

Keep An Eye On Every Corner Of The World With These Live Webcams [Stuff to Watch]

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Sitting around an office, lounging in an apartment or driving to work can often make the world feel pretty small. Sometimes it's important to get some perspective and see the bigger picture – and what better way to ground yourself than by experiencing each of the world's seven continents without even leaving your desk.

OK, so in the grand scheme of things it's a pretty lazy way to travel. Regardless, technology is now in place so that streaming live pictures from every corner of the world is possible and sometimes seems trivial. It wasn't too long ago that such a feat seemed like mere science fiction so today I'm going to be embracing live webcam streams in order to bring you an eye on the entire world.



Times Square

If you're the lucky owner of a 3D TV or monitor (or you're willing to use old-school anaglyph 3D red and blue glasses) then you can watch this stream of New York City's iconic Times Square in 3D. For the rest of us there's always standard 2D, and being Times Square there's always something happening.

They don't call it the city that never sleeps for no reason, after all. You can switch between dimensions using the controls in the bottom right, and you can make some red and blue glasses using these instructions.

Another instantly recognisable landmark, another awesome view – this time on the border between the US and Canada at Niagara Falls. Complete with the roar of the falling water, this is one of the few live webcams I've seen that really benefits from audio.



Niagara Falls

This next stream is definitely one you'll want to catch in the day, otherwise the archives provide some beautiful views captured by past visitors. Patagonia cam looks out from Puerto Natales in Chilean Patagonia, a stunningly located settlement of just under 20,000 people.

Brazil is one of the world's fastest growing economies and the country is currently preparing to host the 2014 World Cup. This webcam comes live and direct from the largest city in the southern hemisphere, home to more than 11 million people making it the world's seventh most populous city. Watch as helicopters buzz, traffic congests and the urban sprawl continues as far as the eye can see in this live webcam stream complete with audio.



Patagonia

Paris – the city of love (apparently), exquisite food, foolhardy tourists and the Eiffel Tower. If you suddenly find yourself longing for a romantic cityscape then this ought to do the trick. The feed delivers a high quality, real-time stream so you'll be able to catch any light shows or fireworks displays if you're looking at the right moment.

A motorized live webcam pans left and right, showing a stunning view of England's capital city and the river Thames. In this live stream you can see a plethora of landmarks including Battersea power station, the Gherkin, Albert Bridge and the London Eye.



Brazil

Not one, but four manned webcams with sound and nightvision from the South African Africam project. Africam dubs itself a "live 24x7 interactive African safari" and while it's no substitute for the real thing it's still a fantastic project and a great way to spend some time. If you're particularly good at multi-tasking you can use multi-cam view to keep an eye on all of the webcams at the same time.

I spent so long watching this camera just to catch a glimpse of an elephant only to hang around long enough to end up seeing four. The feed is streaming live from the Elephant Safari Park & Lodge, Bali's only dedicated Elephant rescue facility in the village of Taro. Part animal welfare project, part holiday destination, the lodge provides a unique blend of hospitality and conservation. Don't forget to check out the bathing pool using the controls at the bottom of the screen!



Bali



Tokyo

Live, direct and in HD – where else but Japan? This feed is so good that you can keep track of the ripples in the canal that runs through Chuo City, a ward near the centre of Japan that is home to much of the city's finance, politics, business and media. This feed provides more of a window on Tokyo than an interesting event or pastime to observe.

Quite possibly my favourite live webcam on this list, this particular stream from Sydney harbour in New South Wales, Australia allows you to take control of the webcam for a whole minute, panning, zooming and tilting to view whatever you want. Once you've had a play you need to wait another two minutes, but it's rather addictive so be warned.

There seems to be a shortage of good New Zealand webcams, which is a shame because the country has some of the most dramatic landscapes on the earth. Still, not to worry – here's a nice big shot of Auckland which updates every 15 minutes. You can check the last 20 pictures captured and if you click fast enough treat yourself to an impromptu time-lapse video.

Antarctica is the last unspoiled continent on earth, and while it's very cold and windy it's still nice to be able to gaze out across the tundra from the comfort of your desk. Here are a selection of webcams which update with varying frequency from the British Antarctic Survey's various stations.

Australia is another country that invests time, money and manpower into the scientific study of Antarctica, and much like the British effort the team has established a series of outposts complete with webcams for the world to watch.

International Space Station Live Stream

Finally for a view that you can't necessarily see firsthand, here's a live webcam stream from 200 miles above the earth's surface. Only six people can be aboard the ISS at any one time so it's hardly surprising that when I last checked there were more than 1,000 other people viewing this webcam.