

## Puuhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park

Puuhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park (daily 7.30am-5.30pm; \$2; ), four miles on from Kealahou, is the single most evocative historical site in all the Hawaiian islands, jutting into the Pacific on a small peninsula of jagged black lava. The grounds include a palace, with fishpond and private canoe landing, and three heiaus, guarded by large carved effigies of gods - reproductions, but still eerie in their original setting. An ancient "place of refuge" lies firmly protected behind the mortarless masonry of the sixteenth-century Great Wall. Those who broke ancient Hawaii's intricate system of kapu (taboo) - perhaps by treading on the shadow of a chief, or fishing in the wrong season - could expect summary execution unless they fled to the sanctuary of a place such as this. As chiefs lived on the surrounding land, transgressors had to swim through the shark-infested seas. If successful, they would be absolved and released overnight.