

travel

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Paris TO DA MAX

Hawaii emissaries bring island culture to the Ile de France and embrace the City of Light

By Mindy Pennybacker
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IT WAS early evening, pau hana time in Paris, and my husband and I were meeting a couple of French literati for a drink at Le Select, also known as the American cafe, on the Boulevard de Montparnasse. A book editor and a filmmaker, they'd been introduced to us via email by a mutual friend.

The filmmaker, wrapped in a chic sweater and scarf against the chill April wind, exclaimed with delight to hear we were from Honolulu. "Oh! But I love Hawaii; I lived on Maui once," she said, and launched, to my dismay, into a cheery imitation hula, wriggling her hips and waving her arms.

We later learned that such tourist stereotypes are commonly held among the French.

"Total ignorance of Hawaii is so typical here," said Vanessa Leilani Thill, a Paris native, hula dancer and concert promoter who spent childhood vacations with her mother in Honolulu. She was saddened, she said, when "Tiki Pop," a 2014 exhibition at Paris' Musee du Quai Branly, which specializes in indigenous art of Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas, presented Western fantasies and



sculpted into a Paris native, hula dancer and concert promoter who spent childhood vacations with her mother in Honolulu. She was saddened, she said, when "Tiki Pop," a 2014 exhibition at Paris' Musee du Quai Branly, which specializes in indigenous art of Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas, presented Western fantasies and



ON BOARD FOR SURFERS
 Airbnb finds itself catering to more surfing aficionados around the world >> E6

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brated at 7 p.m. on June 25 with a showing of the 2017 Waikiki documentary by John Clark and Ann Marie Kirk, and a talk by Jeremy Lemarie, author of "A History of Surfing: How Hawaii Flooded the World" (published in French).

Feeling sore from that long plane flight? On June 28, from 5:30-7 p.m., you can get a lomilomi massage, then learn about sacred and healing Hawaii native plants.

A cool alternative to a tourist-packed bateaux-mouche (sightseeing boat) on the Seine is Le Petit Bain, a converted houseboat anchored in the river in the 13th arrondissement.

On June 29, at 8 p.m., it will host a kanikapila with music, dance and a Hawaiian dinner prepared by Aloha Cafe, a coffee shop at 32 Rue Pierre Fontaine near the Opera Garnier. Poke was on the festival's last menu, "so this year it's lomilomi chicken," Thill said.

If you are feeling on for poke in Paris, try Ono Poke, 167 Rue Saint-Jacques, not far from Le Petit Bain, or Aloha Cafe.

There's much more going on at the Festival des Arts d'Hawaii than can be listed here: For a full schedule and directions, go to festivalartsd-hawaii.com, online reservation required at resadadh@gmail.com.

LES FESTIVAL

>> **What:** Festival des Arts d'Hawaii, presented by the Association France-Hawaii, includes hula and concerts by Hawaii's Halau Mele and Paris' Halau Hula o Manoa; art and photography exhibits by Hawaiian and French artists; film screenings including "Ka'ahelo Ma Waikiki" by Hawaii author John Clark; Hawaiian food; stand-up paddling on a Parisian canal; ukulele and puppet-making workshops, and more for both children and adults.

>> **Where:** Venues in several districts of Paris

>> **When:** June 22-July 4

>> **Information:** festivalartsd-hawaii.com

>> **Tickets:** Events are mostly free, with some costing 15 euros (about \$17.50), including a kanikapila and dinner at Le Petit Bain, a barge docked in the River Seine; it's 29 euros for a SUP class on a Paris canal. Registration for events is a must at resadadh@gmail.com.



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kitsch images of Polynesia while ignoring the region's true culture and art.

Determined to correct faux impressions, the nonprofit Association France-Hawaii created a Festival des Arts d'Hawaii, which ran in 2012 and 2014 and will take place in Paris for the third time from June 22-July 4.

The festival will be held throughout the city, from the tony 7th arrondissement, a visitor hub anchored by the Eiffel Tower, to other districts that lie off the tourist path. It's a chance to experience live, up-and-coming neighborhoods where younger and less affluent Parisians reside and clubs and galleries feature new music and art, and to meet and mingle with the natives.

