



# ‘ALAEA SALT STORY

## KA ULUWEHI O KE KAI | GIFT FROM THE SEA

In ancient Hawai‘i, a fisherwoman named Hi‘aka set off for the shores of ‘Ukula in Hanapepe, Kauai. Catching more than she needed, Pele, the volcano goddess came to her with a solution and led her to a patch of land near the beach. As Hi‘aka dug a pit into the earth, it filled with ocean water emerging from the ground below. “Put your fish in here for a little while, then dry it out in the sun,” Pele instructed her. Hi‘aka quickly learned that the tiny salt crystals from the ocean water would preserve her bountiful catch.

**This mythical story** of Pele’s gift of salt to the Hawaiians sparked a tradition among families who made it their kuleana (responsibility) to preserve Hi‘aka’s ways of salt harvesting. As the only rock which may be consumed, the salt crystal has become a meaningful and significant symbol in the Hawaiian culture.

**‘Alaea salt**, also known as pa‘akai to the Native Hawaiians, is considered a sacred, coarse salt mixed with red ‘alaea clay, legendary for its health benefits due to its high mineral content. It continues to have a significant role in Hawaiian purification rituals, healing practices, fish preservation and cooking.

### **A Pinch of ‘Alaea Salt goes a long way**

Gaining global recognition, the exotic ‘alaea pa‘akai has a distinct, yet mellow and earthy flavor, making it a highly valued culinary ingredient. As it retains its distinctive qualities throughout the cooking process, it has become highly sort after by renown chefs, food lovers and those seeking island specialties as a gourmet seasoning. Use for grilling, roasting, soups, and as a finishing touch to seasonal vegetables to enhance natural flavors.

**Seascape Restaurant’s award-winning Executive Chef** Henry Tariga uses ‘alaea pa‘akai in his menu. Sourced locally, this natural, non-processed seasoning compliments his dishes with a unique island flavor. As he often is seen greeting his restaurant guests, be sure to ask him for one of his secret recipes.