



One of the most interesting features of this natural wonder is that it constantly works to enlarge itself. Every second hot lava pours out from deep within the earth, flowing into the Pacific Ocean, eventually creating new land. It's how the islands of Hawaii were formed eons ago, and it continues endlessly. The fiery process is beautiful to watch, especially at night.

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park is on the largest island of Hawaii, about an hour from the city of Hilo. Entry costs \$25 per vehicle for up to seven days. Entry is free on certain holidays, and also pass and discount programs offered by the National Park Service. Available are park ranger-led activities, which provide a guided tour of the area and information. Programs are usually offered twice a day, with a morning and afternoon session.

Depending on safety conditions, it's possible to hike close to the edge of the volcano and near live lava areas. Visitors are required to wear strong shoes, because of the intense heat. Another part of the visit is at the beach to watch where the lava flows into the ocean. There are several viewing areas a safe distance away, and the red-hot lava meeting the cold ocean water is better than any fireworks display.

A local day-long guide service is Big Island Volcano Tours, costing about \$130 per adult and \$100 per child. Helicopter tours of the area and lava flow sightings are also available, at about \$500 per person for the two-hour program, which includes flying over the lava flow areas.