



The Beaverhead Range



# Majestic! Magnificent! Montana! *Backroads & Big Sky*

June 10 - 20, 2024 (11 days)

Discover your Montana Moment!  
A truly EPIC tour is in store for you in Montana's Big Sky Country.

## MAP AT A GLANCE



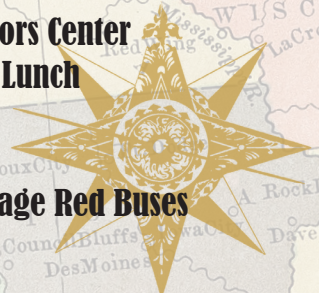
## HIGHLIGHTS

- Medora's Magic Show, Pitchfork Fondue, & Rough Riders Hotel
- Historic Livingston Depot
- Yellowstone National Park including Old Faithful & Mammoth Hot Springs
- Playmill Theater
- Virginia City & Nevada City Tours
- Bannack Ghost Town
- Beaverhead Rock
- Smokeyjumper's Base and Visitors Center
- Flathead Lake Boat Tour with Lunch
- Conrad Mansion
- Bigfork Summer Playhouse
- Glacier National Park via Vintage Red Buses
- Hungry Horse Dam
- Last Chance Trolley in Helena
- Headwaters of the Missouri River
- Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch
- Painted Canyon Visitors Center



Mammoth Hot Springs

SUMMER 105



With Glacier National Park to the north, and Yellowstone to the south, western Montana boasts immense wonder in wild, wonderful spaces. Traveling between the two parks showcases the best parts of Glacier Country and southwest Montana. You will see glaciers and geysers, plus plenty of fascinating towns with activities, history, and culture. Montana should come with a note from the Surgeon General warning: Montana is addictive, may cause mild euphoria, and slowing of the pulse. Maybe it's the sky, which seems bigger and bluer. Maybe it's the air, crisp and fresh and scented with pine. Maybe it's the way the mountains melt into ranchlands or the sight of the shaggy grizzly sipping water from an ice blue glacier lake. Maybe it's the independent frontier spirit wild and free and so wonderfully America that earned Montana the motto "Live and let live." Montana is the kind of place that remains with you long after you have left its beautiful spaces behind.

One could fit Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Delaware, Rhode Island, New York, and Pennsylvania inside Montana and still have room to spare. However, fewer people live in Montana than in Rhode Island alone. You can still find plenty of working cowboys, miners and loggers in the state. We'll tour parts of highly touted and spectacular Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, but also the lands beyond the park's boundaries. We'll view 28 named mountain ranges, cross 8 mountain passes, follow 18 famous mountain streams and cross the Continental Divide 3 times!



### Day 1 - Home to Medora, ND

Our first day's journey across the Great Plains of North Dakota will take us to the historic true west setting of Medora. Tonight, we'll experience the famous Pitchfork Fondue followed by the brand-new Medora Magic Show!

**Included Meals:** Pitchfork Fondue

**Hotel:** Rough Riders Hotel

### Day 2 - Medora to Livingston, MT

A hearty western breakfast is served to start our day. Today we get our first glimpse of the "Big Sky". We will travel along the scenic Yellowstone River to Billings, Montana's largest city, where we make a stop for lunch on our own. Departing Billings, we continue our trek up the beautiful Yellowstone Valley, with the Beartooth Mountains soaring ahead. For the next week we will be surrounded by the awe and majesty of 28 Montana mountain ranges! Entering Livingston and driving down main street, we find a genuine, largely unchanged, western town. At the beautiful Historic Livingston Depot we are greeted to a warm "Welcome to Montana" reception by city dignitaries. Our beautiful hotel is literally in the shadows of the Absaroka Mountains. Our welcome dinner is appropriately served at the iconic Montana Rib & Chop House.

