



An American Tour:
15



Hawaii's *Volcanoes National Park*

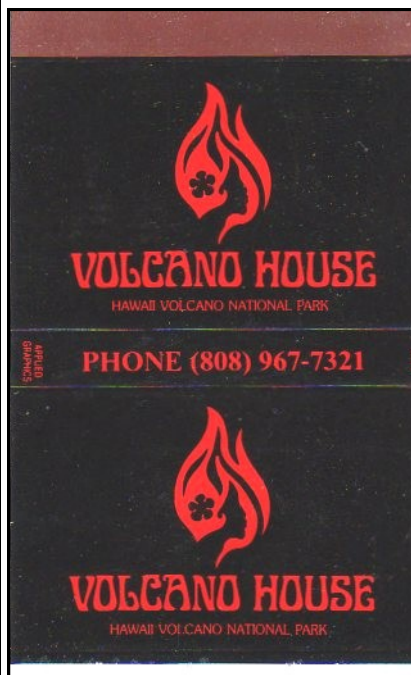
Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, established in 1916, displays the results of 70 million years of volcanism, migration, and evolution. The park encompasses 333,000 acres and ranges from sea level to the summit of the earth's most massive volcano, Mauna Loa at 13,677 feet. Kilauea, the world's most active volcano, offers scientists insights on the birth of the Hawaiian Islands and visitors views of dramatic volcanic landscapes. Over half of the park is designated wilderness and provides unique hiking and camping opportunities.

In 1906, Lorrin Thurston, a publisher, began a campaign to make this amazing area into a public park. On August 1, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the country's 13th national park into existence. It had taken 10 years, but the perseverance of Thurston paid off.

At first, the park consisted of only the summits of Kilauea and Mauna Loa on Hawai'i and Haleakala on Maui. Eventually, Kilauea Caldera was added to the park, followed by the forests of Mauna Loa, the Ka'u Desert (the site of ancient warrior footprints set in ash), the rain forest of Ola'a, and the Kalapana archaeological area of the Puna/Ka'u Historic District.

In 1961, Haleakala was made a separate national park. Today, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park protects 377 square miles of the island's volcanic wonders and is a refuge for surviving native plants and animals. In 1980, UNESCO named Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park an International Biosphere Reserve because of its outstanding scenic and scientific values. The park was recognized for its important volcanic sites (including

two of the world's most active volcanoes); its volcanic island ecosystem, which preserves one of the largest significant ecosystems on the Hawai'ian Islands; and its cultural and historic sites. The park was named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1982.



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