here’s a magical evening light that sweeps across the broad shoulders of Montana’s sky. Its radiating pink and purple colors echo off windows of log-hewn cabins, patios of breweries and the sides of aging pickup trucks rattling down lonely roads. Montana artist C.M. Russell captured this magnificent light in his paintings, and it fills the landscape with a peace that seeps into its people like water spilling over a river bank.

Discover Montana’s spectacular culture via West Yellowstone, Mont., as you point your wheels north to Glacier National Park. In Big Sky, you’ll find adrenaline-filled activities and a vibrant ski town in the summer. Farther north, you’ll find boom-and-bust stories and charming historic towns in Virginia City, Nevada City and Butte.

Minutes from Butte, soak at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort and then hit the road to stroll Philipsburg’s quaint downtown and sample sweets in The Sweet Palace. Explore the fun university town of Missoula and other authentic towns en route to Glacier National Park. Head east from the park to Great Falls for a primer on renowned artist C.M. Russell. Then visit Bozeman and Livingston, the original Yellowstone gateway.
The Heart of Yellowstone

West Yellowstone • Montana

Year-round activities & lodging located at the West Entrance to Yellowstone National Park.

For activities and dining info: www.DestinationYellowstone.com

For lodging info: www.YellowstoneDestination.com
WEST WITH THE SIGHTS

The town of West Yellowstone sits right at the West Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Here are the top 7 ways to avoid the park’s crowds and see the best of the area.

1. SEE A GRIZZLY
WHERE: Missed seeing a grizzly in Yellowstone? You are guaranteed to see a grizzly at the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, a nonprofit wildlife educational and research park at 201 S. Canyon St., in West Yellowstone.
BACK STORY: The seven resident bears arrived in West Yellowstone after becoming nuisance bears where they lived by either damaging property in search of food or becoming aggressive toward people. Rather than be killed, the bears at the center were rescued and serve as ambassadors for grizzlies in the wild.

2. GET THE REAL STORY ON THE PARK
WHERE: Head to the Yellowstone Giant Screen where you can see the movie Yellowstone or another feature film projected on a six-story-high screen. You can also visit the Museum of the Yellowstone located in the historic Union Pacific Depot to learn about the history of tourism and travel in Yellowstone National Park.
TIP: The Yellowstone film plays during the day while a different feature film is shown in the evenings, so plan accordingly.

3. SEE A SUNSET IN SOLITUDE
WHERE: Drive 20 minutes west of West Yellowstone to the stunningly beautiful Hegben Lake to see the sunset, keeping your eyes open for moose, bison, herons, white pelicans and bald eagles. Look for mountain goats at the dam.
TIP: Rent a canoe, stand-up paddleboard or even a fishing boat at one of the lake’s marinas to experience the lake on the water.

4. TAKE A SPECTACULAR SCENIC DRIVE
WHERE: Lose the crowds of Yellowstone on this wildlife-filled “Around the Block” scenic drive that begins on Hwy. 191 and spans 64 miles, covering two states, two mountain passes and wrapping around three lakes: Hegben Lake, Earthquake Lake and Henry’s Lake.
BACK STORY: Stop at The Earthquake Lake Visitor Center at Earthquake Lake. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the formation of the lake, which was created after an earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale caused about 80 million tons of rock from Sheep Mountain to crash down in less than a minute and block the Madison River. Tragically, 28 people who were camping in the area lost their lives.

5. SEE A RODEO
WHERE: Don’t miss seeing one of the West’s long-lived traditions at Wild West Yellowstone Rodeo. During the summer, there are between 4-6 rodeos a week, beginning at 8 p.m., so check the schedule and book online. Tickets are available at the gate, but rodeos do sell out.
TIP: If you want to do a trail ride before the rodeo, Creekside Trail Rides offers one-hour trail rides and 30-minute wagon rides at the rodeo grounds.

6. GET SOME AIR
WHERE: You’ll gain a new perspective as you fly through the air at Yellowstone Aerial Adventure. Choose between a number of passes to best fit your schedule.
TIP: There’s an Adventure Zipline Course and also a Junior Ranger Zipline for kids ages 4-7.

