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Subject: Re: Hawaii Telescope Tour Possible?  
Posted by [b\\_gom](#) on Wed, 01 Feb 2012 19:52:31 GMT  
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Hi David,

I have worked on the summit, and am currently involved in developing instrumentation for one of the telescopes, so I can add some tips:

1) It is possible for the public to go to the summit, although you will need a special arrangement with your rental car agency to allow you to go on the road that leads there. This is a very hazardous environment, and it is not set up for tourists. You know this since you've been there, but I'd hate to give people the wrong impression.

2) This is a working site, and visitors must be careful not to disturb people that are working on the summit, or trying to sleep in the dormitories, or otherwise interfere with operations there.

That being said, there are several tour groups that specialize in taking vans up the mountain for stargazing at the interpretive centre, or sunset at the summit. This is generally the recommended solution.

However, it is possible to make special arrangements to tour the actual telescopes. You can contact the outreach representatives of any of the observatories and see if they can fit you in. This obviously needs to be done well in advance. Failing that, I can tell you that the director of one of the observatories there was an IDL user in a previous life when he had time to write code, so there could be an 'inside route'.

Good luck!

On Feb 1, 11:28 am, David Fanning <n...@idlcoyote.com> wrote:

> Folks,  
>  
> I am going to be on the Big Island of Hawaii in March  
> with a group of science teacher colleagues of my wife.  
> I have long entertained these people at cocktail and  
> holiday parties with tall tales of a previous visit  
> to Hawaii, in which I had one of the most profound  
> experiences of my life.  
>  
> Long-time readers of this newsgroup will assume  
> I am referring to my story of having to fight off  
> the attentions of a particularly large woman who  
> was fascinated by the color of my eyes and the way  
> they reflected light from my IDL T-shirt. I am not.

>  
> Rather, I am referring to the experience of being  
> on a private tour of one of the Keck 10m telescopes  
> and standing beside the mirror when the dome of the  
> telescope was opened. And, there, just on the top  
> of Mauna Kea, was a group of native Hawaiians  
> burning incense and performing a ceremony to the  
> mountain gods. It was mind boggling!  
>  
> I've told this story so often that my science friends,  
> including the astronomy teacher at my wife's school,  
> want to see it for themselves.  
>  
> Does anyone know if it is possible for the public  
> to get to the top of Mauna Kea? Does anyone have  
> connections that might get a small group of us  
> \*inside\* a telescope? You would get free IDL  
> consulting for life, and all the unsold books  
> in my bedroom, if you could arrange this. ;-)  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
> David  
>  
> --  
> David Fanning, Ph.D.  
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming:<http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
> Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")  
>  
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