

## Bonus episode #141 - Living like a local

### Episode description

In this episode, Andrew shares a couple more stories from his recent trip to Hawaii and reflects on some unique, off-the-beaten-path experiences he and his wife had during their travels. Listening to authentic, natural English from a native speaker is one of the best ways to improve your English skills and become fluent faster. So tune in to hear about their everyday adventures, unexpected moments, and the interesting experiences they had along the way!



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Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Hello, and welcome to bonus episode number 141 of the Culips English Podcast. How's it going? Thank you for clicking play and joining me for this English lesson. My name's Andrew. I'm your Canadian English study buddy, and I'm happy to be here with you today. Guys, in this episode, I'm going to tell you a story about visiting Hawaii.

Recently, my wife and I visited Hawaii, and a couple of episodes ago in bonus episode number 139, I believe it was, I told you about some of the touristy things that we did while we were there in Hawaii. And in this episode, I'm going to tell you about some things that we did that maybe weren't as touristy.

I don't want to say that we were living exactly like locals or anything like that, but I think we did get up to some adventures and some fun activities that were maybe a little bit different than the regular tourist itinerary. I'm going to tell you those stories in this episode today.

But before I tell you that story, I want to let you know there's a free interactive transcript and vocabulary glossary available for everyone, and you can get that just by clicking the link in the description. Plus, if you're a Culips member, then you can get a comprehension quiz as well. Thank you to all the Culips members out there for your support.

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Last month, my wife and I were lucky enough to spend a week in Honolulu, Hawaii, and we got up to lots of things. We did lots of activities every day. It was a very busy vacation. It wasn't really a relaxing vacation as much. Of course, we had a wonderful time, but we did do many, many things, and I'm going to show you a couple of the things that we did that maybe you wouldn't find on a regular tourist itinerary.

So, the first thing that we did that was really cool and just a wonderful memory, I think we'll have it as a nice memory of our time in Honolulu going forward for many years, was visiting a local swimming pool. Now, **on the surface**, that doesn't sound like anything too exciting, but it ended up just being a really fun time.

My wife is a big swimmer. She loves swimming. She swims three or four days a week. You guys know that I love running. Well, I think my wife is equally as passionate about swimming. So, we both have our shared passions when it comes to exercise. She likes swimming. I like running and running is a pretty easy thing to do. You know, you can pretty much run anywhere. But swimming, on the other hand, is not so easy to do.

And Hawaii is an expensive place. So, when we were looking into booking our hotel, of course, my wife is interested in staying at a hotel with a swimming pool because of her passion for swimming. But as I said, Hawaii is an expensive place. And as we were looking at the different hotel options, the ones with swimming pools were pretty expensive. And the ones without swimming pools were also pretty expensive, but a little bit cheaper.

And so, what we decided to do, and we were inspired by our previous trip to Australia where we did some outdoor swimming in local community pools. We decided, hey, let's go on Google Maps. We'll search in Hawaii and see if there are any outdoor community pools that we could go to. And if that's the case, then let's do that.

And so, I went on Google Maps. I searched. I found that in the Waikiki Beach area, like that's where we were staying is Waikiki Beach. Within that area, within, I don't know, four

or five kilometers or so, kind of close area, there were several pools, more than enough for us. So, we decided, hey, let's save some money. We'll book the hotel with no pool and then we can go to the community pools to swim instead.

And so that's exactly what we did. And the pool that we ended up going to was not too far from our hotel, probably two and a half, three kilometers or so. And we ended up walking there because I love walking. When you go to a new place, I love just walking around because it gives you an opportunity to see the city, right, to see the area.

So, we decided to walk to the community pool. They had some open free-swimming hours where anybody could go swimming in the early afternoon. Of course, in the morning they have like kids swim programs and after school they had kids swim programs. And then the evening they had swimming activities and lessons for adults and stuff. There's only a little bit of time where you can go and actually just free swim. But it was in the early afternoon. And since we were on vacation, we had early afternoon availability and free time. So, we decided to do that.

