I was walking through the cluster of lipstick palms that graces the center of the 12-acre property. Their trunks were bright red, a bursting contrast against the milky, overcast sky I paused to admire them. It was late November in Hāna, and the rains had come. The sea was rough, but the calm of the land wrapped me up like a warm blanket.

If you think I'm being dramatic, perhaps you've never spent time in Hāna. It's considered one of the last unspoiled Hawaiian towns in the state, and most certainly on Maui. This land belongs to the town's newest cultural retreat, Ala Kukui, at which I've reserved a room. There's a half-mile hike just beyond palm and a hula studio at the bottom of the hill. There's even a giant ahu up at the top. I am al retreat, Ala Kukui, at which I've reserved a room. Tonight, I am staying our culture at a deeper level needs to be constantly nourished. "This is a place that services the community first while still growing and gathering, but that staying amongst it all, looking up to the star, or shaking off the hustle of Kahului or O'ahu. Want to live like a local? Follow these tips.

Food Trucks: When you're in Hāna, there are not many traditional restaurants to choose from, and the ones that do exist will cost you an arm and a leg. Kau'i always points visitors to the surprising number of food trucks, all run by locals. Check out Chow's for plate lunches; That Food by Pae-ra; and Hana Burger Truck at Hana Ranch. 

Double Dip: It's given that you'll visit a local beach, like Hamoa, for a swim. But Kau'i advises not to forget about the cool fresh waters of pools, such as those out at Kipahulu. "The goal when you finally get here is to rest and cleanse your self," she said. "A combination of ocean and fresh water is how you do that."

Stay Awhile: Even though beaches are near Hāna on the fly as they complete the Road to Hāna and continue on, Kau'i says her town is not to be experienced "on the fly." "You don't get Hāna if you just drive in and drive out," she said. "If you really want to understand it here, you have to stay at least two nights. It's how you get into the pace of this place, which is slow."