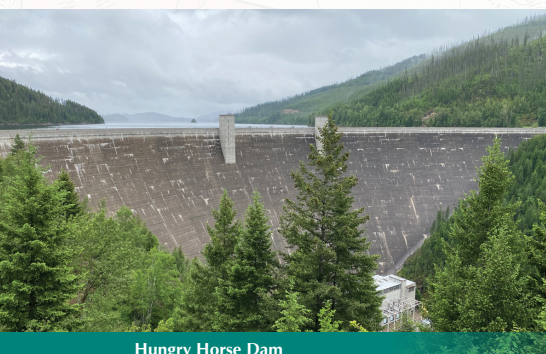
**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Hotel:** Fairfield Inn





Grasshopper Creek



Hungry Horse Dam



Beautiful Seely Lake

### Day 3 - Livingston to West Yellowstone, MT

Enjoy a convenient hot breakfast at the hotel. Immediately after departing, we find ourselves in one of the most beautiful mountain valleys you've ever seen. Around these parts they call it Paradise Valley. We are wedged between the Absaroka Range on our left and the Gallatin Range on our right, literally surrounded by 11,000 foot peaks! We are gradually climbing to Gardiner and the north entrance to Yellowstone Park. Once in the Park we are amazed by Mammoth Hot Springs, Gibbon Falls, the Firehole River, Old Faithful and more. Keep your eyes open for wildlife and other inspiring natural wonders along the way. West Yellowstone is the iconic western tourist town. You will have time to stroll the streets and browse the many unique shops along with great restaurant choices for dinner on your own. This evening we enjoy a highly entertaining evening at the crowd friendly Playmill Theatre.

**Included Meals: Breakfast**

**Hotel: Clubhouse Inn**

### Day 4 - West Yellowstone to Dillon, MT

Awaken to a mountain fresh morning while you enjoy breakfast at the Inn. Departing, we follow the Madison River and make a photo stop on the shore of Hebgen Lake framed by snowcapped peaks. Our next stop is Quake Lake, which was instantly formed by an earthquake in 1959. Watch for antelope gliding across the sweeping slopes as we enter Ennis, the fly-fishing capital of the world. The Blue Ribbon Streams around here are clear, cold and rushing and have never been stocked, leaving only native fish to be caught. We will enjoy ample time in Virginia City, site of the 1860's gold rush. We will all be treated to a tour of the "city", including a stop at Boot Hill, on an old antique fire truck narrated by Scott, our expert guide. Be careful on the boardwalk as you make your way to Cousin's Candy Shop and The Creamery for real, homemade Huckleberry Ice Cream! As we traverse to Dillon, an unscathed, casual western town, we will make some photo stops at scenic overlooks including Beaverhead Rock, an important Lewis and Clark landmark. We'll have great fun at Poppa T's for supper this evening.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

**Hotel: Fair Bridge Inn**

### Day 5 - Dillon to Missoula, MT

Discover what the old west was really like in Bannack, Montana's original territorial capital and the site of the first big gold strike in 1862. Today, the "streets" and boardwalks are deserted,

doors sway in the breeze and the Gold Rush is long over. This is our country's best preserved ghost town and it's story will be dramatically told by historian John Phillips. Travel through some of the most unspoiled countryside you'll ever witness. We wind through lush green valleys with snow laced mountains in every direction. Now we amble into Jackson. Stopping at Beaverslide Store, we meet Scott and Susie Olsen. "Doc", as he's known, will tell us why it's called Beaverslide and so much more as he enlightens us to life in this incredible country, over lunch. By the way, this unforgettable lunch is served at Jackson Hot Springs Lodge. We easily make our way over Chief Joseph Pass and into the Bitterroot Valley as we take in the untouched beauty around us. On the outskirts of Darby, we'll pull to the side of the road and look across to Dutton Ranch, the site of the popular TV Series "Yellowstone." Next, we make a stop in Darby at the Old West Candy, Fudge and Ice Cream Shop. Continuing north to Missoula we arrive late afternoon at the famous Smokejumper's Base and Visitors Center. We are privileged to a guided tour of this famous firefighting operation where we experience a working smokejumper facility, jump gear, parachutes, cargo and aircraft. Tonight, we are guests at the C' Mon Inn with dinner on your own at nearby restaurants.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch**

