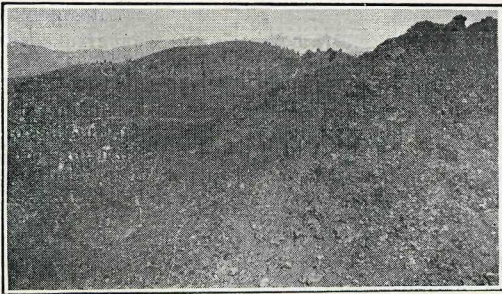


The
Craters
of the
Moon
National Monument



A View of the Wonderland

*A Region of Weird
Attractions*

Arco, Idaho
Eastern Gateway

THE CRATERS

of the

MOON

National Monument

GREAT dead volcanic mountains, curious formations of lava, strange colors, caverns, seemingly bottomless, frozen seas of stone, an apparently boundless area of lava waste is the panorama presented in the Craters of the Moon National Monument, one of the most phenomenal attractions in North America. Scientific research has not in years brought to light anything more wonderful. Here the story of creation is written large.

For years this area of lava has been known as part of the great desert plain extending beyond the Snake River valley. Early Indian lore made mention of the region, but it was never thoroughly explored until within the past three years. Its weird and attractive formations brought it to the attention of geologists. Later it was brought to the attention of the Interior Department, and in 1924 was set aside by President Coolidge as a National Monument.

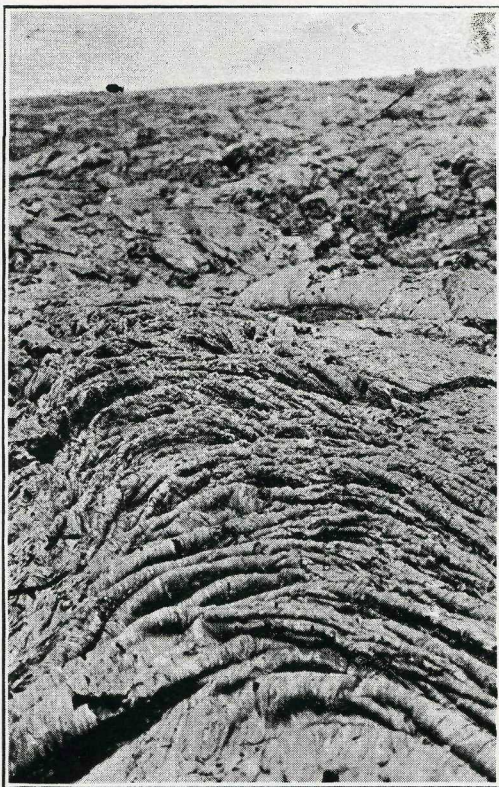
This land of fantastic lava formations is in the center of the great Southern Idaho lava flow. It resembles very much the surface of the moon, hence the name, "Craters of the Moon." Geologists claim that the most recent eruptions here have taken place within the last hundred years, and the earlier eruptions date back to more than a thousand years.

Both pahoehoe and a-a lava are found within the monument. The pahoehoe lava comprises the streams of lava with broad, relatively smooth surfaces that spread out like thick molasses over the plain. The a-a lava was extruded with a high gas content and moved very slowly. As a whole it is more crinkly, vesicular, and broken than pahoehoe.

The lava fields of volcanic eruptions and cinders covers an area about 10 miles wide by 60 miles long. Only a portion of this region, however, is embodied within the Monument boundary, but more of the territory will be included as soon as its worth as a scenic attraction, and its popularity as one of the nation's playgrounds becomes more widespread.

The most interesting spectacles to be seen within the region perhaps, are the craters and underground caves. There are eight craters just inside the area. They are in every size and shape imaginable. A number of them are small and cone-shaped, while others are of enormous size. Others are apparently bottomless and contain openings thousands of feet down into the very bowels of the earth. And then there are the "Sun Bear Temples"—queer shaped lavas with columns higher than the scrub pine trees that are scattered throughout the valley.

The innumerable caves which are found in the region have proved immensely interesting. They vary in size and shape and many of them contain ice and water throughout the summer.



A Section of Ropy Lava Formation

One of the peculiarities of the region is that there are neither springs nor running water visible, but water holes, appearing in a number of the fissures, contain an almost unlimited supply of cold, clear water. These water holes are exposed to the scorching rays of the mid-summer sun, but nevertheless, the water is so cold that it is almost impossible to drink. Moss and stalactite cover the ceilings of most of the caves, and in a number of them, the walls are varied in colors, furthering the belief that the

region contained great quantities of mineral and that during the eruption the mineralized rock melted and flowed down to the lower levels.