So, we walked from our hotel to the swimming pool, and it was a great walk. As I was saying, it's just a nice opportunity to see what the city looks like outside of the main tourist area of Waikiki Beach. So, we walked through this really residential neighborhood. You can see the houses, the kind of houses that are popular in Honolulu. We saw lots of examples of those. We saw schools, we saw shopping centers and restaurants that were just used by locals right outside of the tourist zone.

So, we took our time walking there. I think we, yeah, probably took about an hour just to wander and sightsee. As we walked through the pool, we passed a poke restaurant, and we had some fresh local seafood at the poke restaurant. I had some tuna, and I can't remember what my wife had. Maybe she had tuna as well. It was delicious.

And yeah, you know, there's this **old wives' tale**, this saying, I'm not sure if this is true or not, but after you eat, you're supposed to wait about 30 to 45 minutes before swimming or else you can get an upset stomach and maybe feel sick. I don't know if that's true or not. I don't think that's the case for me. But after we ate our lunch, we decided, OK, hey, let's just take it slow as we walk to the pool just so that we can digest our food. And then when we go swimming, we won't have any issues like that.

So, we wandered to the swimming pool, and it was just nice. I really like looking at people's gardens and people's houses. And that was just a cool walk through this residential area in Hawaii.

And then finally, we arrived at the swimming pool. It was in this really cool, big, massive open park. And yeah, we got to the front of the swimming pool, and it was closed. We arrived too early. So, we had to hang out in the park for about 20 minutes, but that was no problem at all. And then the pool was open.

And actually, I was a little bit confused. I had to ask the lifeguards there, is the pool actually open? Because there was nobody there. My wife and I were the only ones there. And so, I was like, is it really free swimming right now?

So, I asked the lifeguards. There were two lifeguards on duty at this pool. And to paint a picture for you, it was probably about a 25-meter-long pool, just a rectangular pool, and it was divided into two halves. So, one half was just free swimming where you could do whatever you want and just play in the water. And then the other half was dedicated to lane swimming. And that lane swimming area had two lanes.

And yeah, so the lifeguard said, "Yeah, we're open. Come on in!" So, we thought, amazing. We have this private pool to ourselves with lifeguards watching us as well. And also, it's free to enter, totally free for anyone. And so even though we're not American, we were able to go in and take advantage of that amazing community pool.

So, we got changed and we jumped into the pool. I stuck more to the side that was free and open where you could just do whatever you want and play in the water. Cause that's my kind of style. When I get into a swimming pool, I'm not really a lap swimmer, but my wife is more of a lap swimmer. She likes going back and forth and back and forth and actually exercising.

And so, she got into one of the open lanes and then just around that time, also a grandpa from the community, an older gentleman, probably in his seventies or so arrived and he took the other swimming lane. So, my wife and him were going back and forth in their lanes and I was just sort of chilling there and yeah, it was cool. It was a really unique experience and I think we'll remember it for a long time.

Just a nice way to spend some time a little bit outside of the tourist zone to talk with some of the local people, the older gentlemen swimming there and the lifeguards. And to see what kind of infrastructure is available to the locals who live in Honolulu. I mean, I find that fascinating. I love seeing that and it always makes me wish like, oh, I wish in my hometown we had a swimming pool like this.

Anyways, swimming at the pool was great. We had a wonderful time, probably spent about an hour there and then afterwards we wandered back to the Waikiki Beach tourist zone. Back to the tourist zone and our hotel, but we were glad that we got to get **off the beaten track** a little bit and to live life a little bit like a local, a local swimmer in Hawaii might do.

The second thing we did during our time in Hawaii that was a little bit off the beaten path, maybe is not on the itinerary of most tourists who visit Honolulu, was go to an area called the North Shore. And Honolulu's on an island, right? The island of Oahu and so it's kind of near the Southwest part of the island. Whereas the North Shore is more to the north of the island and to get from Waikiki Beach area in Honolulu, where we were staying to the North Shore took us a couple of hours.

