

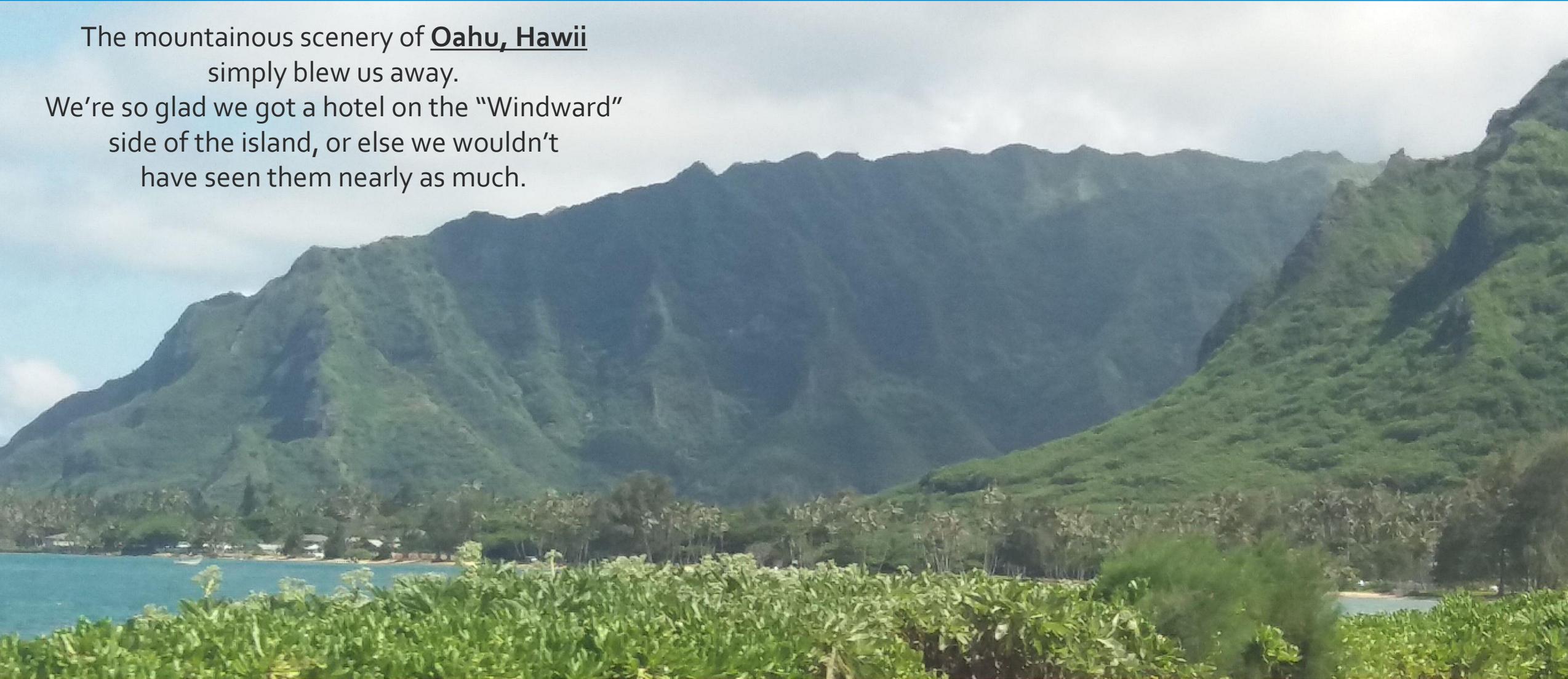
OUR TRIP DOWN UNDER

New Zealand, Australia and Hawaii

Part Three: Hawaii.

The mountainous scenery of Oahu, Hawaii
simply blew us away.

We're so glad we got a hotel on the "Windward"
side of the island, or else we wouldn't
have seen them nearly as much.





Our hotel was definitely on the seedy side of the island, but with magnificent scenery everywhere you looked.

All these mountains are
made of volcanic lava.
They are huge, and often
come right down to the road
or the sea.



