



Deschutes National Forest | May 2025

Lava River Cave Timed Reservation Tickets System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the Lava River Cave Timed Reservation Tickets System?

The Lava River Cave Timed Reservation Tickets System provides visitors with the ability to plan ahead by securing their timeslot for parking at Lava River Cave ahead of arrival.

When is the system in effect?

The Lava River Cave Timed Reservation Tickets System is in effect annually from opening in early May to closing on September 15. The 7-day rolling release begins May 9, for visiting on May 16, 2025. May 10, releases reservations for May 17, and so on. Tickets will become available for reservation at 7 a.m. PST each day.

Why was the timed reservation tickets system implemented?

Lava River Cave consistently receives an average of 70,000 visitors during the operational season. High-volume visitation often far exceeds designed parking capacity. This meant long wait times and uncertainty for visitors who chose to line-up along the road outside of the cave entrance. Lava River Cave Timed Reservation Tickets improves visitors' safety and experience by providing timeslots available for reservation in advance, including same-day arrivals (subject to availability).

How does the reservation system work?

Timed reservations for Lava River Cave are available on Recreation.gov. Each timeslot allows access to Lava River Cave for two hours when Lava River Cave is open.

Beginning May 9, approximately 50% of the tickets will be available on a rolling 7-day booking window. The remaining 50% will be available on a 24-hour booking window. A total of six daily entry blocks will be available every hour on the hour starting at 9 a.m. with the last block at 2 p.m.

How do I reserve and use a timed reservation ticket?

Step 1: Log in or create an account on Recreation.gov

Step 2: Secure your desired day and entry time. Reservations can be made up to 7 days in advance on a rolling release and as soon as 24 hours from your arrival date. Timed Reservation Tickets are free but require a non-refundable \$2 reservation processing fee. *Note: If your plans change, please cancel your reservation as soon as possible to make space for others.*

Step 3: Arrive at Lava River Cave at your reservation time. Forest Service staff will scan your ticket upon entry to the parking lot.

Step 4: Clearly display a valid recreation pass in your vehicle.

Step 5: Attend the required onsite Lava River Cave orientation.

Step 6: Rent a light onsite, if needed, and enjoy your self-guided tour.

Step 7: Depart the parking lot no later than 2 hours after your entry time.

How much does a timed reservation ticket cost?

All reservations are made through Recreation.gov. Timed reservation tickets are free; however, there is a \$2 non-refundable reservation processing fee.

Is a timed reservation ticket required for each person visiting Lava River Cave?

No, one timed reservation ticket is required per motorized vehicle. There is no per person charge.

How many vehicles can I make a reservation for at one time?

Visitors may secure up to two private vehicle reservations per day for only one time slot. The reservation holder must be in the vehicle at the time of arrival to Lava River Cave.



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Is a timed reservation ticket required if I bike to Lava River Cave?

No, timed reservation tickets are only required for motorized vehicles.

When can I reserve a ticket to visit Lava River Cave?

Lava River Cave typically operates early-May to mid-September. Reservations are available at 7 a.m. PST up to 7 days in advance on a rolling daily release and as soon as 24 hours from your arrival date. Reservations are available on 1-hour intervals between 9 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Each reserved timeslot allows access to Lava River Cave for two hours when Lava River Cave is open.

How far in advance can I reserve my ticket?

Beginning May 9, you can reserve a Lava River Cave timed reservation ticket up to 7 days in advance of your visit.

May I transfer my reservation to someone else?

No, tickets cannot be sold, auctioned or transferred.

I don't use a computer or smart device. How do I make a reservation?

Reservations can be made by calling Recreation.gov at 1-877-444-6777. The Recreation.gov call center is open daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. PST. Proof of reservation will still be required at your time of visit. Paper copy or digital ticket downloads are accepted.

Is a Recreation.gov account required to make a reservation?

Yes, a Recreation.gov account is required for all Recreation.gov transactions.

Do I need to print my timed reservation ticket?

Visitors have two options – timed reservation tickets can be purchased online and printed at home or downloaded in advance to a mobile device. Both paper tickets and digital ticket downloads will be accepted at the Forest Service check-in booth.

Will timed reservation tickets be available onsite?

Timed reservation tickets will not be available at Lava River Cave, but may be obtained through Recreation.gov if available, up until the start time of a two-hour ticket window. Due to limited cellular coverage in the vicinity of Lava River Cave, visitors may need to travel to Lava Lands Visitor Center or elsewhere to obtain reception to make reservations. It is recommended that visitors ensure they have cellular coverage or internet access prior to their visit to reserve their timed reservation ticket online.

I have a timed reservation ticket – are there other passes required to visit Lava River Cave?

In addition to a timed reservation ticket, a valid recreation pass is required at the cave. Passes accepted include the Northwest Forest Pass, Interagency Passes, or Day Pass. Passes are sold at Lava River Cave, Lava Lands Visitor Center, or through [local vendors](#). A [digital day use pass](#) can be purchased on Recreation.gov.

What amenities and services are available at Lava River Cave?

- Paved Parking Lot (accommodates standard and oversized vehicles & provides accessible options)
- Vault Toilets
- Light Rentals
- Recreation Pass Sales
- Educational Materials & Souvenirs

I am unable to get a timed reservation ticket to visit Lava River Cave. What other recreational opportunities are in the area?

- Benham Falls
- Deschutes River Trail
- Lava Butte
- Lava Lands Visitor Center
- Lava Cast Forest
- Newberry Caldera (including Big Obsidian Flow & Paulina Falls)
- Trail of The Molten Land

I am not going to be able to use my reservation – what should I do?



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Please cancel your reservation as soon as you know you won't be able to use it. Tickets that have been canceled will reappear on the reservation system, allowing other visitors the opportunity to visit Lava River Cave. Please note, the \$2 processing fee is non-refundable.

Will the Forest Service bring in additional revenue due to this change?

No, the Forest Service will not generate additional revenue from the new, timed reservation system at Lava River Cave.

Recreation.gov charges a non-refundable reservation processing fee to manage the timed reservation system; however, the Forest Service does not generate revenue from these reservations.

Recreation pass revenue will continue to be collected at this site and used to maintain facilities and enhance visitor services.

For more information about Newberry National Volcanic Monument's Lava River Cave please visit us online at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/r06/deschutes/recreation/lava-river-cave-interpretive-site>