And the reason that it took us a couple of hours was because we took the bus, the local bus. Now going to the North Shore, I think is actually a popular tourist activity, but so many people who visit rent a car and drive up there that taking the bus was our way of maybe doing it like a local would. Although I guess a local would probably have a car as well. Most of them, but anyways, I don't know. Personally, it's a way for us to save a little bit of money because renting a car is expensive. And also, my wife and I are not super confident drivers and yeah, we just decided to take the bus for those reasons.

But personally, I love taking the bus. Even a local bus ride for two hours is maybe not the most pleasant thing, but you look out the window and you get to see the surroundings and see some areas of the Island that you probably wouldn't get to check out otherwise.

So, we took the bus up to the North Shore and the North Shore is a pretty touristy area. There's a little village there with lots of touristy shops. We went to one shop that sold peanut butter exclusively and I'm a huge peanut butter fan. So, I was so stoked about that. I went in and I got some coconut flavored peanut butter. That was delicious. I've already finished the whole bottle, of course.

But yeah, a lot of different touristy shops and gift shops and souvenir shops, that kind of thing, which we wandered through, but didn't spend too much time checking out. The reason that we went to the North Shore, first of all, was because my wife wanted to go snorkeling at this beach, which is supposed to be famous for snorkeling and just beautiful, amazing place to snorkel.

So, we did bring our snorkeling equipment with us. We had our bags with our flippers and masks and snorkels. And when we arrived at the beach, finally, then we realized quite quickly that there was no way we were going to be able to snorkel at that area because the waves were super intense and the beach, in fact, was closed. You know that kind of yellow tape that police put up around a crime scene? The beach was taped off with that



yellow, do not enter tape. And yeah, we couldn't even get in. I mean, you wouldn't want to go in that water anyways. You'd probably drown in a second because the waves were so strong. But yeah, they had **sectioned it off** just so dumb tourists like us don't get in there and hurt themselves.

So, that was **a bust** and "a bust" here means unsuccessful. Going snorkeling was a bust. It was totally unsuccessful. But that's OK because my wife had another couple of places that she wanted to check out. The next place was another beach, not too far away. And we just walked down the shore to that other beach. And we wanted to go to that beach to see giant sea turtles.

So, there are these amazing giant sea turtles that live in Hawaii. And I guess every day they come onto the shore to sleep on the beach. And if you're lucky enough, you can see them while they're sleeping on the beach. And we were lucky enough to actually see them while we were on the beach. It was amazing.

There were these massive giant sea turtles. We even saw some of them come out of the ocean and then dig themselves into this little pit that they make so that they can sleep there on the beach. And we saw some other ones wake up and go out of their pit and slowly crawl back down to the ocean and go into the sea, which was so cool to see these just majestic, amazing giant turtles that are probably, I don't know, like 200 kilograms. I'd have to Wikipedia search and see how big they are in fact, but these huge, huge, huge turtles, the biggest turtles I've ever seen in my life.

And I kind of feel like we were really lucky to get that experience because as we were riding the bus, there were some people talking on the bus. One guy was a local and some other people were tourists from California. And they said they were going to see the turtles. And the local was like, "Oh, you won't see them. They're not out this time of year. They're not out this time of day." And so, he was saying like, don't even go there. There's no chance that you're going to see them.



And so, I'm overhearing, I'm listening to this conversation. And I think my wife probably wasn't able to understand the conversation that they were having. Of course, my wife is not a native English speaker. So sometimes those things can be hard to hear, right? When you're on like a loud bus and people talking a way away from you. But me as a native speaker, I can tune my ear in, and I can **eavesdrop** and listen in.

So, I heard them talking and the local guy saying, no, you won't see any of the turtles. But I didn't want to **burst my wife's bubble**. I didn't want to be like, no, we won't see them. Let's not go there. That guy said no. And I'm glad that I just kept my mouth shut and didn't say anything at all because that local guy was totally wrong. Once we got to the beach, there were five or six giant sea turtles there.

And I did take some pictures and some videos. So, I'll put that onto our social media on Discord and Instagram. And if you're watching on YouTube, I'll put some of the videos in the YouTube version so you can see these amazing, amazing creatures. So that was really cool. That was definitely a highlight of that day.

