



MONTANA

Also referred to as “Big Sky Country,” Montana is America’s fourth largest state. With more wildlife than people, amazing animals can be glimpsed all over Montana. Two National Parks anchor the state - Glacier to the north, and Yellowstone to the south. These parks and the other natural wonders between them show why Montana is America’s Last Best Place.

Our wide-open spaces between the parks are filled with their own spectacular scenery, wildlife refuges, National Forests, wilderness areas, 1,402 miles of lakes and streams, and one-fourth of the historic Lewis & Clark Trail. Discover our variety of year-round activities, including whitewater rafting, horseback riding, rodeos, celebrations and festivals, state parks, art galleries, ghost towns, Native American culture, blue-ribbon trout streams, abundant wildlife, elegant resorts, and authentic ranches.

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

- Crow Fair Powwow
- Dinosaur Trail
- Glacier National Park
- Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site
- Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center
- Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument
- Montana Folk Festival
- Museum of the Rockies
- North American Indian Days Powwow
- Pompeys Pillar
- Virginia City and Nevada City Ghost Towns
- Yellowstone National Park



MONTANA

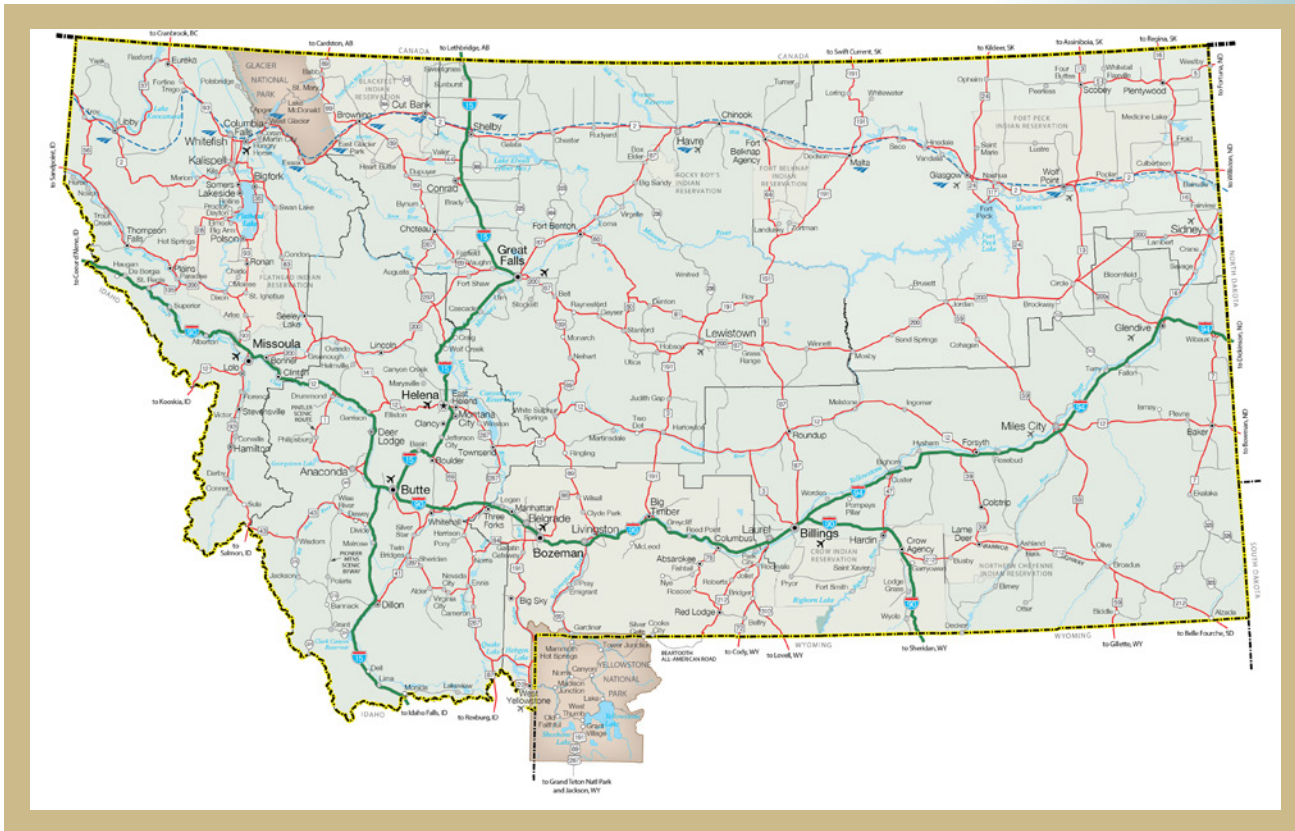
VISIT MONTANA

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CLIMATE

Montana is a vast and varied state of mountains, canyons, river valleys, grassy plains, badlands and caverns. The size and topography of Montana contribute to wide climatic variations across the state. Average annual precipitation (rain and melted snow) is 15 inches. Elevation ranges from 1,820 feet (553 meters) to 12,799 feet (3,890 meters).

Montana has low humidity combined with low precipitation, making the hottest days of summer and coldest days of winter even more enjoyable! Average daytime temperatures vary from 28°F (2.2°C) in January to 84.5°F (29°C) in July.



TRANSPORTATION

Interstate 90 and US Highway 2 traverse the state east/west; Interstate 15 and US Highway 89 run north/south.

Local airports throughout the state provide commercial airline service linking with the gateway cities of Denver, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Portland, and Seattle.

Major airline carriers are Delta, United and American. Local and regional service is offered as well. Find more information [here](#).



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ROAD TRIPS IN THE BIG SKY STATE

