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NEWS RELEASE

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Visitor Tours at Kalaupapa resume this month

“Saints Tour” founded by patient Meli Watanuki honors community legacy

KALAUPAPA, Molokaʻi — Visitor tours are resuming at Kalaupapa National Historical Park with the launch of the *Kalaupapa Saints Tour*, founded by patient Meli Watanuki. The tour is the only park-authorized commercial operator and offers a respectful, accurate, and personal perspective on Kalaupapa’s history.

Located on the island of Molokaʻi, Kalaupapa preserves the stories of those who lived in isolation after being diagnosed with Hansen’s disease (leprosy). Since 1866, more than 8,000 people, mostly Native Hawaiians, died here. Today, the settlement remains home to a small number of cured patient-residents whose privacy is protected by restricting visitation to guided tours only.

“I wanted to create something that not only shares the history, but also honors the people who lived it,” said Watanuki, who has long worked to preserve her community’s legacy. “This is my home, my story, and my gift to future generations.”

The Kalaupapa Saints Tour brings visitors to key historic sites, sharing stories of resilience and the enduring legacies of Saint Damien de Veuster, Saint Marianne Cope, and others who devoted their lives to improving conditions for patients. Tours can be reserved through Seawind Tours & Travel, Inc.

Travel to Kalaupapa is limited to small planes. All visitors must have a Hawaii State Department of Health visitor permit and be at least 16 years old.

For more information or to book a tour, visit [Seawind Tours](#) or call (808) 949-4144. To learn more about Kalaupapa National Historical Park, please see the unit website: www.nps.gov/kala.

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