



Montana: Big State, Big Adventures, Big Stories

Montana is known the world over for its big sky, its mountain terrain and the iconic wilderness and wildlife of Glacier and Yellowstone national parks. Montana is all of that — and proudly so — but it's also so much more. Friendly small towns welcome adventurous, curious travelers who want to immerse themselves in the unique history, culture and stories that make Montana a place like no other.

Spanning the Northern Rocky Mountains and northern Great Plains,

Montana sits just south of Canada and is bordered by Idaho, Wyoming, and North and South Dakota. At 147,040 square miles, it's the fourth-largest state in the country, with a population of just over 1 million.

With wide-open space and relatively few people, Montana is very rural.

Life here is closely tied to grand landscapes that shift from forested mountains in the west to rolling prairie in the center of the state to sweeping high plains and otherworldly badlands in the east. Like Montanans, travelers will enjoy the abundant public lands — including Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park (three of the park's five entrances are in Montana) and 56 state parks — that provide endless opportunities to get outside, explore and recreate year-round. Hiking, camping and water recreation are popular summer pastimes, while winter draws skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers to enjoy the sparkling snow.

Beyond its wild natural beauty, Montana's beating heart is found in the small towns,

cities, rural communities and Native American reservations that Montanans call home. These are the places where visitors can experience local character, long-held traditions, fascinating history and festive celebrations of heritage and connection to the land.

Learn about Indigenous peoples and cultures, Montana dinosaur discoveries, and mining, homesteading and early ranching days at museums across the state. Stroll down a historic main street, where you're sure to get a friendly nod or two.

Stay in a historic hotel, a cozy mountain lodge or a guest ranch, where you can learn to rope and ride horses. Enjoy meals prepared with locally raised beef, bison or produce, and try craft beers made with local wheat. Join in the fun of a local event like a farmers market, music festival, county fair, rodeo — Montana's official sport — or powwow. Experience the stories of past and present-day Montana, and create memories that will stay with you long after you leave.

Getting to Montana and Around the State

Depending on what your travel itinerary lays out, it's generally easiest to fly into Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell (the closest airport to Glacier National Park) or Missoula, Montana, and then rent a car to travel around the state. Hitting Montana's 70,000 miles of open road by car provides the best flexibility to explore the sights and activities you most want to experience.

From many major U.S. cities, such as Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Denver, Dallas, Chicago and Atlanta, travelers can catch direct flights to Montana. Additional direct flights are available seasonally (usually during summer) from San Diego, Detroit, Houston, Washington, D.C., New York City and Boston, among others. To rent a car, international travelers will usually need an International Driver's Permit and proof of a driver's license from their home country.

Though Montana doesn't have train service to most places, railfans can ride Amtrak's Empire Builder across a northern Montana route that locals call the Hi-Line. This train travels between Seattle and Chicago, and in Montana, it stops in 12 small towns and skirts Glacier National Park. Originally part of the Great Northern Railway, this rail route features incredible views of some of Montana's most iconic landscapes.

Fast Facts

Time Zone:

Mountain Time

State Capital:

Helena (population: 35,000)

Biggest City (by population):

Billings (121,000)

Smallest City (by population):

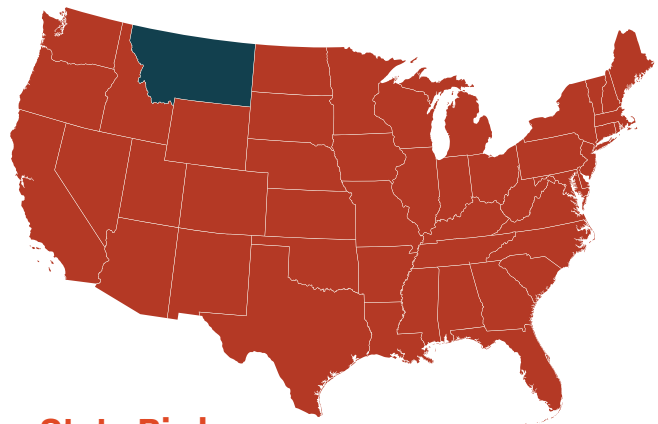
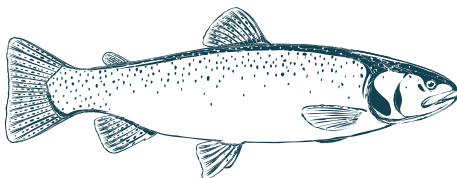
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State Mammal:

Grizzly bear

State Fish:

Blackspotted cutthroat trout



State Bird:

Western meadowlark

State Fruit:

Huckleberry

State Sport:

American rodeo

Highest Point:

Granite Peak (12,808 feet)

Montana is one of just five states in the country that does not have a statewide sales tax.