Every road is scenic, whether it's an interstate or a back road. Explore Trip Ideas [here](#):

Small Towns and Ghost Towns Trip features some of southwest Montana's best loved living and "dead" ghost towns dating back to the gold rush of the late 1880's, all in a four-day rambling adventure. [Plan your trip.](#)

BETWEEN THE PARKS

When traveling between Montana's two national parks, Glacier and Yellowstone, take time to enjoy the hidden gems and lesser-known places between the parks. **Between the Parks** offer lots of ideas as you discover all that Montana has to offer as you travel between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. [Learn more.](#)

SCENIC DRIVES

Nearly every road or highway in the Big Sky State is a scenic drive. Never far away, these routes offer a chance to explore Montana's small towns and unspoiled nature. From the famous Going To The Sun Road to the winding Beartooth Highway, you will find out why Lewis and Clark described Montana as "scenes of visionary enchantment." Take your time so you can spot the wildlife. [Explore Scenic Drives.](#)

The Beartooth Scenic Byway, an All-American Road

Reaching heights of nearly 11,000 feet, this 53.7-mile, three-hour drive offers sky top views of snowcapped peaks, glaciers, alpine lakes and plateaus. The Beartooths are one of the highest elevation and most rugged areas in the lower 48 states, with 20 peaks over 12,000 feet in elevation. Glaciers are found on the north flank of nearly every mountain peak over 11,500 feet in these mountains.

Take the Beartooth Highway from Red Lodge to the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Access is seasonal. Even when the Highway is formally closed to automobiles, snowmobilers may travel the route and enjoy a spectacular winter wonderland.

Discover more here: <http://beartoothhighway.com/>

TOP ATTRACTIONS

Here are Some of the Best Things to See and Do in Montana

Glacier National Park, northwest Montana

Glacier National Park itself is one of the largest intact ecosystems in the continental United States, meaning wildlife including mountain goats, bighorn sheep, moose, grizzly bears and more, thrive within the park's borders. There are more than 26 glaciers here and more than 700 miles of trails leading through cedar groves and rugged backcountry vistas. Be sure to travel the historic [Going to the Sun Road](#), 50 miles of scenic roadway that takes you through the park. If you don't want to drive or hike, try a [bus tour](#), take a guided horseback ride, or climb aboard for a scenic boat tour. www.nps.gov/glac