7. HAVE DINNER WITH COWBOYS
WHERE: Lasso the fun at Parade Rest Guest Ranch just 10 miles from Yellowstone’s West Entrance for an evening under the stars. You’ll ride a hay wagon, horseback or van (depending on availability) to the outdoor cookout spot in the mountains where you’ll eat classic western food like baked beans, grilled chicken or steaks and coleslaw.
TIP: Dress in layers because temperatures drop in the evenings.

Learn more at www.destinationyellowstone.com.
Stay tantalizing close to the park but within walking distance of West Yellowstone’s shops and restaurants at four lodging options under the umbrella of Yellowstone Vacations. The bonus for dog lovers? The popular family hot spot Holiday Inn @ West Yellowstone, fun Gray Wolf Inn & Suites and upscale Explorer Cabins have pet-friendly rooms without additional fees (note: the park itself has strict rules regarding pets). The fourth, Yellowstone Park Hotel, home to a gorgeous lobby with a fireplace, does not allow pets. All are in walking distance to West Yellowstone’s shops and restaurants.

Stay at the cozy Explorer Cabins and get a free s’mores kit to use in the outdoor fire pits near your cabin. You’ll also discover a small kitchenette, binoculars, a flashlight and walking sticks in your cabin. At Gray Wolf Inn & Suites, you’ll find an indoor heated pool and fun facts about wolves in the elevator and hallways. You may even hear real wolves howling from the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center across the street.

Want to see more of the park and less of the parking lot? Take a Yellowstone Vacations Tours summer bus tour and leave the driving to certified guides who know and love the park. Choose between an Upper Loop Tour, which covers sights like Yellowstone’s iconic Mammoth Hot Springs Terraces and Tower Fall or the Lower Loop Tour that brings you to Old Faithful, Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and more. Tours will stop for significant wildlife sightings, allowing you to get the shots of the park’s incredible animals.

“What’s nice is you hear so many facts and stories that you would never have gotten if you were driving yourself,” says Shelby Buider of Yellowstone Vacations. “And you may see hidden spots you didn’t know about.”

Learn more about the tours and lodges of Yellowstone Vacations at www.yellowstonevacations.com.
Here’s a saying Big Sky, Mont., locals often share when they are hiking under unbelievable blue skies or skiing through tons of snow. And if you visit, you’ll learn it.

“LTD,” they’ll say and smile. LTD is short for “Living the Dream.” And in that moment, you’ll feel exactly the way they do.

The town of Big Sky is tucked in the flanks of the green mountains that roll up to Big Sky Resort, a huge ski area with 34 chairlifts and nearly 6,000 skiable acres. Born in 1973 when the ski resort was created, Big Sky is a relatively new town where you’ll find easy-going people who love sharing where they live with people who visit.

“You come here for the two Rs,” says local Candace Carr Strauss. “The first is recreation like hiking, biking, rafting and in the winter, skiing. The other R is relaxation. You recharge. You rejuvenate before you go home.”

Big Sky is situated perfectly between Yellowstone National Park and Bozeman, Mont., the latter being a major hub for Yellowstone travelers to fly in and out of. In fact, Big Sky Visitor Center is the first place after entering the Gallatin Canyon on US 191 from Bozeman where you’ll find cell phone service and public restrooms. Just 45 minutes from Bozeman and the park, Big Sky offers a range of restaurants, outdoor activities and lodging accommodations, the higher end of which you cannot always find closer to Yellowstone.

Near Yellowstone, “the lodging is what it is,” says Strauss who is CEO of Big Sky Chamber of Commerce. “We offer much higher end accommodations—some are downhome and middle-to-mainstream, but you also can rent the higher end.”

Having said that, Strauss emphasizes that the town of Big Sky is no Aspen. You won’t find a Ritz-Carlton Hotel or high-end designer shops like Gucci in this low-key town.

Few places are better than the great outdoors to reconnect with yourself and family, so hit the trails. For an easy but pretty hike, head to Ousel Falls. It takes about 30 minutes to get to the falls, depending on how often you slow down to smell the amazing wildflowers along the trail. It’s 1.6 miles out and back. For views of Lone Peak, do the Beehive Basin Trail that’s 6.6 miles round-trip with 1,600 feet of elevation gain.