I think in the North Shore, what else did we do? We just wandered around, ate an acai bowl, which is one of the foods that we ate a lot in Hawaii. Ah, and on the way back, we had to take the bus again for a couple of hours on the way back. And yeah, again, it was kind of cool. Like there were a lot of locals on the bus.

There were a bunch of high school students on the bus and just to eavesdrop on them and hear like what they're talking about and a little glimpse into their life was funny. All these high school students were carrying band instruments like trumpets and tubas and saxophones, I guess. And they were going to a band rehearsal at their high school.

So, it was kind of funny to eavesdrop and listen in and just see what they're talking about, something that I can't really do very often here in Korea to the same extent as I can in a place like that. So, I enjoyed the bus ride, the public bus ride.

And on our way back, we stopped at this other area that was kind of in between downtown Honolulu and the Waikiki Beach tourist zone. And we stopped there because there was a record store that I wanted to visit. Of course, as a music lover, I love going to record stores and checking them out and even sometimes finding some hidden gems. I like to go digging and see what kind of music I can find that could be interesting to take back home with me.

And I was really curious to see if I could find some cool Hawaiian music to take back with me to Korea here. And of course, Hawaii has got a really interesting musical tradition. They've got their own unique style of music. And of course, the ukulele is famous from Hawaii and Polynesian-style music, right? The local native music.

I don't want to say that I'm an expert about Hawaiian music at all, but I thought it would be cool to pick up some old records of Hawaiian music and take it back here with me to Korea. And that's exactly what I did at this record store. They had this big section of 45s. And a 45 is like an old record. Sometimes we also call them a seven inch and 45 stands for the RPM of the little record spins on the record player. It rotates at 45 spins per minute. So that's why it's called RPM rotation per minute, I believe.

And so, all of these old 45s were only \$3 each. So, I didn't know, you know, like which one is good, which one is bad. So, I just randomly picked one and I got this cool looking hula music 45 from 49th state Hawaii record company from Honolulu, Hawaii.

This was made in, who knows? There's no date on it. I'm just looking at it now. If you're listening to the audio-only version of this, I've got it in my hands. But if you're watching the YouTube, you can see actually what it looks like, this cool 45.

So, this must be from the fifties or sixties, I would imagine. And there's only two songs on it. On one side, there's a song called "Lovely Ginger Lei", and a "lei" is that kind of flower

necklace that is famous in Hawaii. And then on the other side, there's a track called "Melody of Hulas." So very cool. And when we got home, we put it on, and it sounds amazing. It's really cool. And yeah, it's great. Some nice Hawaiian music.

So, I thought this is a great kind of souvenir. I'm happy that I picked this up for only \$3 so much better than just a regular touristy **trinket** in my opinion. So, I'm quite happy with that purchase. And when I want to remember my visit to Hawaii, I'll put that on and listen to that music and I think I'll have a really great memory of my time there.

And then after we are super hungry, it was time to get dinner. So, we went to a local restaurant. We were just walking by, and we saw a restaurant that said they were serving authentic, local, traditional Hawaiian cuisine. And we thought that sounds amazing. I wanted to try some local food.

So, we went to that restaurant, and we ordered just, they had like a combo platter where they had, I don't know, five or six dishes that were authentic and local, and I can't remember the names of all of the specific dishes right now. But again, I'll put a photo online so you can see what the food looked like.

There was some dish, I want to say it was called lau lau, if I remember correctly, that was maybe made with meat, like some pork that was cooked within some leaves. I think it was like cooked in the ground is probably how they would traditionally cook it. That was delicious. There was some salmon. Oh man, there was lots of stuff, and it was really, really good. And yeah, my wife and I pigged out on the local Hawaiian food. And I have to say it was the best meal by far of the trip for me, in my opinion. I really enjoyed that. And then probably after that, some of the seafood that we had was a close second.

So yeah, some **good eats** there in Hawaii. And I'll put some photos of these dishes onto our social media and on YouTube here. So, you guys can see it because as you can tell,

I'm not really a huge foodie. I'm not good at describing the food that we ate, but it was good in the end.