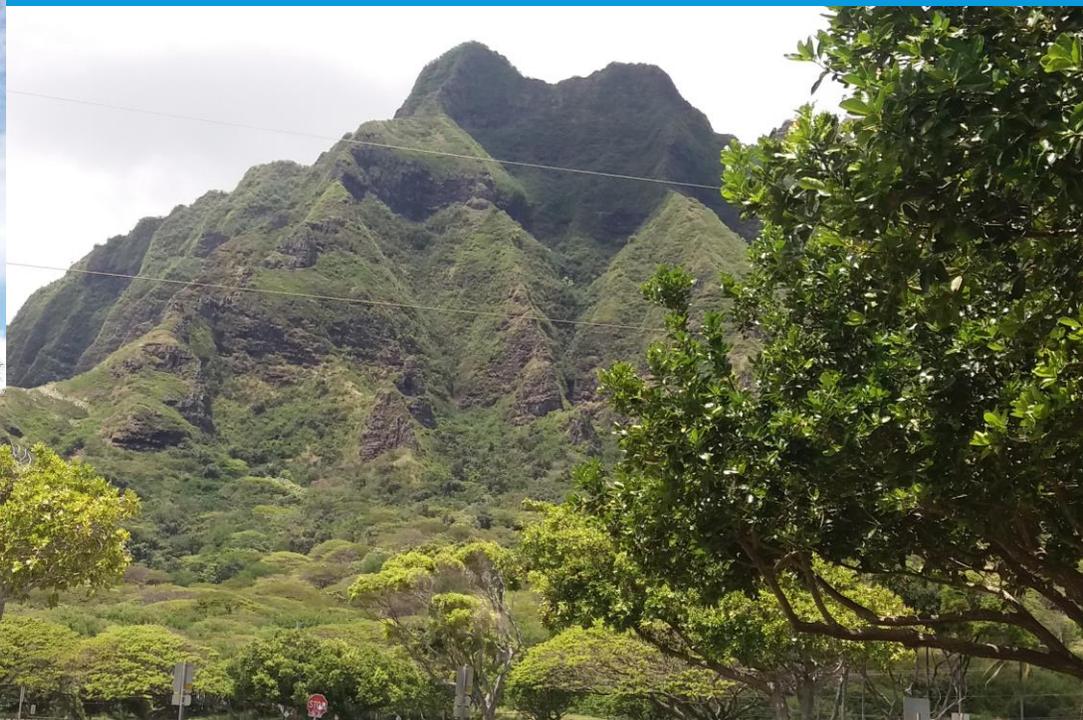
Near the hotel
in a huge cemetery,
was this beautiful
Buddhist Temple.





Driving up the windward side of Oahu, we encountered more great scenery and a typical restaurant, where we had lunch.

This type of sign was all over the island. It indicates rivers coming down the mountains, and their names.





This place was much bigger than we expected. The park has representative villages from all Polynesian cultures.

