

# The

# LEFT COAST SURFER

Fall 2006

## Local Kine Food

Visitors to Hawaii are shocked by the high cost of meals in restaurants and snacks from the grocery stores, especially on outlying Islands. Believe me, we Kamainas (locals) are just as distressed. But eat we must and the Hawaiian culture of food is passionate and prevailing, even as we attempt to dine within our budgets. You learn that one must live, work and grocery shop here a while to truly understand what "Local Kine Food" is all about.

There are cliché Hawaiian food notions—the ubiquitous pineapple, according to lore served in and on everything. The hula-replete Luau complete with whole roasted pig, Ti leaf wrapped Lau-lau and Hawaii's purple version of library paste, Poi. Poi—pulverized and fermented taro root—is one of those funny "you only like it if fed to you while an infant" kind of foods. If you didn't eat it from start on you never really develop a taste for it. Foods included in this category are haggis, Vegemite, durian, natto, tripe, blood sausage, American cheese, and Miracle Whip. Many of these foods associated with the exotica of this Paradise didn't actually come from our fair islands, but we get the credit (or more appropriately, the blame) for these creations. Hawaiian Pizza, for example, is never to be seen on our lovely islands. This bizarre mix of pizza dough, tomato sauce, cheese, pineapple and ham was actually birthed in Edinburgh, Scotland and is inexplicably the most popular pizza combination in

Australia. Strange from a country which normally has good food sense. (Australia, not Scotland). Another universally known island treat is the Mai-Tai; a pineapple based rum drink made famous by Trader Vic. But wait—this drink was first served in Oakland, California, or maybe it was at Don The Beachcomber's in Hollywood? King's Hawaiian Bread is made in Southern California. Famous drinks like the Blue Hawaiian, Keoke Coffee and Champagne Hula are all mainland invented and consumed concoctions, while Hawaii's original drink, a ferment of whisky and Ti root called 'Okolehau (Literally "Lead Bottom") is nowhere to be found.

The foods that are vital and beloved to those of us that live on these islands are a bit more...er... pedestrian—but not easily found elsewhere, at least not in the combinations seen here. It is a canned meat of dubious origin, a clumpy white starch, something called "Plate Lunch", rotted cabbage, and a tenacious barnacle which are the affordable items that inspire locals to sing the Haole (foreigner) Food Blues when off island for too long.

The first surprise to new arrivals is Hawaiian's inexplicable attachment to 12 ounce pull top blue cans of chopped, processed, cooked, canned and then cooked again pork. Spare Parts of Anonymous Mammals, more politely known as SPAM™ takes up an entire quarter of an isle in our local supermarket. SPAM™ can be found in the pantry of any omnivorous Hawaiian family and I'm talking cases here. With more than 7 million cans eaten each year, the largest per capita



SPAM™, Wonderful SPAM™

## The Shed

HARVEST DAYS has Kona Coffee farmers in the coffee land all day tending trees, pulling weeds and, of course, picking perfectly ripe Kona Coffee. The day doesn't end, however, if the farm takes the cranberry red bean beyond the raw "cherry" stage. For folks who take their coffee through the entire process up their own roasted label, like Left Coast Farm, evenings and often nights are spend in the processing shed, conveying the precious beans through several of the many steps it takes to bring a perfect sip of coffee to your cup. The shed at Left Coast is a three tiered, open sided affair cantilevered over the steep volcanic hillside. The top tier, closest to the road, is where the one hundred pound bags of just picked coffee are weighted, then dumped into a wooden chute which feeds into the pulper. An initial hand sort is done at this point, removing green and over ripe beans before the coffee is run through the pulper. The middle tier houses fermentation tanks and a 100 year old cast iron pulper. As the beans run through this machine at about 400 pounds an hour, the skinned seed is funneled

into the fermentation tanks, while the removed outer skin shoots over the side of the shed into a compost area—this is spread around the base of the trees in the Spring, after it has had a chance to mature a bit. The remaining excess pulp is fermented off of the seeds/beans for 24 hours. Without this step, the beans are very sticky, and retain too much moisture to dry properly in our humid climate. The now pulp-free beans are washed thoroughly, to halt fermentation and prevent souring. They are spread onto the drying deck of the third tier. This large open space, which would make a great Square Dance floor, is covered with a roof of special greenhouse grade plastic, to allow the beans to dry gently. Drying the beans can take up to three weeks, and they must be raked several times a day to ensure even drying and prevent mold growth. When ready, the tan colored beans, now called “parchment”, are sorted once again, bagged in 80 pound sacks and stored in a climate controlled room until needed for milling and roasting. Left Coast Farm's shed is airy, clean and a totally pleasant place to work, with a killer view of the coffee land and coastline beyond. Wired for sound, it's not a bad place to spend an evening, and is close enough to the house that we can easily stumble home in the dark when we forget to bring our flashlights along.

