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MAUI IS "BEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD" FOR THE 15th TIME
"Perennial Favorite" Captures Highest Score of
Any Destination Across the Globe for 2009

MAUI, Hawai'i – For an unprecedented 15th time, "Maui, the Magic Isle" captured "Best Island in the World" honors in the 22nd annual CONDE NAST TRAVELER Readers' Choice Awards Poll. With a score of 90.1, Maui was also voted "Best Pacific Island" for the 19th consecutive year.

In the "Best Pacific Island" category, sister island Kaua'i placed second with a score of 87.8. Bora Bora ranked third with 84.9 and the Great Barrier Reef's 84.0 score was enough for 4th place. Completing the "Top Ten" were: 5th place Moorea (83.5); 6th place Hawai'i Island (83.0); 7th place O'ahu (81.7); 8th place Lāna'i (79.8); 9th place Galapagos (76.6) and 10th place Tasmania (76.5).

Other top island destinations in the world included winners in the following geographical categories: Asia (Maldives, 87.5), Caribbean (Bermuda, 81.3), North America (Kiawah, 79.9) and Europe (Mykonos and the Cyclades, 77.3).

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Maui’s score once again surpassed all other top destinations worldwide beating out every single “Best City” category winner including Australia/Pacific (Sydney, 86.9), U.S. (San Francisco, 84.8), Europe (Florence, 84.6), Asia (Ubud, 82.5), Africa (Capetown, 82.4) and The Americas (Vancouver, 82.3).

“As destinations everywhere continue to endure challenging times, Maui has been able to capture the hearts and minds of treasured visitors from all across the globe,” stated Terryl Vencl, executive director, Maui Visitors Bureau. “We are truly blessed with stunning natural beauty and our cherished host culture while the gracious aloha of our residents continues to entice and inspire.” She concluded, “this prestigious honor is yet again testament to Maui’s visitor industry and most importantly, the people of our beloved island home.”

CONDE NAST TRAVELER reported, “The Pacific Ocean is the ratings powerhouse. Of ten islands that score above 80, seven are Oceania and four are Hawaiian led – as usual, by Maui.” During the awards ceremony held Thursday evening in New York City before a crowd of hundreds, Maui was introduced as “the perennial favorite.”

For the first time, the hotels of Maui Nui (Maui, Moloka’i and Lāna’i) dominated the “Top Hawai’i Resorts” category. Of the publication’s “Top Hawai’i Resorts”, four of the top five were Maui Nui properties including: 1. Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea; 3. Four Seasons Resort Lāna’i, The Lodge at Kō’ele; 4. Hotel Hāna Maui and Honua Spa; and 5. Four Seasons Resort Lāna’i at Mānele Bay. (Four Seasons Resort Hualālai on Hawai’i Island ranked second).

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Other Maui properties ranked at the top included: #9 Fairmont Kea Lani, Maui; #12 Grand Wailea; #14 Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua; #15 Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa and #20 Westin Maui Resort & Spa. In total, Maui Nui captured nine of the “Top 20” spots.

The magazine’s annual Readers’ Choice Awards poll analyzes the travel preferences of their readership in various categories including cities, islands, airlines, cruise lines, hotels, spas, resorts and rental cars. Ratings are based on the responses of CONDE NAST TRAVELER subscribers who participated in the 22nd annual poll. More than 25,000 readers participated this year and complete results are published in the November 2009 issue, which arrives on newsstands later this month.

“Maui nō ka ‘oi!” or “Maui is the Best!” is a common Hawaiian refrain. World-class resorts, award winning cuisine, championship golf, staggering natural beauty and the islands’ host Hawaiian culture have propelled Maui into the limelight. For more information, visit www.visitmaui.com or call 800-525-6284.

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