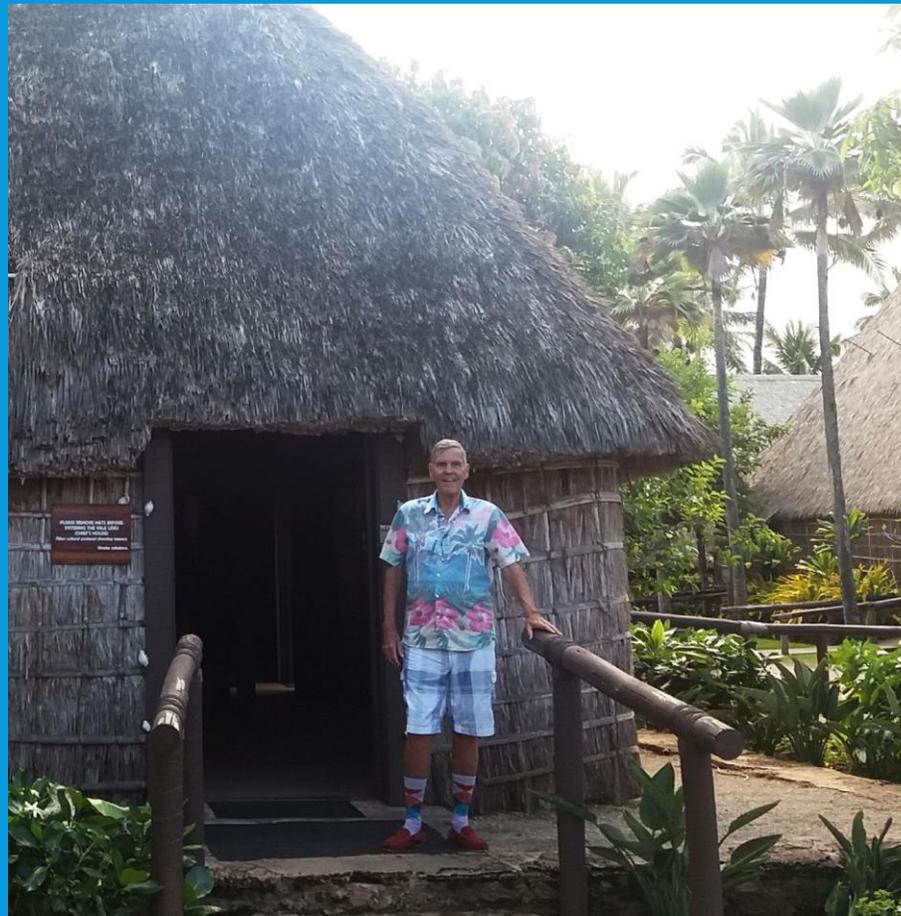




The different villages (like Samoa and New Zealand) all had shows that depicted their cultures.

This guy was a Japanese tourist with little English, but who put on a show of his own.





Then the Luau. Hundreds of tourists in a huge tent for a buffet.

We were seated at a table of "stiffs",
but actually the meal was well organized and very good.

And the entertainment was excellent.





These guys brought out the roast pig that they dug up from a fire pit.



(There were hula dancing girls, too, but for some reason I don't have any photos.)



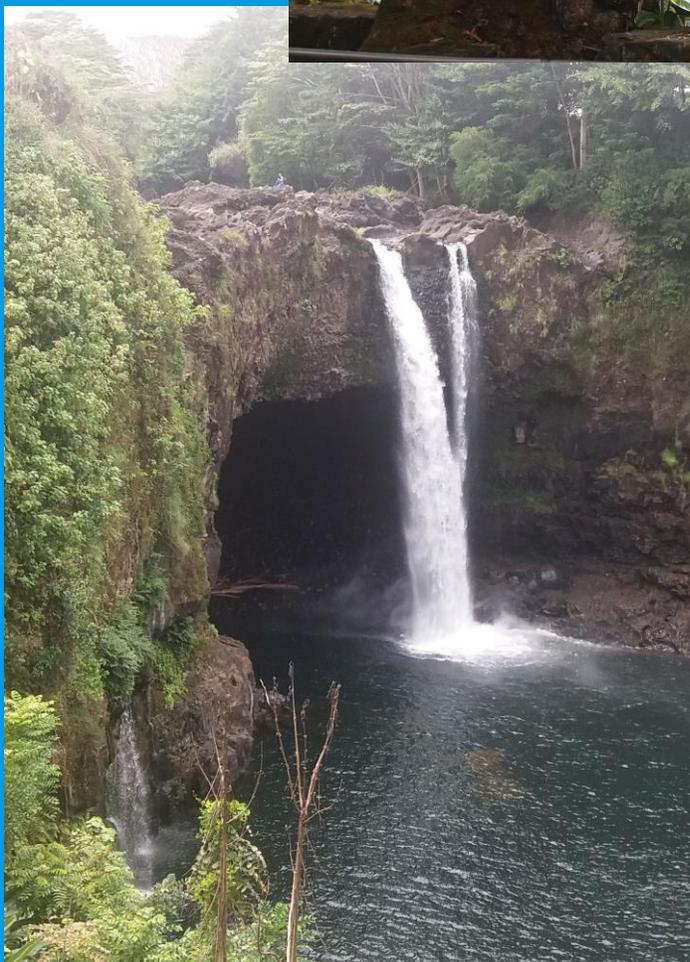


This was the view from our room.



We flew to Hilo, on the "Big Island" and stayed in this wonderful, "Miami Beach-style" hotel.





