

Founded in 2004, Diva of Polynesia was created as a platform to center Pasifika culture, performance, and gender-diverse excellence across Polynesia and the wider Pacific. From its earliest days, the pageant has existed to create space for artistry, leadership, and self-expression rooted in culture and community.

In 2026, Diva of Polynesia returns at a moment where visibility is more important than ever. Across the Pacific and beyond, gender-diverse Pasifika communities continue to navigate systems that too often render them unseen. This pageant is a response to that reality — a space where presence is intentional, excellence is expected, and stories are told on our own terms.

This contestant packet serves as the official guide for participation in Diva of Polynesia. It outlines the expectations, rules, and responsibilities associated with stepping onto this stage. We encourage all contestants to review the contents carefully and reach out with questions as needed.

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## **Diva of Polynesia Pageant Rules & Requirements**

### **Eligibility**

- Contestants must be at least 18 years of age or older at the time of registration.

### **Registration**

- A completed Diva of Polynesia application must be submitted by the posted deadline.
- Registration options include:
  - Payment of the \$400 registration fee, or
  - Selling 20 tickets to waive the registration fee.
- All entry fees are non-refundable unless otherwise stated by pageant organizers.

### **Pageant Day Call Times**

- Contestants must be backstage by 5:00pm (earlier arrival permitted) on the day of the pageant.
- All contestants must be pageant ready by 6:00pm on the day of the event.

### **Backstage Access & Assistants**

- Backstage access is limited to contestants and up to two (2) assistants per contestant.
- Assistants must always wear backstage passes.
- Dancers or human props for Talent are not permitted backstage until immediately prior to the Talent division.
- Dancers or human props must exit backstage immediately following completion of the Talent performance.

### **Backstage Responsibilities**

- Backstage areas are restricted to authorized individuals only.
- Contestants are responsible for keeping their assigned area clean and organized.
- All personal items, costumes, and stage props must be removed after the pageant concludes.
- Any props left behind will result in a \$150 clean up fee.

### **Judging & Scoring**

- Contestants are judged using a point-based scoring system.
  - Contestants will be judged in four (4) categories:
    1. Island Presentation / Fresh Couture
    2. Evening Gown

3. Talent
  4. Diva of Polynesia Costume
- In the event of a tie, the contestant with the higher Talent score will be declared the winner.

## Costumes & Props

- Costumes must be appropriate for a general audience.
- Nudity or offensive material is not permitted.
- No open flames, pyrotechnics, or hazardous materials are allowed.

## Conduct & Disqualification

- Professional and respectful conduct is required at all times.
- Any individual caught tampering with another contestant's property will be immediately disqualified and removed from the premises.
- Any individual found intoxicated or under the influence of illegal substances will be disqualified and removed from the premises.
- No refunds will be issued in cases of disqualification.

## Authority of Organizers

- Diva of Polynesia Pageant organizers reserve the right to make final decisions regarding any matter not covered by these rules.

## Media Release

By participating in the pageant, contestants consent to photography, video recording, and use of their likeness for promotional and archival purposes without additional compensation.

## Liability Disclaimer

- Diva of Polynesia and its organizers are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.
- The pageant assumes no responsibility for injuries sustained while participating.
- Contestants are strongly encouraged to have assistants monitor personal belongings while they are on stage.

## **Diva of Polynesia Pageant Competition Categories**

### **Island Presentation/Fresh Couture – 15 Points Maximum Per Judge**

The Island Presentation / Fresh Couture category is a bold, fashion-forward showcase that celebrates island creativity through living design. This category challenges contestants to transform fresh, natural elements into couture-level runway presentations inspired by the beauty, abundance, and vitality of the islands.

Contestants may wear standard undergarments as a base for construction; however, a minimum of seventy-five percent (75%) of the visible costume must be created from fresh or living materials. Acceptable materials include, but are not limited to:

- Fresh flowers
- Plants and foliage
- Leaves, vines, grasses, or other living botanical elements

Synthetic materials may be used only for structural support, fastening, or undergarments and should not visually dominate the overall look.

Judges will evaluate:

- Creative use of fresh or living materials
- Originality and overall design concept
- Construction and security of the garment
- Runway presentation, confidence, and movement
- Visual impact and cohesion from head to toe

Each contestant will have up to three (3) minutes on stage. All elements must be securely attached; loss of foliage or fresh materials during presentation may result in point deductions.

This category is an opportunity to honor island environments while pushing the boundaries of couture, craftsmanship, and imagination. Contestants are encouraged to think boldly, move intentionally, and bring their fresh couture vision fully to life on the runway.

### **Evening Gown – 25 Points Maximum Per Judge**

The Evening Gown division is a timeless pageant classic that showcases elegance, sophistication, and personal style. This category is more than wearing a beautiful gown—it is about how you wear it.

Contestants should select an evening gown that flatters their figure, reflects their aesthetic, and allows them to move gracefully on stage. Judges will be evaluating your ability to embody confidence, refinement, and control from the moment you step onto the stage to your final pose.

