

Alaska's Denali Highway Rated Among Top 10 Greatest Drives In America!



Denali Highway – Best of the Last Frontier

By: Courtney Dowd-Stanley

Anyone who has ever road-tripped down the Denali Highway knows exactly what all the rage is about. The panoramic beauty is incredible, while the tranquility of being so remote is empowering. When National Geographic listed Alaska's beloved Denali Highway as one of the [top 10 greatest drives in America](#), we weren't surprised in the slightest. A drive on the 135-mile-long (mostly gravel) Denali Highway is worthy of everyone's bucket list this summer season.

The Denali Highway connects Cantwell on the George Parks Highway, to Paxson on the Richardson Highway. It was originally opened in 1957 as the first road accessing Denali National Park and America's highest peak: Denali. At the time, the park was named Mount McKinley National Park. In 1971, the primary access to Denali National Park & Preserve became the George Parks Highway.



Beautiful sights along the way include Mount Hayes (13,832. ft. high) and Mount Deborah (12,688 ft. high) in the Alaska Range. On a clear day, stop at milepost 15 and enjoy panoramic views overlooking the Wrangell Mountains, Chugach Mountains, and the Alaska Range. Talk about a triple whammy! The Denali Highway is nothing short of extraordinary. The recommended speed limit on the Denali Highway is 30 miles per hour—a good excuse to slow

down and take more time to see the sights.

The long winding road gives way to towering mountain peaks in every direction, with vibrant flora and ample amounts of wildlife. On the Denali Highway, traffic jams are actually something to look forward to. Don't be surprised if you see moose, bears, caribou, and much more wildlife.

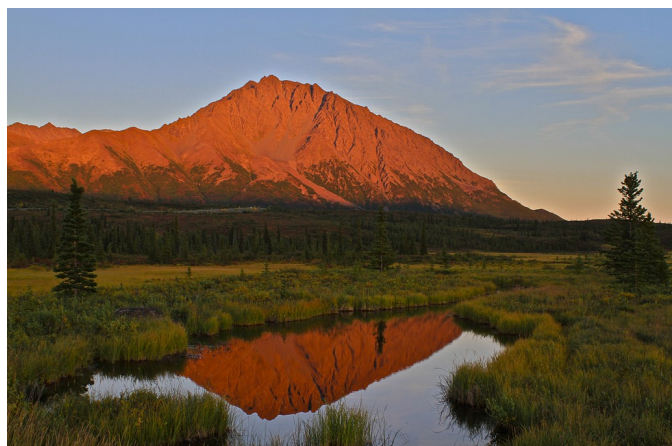


This area is also a spectacular birding destination. Travelers down the Denali Highway are sure to be awed by the mountain peaks and glistening glaciers of the Alaska Range. At 4,086 feet, this is the second highest road in Alaska.

If you're an angling addict or a beginner looking to pick up a new hobby, the Denali Highway connects with several excellent fly fishing streams. Camp in

paradise and wake up to a million dollar view off the Denali Highway. There are dozens of pullouts where travelers can camp on public lands, or they can enjoy the comforts of more developed campgrounds at Tangle Lakes (Milepost 22) or Brushkana Creek (Milepost 104).

In the midst of the action-packed summer season, where RV's and motor coaches line the highways for miles on end, do you ever have the craving to get away from it all? The Denali Highway



is a great place to disappear into the raw, rugged, untouched version of mother nature.

The Denali Highway is known for being an excellent place to soak in a colorful sunset or alpenglow. Red painted mountains and picture-perfect reflections are just some of the (many) magical moments that you can expect to find on this incredible drive.

Bring your four-legged best friend and stop (as often as possible) along the way. Enjoy hiking to a scenic lookout that you won't find from the road.



Stop at Tangle Lakes off of the Denali Highway and go canoeing, hunting, fishing, or gathering under the glorious midnight sun.

The Denali Highway is closed from October through mid-May. Once summer arrives and the snow clears from the road, road-tripper's heading down the Denali Highway won't be able to ignore the snow-covered peaks and valleys in the distance. This is

just a small reminder of Alaska's frigid arctic climate that seasonal visitors don't often get to experience. After the peak of the blooming summer season, the Denali Highway is a stellar place to soak in magnificent fall foliage. The vibrant shades of orange, red, and yellow will keep you wide-eyed and unable to snooze throughout the entirety.



Motorcyclists from far and wide travel north to Alaska each year, with a trip down the Denali Highway at the top of their list. Talk about living the dream!

If you want to experience the Denali Highway without all the time in the car, a flightseeing tour is another great option for getting up close and personal with one of America's top rated places.

If a road trip isn't really your thing, or maybe you just want to break it up a little, consider biking parts of the Denali Highway. Enjoy all the same scenic beauty that the drive offers while soaking in fresh



air and luscious amounts of vitamin D.

No matter how you choose to experience the Denali Highway, just make sure that you add it to the top of your summertime to-do list.

Remember, there is a very good reason why this spectacular destination was named one of the top 10 drives in North America!