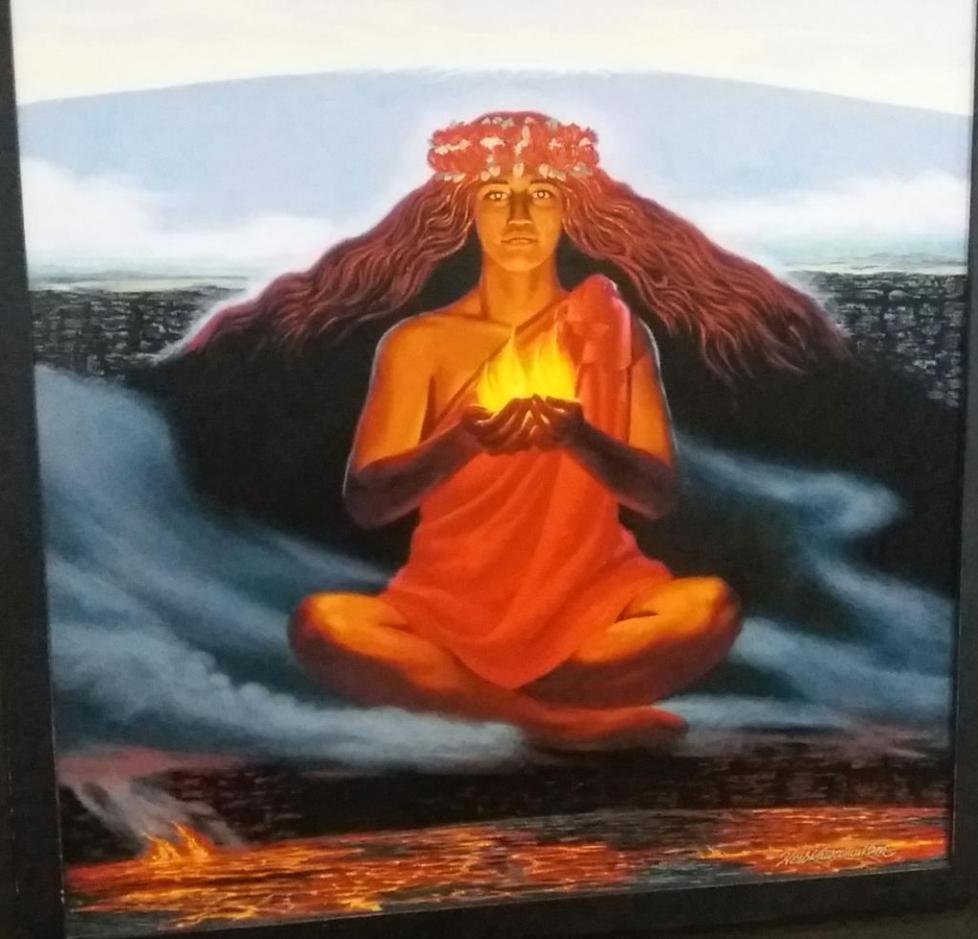


We arrived in Hilo at the start of a major event, the Merrie Monarch Hula Festival. A week-long competition of dancers from all over Hawaii. We got to see the Opening ceremony of local Grammar and Junior High School students doing highly choreographed dances.



This group of junior high school kids, did a very good routine, but everyone's eyes were on the poor boy on the left. His loincloth was falling off in the back and we all just held our breath, hoping that it wouldn't come all the way off. The poor kid must have been mortified, but he didn't break the routine, and luckily it stayed on, by a thread.





