

Southwest[®]

The Magazine

Catch
a wave
on
OAHU

Break
bread on
MAUI
with chef
Sheldon
Simeon

Dig into
ecotourism
on
KAUAI

See nature
become
art on the
ISLAND
OF HAWAII

THE HAWAII ISSUE

JUNE 2019

SHELDON SIMEON

The Family Chef

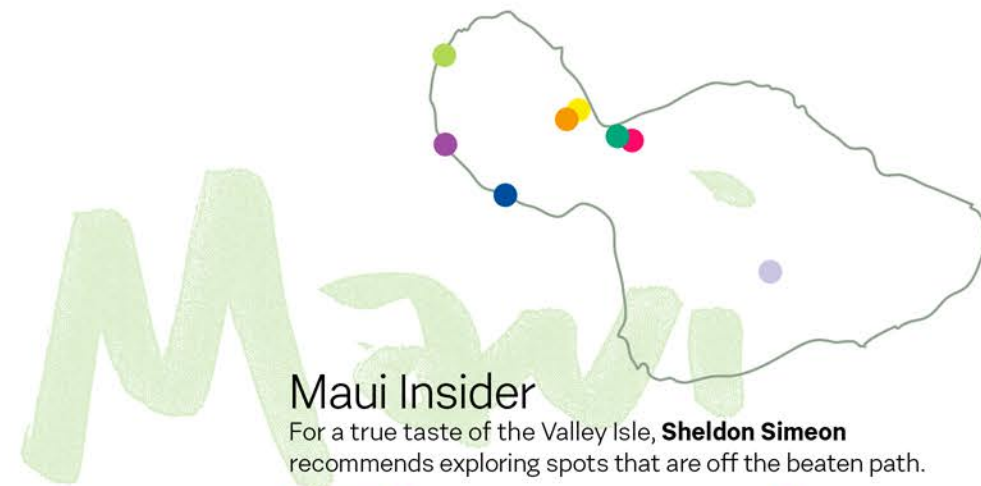
BY Melissa Flandreau / PHOTOGRAPHY BY Kevin J. Miyazaki

When Sheldon Simeon opened Lineage, his first full-service restaurant, in the fall of 2018, it didn't take long for the Wailea spot to start earning accolades. But while best-of lists and James Beard Award nominations are welcome, the former *Top Chef* contestant puts more stock in a different group of critics. "One of our biggest accomplishments has been having that generation of older folks of Hawaii come in and say, 'Oh, my God, this reminds me of my childhood,'" says Simeon, 37. "It's been the best compliment."

Recalling the past—and paying homage to it through food—is key to Lineage's makeup, and the menu is a love letter to classic Hawaiian dishes and the Simeon family cookbook. The Filipino-style pork and peas dish is the same recipe the Simeons have used for years, while the Bottom of the Plate Lunch honors a Hawaiian midday staple. "You grow up here and go to a drive-in, and it's that moment of the cabbage sitting underneath the main protein, and it all comes together. It's sharing a moment like that, this delicious part of a memory of a dish we have in Hawaii."

Creating connections through food traces back to Simeon's first restaurant: Tin Roof, a counter-service lunch joint he opened with his wife, Janice, in Kahului in 2016. "I wanted a spot that fed the community, that anybody could come in for three, four days a week." Tin Roof is in a building that was once a Japanese-style deli frequented by Simeon, who was born in Hilo but moved to the Valley Isle after "falling in love with a Maui girl." He would joke with the owners that he was ready to take over the space if they ever moved on. "That day came, and I could carry on their tradition and feed people—serve honest food to the community."

To truly know Hawaii cuisine, Simeon says the best thing to do is to be invited to someone's house. But the second-best might just be a trip to one of his own restaurants. "I want to continue to share the story of Hawaii food, you know? Hawaii cuisine has been stereotyped, but the layers of history that have influenced it are really, really cool."



● **MAUI COFFEE ROASTERS** It's all about location, and this java spot

just happens to be next door to Tin Roof. "I always go for their Maui Red Rooster," Simeon says. The flavorful roast is sometimes described as "the cabernet of coffees."

● **LEODA'S KITCHEN AND PIE SHOP**

This casual shop serves up "the best pies on Maui," from the apple crumb to the Olowalu lime. Sandwiches, salads, and freshly baked bread round out the expansive menu.

● **ILOCANDIA FILIPINO STORE**

Go early, Sheldon says, and treat yourself to *lechon kawali*: crispy, deep-fried pork belly. Along with other takeaway options

like *dinuguan*—a savory stew—and squid adobo, this tiny grocery in Lahaina sells veggies, canned goods, and spices.

● **A'A ROOTS**

No meat? No problem. There's "no lack of flavor" at this vegan eatery at the western edge of Maui. Creative dishes range from tempeh tacos to Thai coconut mushroom soup. Swing by on the weekend and dig into the Sunday waffle.



● **DONUT DYNAMITE**

This laid-back joint is, as Simeon puts it, "doughnut perfection." Chefs Desiree Parada (known as Madame Donut) and Frank Parada create delicious brioche-based bites, with ever-changing flavors that range from vadouvan curry vanilla to mango poi.

● **UMI SUSHI**

At this sushi and ramen restaurant in Wailuku, "Chef Jayse Sato and his *ohana* always make you feel like family." No matter what you order, pair your entrée with a serving of the soft-shell crab bao buns.

● **JACK'S INN**

Wake up early, grab some cash, and enjoy a blend of Hawaiian- and American-inspired breakfast and lunch dishes at what Simeon calls "Maui's diner." The banana pancakes and kimchi saimin are equally delicious.

● **HALEAKALĀ SUNSET**

After a full day, pack in one last adventure. "Everyone comes to Maui for the Haleakalā sunrise, but in my opinion, the sunsets are spectacular—especially if you're not one to get up before the break of dawn."