Makoshika State Park, Glendive, MT

To the Sioux Indians, Makoshika (pronounced ma-KO-she-ka) meant "bad earth" or "bad land." Today as Montana's largest state park, the pine and juniper studded badland formations house the fossil remains of such dinosaurs as Tyrannosaurus Rex and Triceratops. You'll find the visitor center at the park entrance with exhibits explaining the site's geologic, fossil, and prehistoric sites. Hike, bike or camp in the canyons, crags and unique gumbo cap rocks that form the pristine skyline. <https://mtdinotrail.org/makoshika-state-park/>

Virginia City and Nevada City, southwest Montana

It's been over 150 years since gold was struck in Alder Gulch, in the very much alive Victorian ghost town of Virginia City, located just 90 miles from Yellowstone National Park. Nevada City, an open-air museum a mile and half away, offers more than 100 gold rush-era buildings, a museum, restaurant, gift shop, music hall, hotel, cabins, train rides and weekend living history programs that are sure to put you into another era. <http://virginiacitymt.com/>

Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park, Whitehall, MT

Montana's first and best-known state park features one of the largest known limestone caverns in the Northwest. Guided tours are conducted daily between May and September. The park, minutes off I-90, has a visitor center, interpretive displays and evening programs presented during the summer months, and hiking and mountain biking trails (outside the caverns) available year-round. <http://stateparks.mt.gov/lewis-and-clark-caverns/>

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Crow Agency, MT

Visit the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn which took place in June 1876, between Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and the Sioux and Cheyenne tribes under the spiritual leadership of Sitting Bull. Custer's Last Stand is portrayed in the museum which features exhibits of the history of the battle, Plains Indian life and much more. The monument provides both a driving tour and walking tour throughout a landscape largely unchanged since the time of the battle. <https://www.nps.gov/libi/index.htm>



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Yellowstone National Park

With three of five entrances and a wealth of surrounding attractions, Montana is the gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Come through the north entrance at [Gardiner](#) to see the Roosevelt Arch, inscribed with the famous quote from the congressional act through which the park was established in 1872: “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of All People.” The northeast entrance near [Cooke City-Silver Gate](#) leads into Lamar Valley, which boasts exceptional wildlife watching opportunities. Cooke City-Silver Gate also provides access to the Beartooth All American Road, one of the country’s most scenic drives. Or enter the park from the community of [West Yellowstone](#), located a short hour’s drive from the iconic Old Faithful geyser.

Indian Nations, statewide

Montana’s Indian reservations are rich strongholds of Native American heritage, with its seven reservations, representing twelve tribes. They are places where Indian culture can be experienced in the sacred landscapes and at annual gatherings – where traditional dress is worn and tribal customs are carried out and passed down as they have been for thousands of years. Remarkable art and crafts reflect a unique connection between Montana Indians and the natural world. Each features a wealth of cultural institutions such as the Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning, Chief Plenty Coups State Park in Pryor, the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Culture Center and Museum in Poplar and Three Chiefs Culture Center in St. Ignatious. <https://www.visitmt.com/places-to-go/indian-nations.html>

Download the [Indian Country Guide](#) and explore three road trips through this region, unique tribal events and cultural traditions.

Wildlife Viewing, statewide

Montana is a true place to walk with the animals; more than 100 mammal species call Big Sky Country home. Buffalo freely roam Yellowstone National Park and the National Bison Range. Grizzly bears explore the wild backcountry of Glacier National Park and many wilderness areas. Bighorn sheep and mountain goats scale the craggy peaks of the Continental Divide. Elk bugle during the fall “rut” near Gardiner and at the Slippery Ann Wildlife Viewing Area on the CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge. Trumpeter swans, golden eagles, meadowlarks and over 250 bird species call Montana home. With the ecosystems surrounding Yellowstone and Glacier national parks, Montana is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the United States. So, if you want to see animals, come to Montana and go wild! <https://www.visitmt.com/things-to-do/outdoor-and-adventure/watching-wildlife>

