

# Cigars in Kauai

Due to smoking bans and regulations, smoking anywhere in Hawaii, including Kauai, is difficult. Despite the challenges, there's a local cigar company: the Kauai Cigar Company, owned by Les Drent. We asked Drent about his company and what cigar enthusiasts can expect when visiting Kauai.



**Cigars & Leisure:** Many people traveling to Kauai are not aware of how strict the anti-smoking laws are in Kauai and other Hawaiian islands. For those traveling to Kauai, what should they expect if they're looking to smoke?

**Les Drent:** Smoking is prohibited within 20 feet of any public building. Most hotels accommodate an outdoor smoking area with seating for cigars. Those staying at private rentals and condominiums have a bit more freedom. I mostly observe people smoking cigars along beach walks at hotels. The Grand Hyatt Kauai in Po'ipū is the best for designated smoking accommodations.

**Are there any clubs, lounges, bars, or social clubs for cigar smokers in Kauai?**

For the most part, no. Cigar smoking is permitted in cigar shops in Hawaii. My company has an additional farm that we purchased a year ago that we've been discussing the possibility of developing into our agriculture processing center that would include a cigar lounge.

**Despite the laws, you started the Kauai Cigar Company. What inspired you to start the company, and what's been the response so far?**

It's been 12 years since we first started, and 10 years since our cigars have been in the market. I started it on a whim because of my own personal enjoyment. The business has now grown into five farms and a business that includes around 175 stores in Hawaii that sell our cigars.

**Tell us about Kauai Cigar Company's cigar lines.**

We have four brands: Island Prince, Makaleha, Hawaiian Vintage Series, and the Grand Alii, all available in various sizes and shapes. All are

comprised of proprietary blends that feature Kauai-grown tobacco as binders and filler. We do not produce enough wrapper tobacco for production, but that is our intention with the Grand Alii. The Grand Alii, which was first produced and sold in 2006, is a line that will eventually feature 100 percent Kauai-grown and -made cigars. We've temporarily ended the production of this cigar and will not reintroduce it until we are fully satisfied with its quality. The Island Prince is sold exclusively in Hawaii and direct from us.

**And where can cigar enthusiasts find these cigars?**

Pretty much everywhere in Hawaii. There's a list on our website ([kauaicigar.com/retailers](http://kauaicigar.com/retailers)) that really needs updating because we've added a ton of stores.

**For those visiting Kauai, do you have one overall travel tip or recommendation of something to do or experience while on the island?**

Enjoy the beautiful outdoors and the scenery. We have great hiking and kayaking opportunities here. Our beaches and golfing are obviously world class. In my mind, the best place to enjoy a cigar in the outdoors is up in Kōke'e. The air is typically moist and cool, with very little wind. Smoking in Hawaii's state parks is prohibited, but nothing gives me more pleasure than breaking their ridiculous rules.

I also operate a lobbying arm in [hawaiicigarassociation.org](http://hawaiicigarassociation.org). After 25 years in the islands I still refuse to shed my New Hampshire "Live Free or Die" roots. ■

If you're traveling to Kauai and want to visit the Kauai Cigar Company farm, call (800) 750-5662 ahead of time to arrange for a tour. For more information, visit [kauaicigar.com](http://kauaicigar.com).