Then hit some of the best whitewater rafting or float trips in the West. Or head for the skies in a hot air balloon with Montana Balloon. And then there’s Yellowstone, just 45 miles down the road, where you can explore the world’s first national park. It’s close enough that you can head to the northern part of the park for the day and return to Big Sky to eat at the family friendly Gallatin Riverhouse Grill. Known for its BBQ, it has beef brisket, pork baby back ribs, smoked salmon and more. You also can play corn hole, sit by the outdoor firepit and listen to live music.

“It’s like stepping back in time,” Strauss says.

Learn more at visitbigskymt.com.
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VENTURE TO 11,166’ | NO HIKE REQUIRED

LONE PEAK EXPEDITION
Ride a chairlift, an expedition vehicle, and finally, the Lone Peak Tram to Montana’s Highest Scenic Overlook at 11,166 feet. Take in magnificent 360 degree views of two national parks, three states and several mountain ranges from the peak of Big Sky Resort. Big Sky is a short drive from the West Entrance of Yellowstone National Park, and offers a wide range of lodging options, outdoor activities and restaurants. Book Now.
bigskyresort.com | 833-454-5983
Bozeman Spirits

“Drink local” is the motto of the Bozeman Spirits distillery in downtown Bozeman. And there may be no better locally concocted cocktail than the distillery’s Montana Huckleberry Mule. Made with huckleberry-flavored vodka, it’s served in a copper mug in the saloon-inspired tasting room.

Using local grains as often as possible, the distillery produces whiskey, vodka, gin and rum, all distilled and bottled on site. And if you like what you are sipping, bring a taste of Montana home with you. Purchase a bottle on site or throughout Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and North Dakota.

Stop by Bozeman Spirits at 121 W Main St, Bozeman, Mont., or go online at bozemannspirits.com.

Rivers to Run

Offering everything from a leisurely float on a tube to half-day and full-day rafting trips, plus ziplining courses, Montana Whitewater has an adventure for you.

If lounging on an inflatable tube on the sparkling waters of the Madison River sounds like your speed, do it. Montana Whitewater provides shuttles to and from the river from Bozeman and provides all gear, including inflatable coolers.

If you’ve never rafted before or are looking for a family-friendly raft trip, choose the Yellowstone River trip where the put-in is in Gardiner, Mont., in Yellowstone.

Adrenaline seekers will find their hearts pumping through the infamous Mad Mile of continuous class IV rapids along the Gallatin River between Big Sky, Mont., and Bozeman. And if you want a full-day wilderness experience down the remote Bear Trap Canyon, opt for the Madison River trip where only one other rafting company has a permit.

You can even do the popular Zip and Dip packages, enabling you to spend half your day rafting and the other ziplining. Otherwise, stay high and dry and ride a zipline over a river or above a historic Montana ranch.

Learn more at montanawhitewater.com.

BI G S K Y ’ S B I G F O U R

Less than an hour from Yellowstone, head to Big Sky Resort for Montana’s incredible summer activities.

1. SUMMIT A PEAK
   WHY GO: To get to Lone Peak, the highest overlook in Montana at 11,166 feet, you’ll spend 2.5 hours round-trip with a guide, taking a chairlift, vehicle and tram to get there and back.
   LITTLE-KNOWN FACT: You can see two national parks, three states and 12 mountain ranges from the top.

2. EXPLORE VIA TWO WHEELS
   WHY GO: More than 40 miles of mountain biking await beginners to expert riders. Big Sky offers lessons, bike rentals and lift tickets for you and your bike (so you can avoid uphill climbs).
   TIP: Easy Rider and Rabbit Run are lift-served and great trails for beginners. Intermediate bikers should check out Snake Charmer, also lift-served.

3. FLY THROUGH THE SKY
   WHY GO: Spend several hours flying through the thin, mountain air on a zipline.
   TIP: Two different experiences offer something for everyone. The Adventure Zipline is for thrill-seekers and offers a twin zip at the end, so you can race alongside your buddy. The Nature Zipline caters to families with younger kids but still offers an adrenaline rush.

4. SPEND THE NIGHT IN GORGEOUS ACCOMMODATIONS
   WHY GO: In winter, Big Sky Resort’s 400 inches of powder attract skiers from all over the world. In the summer, you can stay in the resort’s cozy and elegant chalets and lodges.
   TIP: The resort offers a range of lodging accommodations, so explore online to book a place that fits your needs.

