



WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

Summertime Living

MMy hubby and I love an ocean view. I think it is because gazing out at its vast horizon is similar to what we enjoy as we look out over our Texas pastures. We love a big, broad, infinite landscape, and our favorite place to beach-it is on the island of Maui.

Our idea of fun in Maui is anything but sitting still on a beach. We absolutely adore snorkeling.

Every day we move from beach to beach around the island swimming and snorkeling with great delight. It is astounding to see so many different shapes, sizes and colors of fish. I have read that some estimates report the world's oceans are home to 20,000 species of fish.

Our snorkeling activities do not begin too early however, as there are things that do not change when these cattle ranchers beach-it. Just like when we are home, we must have our slow-paced coffee-sipping mornings.

Also, just like when we are home we are captivated by gorgeous sunsets. You can bet that we will be somewhere with a view when the sun goes down. My favorite place to watch the sun set in Maui is from a catamaran.

I know how difficult it can be for ranchers and farmers to take a vacation. There really is not a perfect time to be away since daily responsibilities are 365 days a year. When you are a mom-and-pop operation like we are, we do not have hired hands to readily rely on. However, through the years we have had wonderful neighbors who have been happy to help us.

Whatever your occupation, I have always believed in the importance of giving yourself some retreat time to take deep breaths, rest your body and soul, and relish in the freedom to simply be present without a schedule or agenda. A change in scenery can be transformative when needing time to reflect especially when some big decision is looming.

Honestly, we do not need any special reason for spending time by the sea. It is simply a



One of the Bridges' favorite places to visit is Maui. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

must-do as often as we can work it out.

Back home in Texas our meats of choice are usually beef, chicken and pork, but when we are seaside we only eat fish.

We are especially eager to eat varieties that are not available to us at home. Our favorites are opakapaka and wahoo (Ono) although we always enjoy mahi-mahi and shrimp, too.

You might be surprised to know that you will see cows grazing pastures on the island of Maui. Of course, grazing land is not found everywhere. To see Maui's beautiful bovines,

you will need to ride around what is known as Upcountry, which is on the side of Maui's dormant volcano Haleakala. Temperatures are always pleasant and steady on Maui, but they are a tad cooler in the Upcountry that I am sure the cows appreciate. Unlike Texas, there is never a shortage of luscious green grass to graze year round.

We love cruising the Upcountry, and just like when we are back home, we love checking out pastures filled with cows. Some things never change, even when cattle ranchers beach-it. 