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Highway Inn Opens Tūtū's Place — A New Café Concept at Bishop Museum

KAPĀLAMA, HAWAII — www.myhighwayinn.com — Family-owned Hawaiian food restaurant Highway Inn announces the opening of Tūtū's Place by Highway Inn, a warm and welcoming café located at Bishop Museum in Kapālama. Inspired by the wisdom and traditions passed down by our *kūpuna* (elders), Tūtū's Place is named in honor of Toguchi family matriarch Nancy Toguchi, who co-founded Highway Inn with her husband, Seiichi, in 1947. While Grandpa Toguchi cooked the food Highway Inn is still known for today, it was Grandma Nancy who made sure each guest felt welcome and enjoyed the comfort of food and hospitality. Because of her, Tūtū's Place was created with *‘ohana* (family) and community in mind.

Grandparents play a pivotal role in cultural preservation, especially when it comes to food—they are often the ones we turn to when it comes to learning time-honored family recipes and traditions. The menu for Tūtū's Place celebrates Hawai'i's diverse culinary heritage and features a mix of permanent and rotating items. Highway Inn's famed kālúa pig and beef stew—and lau lau and squid lū'au on Aloha Fridays (and Saturdays)—are served, of course, along with local food favorites, old-school treats, and modern Island-inspired fare, ranging from shave ice and musubi to Kālúa Pig Flatbreads and Lū'au Veggie Tarts. Tūtū's Place also offers espresso drinks featuring locally roasted coffee, alongside freshly baked pastries, including our customer-favorite house-baked cookies, and other dessert items.

Food connects us all, and sharing a meal invites an exchange of cultures, ideas, and knowledge. Tūtū's Place offers a space to connect, to tell stories of our food and our history—where visitors and locals, guests and museum staff, and different generations can come together to “talk story.” Third-generation Highway Inn owner Monica Toguchi Ryan recalls, “Sunday dinners at my grandparents’ house were simple meals, full of love, that brought our family together. I spent much of my childhood in Waipahu, where my grandparents lived and where Highway Inn first

- more -

Page 2

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began. It's moments like those that remind me of the people who shaped us and the traditions that ground us. With Tūtū's Place, I wanted to capture that same spirit of aloha and belonging—where food connects us and stories live on—bringing generations together so this knowledge isn't lost in the rush to seek what's new. In many ways, it's a living museum, and Bishop Museum is the perfect place to nurture this spirit through its mission to inspire our community and visitors by exploring, celebrating, and perpetuating the extraordinary history, culture, and environment of Hawai'i and the Pacific."

"On behalf of the entire Bishop Museum 'Ohana, congratulations to our friends at Highway Inn on the grand opening of Tūtū's Place, a wonderful and welcome addition to our museum campus," said Dr. Kristofer Helgen, Bishop Museum president and CEO. "We are so pleased to see this vision come to fruition, and thank our legislators for helping to make this new facility possible. Mahalo to Highway Inn for their continued effort to support local initiatives and provide our guests with a true 'local-style' dining experience."

The café interior is modeled after a plantation-era home, with vintage décor items, a communal dining table and a keiki play corner. Sit back on the sofa and sip a cup of locally roasted coffee in Tūtū's living room, or head outside to cool off with a shave ice at one of the outdoor tables overlooking the Great Lawn. In a nod to the history of the building, formerly the museum's Hall of Discovery, the Wall of Discovery at Tūtū's Place allows visitors to walk along a timeline sharing Hawai'i's food history through archival photographs and commissioned illustrations. Tūtū's Place will also host talk-story sessions and other events to celebrate and perpetuate food and cultural knowledge.

Tūtū's Place is open daily, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Located on the Bishop Museum campus, between Hawaiian Hall and the J. Watumull Planetarium, the café offers validated two-hour parking for restaurant patrons (\$10 minimum purchase required). Museum admission is not required to dine at Tūtū's Place. Catering for on-site events and meetings is available through Tūtū's Place/Highway Inn.

'Ai ā mā'ona. Tabemasho. Kain tayo. Sik fan la. Meokja. Come and Eat!

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Media Preview Opportunity

Members of the news media are invited to preview Tūtū's Place on Saturday, September 27, 2025, from 3:30p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monica Toguchi Ryan will be available for interviews, and some sample dishes will be offered. Please RSVP via the contact information above.

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About Highway Inn

Highway Inn was founded in 1947 in Waipahu by Seiichi and Nancy Toguchi. The restaurant is now under the leadership of third-generation owner Monica Toguchi Ryan, offering Hawaiian and "local" American comfort food. Toguchi Ryan follows in the footsteps of her father, Bobby, and has guided Highway Inn through its expansion to a second location in urban Kaka'ako and the Tūtū's Place at the Bishop Museum. Highway Inn is a two-time Small Business Administration, Honolulu, "Family Business of the Year" winner, and Seiichi and Nancy Toguchi are inductees in the Hawai'i Restaurant Association's Hall of Fame. In 2023, Highway Inn was named the Hawai'i State Women-Owned Business of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Highway Inn Locations and Hours

Kaka'ako: 680 Ala Moana Blvd., #105, Honolulu, HI 96813 | (808) 954-4955 | @myhighwayinn
Mon-Thur: 9:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. | Fri & Sat: 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. | Sun: 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Waipahu: 94-830 Moloalo St., #101, Waipahu, HI 96797 | (808) 677-4345 | @myhighwayinn
Mon-Thur: 9:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. | Fri: 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. | Sat: 9:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. | Sun: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Bishop Museum: 1525 Bernice St., Honolulu, HI 96817 | (808) 954-4951 | @tutusplace
Mon-Sun: 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.