"French people are really interested," Thill said. "They already love surf and ukulele (Thill has brought Hawaiian ukulele virtuoso Taimane to Paris), and at our festivals they've been marvel-struck by the authentic hula and mele."

Festival des Arts d'Hawaii
 The festival kicks off at 6 p.m. June 22 in the 19th arrondissement, La Villette, with a free program at the charming Pavillon des Canaux, a brightly painted mansion with a dining room and performance spaces. There will be a screening of the short film "A Hawaiian Princess in Britain, and photography and art shows, including an installation by fiber artist Marques Hanalei Marzan, who will come from Honolulu along with other local artists and scholars.

At 7 p.m., Halau Mele, led by kumu hula Mahealani Wong and Samuel Gon III, a scientist and teacher of oli, Hawaiian chant, will give a concert.

On June 23, those age 10 and older can take a 1-3/4 hour, stand-up paddling class on the Paris-based Halau Hula O Manoa, founded by Thill's mother Kilohana Silve.

Hawaiian surfing will be celebrated

those too young to SUP can explore the vast, free-form Parc de la Villette, built in 1986 in the city's former slaughterhouse district. At age 7, our son loved the interactive Explora exhibits at the park's glass-and-steel Cite des Sciences et de l'Industrie and its Cite des Enfants for children.

At 3 p.m. on June 23, a show of Marzan's art opens at Galerie Orenda in the 7th arrondissement, followed at 4 p.m. with hula by the Paris-based Halau Hula O Manoa, founded by Thill's mother Kilohana Silve.

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More to do in Paris

Here are some eclectic suggestions on sites to visit in Paris, based on our stay in late April and early May.

THE LOUVRE
 Be sure to research what days and evenings of the week specific museums are open or closed (this varies widely). Most museums are free or deeply discounted for those younger than 18. For the rest, a Paris Museum Pass (parismuseumpass.com) gives free admission and allows you to bypass the ticket-buying lines to selected museums and sites (including the Louvre, Orsay, Orangerie, Rodin and Pompidou museums) for two, four or six consecutive days (€48, €62 or 74 euros, respectively).

Selfie with Mona Lisa? Check! The Louvre isn't going anywhere and is best seen outside of summer's interminable lines and rubbernecking crowds. However, if this is your chosen time to tackle the largest museum in the western world, containing art from ancient times through 1856, you should go for it. Admission is 15 euros.

If you'll be in Paris for a while, consider Friends of the Louvre, which our now-grown son and daughter-in-law, Rory and Kaitlin Wallace, joined (they also rented an apartment across the street from the museum for five weeks). It costs 120 euros for two, and gives free, unlimited priority admission (no lines!), plus discounted entry at other museums. See louvre.fr/en/membership-become-friend-of-louvre. After exploring the museum extensively, the couple highly recommend the special exhibition on 19th-century painter Eugene Delacroix ("Liberty Leading the People") on view through July 23.

PARIS

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Bois de Boulogne, as well as many works by his friends Edouard Manet, Camille Pissarro, Berthe Morisot and Auguste Renoir.

Special exhibitions are always worth it. My husband, Don, and I enjoyed the revelatory "Corot and his Models," featuring the 19th-century French landscape giant Camille Corot's lesser-known portrait paintings, at the Marmottan through July 8; and "Tintoretto: Birth of a Genius," at the Musee du Luxembourg through July 1, showed the breathtaking, energetic painting of the Venetian prodigy as a young man and helped us understand how germane Corot's trips to Italy were to his mastery of the human face and form. Afterward, we ate sand-

wiches in the sun, with our bare feet propped on chairs, in the blossoming, Italian-style Luxembourg Gardens, my favorite place in Paris, with its shady chestnut trees and statues of artists, musicians and French queens.