**Hotel: C' Mon Inn**

### Day 6 - Missoula to Kalispell, MT

Enjoy a great hot breakfast before we journey north to the Flathead Valley. Rounding the bend and entering Polson we catch our first view of Flathead Lake stretching before us like an inland ocean. 30 miles long and 16 miles wide, these crystal-clear waters are bordered on the east by the Mission Mountains and on the west by the Salish Mountains. We are fortunate to enjoy the lake via a Boat Tour with lunch included. Motoring on to Kalispell we experience some incredible local history with a visit to the Conrad Mansion, built by the founder of Kalispell in 1891. We'll check into our hotel for a



brief rest before making our way to the little burg of Bigfork. You'll love this compact little downtown with great boutiques, shops and hometown dining before we enjoy a great show at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch**  
**Hotel: Hampton Inn & Suites (2 Nights)**

## Day 7 - Journey thru Glacier National Park

Eat a hearty breakfast and prepare for a big day ahead. We make an early departure from the hotel to be at Glacier when the gates open. In our opinion, this may be America's most spectacular National Park and June is the best time to visit. Mountains are snowcapped and waterfalls are everywhere! We board the famous Red Buses for an unprecedented, expertly navigated and narrated, guided tour. Starting at beautiful Lake McDonald we traverse the world renown "Going To The Sun" Highway, over Logan Pass to picturesque Lake St. Mary on the eastern side. Arriving at the village of St. Mary we enjoy lunch at the Snowgoose Grille while we share the wonder we've just experienced. Our motorcoach meets us there and we journey the south route back. But the adventure isn't over yet! Hungry Horse Dam is on the way and beckons our company. You will marvel at this engineering wonder. If you like huckleberry, our next shopping stop will be perfect! We enjoy the convenience of a second night at our great hotel and dinner is on your own with several restaurants near the hotel.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch**

## Day 8 - Kalispell to Helena

This morning we travel along the Swan River on tree lined backroads with the Swan Range on one side and the Mission Mountains rising on the other. We have to stop at the Mission Mountains Mercantile to stock up on goodies. This is the backroads, so enjoy this special stop. As we rise over McDonald Pass the view before us is amazing. We will stop and take time to soak it all in. We arrive in historic Helena, Montana's beautiful capital city. You have some time to explore Last Chance Gulch and grab a bite of lunch. The best way to experience Helena is on the Last Chance Trolley for a narrated guided tour. It's very relaxing, enlightening and enjoyable. We'll have time for picture taking around the beautiful capital

building. Just north of town is the "Gates of the Mountains" where the Missouri River slices thru the Big Belt Mountains on its journey east. More picture taking is a must. Dinner this evening will be included.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**  
**Hotel: Holiday Inn Express**

## Day 9 - Helena to Billings, MT

We'll appreciate the hot breakfast at our hotel before we leave. We skirt Canyon Ferry Lake for miles before we enjoy a stop at Wheat Montana, well known for its bakery delights. We learn more about Lewis and Clark history as we visit the Headwaters of the Missouri River. On this site where Meriwether Lewis camped in 1805, the Gallatin, Madison and Jefferson Rivers join to form the Missouri River. Now we continue our journey past the growing city of Bozeman and over Bozeman Pass thru the Bridger Mountains. Just below the pass we come to Livingston and realize we've come full circle to the intersection we passed one week ago! The historic Grand Hotel of Big Timber hosts us for a great homemade lunch. As we exit the hotel, look north up McLeod Street for a spectacular view of the Crazy Mountains. This afternoon we have been invited to be the guests of Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch. The Ranch is known as one of the finest residential youth care facilities in all of America and we are privileged to a guided tour of its beautiful campus. We'll take some added time for additional insight to its history and program in the beautiful Robbie Chapel. Following our dinner together we ascend the Rimrocks, high above Billings for a panoramic view of Montana's largest city and the mountains beyond.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**  
**Hotel: Hampton Inn West**

