

AAA Reading-Berks Group Travel presents...

# Montana: Exploring Big Sky Country

July 8 – 18, 2025



For more information contact  
AAA Reading-Berks  
**610-374-5600**





**Small Group Travel** rewards travelers with new perspectives. With just 12-24 passengers, these are the personal adventures that today's cultural explorers dream of.

**11 Days • 16 Meals:** 10 Breakfasts, 1 Lunch, 5 Dinners

**HIGHLIGHTS...** Bozeman, Yellowstone, Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone Grand Canyon, Helena, Gates of the Mountains, Choice on Tour: Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center or C.M. Russell Art Museum, Glacier National Park, Going-to-the-Sun Road, Whitefish, Choice on Tour: White Water Rafting or Flathead River Float, Flathead Lake, Kootenai Traditions, Impact Moment, Museum of Mountain Flying, Holt Heritage Museum

#### ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Day 1      | AC Hotel Bozeman Downtown, Bozeman, Montana             |
| Days 2, 3  | The Ridgeline Hotel at Yellowstone, Gardiner, Montana   |
| Days 4, 5  | DoubleTree by Hilton Helena Downtown, Helena, Montana   |
| Day 6      | Great Bear Lodge at St. Mary Village, St. Mary, Montana |
| Days 7, 8  | Grouse Mountain Lodge Whitefish, Whitefish, MT          |
| Days 9, 10 | Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown, Missoula, Montana        |

*On some dates alternate hotels may be used.*

**AAA Members receive  
an additional \$50 off  
per person!**

**Day 1: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 Bozeman, Montana** Step outside, take a deep breath in, and look around you – you're in big sky country. Montana is wilderness, adventure, and beauty, and you're about to see what makes it unique, as well as its crown jewels. Today, arrive in Bozeman, the jumping off point to explore the northern and southern loops of Yellowstone, America's first national park. Get your cameras ready and your boots laced tight, there's a good chance you're going to come across roaming bison, roaring geysers, and more.

**Day 2: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 Bozeman - Yellowstone Southern Loop - West Yellowstone** This morning, pass through Yellowstone's western gate and venture into the Lower Loop, the road that encircles the entire lower half of the National Park. Your first stop will be at the Grand Prismatic Spring, where steaming azure-blue waters clash brilliantly with the bright orange of the clay earth surrounding it. You'll quickly learn why this is one of the most photographed spots in the entire park – its unearthly beauty is something to behold. The best spot to take it all in is at the overlook, and you'll have enough time to take the 20-minute hike up if you choose. Afterwards, head to Old Faithful, the legendary geyser that you can "set your watch to." Enjoy lunch on your own, walk the boardwalk trails surrounding Old Faithful, and check the time on the next eruption. No drive through Yellowstone is that quiet, though – you'll want to gaze out your window at the mountains, plains, cliffs, and forests. Bison, elk, bears, eagles, wolves, and antelope call this incredible slice of wilderness their home, and you might spot them at any time. (B, D)

**Day 3: Thursday, July 10, 2025 West Yellowstone - Yellowstone Northern Loop - West Yellowstone** Today, explore Yellowstone's northern loop. Your first stop will be Mammoth Hot Springs. Here, bubbling pots of geothermal water trickle down the step-like terraces, creating incredible shapes and colors. Explore the boardwalks that wind through the steaming landscape. Next, head to the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone lookout, where you'll find yourself standing over the massive, 20-mile-long canyon. Its craggy walls are streaked with brilliant whites, pinks, and oranges from the volcanic minerals contained in the rocks. The Yellowstone River roars along at the bottom over three different waterfalls. Later today, return to your hotel in West Yellowstone. (B)

**Day 4: Friday, July 11, 2025 West Yellowstone - Paradise Valley - Helena** This morning, head through the sweeping vistas of Montana's Paradise Valley. In the distance, you'll see the Absaroka Beartooth Mountains to the east, and the Gallatin Range of the Rocky Mountains to your west. You'll arrive in the capital of Montana, Helena, a city with rich gold rush history and beautiful Victorian era architecture. These days, the "Queen City of the Rockies" is less known for gold and more known for its great local restaurants and microbreweries, as well as a stunning trail system in the surrounding landscape. (B, D)