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Deer Lodge, MT

The 1,500 acre Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic site near Deer Lodge, illustrates the development of the Northern Plains cattle industry from the 1850s to recent times. This was the headquarters of one of the largest and best-known 19th century range ranches in the country. Guided tours of the house, self-guided walks and exhibits are available, free of charge. Grant-Kohrs Ranch Days held in July, is the annual celebration of the Cattleman’s West, which includes roping, branding, chuck wagon cooking, blacksmithing, traditional cowboy music and poetry. www.nps.gov/grko

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Montana Brewers Trail, statewide

Montana's vast farmland provides ample area for wheat and hops production – and it shows – in the Montana Brewers Trail. Almost 60 craft breweries call Montana home – enjoy Pigs Ass Porter, Prickly Pear Pale Ale, Coldsmoke, Farmer's Daughter Strawberry Blonde, Clothing Optional Pale Ale and Mountain Man Stout to name a few. Try the walking brewery tour in historic downtown Billings, where 5 breweries are within walking distance of each other. Missoula's Big Sky Brewing (and Montana's largest brewer) offers perennial favorites of Moose Drool, Trout Slayer and Slow Elk brews. www.montanabrewers.org/trail-map

Montana Dinosaur Trail, statewide

Montana has so many Dinosaur fossils, in fact, that you can trace them across the state on the 14 stops of the Montana Dinosaur Trail. Not to be missed is the Fort Peck Interpretive Center, with its life-size Peck's Rex, one of the most complete Tyrannosaurus Rex skeletons ever found. Another notable location is the Bozeman's Museum of the Rockies, home to the world's largest collection of dinosaurs and a paleontology lab, as well as exhibits on Western history and American Indians. www.mtdinotrail.org

First People's Buffalo Jump State Park

First People's Buffalo Jump State Park near Great Falls is an archaeological site and possibly the largest buffalo cliff jump in North America. Schedule a ranger talk to learn about how local tribes depended upon bison for survival. mt.gov/stateparks/first-peoples-buffalo-jump

Mountain Biking - Helena and beyond

Montana's trails are becoming well known for mountain biking. Helena is a designated Ride Center by the International Mountain Bicycling Association, only one of the 17 communities around the world with this distinction. Bozeman, Missoula, Butte and beyond offer trail access to national forests that abound with everything from screaming single track to historic rides to National Recreation Trails. Montana's weather is perfect and the scenery unmatched.

www.helenamt.com

World Museum of Mining and Butte-Anaconda National Historic Landmark, Butte, MT

Once known as the "Richest Hill on Earth," Butte is steeped in mining history and cultural diversity. Its colorful history can be seen in its ethnic neighborhoods, preserved Victorian uptown business district and stately mansions. You can also visit one of the few museums in the world located on an actual mine yard – the Orphan Girl Mine – and maybe the most realistic you'll ever experience. Above ground, explore over 50 exhibit buildings, countless artifacts and 66 primary exhibits in the mine yard; you can easily spend a couple of hours to an entire day lost in the unfolding story of Butte's mining heyday. <http://miningmuseum.org/>



