

In some places the high levels of sulphur dioxide produce acid rain, which results in defoliation.

Appropriately we lunch at the Volcano Golf and Country Club and enjoy Chili, Teriyaki and Macadamia Nut pie.

The prices are quite reasonable at an orchid farm where I buy pieces of Ti Plant (the Hawaiian Good Luck Plant) and seed of Bird of Paradise.



328. Orchid Farm.



326.

327.



Even the nice homes have corrugated metal roofs to shield them from heavy rain. There are lots of King Palms here and more Monkey Pod Trees.

Returning to Hilo, we follow the north east coast, crossing the island to Waimea, passing through the Parker Ranch. Lots of cattle graze on rolling hills capped with heavy cloud. Christine assures us this is the wet side of the island and we will enjoy better weather where we are going.

The Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel is huge with magnificent grounds. Wide tiled walkways, arched roofs supported by robust pillars. Large comfortable seating areas overlook the sea. We even need a map to navigate.

The bar is a large open balcony. We sit in huge wicker chairs at a proportionally sized table. The drinks are served on cloth coasters. We nibble spicy glazed snacks, watching the sunset and whales spout. Jan has a cold so we ask to dine alone.



331.



330. Magnificent hallways.



332. The bar.



335.