



Lua Pele Double Back Koa Tenor Ukulele

Description:

“Lua Pele” is Hawaiian for volcano, referring to the volcano inlay with smoke cloud sound hole cut out on the outer back. Lua Pele Double Back Ukulele was a special challenge I undertook with my friends from the Waialua Sky Ukulele Builders to build a double back ukulele. We each built our own version of a double back ukulele and presented them at The Hawaiian Ukulele Experience showcase in Honolulu, HI.

I used the Lua Pele theme for this ukulele to commemorate my first trip to Hawaii where I was inducted into the Ukulele Guild of Hawaii and hānai into the Waialua Sky Ukulele Builders ‘ohana (family). Hānai is an ancient Hawaiian practice of adoption or fostering another to build community and share knowledge.

Mauna Loa, the Earth’s largest active volcano, erupted for the first time in 38 years shortly after I returned home from my stay in Hawaii. 36 minor earthquakes put the islands into a “state of heightened unrest”, and then Mauna Loa erupted for over 2 weeks with lava flows traveling 12 miles from the vents. There were no recorded injuries or fatalities and minimal property damage during the eruption. The lava stream actually ended a short 1.7 miles away from Daniel K. Inouye Highway, which made that a spectacular viewing point for the activity.

Lua Pele Double Back Ukulele features a kasha braced Engelmann spruce soundboard with a "live back" western red cedar inner back. The warm cedar and bright spruce vibrate together to create a wonderful tone. The outer back acts as a shield, preventing the player’s body from dampening the vibrations of the inner back. The outer back, sides, fingerboard, bridge, and faceplates are all made from Brazilian walnut (Imbuia) that I processed myself. Lua Pele Ukulele has a comfortable c-shaped mahogany neck and red lava colored bloodwood binding to pick up the warm tones of the walnut.

About the Builder:

Christopher is a 2nd generation luthier from Long Island, New York. He has been working in the shop since he was a child and building/playing ukulele since 2010. Christopher also performs and records exclusively on his own handmade ukulele, becoming a Na Hoku Hanohano “Ukulele Album of the Year” award finalist in 2021 for his original album, *Beginning Today*.

SPECIFICATION SHEET

Materials:

Soundboard: Engelmann Spruce

Sides, Back, Faceplate, Backplate: Brazilian Walnut (Imbuia)

Inner Back: Western Red Cedar

Neck: Honduran Mahogany

Fingerboard: Brazilian Walnut

Bridge: Brazilian Walnut and Ebony

Binding: Bloodwood

Side and Neck Wood Purfling: Red and Black

Nut and Bridge Saddle: Bone

Volcano (Lua Pele) Inlay on Outer Back: Curly Maple (dyed red), Rosewood, Ebony, Bubinga

Lava Fissure Inlay on Fingerboard: Curly Maple (dyed red)

Specs:

- 17" tenor ukulele
- 6 piece volcano inlay on outer back with "smoke cloud" outer back sound hole
- lava fissure inlay on face of fingerboard
- Kasha braced soundboard
- Double side sound holes with custom shape
- Nut width: 1-3/8"
- Neck width at 12th fret: 1-3/4"
- 14 frets to the body, 18 frets total
- 16" radiused fingerboard
- Bound fingerboard and body
- Fingerboard side position markers in alternating strips of ebony binding
- Domed top and back plates
- Original headstock design
- Custom headstock logo - "CT" initials inlaid in curly maple (dyed red)
- Compensated bridge saddle for improved intonation
- Gotoh UPT black tuning machines with bell buttons - 4:1 ratio
- String-through bridge design
- Environmentally friendly, water based finish
- D'Addario EJ65T - nylon strings (set up with high G)
- Includes Crossrock ABS molded ukulele case, black outside, black inside

Ukulele Dimensions:

- Overall length: 26-1/2"
- Body length: 11-3/4"
- Lower bout width: 9-1/16"
- Upper bout width: 6-7/8"
- Waist width: 5-7/8"
- Body depth: 3-1/2"