Another personal favorite is the Pompidou Center for Modern Art, known affectionately to Parisians as Beaubourg, where, 36 years ago, Marc Chagall's painting of a tipsy groom balanced on the shoulders of his bride brought us sunshine and smiles during a grim, gray Paris December. We saw it there again, along with "Above the City," a painting of a young couple flying tandem, on loan from the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, in the special show, "Chagall, Lissitzky, Malevich: The Russian Avant-Garde in Vitebsk," on view through July 16. At the Beaubourg, you will also float above the city from its observation deck at the summit of the escalators that carry you past glass walls.

Speaking of gardens and views, when the quays and boulevards get as hot and crowded as Kala-kaua Avenue, take an early morning jaunt to the Chateau de Versailles. The vast, elegant yet unpretentious gardens and woods are empty and cool when it opens, and after a nice lunch in the shade at one of the reasonably priced cafes

times in Paris department stores and boutiques, so enjoy!

A must accessory for women, winter and summer (the metro is air-conditioned) is the long, wind-around (and around) scarf. For summer, grab a lightweight cotton/nylon version for 5 euros at a street market or 24 euros in an Indian print at the city's many exquisite Diwali boutiques.

Also abundant are Comptoir des Cottoniers boutiques, which stock lightweight cotton and linen clothing for women and men and where my husband found a well-fitted cotton pair.

For young children and teenage girls, Petit Bateau carries soft, French-made cotton T-shirts in nautical stripes.

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Note: Unless you're desperate, don't get bread or pastries here: go to a real boulangerie or patisserie. For some essentials, such as eyedroppers, eardrops or contact lens solution, you must go to a pharmacy.

>> **Warm-weather treats:** Forget macarons (been there, done that)



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Rows of topiary, hedges and statuary decorate the gardens of the Chateau de Versailles.



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Above left, The early 16th-century Tour St. Jacques, festooned with gargoyles and saints, rises above the cobble streets of the 4th arrondissement near the Pompidou Center. Fresh coquilles Saint-Jacques, scallops, are sold by a fishmonger at the open market on the Place Maubert.

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IF YOU GO...

Paris
 >> **Getting there:** Research all your options, from American to European airlines, some of which partner with one another so you can accrue or use miles. When we bought our tickets in February, 2-1/2 months in advance, the best deal was to fly Hawaiian to Los Angeles, for \$400, and then Air France direct to Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport for about \$700 each, round trip. It did involve long waits between flights, but the new international terminal at LAX has lots of charging stations and couches for stretching out.

>> **Travel warning:** Strict international size and weight limits (26.4 pounds) for carry-on luggage are assiduously enforced by Air France and some other carriers; our roller suitcases and laptop bags, which made it to Paris without penalty, were overweight and the suitcases had to be checked for a fee of 50 euros each. If you're bringing omiyage and other souvenirs back from Paris, consolidate your heavier stuff in one checked bag.

>> **Money:** As of press time, the euro was worth about \$1.17.

>> **Where to stay:** If you're staying for at least a week, want to cook occasionally and have a bit of space to stretch out, rent an apartment through airbnb.com, vrbo.com or lodgics.com, a similar French service that our son and daughter-in-law used. Otherwise, cheap hotels abound in Paris; we recommend the Hotel Cluny Sorbonne in the Latin Quarter, the 5th arrondissement, near the Luxembourg Gardens. It's 67-89 euros a night for a small but bright room with a nice, firm queen-size bed, closet, TV, cramped but clean private bath (big, generous towels compensate for sadly ineffective shower curtain) plus 7 euros for a breakfast of orange juice, cafe au lait or hot chocolate, a croissant and bread, butter and jam. It is at 8 Rue Victor Cousin, hotel-cluny.fr/?lang=en. Paris is laid out in a clockwise spiral of 20 arrondissements, or districts.

>> **Shopping:** If you plan to shop for French fashion, late June and early July are biannual sale



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New April leaves and blooms surround the pond in Monet's garden at Giverny, top. Above, Monet fans gaze around a gallery of his water lily canvasses at the Musee de Marmottan in the Bois de Boulogne. A produce seller hands a bag to a patron at the Place Maubert farmers' market.



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