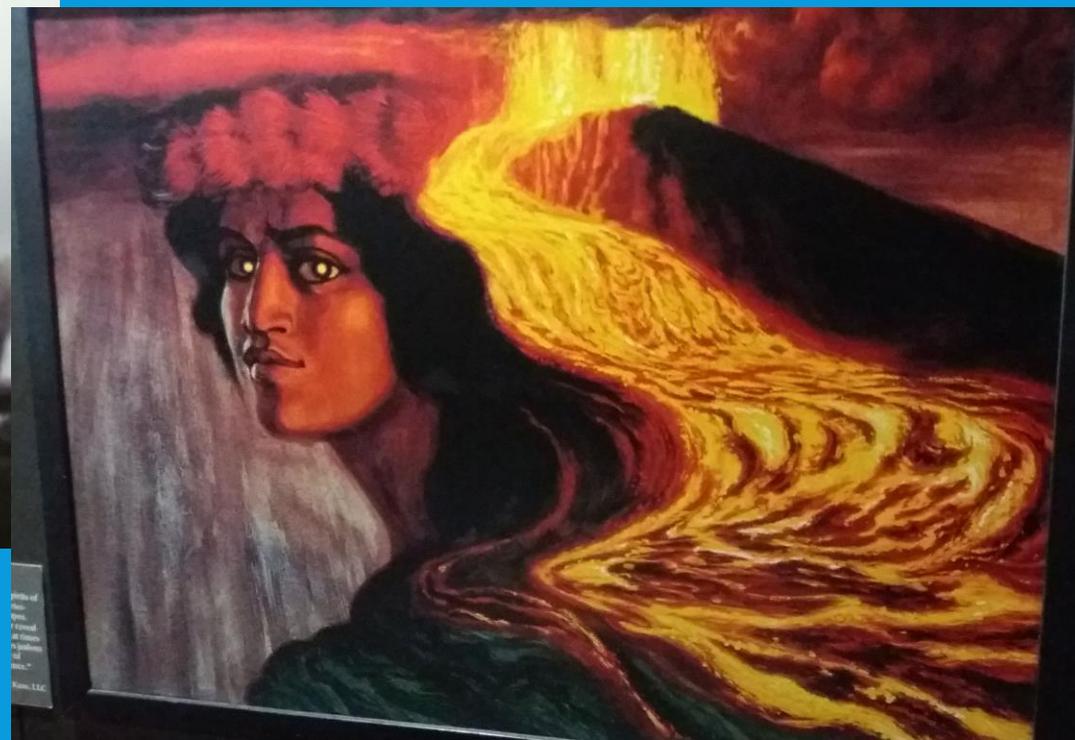
The whole trip to Hawaii was inspired by David M's desire to see the lava from the active volcano, Kilauea.

So, first we drove up to the Volcanoes National Park in the evening, to see the glow.

We had dinner here.



(These photos are from the Volcano Museum on that site.)





This is what we actually saw.
Very dramatic, but just the mist
from the lava, glowing below.

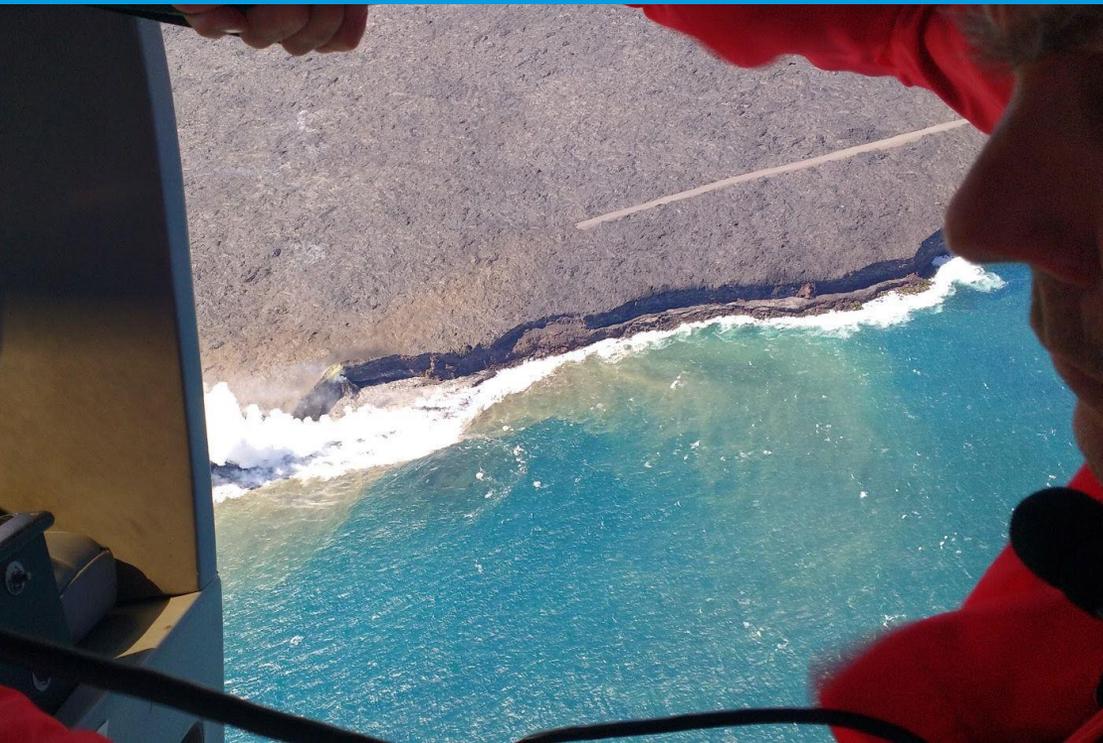
But the next day, we took a ride
in this helicopter to view the
actual lava from above.
We chose "Doors Off"
for a better view.





