



Mauna Kea & Saddle Road

📖 808

Includes ➔

Mauna Kea	170
Saddle Road	174

Mauna Kea Webcams

- ➔ Keck Cosmic Cams (www.keckobservatory.org/video)
- ➔ Gemini Cloud Cams (www.gemini.edu/sciops/telescopes-and-sites/weather/mauna-kea/cloud-cam)
- ➔ CFH Telescope Timelapse Webcam (www.cfht.hawaii.edu/webcam)
- ➔ MKVIS Live Allsky Cam (www.ifa.hawaii.edu/info/vis/photo-gallery/live-webcam.html)
- ➔ NASA Infrared Telescope Facility Cameras (<http://irtfweb.ifa.hawaii.edu/~irtfcameras>)
- ➔ Subaru Telescope Webcams (www.naoj.org/Weather)

Why Go?

You won't find much on the grassy lava-strewn plains between the massive shoulders of Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea, except for overwhelming scenery and an acute sense of your own insignificance.

Hastily built by the army to move troops across the island, the original Saddle Road's tight turns, blind hills and poor surface made it terrifying and downright dangerous, which motivated most rental companies to prohibit driving it. Now officially named Daniel K Inouye Hwy, a major reconstruction is almost complete that has removed Saddle Road's claws and teeth – but it's still an impressive beast with astounding views across the lonely heart of Hawai'i Island (when those views aren't obscured by fog – one remaining, real danger).

Just before Mile 42, the old road splits north toward Waimea, while the new section begins a zippy 9-mile, 3000ft descent toward Hwy 190.

When to Go

Nov–Mar Winter definitely visits the high country, making road and trail conditions less appealing and more dangerous; though it can snow any month of the year.

Aug & Dec Watching a meteor shower from the slopes of Mauna Kea is worthy of planning your trip around. Check StarDate (<http://stardate.org/nightsky/meteors>) for information. The Perseids (August) and Geminids (December) usually give reliable shows.



Mauna Kea & Saddle Road Highlights

- 1 Mauna Kea Summit** (p170) Standing among the giants of astronomy, contemplating your own relationship with the heavens.
- 2 Subaru Telescope** (p170) Inspecting the inner workings of a gargantuan precision instrument.
- 3 Lake Wai'au** (p170) Paying respects to the Hawaiian gods of the earth and sky at the Hawaiian Islands' *piko* (navel).
- 4 MKVIS Stargazing** (p172) Taking an optical journey through the cosmos from the top of the world.
- 5 Mauna Loa Observatory Trail** (p164) Staring into the gaping maw of the world's largest above-water volcano.