Learn more at bigskyresort.com/basecamp.
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• Explore a ghost town and Montana’s history
• Follow in Lewis & Clark’s footsteps
• Relax in a hot spring
• Dig for sapphires

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## TRUE GEMS
Southwest Montana offers everything from spirits to saloons.

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<th>Reason to Go</th>
<th>Tips and Quirky Facts</th>
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<tr>
<td>VIRGINIA CITY PLAYERS THEATRE CO.</td>
<td>Sit back in this historic theater in Virginia City and be entertained by 1800s-era melodramas and vaudeville variety acts.</td>
<td>You can purchase a drink at the Bale of Hay Saloon next door and bring it into the theater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEVADA CITY MUSIC HALL</td>
<td>Part of the Nevada City Museum, this ornate hall holds the largest collection of automated music machines in the country, many still working.</td>
<td>This unique building was built as the recreation hall at Canyon Lodge in Yellowstone National Park around 1910. In 1959, it was disassembled and moved to Nevada City.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUTTE TROLLEY TOUR</td>
<td>Ride the trolley to hear about Butte’s colorful history and present-day attractions, including the 90-foot Our Lady of the Rockies statue.</td>
<td>Visitors can go 65 feet underground into the Orphan Girl Mine at the World Museum of Mining (not part of the trolley tour).</td>
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<td>OLD MONTANA PRISON COMPLEX</td>
<td>See more than 165 cars from classic Chevys and muscle cars to a 1915 Trumbull Cycle Car at the Montana Auto Museum in Deer Lodge, Mont.</td>
<td>The museum is part of the Old Montana Prison Complex and houses five museums in total, including the Old Montana Prison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRANT-KOHRS RANCH HISTORIC SITE</td>
<td>Once the headquarters of a 10-million-acre cattle empire, this National Historic Site in Deer Lodge, Mont., offers tours of the ranch home built in 1862.</td>
<td>At this National Park Service site, you can explore the bunkhouse, blacksmith shop, horse barns and cattle sheds. Spend time with the horses, chickens and cows on site.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAPPHIRE-SIFTING</td>
<td>Many don’t know that Montana has caches of sapphires in some of its mountains. Sift for your own sapphires in charming Philipsburg.</td>
<td>Head to Sapphire Gallery or Montana Gems of Philipsburg to sift for sapphires. After you find sapphires, either venue can create earrings, necklaces and more with your gems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATES OF THE MOUNTAINS</td>
<td>Experience the awe Lewis and Clark felt when they first set eyes on the “Gates of the Mountains,” spectacular 1,200-foot-high limestone cliffs presiding over the Missouri River near Helena.</td>
<td>See nature and wildlife on a 120-minute cruise on board one of two tour boats – the “Canyon Voyager” or the “Sacajawea.” The cruise starts at the marina three miles off Interstate 15 in the foothills between Helena and Great Falls.</td>
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Learn more at SouthwestMT.com.
BUTTE IS YOUR BASECAMP FOR UNPARALLELED ADVENTURE.
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Ready to elevate your adventure? Visit www.visitbutte.com
DIP INTO HISTORY AND POOLS

In Butte and neighboring Anaconda, you'll discover a historic district and hot springs.

Head to Butte to explore the historic streets of a town once known as “the richest hill on Earth.”

In fact, in 1896, this tiny town nestled into the folds of Montana's gentle hillsides produced 26 percent of the world’s supply of copper and 51 percent of the United States' supply, according to the Mining History Association.

Take a Butte Trolley Tour to learn about Butte’s colorful history and to see the largest National Historic Landmark District in the West. Butte’s buildings are stunning with their architectural details that masons at the turn-of-the-century took time to painstakingly create. You’ll stop at the Berkeley Pit, a one-mile-long and half-mile wide former open pit copper mine where 320 million tons of ore was mined from 1955 to 1982. Today, ground water is filling the 1,780-foot deep pit since the water pumps were turned off when the mine closed. Because the pit is laced with toxic heavy metals, the site is an EPA Super Fund site. It’s a marvel in the human ability to extract from the Earth and a dramatic visual lesson on how negatively we can impact the environment.