Early in 1923 Howard T. Stearns of the U. S. Geological Survey, made an official survey of the region for the department of the interior. It was largely on his recommendation that the area was set aside as a National Monument. The report of his findings, which was published in the Geographical Review in July, 1924, described the proposed monument in detail. Mr. Stearns' article, together with the one which appeared in the March, 1924, issue of the National Geographic by R. W. Limbert, did much to create sentiment in favor of having it recognized as a National playground.

Quoting from Mr. Stearns' report, he says: ". . . One is reminded of Thoroddsen's descriptions of the view from the Icelandic volcano, Odahahraun, 'the weirdness of desolation itself. As far as the eye can see, the surface of the earth resembles a gigantic stiffened corpse, petrified, black as night.' Although smooth from the distance, upon closer inspection it appears astonishingly rough, covered with jagged fragments of lava and floated crags of cinders. Continuing southward, one is confronted by cinder cones one after another, large and small, high and low, until one is lost in amazement at their sameness.

"From the top of one of the cones, let us say Big Crater, a remarkable view of the numerous craters and their arrangement is obtained. To the east stretches black, barren lava, until it fades into the desert haze. Not a sign of life or vegetation breaks the monotony except one small, yellow, grass-covered knoll that was not inundated by the floods of lava and now stands like an island in a black sea. To the west for about six miles the lava has flowed against the southern spur of the White Kamb Mountains, filling the valleys as if they were bays and leaving the ridges like projecting headlands in a black sea. Black and barren as it is, the lava surface yet has a weird scenic charm.

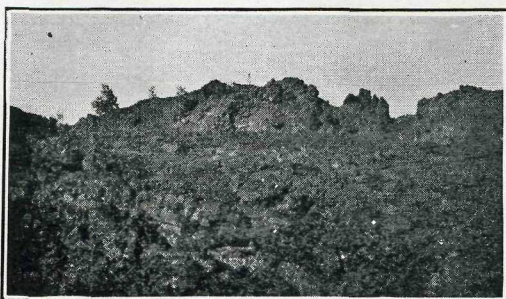
"To the southeast extends the troughs of the Great Rift. In the foreground it is studded with pits, but farther away it opens into dark, yawning craters and finally loses its identity in a chaos of high cinder domes. To the northwest the plain is covered with cinder cones, craters, and hornitos, most of which are strung along the trough of the Great Rift. These cones vary in size from small cinder piles 20 or 30 feet high to huge cones which rise a thousand feet above the lava plain. On the tops of many of the craters, pits are discernible, especially when viewed under the lengthened shadows of evening. Some of the cones, however, such as Crescent Butte, are merely remnants of larger cones partially destroyed by subsequent explosions.

"There are no streams in the whole area, the entire precipitation either sinking into the

ground or being returned to the atmosphere by evaporation. Nevertheless, water is available to the traveler in several unusual ways. There are three distinct types of occurrence of water in the region. Most striking is the natural ice well near the Bottomless Pit. It is the throat of a small cone on the lava surface with an opening about four feet in diameter. A crude ladder 30 feet long reaches the bottom of the pit, resting on a heap of snow about eight feet high. Here on a hot summer day one can refresh one's self with ice water or clean white snow. The bottom of this spatter cone is in the shadow of its walls except for about an hour each day, which is not long enough for the sun to melt the snow of the previous winter.

"An interesting spring, which must be supplied by melting ice, occurs about 600 feet southeast of North Crater in the bottom of the pit filled with fragmental lava. On August 25, 1923, the temperature of the water was 34 degrees F., while the air temperature was 87 degrees F. Several other springs of this type are found among the lavas."

One of the unusual sights to be seen in the area, is the "river of molten lava." Geologists who have seen this phenomenal sight, say the



Jagged and Crinkled Upheaval

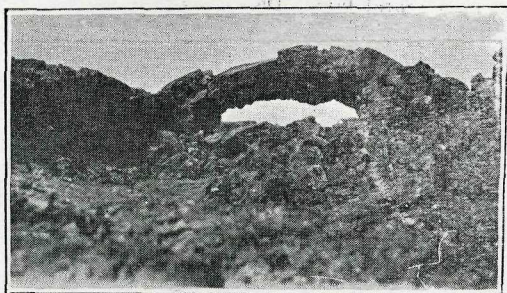
river was formed by two distinct flows of lava. One appears to have cooled rapidly, leaving the mass of jagged and twisted formations. A short time later appeared another flow, which seems to have trickled and flowed down like molasses, seeking the natural drainage, cooling slowly, and when cooled having the appearance of waves. The river varies in width from about twelve feet at its source, which is a crater, to about fifty feet, widening as it lengthens.

Most of these attractions are easily accessible. A fair road extends to about two miles in the Crater region, and a fairly smooth path leads to the numerous attractions, such as "Dew Drop Cave," "Sun Bear Temples," "Indian Tunnel," the "Bottomless Pit," and "The River." Most of the craters are near the entrance to the monument.

