

HAWAII'S BEST RESTAURANTS 2006-2007




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CUBAN

O'ahu is home to hundreds of ethnic restaurants – most heavily Asian, most of them small, inexpensive and family-run, and all with their regulars and passionate fans. We couldn't possibly visit them all in a year, much less include them all in this guide. So this is just a selection, focused on offering as wide a range of cuisines as possible.

Soul de Cuba Cafe

O'ahu's first and only Cuban restaurant opened in 2006 to be greeted with an enthusiastic "Hola!" from transplants who already love *cuisina Cubana*, as well as those who have always wanted to try it. Grilled Cuban sandwiches, the panino of the Caribbean, are a big lunch draw. Simple black beans and rice or *ropa viejas*, the classic slow-simmered pot roast of Cuba, offer homey comfort. Try the charmingly named *camarones bailando* (dancing shrimp), marinated in a "Cubano-chinois sauce," then sauteed. The guava-and-cheese-filled dessert *empanadas* alone are worth a visit. Inviting decor and great music complete the experience.

1121 Bethel St. 545-2822. Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. Dinner: 5:30-10 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Brunch: 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. Closed Monday. No liquor license; corkage fee \$5 per person. Takeout available. Reservations for parties of six or more. VS, MC, AX, DS, JCB. No checks. \$.

Web site: www.souldecuba.com



Here's a Cubano Sandwich at Soul de Cuba on Bethel Street. O'ahu's only Cuban restaurant, right across the street from the Hawai'i Theatre – opened this year.

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THAT MAKE IT HAPPEN

Legend:

- VS: Visa
- MC: Mastercard
- AX: American Express
- DC: Diners Club
- DS: Discover Card
- \$\$\$: Pricey; entrées mostly more than \$17
- \$\$: Moderate; entrées \$10-\$16
- \$: Budget-friendly; entrées mostly less than \$10

- Past 'Ilima Award winner
-  "Cheap eats" restaurant
-  "Local classic" eatery

JCB: JCB Card
Olioli: Olioli Card

Checks: Local checks and travelers' checks
only

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