

# Vacationing in cyberspace

The Smart Traveler

By Megan K. Scott | Associated Press

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Ride the waves. See a safari. Visit New York's Times Square. Take a virtual vacation that requires no money, no vacation days and no planning.

Webcams, short for Web cameras, are capturing more than baby pandas at the zoo.

More than a million are offering images in real-time across the Internet, from the not-so-interesting (a pug sleeping on a sofa) to destinations such as Iceland. Some are live streaming video 24-7, while others refresh the image every few seconds or longer.

Still, regardless of how "live" these images are, Webcams are showing the world to the world, says Brian Cury, founder and CEO of EarthCam, a leader in providing Webcam content, technology and software.

Here are some Webcams worth checking out. Some of these Web sites may prompt you to download software before you can view them; many are best viewed at certain times of day, and some can be enlarged for better viewing.

**HAWAII WAVES** // [mauiwindcam.com](http://mauiwindcam.com) - Catch the waves on the reef in the North Shore of Maui. Two Webcams capture the Uppers Kanaha and Camp One, famous windsurfing spots. Professional windsurfers launch right in front of the camera and train in the winter months before starting the Professional Windsurfers Association tour.

**TIMES SQUARE** // [earthcam.com/usa/newyork/timessquare](http://earthcam.com/usa/newyork/timessquare) - One of the best Webcams for people who are burning the midnight oil. The cameras show live streaming video of Times Square and the illuminated signs mean the view is great 24-7. The main image captures the "Crossroads of the World" at 46th Street and Broadway and allows users to zoom in or out.

**AFRICAN SAFARI** // [www9.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/wildcamafrika](http://www9.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/wildcamafrika) - Go on a virtual safari with live streaming video of the Mashatu Game Reserve in Botswana, Africa. Watch lions, tigers, bears, deer and other animals feed at a watering hole.

**INSIDE AN AQUARIUM** // [earthcam.com/oceantank.php](http://earthcam.com/oceantank.php) - One of EarthCam's top 25 Webcams. Watch more than 150 species of sea life, including sharks, eels and turtles, in the circular, four-story Giant Ocean Tank at the New England Aquarium in Boston. Double click on the image to make it full size to set up a virtual aquarium at your desk. Note: The lights in the exhibit are turned off at night, so take this vacation during the day.

**NIAGARA FALLS** // [earthcam.com/canada/niagarafalls](http://earthcam.com/canada/niagarafalls) - The camera is on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. The image updates once every two to three seconds. (Note: The camera has an automatic windshield wiper, which can be distracting).