**Day 5: Saturday, July 12, 2025 Helena - Gates of the Mountains - Helena** Start your day today with a local guide showing you around the beautiful and welcoming mountain city of Helena on a narrated, train trolley tour. See the opulent mansion district, marvel at the Cathedral of St. Helena, and roll by governor's homes. Pass by a restored miners' village, enjoy the unique architecture along Last Chance Gulch, and catch a glimpse of the Old Fire Tower. After exploring the city a bit, you'll have time on your own to enjoy the charm of downtown Helena before heading to the Gates of the Mountains. Here, on the shores of the Missouri River, you'll follow in the footsteps of the most renowned explorers in American history – Lewis and Clark. Climb aboard a boat and cruise these storied waters, follow the path Lewis and Clark took on their legendary journey across this vast wilderness, and take in the natural beauty. Meriwether Lewis himself named this stunning canyon the Gates of the Mountains, and you'll discover just how it must have felt to come across this awe-inspiring sight. Tonight, return to Helena for an evening at leisure. (B)

**Day 6: Sunday, July 13, 2025 Helena - Great Falls - St. Mary** Today, venture to Great Falls, where the mighty Missouri River



## Per Person Rates\*:

**Double \$6,799; Single \$8,599; Triple \$6,699**

**Included in Price:** Round Trip Air from Philadelphia Intl Airport, Air Taxes and Fees/Surcharges, Hotel Transfers

**Not included in price:** Cancellation Waiver and Insurance of \$429 per person

\* All Rates are Per Person and are subject to change

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS: Your price is guaranteed once deposit is received and booking confirmed by AAA Vacations®. Your price is not subject to increase after the deposit is received and booking confirmed, except for charges resulting from increases in government-imposed taxes or fees. (See registration form for consent.)

thunders down from the Rocky Mountains, over five waterfalls to the great plains below. This was a massive obstacle for Lewis and Clark's expedition in 1805. They had to carry their boats over land for a month to make it from the lower falls to the upper falls. You will not have to work that hard, because **it's your choice!** Visit the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center where you can learn about the trials of the legendary expedition -**OR-** explore the exhibits at the C.M. Russell Art Museum during a guided tour, where you'll see the art of Charles Russell, a cowboy-turned-artist from the turn of the century, as well as his original home and log studio. Afterwards, continue to St. Mary, the eastern entryway to Glacier National Park. (B, D)

**Day 7: Monday, July 14, 2025 Glacier National Park - Going-to-the-Sun Road - Whitefish** Head into Glacier National Park to board one of the 1930's vintage red buses and venture down one of the most breathtaking roads in North America, Going-to-the-Sun Road.\* Sit back and admire the views of the valley as your "jammer," one of the experienced guides, drives you through this natural landscape. Relax and take in all the majestic sights, before heading to the town of Whitefish where forests, lakes, rivers, and mountains unfold in every direction. (B, L)

**Day 8: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 Whitefish** This morning, enjoy some leisure time in the quaint, picturesque town of Whitefish. Always listed as one of America's 25 prettiest towns, indulge yourself with time to stroll around, do some shopping, or just relax. Perhaps you'll stop for lunch at one of the great restaurants found along Central Avenue or buy some Huckleberry jam from a local shop. A true favorite in Montana, huckleberries can be found in snacks, drinks, candy, and more. Your morning leads into an adventurous afternoon, because **it's your choice!** Grab a paddle and get ready for a white-water rafting adventure -**OR-** take the calmer, scenic route on a float down the Flathead River. No

### Experience It! Great Falls

The five waterfalls near Great Falls, Montana might have been one of the greatest trials of the entire Lewis and Clark Expedition. Here, on the Missouri River, five waterfalls thunder down a series of cliffs, stopping the exploration of the Louisiana Purchase dead in its tracks. The only option was portage, where the entire expedition would pull their boats up on shore, and carry them through the surrounding wilderness, around the five waterfalls, and place them back in the Missouri over ten miles further up the river. This back-breaking labor took an entire month, but Lewis and Clark persevered. Now, their entire expedition is a legendary tale of American exploration.

matter which style river journey you choose, the awe-inspiring views of Glacier National Park await. Tonight, tell tales about your river escapades while sitting down for a mouth-watering barbeque dinner. (B, D)