The tour also brings you by the Copper King Mansion where you can actually spend the night on an African mahogany sleigh bed. The 34-room abode was once home to W.A. Clark, a Butte mining giant who was one of the world’s richest men in 1900. The house cost an estimated half million dollars to build, which represented a half-day’s income for him. Before you leave town, don’t miss Front Street Market, an unbelievably authentic Italian market that would even wow a native New Yorker. It stocks gourmet cheeses, salamis, specialty items, sandwiches, salads and soups, plus more than 2,000 wines from all over the world.

Fifteen miles west of Butte, you’ll find a genuine hot springs paradise. Fairmont Hot Springs Resort in Anaconda, Mont. keeps its pools open year-round and is Montana’s only full-service hot springs, golf and convention resort. Home to two Olympic-sized pools and two hot soaking pools, you can rest your road-weary muscles or get a workout by swimming laps. The 160°F, naturally heated water is cooled to temperatures ranging from 88°F to 104°F. And if you’re feeling adventurous, you’re guaranteed to make a splash when you ride down the 350-foot-high enclosed waterslide into Fairmont’s outdoor pool.

After drying off, head to the resort’s 18-hole golf course named by Golf Digest as one of the “Best Places to Play.” There’s also a great playground for children on site and tons of green lawn to run on and play.

During the past decade its owners have invested more than $11 million in upgrades to guest rooms, the dining room and the indoor pool, with renovations to all guest hallways and three suites debuting summer 2019.

Learn more at visitbutte.com and fairmontmontana.com.
With flowers and gorgeously restored historic buildings lining its main street, Philipsburg is one of Montana’s most charming towns.

It’s a place that makes you want to sit on one of its benches along the sidewalk and watch the world go by. But first, you need to indulge in the town’s enormous handmade candy store, The Sweet Palace. Amid the Victorian-era decor, you’ll find 50 kinds of fudge, 20 types of caramel and incredible treats like Dark Chocolate Premium Moose Truffles made with Moose Drool Brown Ale by Big Sky Brewing Co.

Down the street is Sapphire Gallery where you can buy a bag of gravel with local sapphires in it for $25. Staff will show you how to use screens to clean and sort the gravel to uncover the sapphires. You can have the gallery heat-treat them to enhance their color or fashion them into jewelry.

“Everyone loves finding treasure,” says co-owner Shirley Beck. “It’s material that has been waiting for them in the ground for a long time: about 50 million years.”

But Philipsburg itself is a treasure, and you may find it hard to get back into the car when its time to leave.

“Philipsburg has activities and shops, eateries and photo opportunities, but at the end of your visit we just make you feel good. It’s magic,” Beck says.

Learn more at visitphilipsburg.com.
Glacier National Park is a year-round natural beauty of mesmerizing peaks and glistening waters surrounded by charming small towns and unrivaled adventure. Find yourself in Western Montana’s Glacier Country.

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122 YELLOWSTONE EDITION 2019
**EIGHT Stops**

Pull over at these great stops lining the road from Missoula to Glacier National Park.

1. **Kettlehouse Amphitheater**
   - **Why Go:** Built in 2017, this 4,000-person amphitheater along the Blackfoot River is Montana’s version of the Hollywood Bowl and Colorado’s Red Rocks.
   - **Access:** Located just outside of Missoula, this new music venue is in Bonner. To catch a show downtown, visit The Wilma.

2. **Hike the M in Missoula**
   - **Why Go:** Hike the M trail, which takes you on 10-plus switchbacks 620 feet above the valley floor in three quarters of a mile. Go a mile farther to reach the top of Mt. Sentinel for a spectacular view.
   - **Access:** The trailhead is on the University of Montana campus.

3. **Smokejumper Visitor Center in Missoula**
   - **Why Go:** Learn more about this daring group of professionals who parachute into forests to fight wildfires. It’s the only place in the country where you can take a tour of a smokejumper training facility.
   - **Access:** It’s at 5765 W. Broadway St. in Missoula.

4. **Black Coffee Roasting Co. in Missoula**
   - **Why Go:** This local favorite serves organic coffee that is ethically traded, sustainably packaged and tastes great.
   - **Access:** It’s at 5765 W. Broadway St. in Missoula.

5. **National Bison Range**
   - **Why Go:** Look for some of the 350 bison that inhabit the National Bison Range. President Teddy Roosevelt established the range in 1908 to provide a permanent home for bison.
   - **Access:** From the south, take Hwy. 93 north to Ravalli, turning west on Hwy. 200 to Hwy. 212. Travel north on Hwy. 212 for 5 miles to the entrance.