Munro took all the pictures, while I just hung on for dear life.

We did see some actual red lava, but it wasn't as dramatic as he had hoped.





Our last excursion, took us to this beautiful bay, with the tallest cliff on the Big Island. But generally, the scenery was not nearly as dramatic as on Oahu.



For our last day in Hawaii, we flew back to Oahu and stayed in this hotel, at the end of the long Waikiki hotel strip. It was very "Miami Beach", so I'm glad we didn't spend a lot of time here. But it was a nice way to end our extraordinary trip.

"ALOHA"

(which means, "Hello", "Goodbye" and "I Love You")



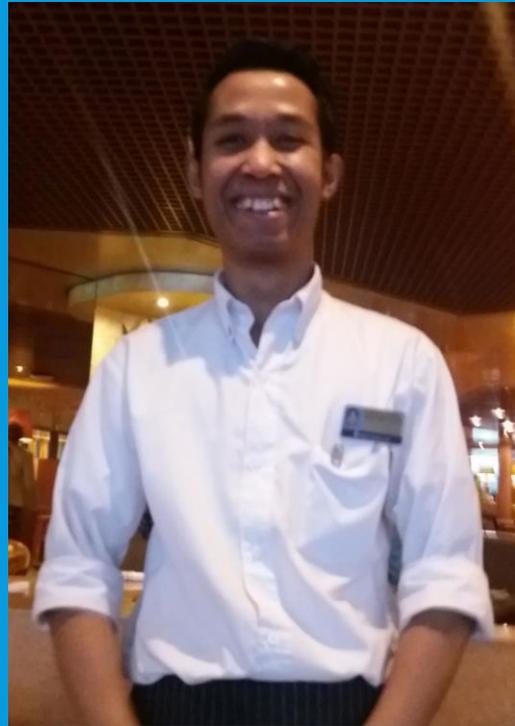
I can say I actually swam on the beach at Waikiki.



ADDENDUM:

Some pictures from our
cruise ship, *The Noordam*.