**Day 9: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 Whitefish - Flathead Lake - Missoula** Depart Whitefish and drive south, journeying along the western edge of beautiful Flathead Lake. Carved by the ancient glaciers that give Glacier National Park its name, Flathead Lake stretches almost 200 square miles. Quaint, small towns dot the shores here, built with the beautiful backdrop of nature behind them. You might even spot some orchards, growing Flathead cherries. Encompassing most of the lake is the Flathead Reservation, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation. At one point, these tribes had territories that stretched out of Montana and into Idaho, British Columbia, and Wyoming. The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 set aside Flathead Lake for the tribes, reducing their lands to a fraction of what it once was. Tribal land was once again shrunk in 1904 by over half a million acres. Despite all of this, the Tribal way of life continues on to this day, passed down from elders to children though a rich oral and spiritual tradition. Get a glimpse into these traditions when you meet a descendant of the last Kootenai chief, and learn about the importance of the land in native life. Then, experience an **Impact Moment** at the Smokejumper Visitor Center to learn about the heroes who fight fires in North America. Afterwards, enjoy a relaxing evening at leisure in Missoula. (B)

**Day 10: Thursday, July 17, 2025 Missoula** Your day in Missoula starts off with a visit to the Museum of Mountain Flying. Aircraft as well as interactive history displays that interpret and preserve the history of mountain flying and smoke jumping. Next, visit the Holt Heritage Museum, located on the Lolo Trail which was used by Lewis and Clark in 1805 and 1806. A private museum built by Bill

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and Ramona Holt, the extensive collection tells the story of Western Montana – from cowboys and rodeo's, to the native Nez Pierce and Salish/Kootenai cultures. This evening, enjoy a memorable farewell dinner with your fellow travelers, where you can raise a glass and toast to a wildly fun Montana adventure. (B, D)

**Day 11: Friday, July 18, 2025 Missoula - Tour Ends** Say goodbye to Big Sky Country and its beautiful sights as you head home. (B)

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**The overall activity level of this tour is a level 3.** This means you're an on-the-go traveler. You don't want to miss a thing, so walking and standing for longer periods of time (2-3 hours) isn't a big deal. A moderately paced two-and-a-half-hour walking tour, covering several miles, hills, and uneven surfaces, is no problem for you. Walking four miles over the course of a day is very doable, as is climbing into and out of various modes of transportation (tuk-tuk, cable car, zodiac, etc.). You can climb three flights of stairs easily and handle altitudes between 6,000 and 9,000 feet. Expect some longer days with early mornings or late nights balanced with free time to recharge or set out on your own adventure. This level is not a fit for travelers who require mobility assistance devices.

**Travel with just 16-24 guests on this tour where a smaller group setting means a more personal travel experience.**

If you require any special assistance while on tour, please make us aware at time of reservation so the necessary request form can be sent to your attention.

The days and order of sightseeing may change to best utilize your time on tour.

\*Going-to-the-Sun-Road may not be open due to weather conditions and typically opens the last week of June. In this case, an alternate tour of Glacier National Park will be provided.

Single accommodations are limited and are available on a first come, first served basis. Single rate subject to change based on availability. Triple rooms are not available.

Coaches which may not be lavatory equipped may be used on this tour. In this case, stops are made during travel periods.

To complete your tour, we include roundtrip airport-to-hotel transfers when purchasing our airfare with your tour. If you have arranged for your own air, we are pleased to provide you the option of *purchasing* these transfers. Please note that all transfers will leave at pre-scheduled times.

Our air passengers will arrive into Bozeman/Yellowstone airport and depart from Missoula airport.

For air-inclusive reservations, the name provided at time of booking must match your government-issued ID that will be used during travel. Name changes are subject to penalties.

Please be advised many airlines do not provide advance seat assignments until check-in at the airport. Advance seating will be subject to the airline's terms and conditions.

**IDENTIFICATION**

Travel within USA

For travel completed by May 6, 2025, all airlines will ask for identification when you check in. It is recommended that you carry a passport if you have one. A driver's license (with a photo I.D.) is also acceptable for domestic flights.



Effective for travel May 7, 2025 forward, the REAL ID Act standards for identification while travelling will be in effect. This means a standard issued driver's license used as a form of identification will no longer be accepted for domestic air travel within the United States. Instead, a Real ID compliant form of identification must be presented both at the time of booking air travel with AAA Member Choice Vacation® and upon checking in at the airport to board any flight. Any fees associated with changing a reservation resulting from a non-compliant identification will be the responsibility of the guest. For more information on Real ID, please visit the Department of Homeland Security website: <https://www.dhs.gov/real-id>  
Economy air rate and schedule are applicable for groups of 10 or more traveling on the same flights and dates.

**A deposit of \$698 per person is due upon reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis. Reservations made after the seat reduction date of November 23, 2024 are based upon availability. Final payment due by April 09, 2025. Deposits are refundable up until November 30, 2024.**

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