Mr. S. A. Paisley of Arco, Idaho, has been appointed custodian and guide in the Craters of the Moon National Monument, and will be on

hand to guide visitors to the attractions every day during the months of June, July and August. Mr. Paisley is well acquainted with the region. He has been a member of practically every party exploring the wonderland. He is courteous and will take pleasure in showing the visitors those attractions which they wish to take the time to visit.

The Craters of the Moon National Monument is 25 miles west of Arco, Idaho. It is on the Idaho Central highway to Yellowstone park and a good road traverses the entire country between Boise and Yellowstone Park. Arco is the gateway to the region, but it can also be reached from Carey, 35 miles west of the Craters. From the east, Arco can be reached from Dubois, which is about 70 miles; Roberts, about 65 miles; Idaho Falls, about 72 miles; Blackfoot, 60 miles; Pocatello, 80 miles. To go to the Craters from either of these points, go by way of Arco. From Minidoka the Craters can be reached by traveling in a northerly direction, missing Arco by about five miles. Going from Boise, Shoshone, Gooding, Hailey or any of the points in southeastern Idaho, go by way of Carey.



A Natural Bridge of Lava

Tourists from Montana and other northern points wishing to go to the Craters, can go by way of Idaho Falls, Roberts, Dubois or Blackfoot or come to Arco by way of Salmon, Challis, Maackay and Moore.

Either of these routes are good, and with the large amount of road work now being done on all of them, the tourist will find the trip one of pleasure. The route through this section, traverses one of the most beautiful scenic sections in Idaho, where camping places and shady nooks abound. Clear, mountain streams afford an opportunity to fish and over no route to Yellowstone Park will the tourist find so much genuine recreation as coming by way of the Craters of the Moon National Monument.

The Bureau of National Parks, under whose supervision the Craters of the Moon is now being managed, plans many extensive improvements within the area. Roads are to be constructed to the several points of interest and it is confidently expected that much of this construction work will be done this season.

A Special Scenic Offering

“The Loop Trip”

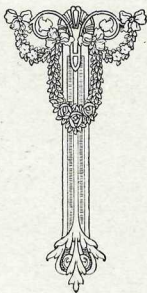
Tourists visiting Yellowstone Park, who wish to take a side trip of unusual attractiveness, are invited to go by way of Arco to the Craters of the Moon, thence to the beautiful Wood River valley, over the far-famed Galena Summit road to Stanley Basin, down the Salmon river, to either Mackay or Challis and Moore, back to Arco, or continue down the river beyond Challis to Salmon City and out through Montana and Glacier National Park. No where in his western country can a more delightful outing be had. The Lost River country (Arco territory) and the Wood River valley afford the best trout fishing in the northwest. Innumerable camp sites in either valley, makes an outing thoroughly enjoyed. Leaving the Wood River valley, one travels through some of the most beautiful scenic country in America. The road over Galena Summit reaches an elevation of about 9,000 feet in eight miles, over a perfect automobile road. On either side of Galena Summit are pine covered forests. Hot Springs and pleasure resorts are to be found every few miles. On the other side of Galena Summit is Stanley Basin, the campers' paradise. Lakes and mountain streams, hot springs and pleasure resorts are located everywhere. Among the most beautiful lakes are Alturas Lake, Stanley Lake, Big and Little Red Fish Lakes—and Salmon River, one of the west's most enchanting streams.

The roads throughout this whole region are remarkable engineering achievements. It is a trip that is becoming immensely popular and each year finds increasing thousands of Yellowstone Park tourists taking advantage of their proximity to this new playground to visit it. Most of the section referred to it under control of the U. S. Forest Department and many things for the comfort and convenience of tourists have been provided for.

In the Salmon River country are numerous deserted mining camps, silent reminders of the days when the country teemed with excitement and activity. Among them are Custer and Bonanza, on Yankee Fork of Salmon River, which are among the most interesting. Delightful camp grounds, on the banks of roaring mountain streams, which abound with trout and other game fish, hold out an alluring appeal to all who seek diversion from the strict regulations of the national parks. Here you can come and go as you please, traveling through a scenic section that has no equal.

In Conclusion

Space has not permitted us to go into detail explaining the attractions to be found in this Mecca for tourists. The Chamber of Commerce, Arco, Idaho, under whose direction this pamphlet has been published, will be glad to answer correspondence regarding any of the trips enumerated. Mr. S. A. Paisley, custodian of the Craters of the Moon park, (address, Arco, Idaho,) would be pleased to render any service which would make the visit to the Craters enjoyable. The Chamber of Commerce is cooperating with the other communities surrounding the Craters of the Moon in bringing the wonderland to the attention of tourists and it would afford us a great deal of pleasure to have you visit this playground.



For further information address, Mr. S. A. Paisley, Arco, Idaho, or

Chamber of Commerce,
Arco, Idaho