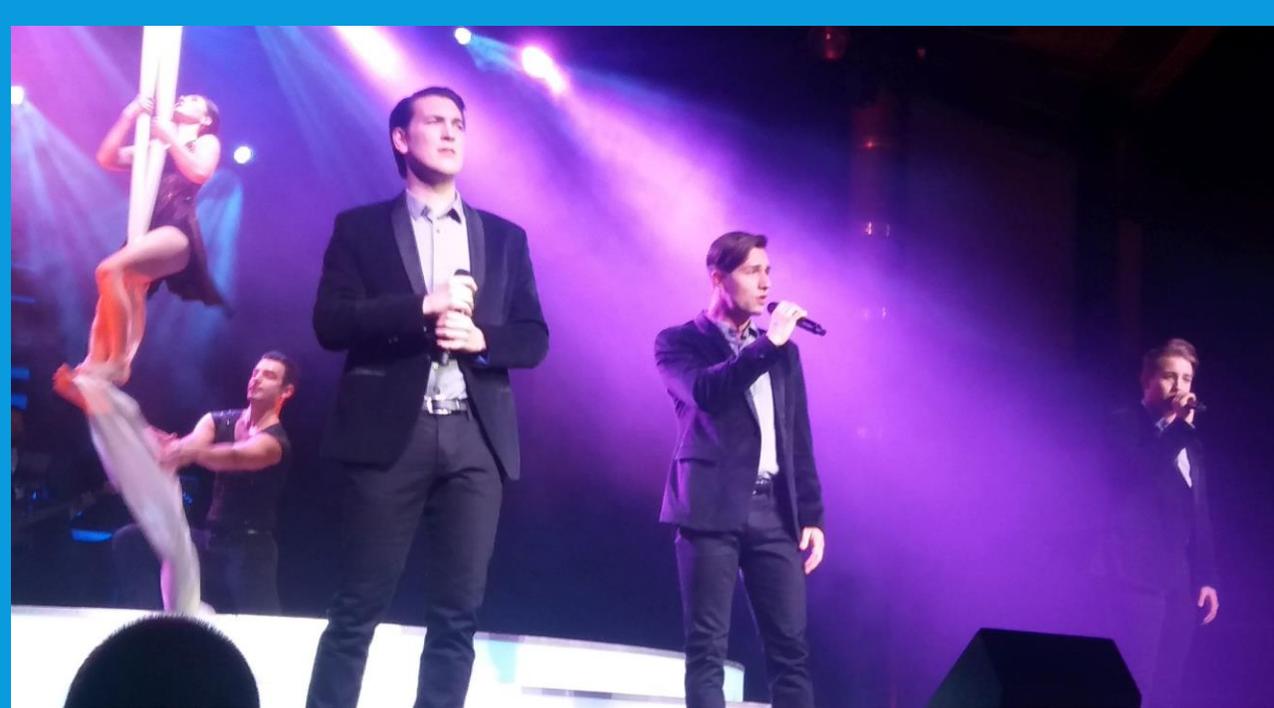


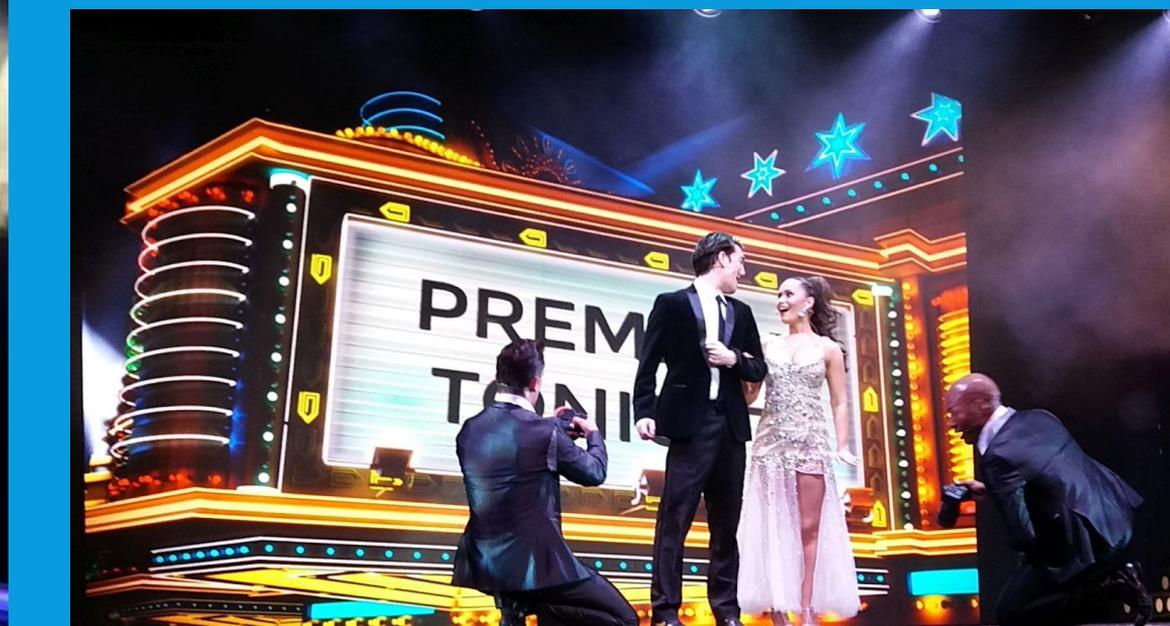
Towel art
from our cabin
stewards
each night.



All the shows put on by the ship's company were very impressive.

They all had great voices and could dance as well.





In one of the dining room dinners, much to our surprise, a waiter brought us a "Happy Anniversary" cake.

This was greeted pleasantly by our conservative dining partners.

"That's All, Folks!"

