Explore Crater Rim Drive and Chain of Craters Road

VISITOR ALERT

High amounts of dangerous sulfur dioxide gas may be present in the park.

Personal Safety
- VOG (volcanic gases visually similar to smog) may exist along portions of Crater Rim Drive and Chain of Craters Road.
- If the air smells bad (like a struck match), or if you have difficulty breathing, close your windows, or if outside, return to your vehicle and leave the area.
- Be flexible in your travel plans. Some areas may be closed for your safety.

Crater Rim Drive: Points of Interest

This road takes you along a portion of the summit caldera—through desert and rain forest—and provides access to scenic stops and short walks. Allow one to three hours with stops.

Visitor Centers

In addition to these two visitor centers, a remote ranger station is located at the end of Chain of Craters Road.

Visitor Centers
- Kīlauea Visitor Center
  - Open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
  - Accessible restrooms, water and phone available.
- Thomas A. Jaggar Museum
  - Open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Hours vary with seasons and volcanic activity)
  - Accessible restrooms, water and phone available.

Short Walks

For more hiking opportunities, ask for a “Day Hikes” brochure at Kīlauea Visitor Center.

Sulphur Banks (Haʻakulamanu)
- See where volcanic gases deposited colorful sulfur crystals and other minerals that paint the land along this paved trail and boardwalk.
- Walk from Kīlauea Visitor Center (0.3 mile / 0.6 km one-way) or take the wheelchair-accessible trail from Steam Vents parking area. (0.4 mile / 0.8 km one-way)

Thurston Lava Tube (Nāhuku)
- Walk through lush rain forest to explore a 500-year-old lava tube. Accessible restrooms available. (0.4 mile / 0.6 km loop trail)

Devastation Trail
- Stroll on a paved path through a starkly beautiful landscape that was buried by cinders from the 1959 Kīlauea Iki lava fountain eruption. Witness life returning to this once-devastated area. (0.5 mile / 0.8 km one-way)

Hike

Pick up a Kīlauea Iki interpretive trail guide at Kīlauea Visitor Center or at Kīlauea Iki Overlook.

Kīlauea Iki
- Descend 400 feet (122 m) through native rain forest into a crater and hike across a hardened lava lake still steaming from the 1959 eruption.
- Park at Kīlauea Iki Overlook to begin your 2-3 hour hike with spectacular views. (4 miles / 6.4 km loop trail)
Chain of Craters Road: Points of Interest

For emergencies call 911 or 808-985-6170

This 38-mile (61 km) round-trip drive descends 3,700 feet (1,128 m) to the coast and ends where lava has covered 10 miles of road since 1986. Allow 90 minutes to two hours round-trip, depending on how often you stop and how far you hike.

Note: There are no services (water, gasoline, or food) on Chain of Craters road. Accessible toilets are located at Mauna Ulu parking lot and the end of the road. There is an emergency 911 phone at the Pu‘u Loa Petroglyphs trailhead.

Pu‘u Huluhulu Cinder Cone
Hike over 1973-1974 lava flows to a viewing area atop a 210-foot (64 m) cinder cone. Weather permitting, see the East Rift Zone eruption at Pu‘u ‘O‘o and Mauna Ulu. Trail begins at Mauna Ulu parking lot. (2.5 miles / 4 km round-trip hike)

Pu‘u Loa Petroglyphs
A traditional Hawaiian trail leads to images artfully etched in stone. Petroglyphs are fragile, so stay on the boardwalk. Trail begins at Pu‘u Loa Petroglyphs pullout. (1.4 miles / 2.4 km round-trip)

Hōlei Sea Arch
Enjoy spectacular ocean views of a 60-foot (18 m) tall sea arch from a viewing area just past the coastal ranger station. This sea arch was formed by wave erosion; the same process which will eventually cause it’s collapse. For your safety, stay behind the rock wall and away from cliff edges. Do not climb out onto the sea arch.

Where Can I See Lava?
Although Kilauea volcano is active in two locations, lava viewing in and out of the park is variable and unpredictable.

Viewing Options:
1) In the Park:
   i) Glow from Jaggar Museum: During the day a robust plume of volcanic gas is a constant and dramatic reminder of the molten magma churning in the lava lake below. At dawn or at dusk into evening a glowing fume cloud from that same lava lake is often visible from the Jaggar Museum overlook. The active vent is located within the Halema‘uma‘u Crater in the caldera of Kilauea. The Museum overlook is open 24 hours a day.

   Views from other locations vary considerably. Consult rangers for more information on these moderate and challenging lava viewing conditions.

2) Outside of the Park:
   For updated lava conditions outside the Park, visit http://www.hawaiicounty.gov/lava-related/ or consult rangers.

Pu‘u Loa Petroglyphs trailhead.

Hōlei Sea Arch

Hikes
Pick up the Mauna Ulu Eruption interpretive trail guide at Kilauea Visitor Center or at the Mauna Ulu parking lot.

What Will I See at the End of Chain of Craters Road?
Accessibility: The last 0.5 mile of the road, past the first gate, is wheelchair accessible. Accessible toilets are located at the vehicle turnaround.

During the day, you will see a variety of coastal landscapes and depending on what’s going on with the East Rift Zone eruption at Pu‘u ‘O‘o, you may see everything from fumes on the hillside to a seemingly quiet flow field. On rare occasions, after dark, a red glow may be visible above the ridge.

After visiting the coastal ranger station, continue your walk to the Hōlei Sea Arch and then down the last 1/2 mile of road to view the newly created emergency access route.

Where Can I See Lava?

For updated lava viewing conditions in and outside of the Park, consult rangers, check the following website www.nps.gov/havo/planyourvisit/lava2.htm. Another option is to call the Eruption Update Hotline at 808-985-6000.

Pu‘u Huluhulu Cinder Cone
Hike over 1973-1974 lava flows to a viewing area atop a 210-foot (64 m) cinder cone. Weather permitting, see the East Rift Zone, Pu‘u ‘O‘o and Mauna Ulu. Trail begins at Mauna Ulu parking lot. (2.5 miles / 4 km round-trip hike)