Judges will assess:

- Gown selection and fit
- Posture, walk, and fluid movement
- Overall polish and presentation
- Stage presence and confidence
- Cohesion between gown, hair, makeup, and accessories

Each contestant will have **up to 4 minutes** on stage. Music must be submitted in advance. One escort is permitted at the contestant's own expense but is not required. This division is your opportunity to exude grace and leave a lasting impression through quiet power and elegance.

## Talent Division – 30 Points Maximum Per Judge

The Talent Division is where your individual artistry, creativity, and performance skills take center stage. This is often the most dynamic and memorable portion of the competition, allowing contestants to fully express who they are as performers.

Permitted talents include, but are not limited to:

- Lip-sync performances
- Live singing
- Dance
- Spoken word or poetry
- Comedy or theatrical performance
- A combination of performance styles

Judges are looking for:

- Originality and creativity
- Technical skill and preparation
- Strong stage presence and confidence
- Emotional connection with the audience
- Clear storytelling or performance intent

Each contestant is allotted up to 6 minutes. A maximum of four dancers may be used. Props are allowed with prior approval. Contestants are responsible for their own setup and clearing of the stage. Time limits are strictly enforced, and performances that exceed the allotted time may receive point deductions.

This division is your chance to take risks, tell a story, and show the judges what makes you unforgettable.

## Diva of Polynesia Costume – 30 Points Maximum Per Judge

The Diva of Polynesia Costume category is the signature division of the pageant—a bold celebration of Polynesian heritage, drag artistry, and storytelling through costume.

This look should merge cultural inspiration with glamour, craftsmanship, and theatrical impact. Contestants are encouraged to draw inspiration from Polynesian traditions, symbolism, nature, and movement, while interpreting these elements through a drag and pageant lens.

Judges will evaluate:

- Creativity and originality
- Cultural inspiration and respectful interpretation
- Craftsmanship and attention to detail
- Overall visual impact
- Confidence, movement, and storytelling on stage

Contestants are encouraged to create visually impactful costumes; however, all designs must comply with venue height and space limitations. Costumes must be able to safely navigate the stage, wings, and backstage areas.

### Important Restrictions

- Costumes should fit within standard stage doorways and backstage access points.
- Height elements (including headpieces, platforms, or extensions) must allow contestants to safely move on and off the stage.
- Costumes should not obstruct other contestants, stage crew, or equipment.
- Oversized costumes must be self-contained and manageable by the contestant without disrupting stage flow.

Each contestant will have up to 4 minutes on stage. Music must be submitted in advance. This division is not about historical accuracy, but about honoring culture through expression, pride, and artistry. The goal is to command the stage as true island royalty.

## **Diva of Polynesia Prize Package & Titleholder Responsibilities**

### **Prize Package**

- The winner of Diva of Polynesia will receive a prize package valued at \$4,000.
- The prize package includes \$2,500 in cash and additional non-cash benefits.
- 50% of the cash award will be presented on the night of crowning.
- The remaining cash balance will be distributed upon step-down, provided all titleholder responsibilities have been met or approved by the Pageant Committee.

### **Crown, Sash & Regalia**

- The reigning Diva of Polynesia is responsible for the care and safekeeping of the crown, sash, and any official regalia.
- All regalia must be kept clean and presentable throughout the reign.
- If regalia is lost, stolen, or damaged while in the titleholder's possession, the titleholder may be responsible for replacement costs.

### **Representation & Appearances**

- The reigning Diva of Polynesia may be invited to participate in Pride events, community celebrations, and pageant-related appearances.
- Appearances will be coordinated in advance and are encouraged but not mandatory.
- Approval is required before representing Diva of Polynesia at external events in an official capacity.

### **Community Engagement & Fundraising**

- The reigning Diva of Polynesia agrees to coordinate one (1) fundraiser benefiting the Kua'ana Project during their reign.
- Fundraiser details will be coordinated with pageant organizers to ensure alignment with mission and capacity.
- The titleholder is encouraged to support additional community engagement and advocacy efforts aligned with the values of Diva of Polynesia.

### **Pageant Attendance**

- If the reigning Diva of Polynesia wishes to attend any pageants during their reign, they must notify the Pageant Committee of their interest in advance.
- Upon approval, the Pageant Committee will secure the entry for the Diva of Polynesia.

- All other expenses related to attendance of additional pageants, including but not limited to travel, lodging, costumes, and meals, are the sole responsibility of the titleholder.

## Pageant Support & Recruitment

- The reigning Diva of Polynesia is encouraged to assist with promotion and outreach for future Diva of Polynesia pageants.
- Support may include contestant recruitment, sharing promotional materials, and encouraging community participation.

## Promotion & Social Media

- The titleholder agrees to promote the Diva of Polynesia title through social media and public engagement.
- Promotion may include posts, cross-posts, interviews, and event appearances.
- All representation should reflect Diva of Polynesia, its partners, and the community positively.

## Conduct & Expectations

- The titleholder is expected to uphold the highest standards of dignity, respect, and professionalism.
- Harassment, discrimination, or conduct that reflects negatively on the pageant may result in forfeiture of title, prizes, or privileges.

## Term & Step-Down

- The Diva of Polynesia titleholder serves from the date of crowning until the next pageant or official step-down.
- Final prize distribution is contingent upon fulfillment of titleholder responsibilities or approval by the Pageant Committee.