We had a really busy day that day, visiting the North shore, riding the bus for several hours, and then going to the record shop and digging in the used record shop, and then eating the local authentic Hawaiian food at the end. By the time we got home at the end of the day, we were totally wiped out. And I think we probably slept really, really well that night. And yeah, I can't remember what we did the next day after that, but I'm sure we were busy. So, it's a good thing we got that rest in.

Anyways, guys, I think I'll leave it here for now. Thank you for listening all the way to the end of this episode. And thank you for listening to my Hawaiian adventures.

After Hawaii, my wife and I stopped in Japan. And for me, the Hawaii part of our trip was amazing. It was so fun and so just wonderful. But in Japan, it went from wonderful to terrible. And I'll tell you all about that in the next couple of Culips bonus episodes. So, make sure that you tune in next week for that story.

But before I let you go here today, I do want to share the completion code with you each and every week. I give you a completion code and as a homework assignment, you have to use the phrase or the word from the completion code in your own example sentence. And leave that example sentence on our social media or our YouTube comments or our discord community. And that will signal to me and to all of Culips listeners out there that you finished this episode, that you did it. And then I will say, good job. Well done, you made it all the way to the end of the lesson.

So, for today, let's go with the phrase. I taught you this cool phrase, this cool expression in this episode, "Off the beaten path." Off the beaten path. And we use this to talk about traveling somewhere that's not so popular, maybe where most tourists don't go or don't see or don't visit. So: "Off the beaten path."

My wife and I went off the beaten path when we went to the local swimming pool and the North shore in Hawaii. I want to know what your example sentence is with this expression. So go, go, go. You have your homework assignment and I look forward to reading your comments.

So, everyone, please take care. Have a great week of English studying up ahead here, and I'll catch you in the next Culips episode. Until then, bye bye.

## Glossary

1. **On the surface** is an expression that means how something appears at first glance, before knowing the full story. In this episode, Andrew said “on the surface, that doesn’t sound like anything too exciting” when talking about visiting a public swimming pool. **Example:** On the surface, the project looked easy, but it turned out to be really complicated.
2. **Old wives’ tale** is an expression that refers to a traditional belief or superstition that usually isn’t supported by science. Andrew brought it up when mentioning the idea that you shouldn’t swim right after eating. **Example:** It’s an old wives’ tale that going outside with wet hair will make you sick.
3. **Off the beaten track** is an expression used to describe places or activities that are less popular or not visited by most tourists. A similar expression is *off the beaten path*, and Andrew actually uses both in this episode when talking about visiting a local swimming pool and exploring the North Shore in Hawaii. **Example:** *We stayed in a tiny village off the beaten track and loved the peaceful atmosphere.*
4. **Section off** is an expression that means to block or divide part of an area so people can’t enter it. Andrew described how part of the beach was sectioned off with yellow tape because it was too dangerous to swim. **Example:** They sectioned off the construction zone to keep pedestrians safe.

5. **A bust** is an expression that means something was a failure or didn't work out as planned. In the episode, Andrew said snorkeling was a bust because the beach was closed due to rough waves. **Example:** Our camping trip was a bust! It rained all weekend and the tent leaked.
6. **Eavesdrop** is an expression that means to secretly listen to someone else's conversation. Andrew talked about eavesdropping on a conversation between a local and some tourists on the bus. **Example:** She didn't mean to eavesdrop, but the couple behind her was arguing loudly.
7. **Burst someone's bubble** is an expression that means to disappoint someone by telling them something that ruins their excitement. Andrew didn't want to burst his wife's bubble by saying he overheard someone saying the turtles wouldn't be on the beach. **Example:** I didn't want to burst your bubble, but that movie has really bad reviews.
8. **Trinket** is an expression for a small, inexpensive souvenir or decorative object, often with little real value. Andrew said he preferred buying a vintage record as a souvenir instead of a touristy trinket. **Example:** He brought home a few trinkets from the gift shop, like keychains and pins.
9. **Good eats** is a casual expression that means tasty or enjoyable food. In this episode, Andrew used it to describe the delicious local Hawaiian meal he and his wife had after a long day. **Example:** There's a new food truck downtown that serves some seriously good eats.

## Episode credits

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