consumption in the world, SPAM™ in our fair state is celebrated with songs, art, cult events and recipe contests. In Waikiki an entire weekend is in April is given over to “SPAM™ Jam”, where over twenty thousand people come to watch the crowning of Mr. or Ms. Spam (first prize: a years supply of SPAM™), taste the creations of top restaurants serving SPAM™ based dishes and the construction of a 325 foot long Musubi, a dish made of SPAM™, rice and seaweed. SPAM™ haiku slams take place in local coffee shops. Here is a taste of these literary feats:

Valentine's day, I  
give my true love the one thing  
that says love. Blue can.  
--William Routhier,

Gregor Spamsa woke.  
In horror he sees that he's  
Now a pink pork cube.  
--Sham

Order from chaos  
Differentiated flesh  
SPAM™ proves entropy  
--Anonymous

SPAM™ goes to D.C.  
Wins seat in legislature  
Pork-barrel funding  
--Anonymous

The Musubi is arguably the main reason contributing to Spam's continued Hawaiian popularity. It is a lunch staple here in the islands which replaces the mainland sandwich and not a grocery store, food market or lunch shop is without a rack of them ready to grab, right next to the checkout lane. A slice of SPAM™, often fried, is placed on a glob of white rice, wrapped in a sheet of Nori (flat pressed seaweed) and then sealed in cellophane. While it looks like sushi, there is no vinegar added to



THE PERILOUS CLIMB

the rice—rather, it is a short grain rice cooked to be sticky, so it holds together. Plastic Musubi molds can be bought at any food store—they are the size of a slice of SPAM™ and help to mold and compress the Musubi into a firm brick. My personal Musubi recipe includes a strip of egg cooked omelet style and the SPAM™ is pan fried in a bit of shoyu (Hawaiian soy sauce) —yum!

A disturbing situation is that, like SPAM™, another inexpensive food staple in Hawaii is wholly imported: rice. A little over a half a century ago, rice was the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest crop on the Hawaiian Islands. Nowadays, it is not on any of the Ag department's crop lists. When disaster hits—be it hurricane, earthquake, tsunami or longshoreman's strike—the first items to fly off of store



THE DARING REACH

shelves for hoarding are rice, toilet paper and SPAM™. In that order. Rice is the primary starch of the modern Hawaiian diet and is commonly seen in 40 pound bags at the local

markets. The sublimely affordable rice is seen at breakfast in the form of LocoMoco—rice topped with a hamburger patty, fried egg and gravy—or with eggs and Portuguese sausage (or SPAM™). Rice is always served with lunch—two scoops—or in the lunchtime Musubi, and is dished up with everything having to do with dinner. Rice even accompanies steak in local cooking—the only baked potato to be found is in a tourist style restaurant. An oft quoted High School graduation speech starts with, “Eat rice.” It goes on to suggest that the new grads remember to “Give directions to a tourist”, to “Try one new Shave Ice flavor each week”, and to “Visit each neighbor island at least once. Go to the Big Island twice—once for Kona and once for Hilo. On second thought, go to Kona twice.” The oration finishes with the most important advice “No matter what you do, eat rice”.

Lunch seems to be the most important meal in Hawaii. It is unthinkable to skip lunch. The practice of a hearty, carbohydrate laden midday meal probably harkens back to the islands' agricultural

tradition—a long morning of working in the fields or construction made for hungry folks at noon break. Even with the shift from agriculture to more urban employee, the Plate Lunch remains the chosen repast. Sandwiches are not a common lunch food, mainly because the Hawaiian translation for them is “na palaoa me na mea ho’ono’ono i waena” —by the time you say it, lunch break is over. Plate Lunch is the Hawaii version of fast food. The establishments serving Plate Lunch are generally small diners or lunch wagons with very casual seating, usually privately owned. There are several chain restaurants—most famously L&L Diner and Zippy’s, but the norm is mom & pop. On the road between Left Coast Farm and Kailua town—a low density, agriculturally zoned area—there is one mainland fast food restaurant (McDonalds) and four Plate Lunch places. The Plate Lunch is two scoop rice, one scoop macaroni salad, and protein in the form of a choice of kalua pig (slow roasted), beef stew, chili, oxtail stew, teriyaki beef or chicken, BBQ ribs, chicken, fish or pork katsu (breaded with panko and fried), chicken long rice or SPAM™. A condiment cup of Kim Chee always accompanies.

