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CONSTRUCTION ON US-199 THIS SUMMER? CAVE JUNCTION IS YOUR PERFECT DETOUR DESTINATION

Travelers delayed by construction while passing through Southern Oregon's Illinois Valley will be excited to find themselves in one of the region's most underrated destinations.

(GRANTS PASS, Ore.) — Road construction along US-199 northeast of Crescent City is already underway, and travelers between Southern Oregon and the coast should plan accordingly. Ten-minute delays are currently in effect at active work locations. Beginning in September, full closures will take effect Tuesdays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for rock blasting and slope stabilization operations that cannot safely proceed with traffic moving through. Closures will affect specific spot locations along the 1.7-mile project corridor rather than the full highway at once, and week-to-week pauses are possible. For travelers making their way between Southern Oregon and the coast, the Illinois Valley is the perfect waypoint that just may become the best stop of the trip.

Cave Junction and the surrounding Illinois Valley are home to a remarkable concentration of outdoor adventures, local restaurants, distinctive wineries, and natural wonders that most travelers have only glimpsed from the highway. This summer, a new Visit Grants Pass guide, [Best Detour You Never Planned: Cave Junction, Oregon](#), makes it easy to turn a construction delay into a fun-filled afternoon.

A Valley Full of Surprises

The Illinois Valley outdoor recreation scene punches well above its weight. The Eight Dollar Mountain Boardwalk Trail winds through wetlands home to the rare Cobra Lily carnivorous plant, found almost nowhere else on Earth. The Rough and Ready Botanical Wayside offers a gentle walk through what the locals call a "rainforest desert", a high-precipitation landscape that supports the highest concentration of rare plants in Oregon. Lake Selmac beckons kayakers and anglers, while Illinois River Forks State Park offers an 18-hole disc golf course steps from one of the most pristine wild rivers in the West.

History seekers will find the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base, the Kerbyville Museum, and even a Bigfoot Museum. The Illinois Valley has range.

Local Food, Local Wine

The valley's food scene is equally worth the stop. From sit-down favorites like Carlos Restaurante and Wild River Pizza & Brewing to food trucks serving burgers, Hawaiian fusion, and wood-fired pizza, the options are plentiful. Illinois Valley wine country, shaped by a cooler, marine-influenced climate, is home to standout producers including Foris Vineyards, Augustino Estate (with tastings in a treehouse perched above a 400-acre ranch), Bridgeview Winery, and Deer Creek Vineyard.

Go Underground at Oregon Caves

Twenty miles up the mountain from Cave Junction, Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve offers ranger-guided tours through a dramatic marble cave system unlike anything else in the Pacific Northwest. Above ground, the monument's hiking trails wind through old-growth forest to landmarks like the Big Tree, the widest known Douglas fir in Oregon. Travelers are encouraged to stop at the Illinois Valley Visitor Center in Cave Junction first to purchase same-day tickets and check current conditions before making the scenic 45-minute drive up the mountain.

The full guide to making the most of a stop in Cave Junction is available now at visitgrantspass.com.

Traveler Information

Current delay and closure information is updated each Thursday in the weekly Road Information Bulletin. Check the [Caltrans District 1 Facebook page](#) for updates. Travelers can check TripCheck.com for real-time conditions before departing. Note that temporary speed reductions to 35 mph are in effect within construction signal areas, and queues can build quickly on the winding road, so allow for extra travel time. Cave Junction is located approximately 30 miles southwest of Grants Pass along US-199.

About Grants Pass: Located along Southern Oregon's mighty Rogue River, just a few bends downstream of Interstate 5 and only an hour north of the Oregon/California border, Grants Pass is a beautiful river town with captivating scenery and abundant year-round adventure. The perfect Pacific Northwest getaway starts in this classic Oregon River town, which offers exceptional dining, accommodations, and remarkable shops in and around a historic downtown that radiates charm. Conveniently accessed by air from the nearby Rogue Valley International Airport (MFR), Grants Pass is also less than a half-day drive from Redding, Chico, and Portland, and a picturesque day's drive from San Francisco, Sacramento, Reno, Vancouver, Seattle, and Boise. For more information and to begin planning a trip to Grants Pass and surrounding areas, visit www.visitgrantspass.com. For daily inspiration, follow along on Instagram at [@visit_grants_pass](#).