## Day 10 - Billings to Bismarck, ND

We make an earlier start today as we have lots of ground to cover. The sky will get "bigger" and you'll think the country couldn't be this vast as we head east. Be looking for antelope on the vast landscape. We know a great little ma & pa lunch place in Glendive and they have been expecting us. Following lunch, the community has created a wonderful and informative museum. You will be delighted what you discover in its peaceful surroundings. 30 minutes after we

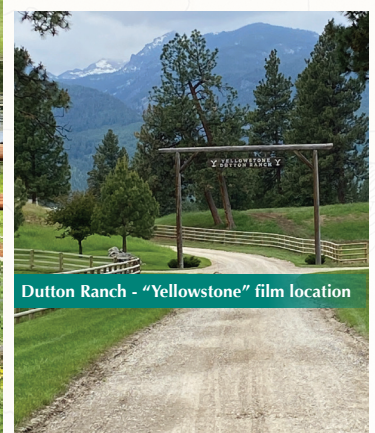
Mission Mountains



SUMMER  
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Welcome to Montana!



Dutton Ranch - "Yellowstone" film location



Capitol Building in Helena



Smokejumpers Headquarters

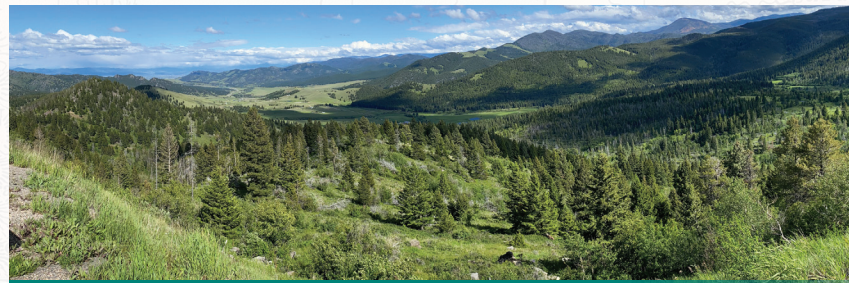
depart Glendive, we cross the state line into North Dakota leaving behind Magnificent! Majestic! Montana! Wow! What a wonder of God's creation! We make a rest stop at the Painted Canyon Visitors Center where the landscape features every color of the rainbow and more! We rest tonight in Bismarck with a wonderful farewell dinner.

**Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**  
**Hotel: Country Inn & Suites or similar**

### Day 11 - Bismarck to Home

Today we travel across the Dakota prairie. You may be apt to start singing "O give me a home where the buffalo roam and the deer and the antelope play." We truly have experienced the Backroads & Big Sky!

**Included Meals: Breakfast**



View from McDonald Pass



Exploring Glacier National Park via vintage buses!



Open range of Montana!

### Did you know?

Montana's population is 1,074,167

#### Montana Symbols:

- State Bird: Western Meadowlark
- State Flower: Bitterroot
- State Tree: Ponderosa Pine
- State Capital: Helena
- State Fish: Cutthroat Trout
- State Song: Montana Melody
- State Animal: Grizzly Bear



#### Famous people from Montana:

Gary Cooper, Chef Huntly, Chief Plenty Coups, Evel Knievel, Mike Mansfield, Levi Leipheimer, Jeanette Rankin, and R&J's very own - Dan Hansen!

**Majestic! Magnificent! Montana!**  
*Backroads & Big Sky*

## 2024 DATES & PRICES



DATES:	June 10 - 20, 2024 (11 Days)	
PRICE PER PERSON:	\$3,899 Double \$3,619 Triple	\$5,149 Single \$3,429 Quad
PRICE INCLUDES:	21 Meals, Hotels & Activities as stated, Luxury Motorcoach	
DEPOSIT DUE PER PERSON:	\$100 deposit per person at time of reservation. Full payment due 30 days prior to departure.	
OPTIONAL TRAVEL PROTECTION P/P:	\$247 Double per person	\$338 Single
TRAVEL BUCKS:	\$50 per person on future travel with R&J	
TOUR PACE:	Moderate Walking (See page 9 for description)	

**SUMMER**  
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