

## Z's Two Puna Tours

### **Pahoa -> Opihikao -> Mackenzie State Park and Isaac Hale Park -> Kalapana -> Kalapana (Black Sand Beach) -> Star of the Sea Painted Church**

From the house head out Maku'u back to the main road. Turn left on Hwy 130 and travel through the Pahoa Roundabout. Continue on 130 past the entrance to Lealani Estates and you will come to an area where the speed limit has been reduced to 25mph. With your windows up to keep out the sulfur steam, pass over the special plates in the road. Once past this are you will shortly come upon a sign to Opihikao. Turn left and head towards Opihikao. You can ignore the Residents Only signs – this is a public road. But this is a rural area and though recently paved it is one lane so drive carefully. The people here went through some miserable times when the 2018 lava flow was active. The air quality was terrible. In fact as you descend at some point you will be able to see a ridge on the left that is covered with dead vegetation. After about five miles the road will end at Hwy 137. Turn left to travel a mile or so to Mackenzie State Recreation Area.

**Mackenzie State Recreation Area (2018 lave flow)** – this is a low cliff, wild volcanic coastline with wonderful views and is a good picnicking spot. You'll recognize the ironwood trees as the same invasive non-native trees you see near our house. To view one of the ocean entries of the 2018 flow walk towards the lava cliffs turn left and hike about a quarter mile and eventually you come to a wall of lava - very impressive. There is a rough trail onto the lava flow but be sure to wear good shoes (no sandals), carry water, and be careful - the lava is quite sharp. As of November 2018, there are no active surface flows on Hawaii however it continues to flow underground. When you are ready to leave turn left oat the exit turn left onto 137 and drive to Kalapana. As of December 2018 the road from Mackenzie now extends a few miles to Issac Hale Park (closed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month). This allows you to view the 2018 lava Flow from your car. The drive over the three lava arms is quite impressive. Do not attempt to go into the water at Isaac Hale. You can however walk a long distance on the new huge black sand beach.

**Kalapana and the new Black Sand Beach** – at the end of highway 137 is what's left of Kalapana. The original beach here was covered in a volcano flow in 1990. If you have time park the car and hike out to the new beach. The water is quite dangerous here so I have never dared to venture into the ocean and suggest you stay out of it too. The original beach was one of Hawaii's most picturesque. What we have now is a very young, wild black sand beach. Make note of the many small palm trees that have been planted and which some day will provide shade. In the far distance you should be able to see Pu'u O'o crater venting smoke. Kalapana has acouple eating choices. One is a drive Inn the other is found under the large covered area. When ready head towards Pahoa on Hwy 130 and after one mile you will come to the Star of the Sea Painted Church.

**Star of the Sea Painted Church** – on highway 130 between the highway road makers 19 and 20 is the Star of the Sea Painted Church. This church was saved from the 1990 lava flow by the people of Hawaii that swallowed much of the area. Stop and take a tour of the uniquely painted interior. Open daily 9am-4pm, free. When finished continue on Hwy 130 back to Pahoa and our home.

## **Drive over 2018 lava flow via the new highway 132 finishing up with an off the grid drive through a jungle**

This takes 90 minutes or so.

**Drive over 2018 lava flow** - The part of Highway 132 that was covered by the Fissure 8 massive 2018 lava flow that completely covered Kapoho, has been reopened and is a cool drive. Drive through the Pahoia roundabout until you come to the stop light and turn left onto Hwy 132 (Kapoho Road). A mile or so past Lava Trees State Monument you will come to a curve. Straight in front of you is a wall of lava but if you follow the curve soon you will be driving on the new road on top of the lava. It is quite interesting – see if you can spot what once was the channel walls that held the river of lava. You cross it in a couple areas. After a rain the sides of the road will be steaming as the rain interacts with the still hot lava underneath. Follow this road all the way to the end where you have two options. You may turn around and head back the way you came across the lava or turn left to begin the off grid portion of the tour.

**Off grid drive** - continue on the paved road and once you enter a jungle like area the road will become mostly one lane with plenty of turnout areas to allow other cars to pass. You may ignore any Residents Only signs as this is a public road. Drive carefully and after approximately 4-5 miles you will arrive into Hawaiian Beaches (no actual beaches here). Once you hit the main road, Kahakai Blvd. turn left and after 5 miles you will be back in Pahoia. Turn right and you soon be at the Pahoia round-about.