Named a national treasure by the Korean government, Kim Chee is different kinds of vegetables pickled in garlic, salt and red chili peppers. In Hawaii, it is typically made from Asian cabbage or turnip, but there is said to be 160 documented types of Kim Chee.

Unlike long-lived sauerkraut, the Kim

Chee pickling process takes place over only a few days. While Kim Chee can last for several weeks in the fridge, once it starts to lose its green tint or gets too soggy, it’s no good. Kim Chee, ranging from mild to blistering hot, serves as a savory dish alone, but is frequently added to soups, rice, stews and in salads. If you don’t want to make your own Kim Chee, it is available in the produce section of every market, and by the gallon at CostCo. By the way, you will find Kim Chee topped pizza on the offering here.

The most beloved of traditional Hawaiian foods is also the rarest. Found nowhere else but the island’s shores, the venerated Opihi is a cone shaped limpet, usually eaten raw or mixed with seaweed. Tasting of the ocean with a salty crunch, they resemble miniature abalone, and are just as fabulously expensive at \$180.00 a gallon. Unless you catch them yourself—then they are free. The stalwart gastropod lives only on rocky wind- and wave-swept cliffs, and once aware of the picker’s presence, clamp down like nothing doing—you must be swift and



THE HUNTER GATHERER

fearless to collect them. It is said that there are no old Opihi pickers—they all fall off of a cliff or get swept away first.

A recent holiday trip saw my brother, Gene, and I off island exploring the uppermost tip of Maui. Far from the resorts, on a one lane dirt road carved out of the sheer ocean cliff side, we found ourselves as far from civilization as you can get on that island. At one turnout, rickety wood ladders tied to the boulders gave access to tide pools and the wave battered lava shore a hundred feet down. Of course we couldn’t resist, and monkey-ed down to have a look. Unusually calm seas (the reason we weren’t surfing instead) and a very low tide revealed a king’s feast of Opihi. With only Gene’s trusty Boy Scout knife as a tool we manage to collect and eat enough to fuel the climb back up. The whole time, we sang Frank DeLima’s children’s song:

Please don’t eat me,  
I’m just a small Opihi,  
I’m an endangered species,  
So please don’t eat me.

We think to eat us is offensive,  
Besides we’re really quite expensive,  
Being a pupu is no fun,  
We can’t look good to anyone.

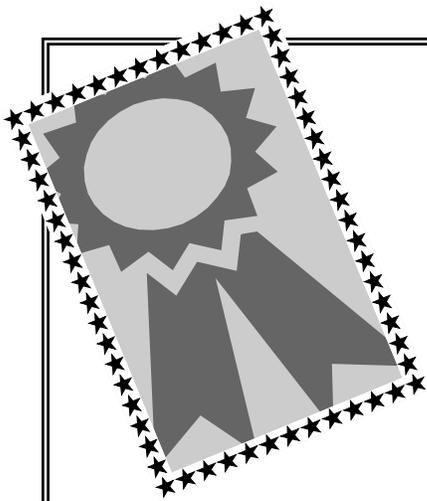
Have something meaty and moister,  
Why don’t you go suck on an oyster,  
They don’t put up much of a fuss,  
And they’re much uglier than us.

We’re born and raised here on these islands,  
You shouldn’t eat native Hawaiians,  
Go eat a hamburger instead,  
At least the cow is really dead.

So please don’t eat me,  
I’m just one small Opihi,  
Go have some more sashimi,  
Just please don’t eat me.



THE REWARD



## Left Coast Farm

And

## Long Mountain Kona

is proud to announce that once again we were

## Finalists

At the 2006 Gevalia Kona Coffee Cupping Contest!

**This prestigious event pits over 80 boutique Kona coffees against one another in a two day double-blind taste test, judged by a panel of international coffee experts.**

**This is the sixth time our farm has placed in the past 9 years-  
A Kona Coffee record!**

**Left Coast Rocks!** Yup, we felt it. A 6.7 magnitude earthquake shook our fair island early October 15th, quickly followed by a 6.0 aftershock. The epicenter was 40 miles north of the farm and the Big Island got the brunt of the kick. The place held up fine, with minor foundation, rock wall and roof repairs needed. Lots fell and broke inside-the most heartfelt casualty was an unopened bottle of Patron Añejo-such a waste! The cat split for two days and Miss Hope made me take her everywhere with me for several weeks following, but all in all we got lucky.

