

BAR BULLETIN

KING COUNTY BAR

This is a reprint from the King County Bar Association Bar Bulletin
November 2019



Escape from Reality: Hawaiian Vacation, The Sequel

It is time again to escape from reality and go back on vacation to Hawaii, or at least back to a few Hawaiian-themed food establishments. There continue to be many to patronize, from tiki bars to plate lunches.

Tiki Tiki Tiki

Did you know there are three tiki bars within walking distance of downtown? We took advantage of our second Hawaiian-themed issue to check out the happy hour at one of them, **Hula Hula** (1501 E. Olive Way; 206-284-5003; <https://www.bulabula.org/>), an establishment that a number of us often drive right by on the way home.

Hula Hula is a tiki bar that relocated from Queen Anne to Capitol Hill about two years ago. The décor is, of course, campy Hawaiian with multiple screens showing vintage surfer movies. Happy hour is from 4 to 6 p.m., seven days a week, with \$5 off all tiki drinks (almost every drink on the menu), plus some selected food specials. There is quite a selection of tiki drinks, starting with three different mai tais, and a large assortment of other drinks that come with orchids and a miniature-umbrella garnish.

For drinks we had to have a classic mai tai, which could safely be said to be rum forward with fruit juices, and a “Passion Princess,” another fruity rum drink (it is a tiki bar after all) that came in an appropriately risqué glass.

For food we ordered the “Potstickers in paradise” — chicken potstickers made in-house, with a teriyaki dipping sauce — and the hula burger, a Painted Hills beef and pineapple cheeseburger that comes with seasoned “forbidden fries.”

We would order both again.

There are many more drinks we intend to try; after all, Hula Hula offers one of our favorites — a lava flow (a mix of berry daiquiri and piña colada). And, if that is not enough, there is karaoke every night starting at 9 p.m. We understand it gets crowded for karaoke, so get there early.

Poke Please

Nothing truly says Hawaii like fresh fish. For truly authentic Hawaiian poke, you need to check out **Ono Poke** in Edmonds (10016 Edmonds Way, Suite E; <https://eatonopoke.com>). Ono Poke is run by Steven Ono, who was born and raised in Kahaluu, Oahu.

Ono serves ahi tuna from Hawaii, salmon from British Columbia, and hama-chi (yellowtail) and tako (octopus) from Japan — all “Premium Sushi Grade 1,” which means his poke is of the highest quality.

During our last visit to Ono Poke, we tried the traditional ahi, spicy ahi and shoyu onion tako poke. The flavor and freshness of each poke brought us straight to the poke counters you may find throughout Hawaii. Our personal favorite was the traditional ahi and the shoyu onion. Don't forget to pick up some sides as well such as the cucumber kimchi, edamame, or seaweed salad. Paired with some fresh rice and nori (seaweed), you have the makings of a perfect picnic.

Ono's desire to provide the highest quality ingredients means that the prices aren't the least expensive of poke options you may find in Seattle, but you simply can't beat the quality. Every time we pass by Edmonds we make sure to make a poke stop at Ono Poke.

Two Scoops of Rice

Many have been to the Seattle location of **Kona Kitchen** for a plate lunch, a piece of guava cake or to sing karaoke. But Kona Kitchen has brought its plate lunches and Hawaiian food farther north to its Lynnwood location (3805 196th St. SW, Lynnwood; 425-578-KONA (5662); <https://konakitchen.com>).

Those familiar with either Kona Kitchen location probably know that its owner, Yuji Okumoto, played the antagonist against Ralph Macchio in “The Karate Kid, Part II,” and the décor in the restaurant mixes Okumoto's Hollywood background with a local flair.

The food lives up to its billing as Kona Kitchen offers Hawaiian plate lunch standards of kalua pig, mochiko chicken, Korean chicken and beef stew to name a few. If you are looking for an extremely hearty meal, be sure to “build your own loco moco” where you can choose your own rice (we recommend fried rice) and meat, topped off with a fried egg and brown gravy. On our last trip, our loco moco included fried rice, corned beef hash, two over-easy eggs, and brown gravy. Let's just say that it was quite difficult to stay awake to get back into our car after that meal.

For those looking for a less sleep-inducing meal, we would recommend the mochiko chicken, Korean chicken, kalua pig or Hawaiian french toast. The chicken was moist and flavorful, the kalua pig was the right amount of salty and smoky, and the french toast was decadent as it was made with Hawaiian sweet bread. Kona Kitchen also carries a variety of confections from Cakes of Paradise, including guava, haupia and rainbow cakes.

Plate Lunches in Kent

A meeting in Kent provided us the chance to check out **Saimin Says** (6621 S. 211 St., #104, Kent; <https://saiminsays.com/>). This location is a fairly small storefront in a strip-mall type setting, bustling inside with limited seating and a constant long line of patrons (many getting lunch to go).

We were tempted by many of the menu items, including a large selection of Hawaiian-style breakfasts combining eggs, rice and gravy, but we settled on the Kalua pork plate lunch for our first try. The pork and cabbage were flavorful, but unlike such a dish in Hawaii, it was heavily seasoned with black pep-

per and there was no smokiness to the pork at all (possibly a relief to many who have tried various authentic pork dishes in Hawaii). And, at least for this order, it was not a full plate lunch as it only came with one scoop of rice and a scoop of macaroni salad. Hawaiian plate lunches usually have two scoops of rice, and a scoop of macaroni salad in addition to the main course. But the smaller sides did allow for a workday lunch without falling asleep from too many carbs.

The flavor was good and there are many more options to try, so a return visit is in order. Saimin Says has opened a new location at 269 SW 41st St. in Renton, giving you another option when

you just need your fill of Hawaiian. ■

Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt is a multiservice, Northwest regional law firm with offices in Seattle, Vancouver, Portland and Bend. For comments on this article or to share your favorite places to eat or drink with the Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt attorneys, contact Kainui Smith, a member of Schwabe's Real Estate Industry Group with a construction practice (and admitted in Hawaii as well as Washington), at 206-407-1567 or at ksmith@schwabe.com.