



Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass

Donner Summit Lodge ●

History

At one time there were many lodges and inns along Highway 40. Today one can drive from the Bay Area to Donner Summit in a couple of hours but when Highway 40 was the only route it was two lanes and went through every downtown on the way. Traveling to the Summit was an all day affair. So there were lots of places where visitors could sleep. Donner Summit Lodge and its Summit Restaurant, built in 1939, is one of the few remaining examples of the lodges built to serve auto traffic. Over the decades almost all of the others have closed down or burned (Beacon Hill Lodge just up the road for example). Pictured here: Donner Summit Lodge and ad in the 1930's.

A Good Story

When Highway 40 stopped being a State highway it was given to Placer and Nevada Counties via two different bills. One bill said the State "shall" plow the roadways and the other said the State "may" plow the roadways. The State plowed driveways along the highway in those days too. One day after a heavy snowfall, the operator didn't plow one driveway just up the road here. The homeowner was irate. He ran out with a shotgun intent on getting his driveway plowed and chased the snowplow down the road. Seeing the shotgun, the driver stopped his plow and said he'd comply immediately. He began backing up his plow and when he was far enough away he jumped out and ran for his life. Shortly thereafter the wording for both counties was changed to "may" and the plowing contract was let to a private operator.

Things to do right here

Come on into Historic Donner Summit Lodge and enjoy a wonderful breakfast, lunch or dinner. The Summit Restaurant always uses fresh ingredients and offers a wide variety of menu options. The locals love the pizza, salads and the delicious good Old fashioned burgers. You won't be disappointed.....

Sign sponsored lovingly by The Montano Family (owners of the Summit Restaurant) in honor of the wonderful community of Donner Summit.