The silver lining was that there were no fatalities and on a more personal note, the extensive damage to our private road has mobilized the neighborhood to do much needed road work. With a renewed sense of access urgency, Left Coast Farm looks forward to this week's major repair party-break out those shovels, rakes and asphalt tampers!

*FOR THOSE OF YOU who have  
been wondering what the  
"LONG MOUNTAIN KONA" thing is all about,  
let me explain.*

*About a year and a half ago, marketing  
pressures lead us to create a new label.*

*We love our clever Aloha print bags,  
but a few of our retail stores asked for  
more traditional packaging.*

*So the classy and elegant Long Mountain  
label was developed,*

*inspired by Kim's Wine Country roots.*

*The [www.LongMountainKona.com](http://www.LongMountainKona.com)  
web site is in its infancy with a home page  
and an order form and we have a talented  
web guru building a fabulous new site-  
we'll let you all know when it's ready  
early next year.*

*The coffee is the same delicious brew-  
now you have a choice of style!*

Net  
Weight  
8OZ  
(227g)

*Wailapa Valley Reserve*  
V I E N N E S E R O A S T



**LONG MOUNTAIN**  
100% KONA COFFEE

*Produced by Long Mountain Coffee  
Honaunau, Hawaii · 808-328-9039  
100% Kona Coffee by Volume*

# THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT!

## LEFT COAST FARM

Estate Grown

### 100% KONA COFFEE

Wake up those friends, rels and work mates with an 'ono (that's Hawaiian for delicious), rich and bodacious pot of Kona Coffee. Already wrapped in Aloha print fabric bags in festive holiday colors with a jammin' Santa gift tag, this is the coolest present and the finest brew puka shells can buy.

**\*\*Please order by December 19th if you want Santa to get the credit! \*\***

**MEDIUM ROAST**, equivalent to a Full City roast, produces a coffee with Kona's characteristic smooth, fruit-and-wine acidity with a bright finish. It is a bit higher in caffeine and is an excellent morning coffee

**DARK ROAST**, equivalent to a Vienna Roast, deepens Kona coffees' intrinsic sweetness and produces a brew with an intense, rich aroma. It is a wonderful evening and dessert coffee.

### Don't Forget the AWESOME CANDY

Left Coast Farm Peaberry and Hawaiian Macadamia Nuts all drenched in Gourmet Chocolates  
Hummm....might go good with some coffee....

100% Kona Coffee \$23.00/pound, \$12.00 one half pound

All roasted coffee comes in Aloha print fabric bag

#### Dark Roast

#	\$
___ 16 oz/one pound whole bean	_____
___ 16 oz/one pound ground	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound whole bean	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound ground	_____

#### Medium Roast

___ 16 oz/one pound whole bean	_____
___ 16 oz/one pound ground	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound whole bean	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound ground	_____

#### Candy \$11.00 box

___ 8 oz/Coffee in Dark Chocolate	_____
___ 12 oz/Mac Nuts in Dark Chocolate	_____
___ 12 oz/Mac Nuts in Milk Chocolate	_____
___ 12 oz/Mac Nuts in White Chocolate	_____
___ 12 oz/Mac Nuts Mixed Chocolates	_____

shipping \_\_\_\_\_ shipping please add \$3.95 for one lb. OR \$2.50/lb. after 1st lb.  
Total= \_\_\_\_\_ any order over 4 lbs. is a flat \$8.10 rate

Send To:  
Address:

Gift From?:

Message:



Visa/Master Card #

Exp. Date

Checks gladly accepted

Or Order Online at [www.LeftCoastFarm.com](http://www.LeftCoastFarm.com)

# GET IT FROM...

## Left Coast Farm

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Venice, CA 90291

[www.LeftCoastFarm.com](http://www.LeftCoastFarm.com)

[www.LongMountainKona.com](http://www.LongMountainKona.com)



Left Coast Farm  
Long Mountain Kona  
Kim and Lewis Johnson  
2618 Pacific Ave.  
Venice, CA 90291  
(Hawaii too!)



"a cup a day keeps you jammin'"