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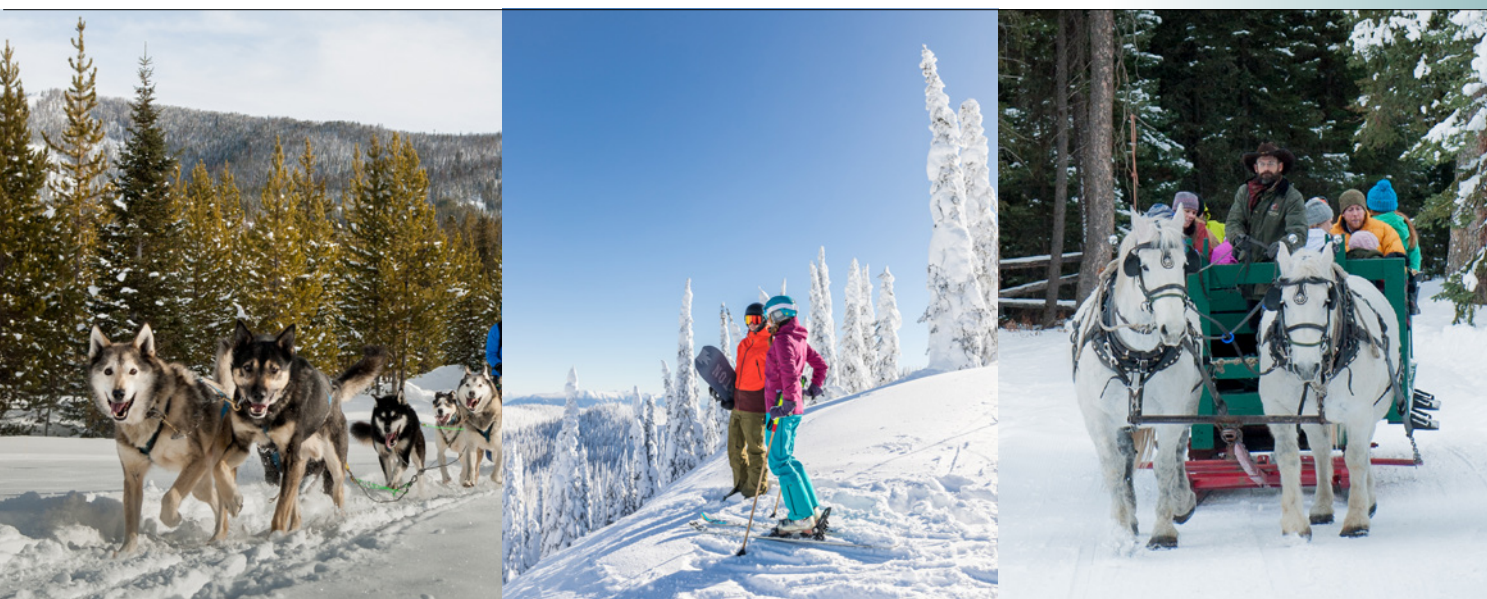
MONTANA'S WINTER

With four distinct seasons, a rich history, and more spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in America's lower 48 states, Montana lives up to its Last Best Place nickname no matter what time of year you visit.

Montana is home to [15 ski areas](#), including two destinations – Big Sky Resort and Whitefish Mountain Resort. In southwest Montana, enjoy the “Biggest Skiing in America” at Big Sky Resort with 5,750 acres of snow, 4,350 vertical feet and over 250 named ski runs to explore. Also with its close proximity to Yellowstone National Park, a winter excursion into the Park on snowcoach or snowmobile, in an area well known for snowmobiling and cross country skiing, makes this a wonderful winter experience. www.bigskyresort.com

In northwest Montana, Whitefish Mountain Resort sits on top of Big Mountain. And yes, Whitefish Mountain Resort is BIG. Its 3,000 acres allows winter (and summer) recreation on all four sides of the mountain. Whitefish Mountain Resort offers huge amounts of terrain for every level of skier or boarder via its 14 lifts, 98 named trails and six terrain parks. www.skiwhitefish.com

Try snowmobiling, dog sledding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, watch dogsled races, ski-joring competitions, and more. Learn about the variety of [Winter Activities](#) and the many places in Montana to try them. <http://www.visitmt.com/places-to-go/ski-areas-and-resorts.html>



FUN FACTS ABOUT MONTANA

- Montana is the 4th largest state but has only one million people.
- It has the largest grizzly bear population and largest elk herd in the US.
- Montana has no sales tax.
- There are 50 mountain ranges in the state.
- It is home to 12 Indian tribes and 7 Indian reservations.
- Films such as A River Runs Through It, The Revenant, and The Horse Whisperer were filmed in Montana. The popular tv series Yellowstone is also filmed here.
- Montana's Flathead Lake is the largest natural freshwater lake in the West.
- Montana's largest city, Billings, has a population of only 110,000.
- Bozeman's Museum of the Rockies house the most T-Rex specimens in the world.

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