6. **Hockaday Museum**
   - **Why Go:** Discover the stories of Glacier National Park through artists, authors and vintage maps.
   - **Access:** It’s located at 302 2nd Ave. E. in Kalispell, Mont.

7. **The Whiskey Barn**
   - **Why Go:** Glacier water never tasted as good as it does in Glacier Distilling’s small-batch whiskey. Stop at this tasting room to sample this locally made drink and other spirits.
   - **Access:** Just 7 miles from the West Entrance of Glacier National Park, it’s on 10237 Hwy. 2 E. in Coram, Mont.

8. **Two Sisters Cafe**
   - **Why Go:** The huckleberry pie here keeps locals coming back.
   - **Access:** It’s located in Babb past Glacier’s East Entrance.

Learn more at glaciermt.com and destinationmissoula.org.
1. **EAT AT LAKE MCDONALD LODGE**  
Start the day with a continental or full-breakfast buffet at this historic lodge on the west side.

2. **STOP AT THE CEDAR TREE GIFT SHOP**  
Shop at the park’s largest gift store in Apgar for souvenirs or ice cream. Old-growth cedar trees grow through the floor and ceiling. The trees existed long before the store, so the builders let some stay.

3. **HIKE ON LOGAN PASS**  
At 6,646 feet, Logan Pass is the inspiring high point of Going-to-the-Sun Road. Both Hidden Lake Overlook Trail and the Highline Trail leave from here, offering breathtaking opportunities to spot wildlife.

4. **DINE AT MANY GLACIER HOTEL**  
Head to the historic first-come, first-served Ptarmigan Dining Room. Chefs use locally sourced ingredients whenever possible.

5. **TAKE A RED BUS TOUR**  
Ride in the world’s oldest touring fleet of vehicles. Depart from the east or west sides of the park in these 1930s-era vintage buses with roll-back tops. They accommodate 17 people. Tours last between 2.5 to 8 hours, depending on which one you choose.

6. **RIDE ON A HISTORIC BOAT**  
Take the oldest wooden boat in Glacier Park Boat Co.’s fleet across Two Medicine Lake and learn about the area’s Blackfeet Indian history. When the boat docks on the upper west shore, disembark and hike with a naturalist or on your own to Twin Falls. Catch a different return boat or hike back.

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**GLACIER’S TOP SIX**

Here are some of our favorite things to do from hiking to exploring some of Glacier’s most iconic treasures.
Directly between two national treasures lies a third, the C.M. Russell Museum.

With over 60,000 square feet of galleries featuring America’s Cowboy Artist Charles M. Russell and others, the C.M. Russell Museum is not to be missed on the road between Glacier and Yellowstone. Summer 2019 exhibitions include a once in a lifetime gathering of select masterpieces by Charles M. Russell, a tribute to his show at the 1919 Calgary Stampede.

Great Falls Montana is a place for independent, outdoor adventurers looking for a true, authentic Montana experience, located on the Missouri River in the heart of Montana. Great Falls provides a basecamp for a wide range of outdoor adventures and offers a haven of rich arts, culture, and history in a vibrant, modern community where an expansive, unspoiled, diverse landscape will renew your spirit.
In Great Falls, discover world-class paintings and an artsy river walk.

Works of Art

You’ll find one of the West’s most vibrant storytellers in Great Falls, Mont.

But you won’t be able to hear his stories. The great artist Charles Marion Russell died in 1926. Instead, you’ll discover evocative scenes from the 1800s and early 1900s depicted across his broad canvases with splashes of bright-colored paint at the C.M. Russell Museum. You’ll find herds of boisterous elk and the haunting sunlit faces of three Native Americans witnessing a steamboat on the Missouri River for the first time.

“I like to say that the more you dig into Charlie Russell and his art and writings, the more you are drawn into his world,” says Duane Braaten, the museum’s director of art and philanthropy. “You find you’d like to sit around a campfire with him and hear his stories. A visit to the museum is about the closest we’ll ever get to that.”

While artists of Russell’s era like Thomas Moran and Frederic Remington traveled to the West periodically, Russell stayed, carving out a rich life in a corner of the West where the Great Plains roll up to the Rocky Mountain front. The museum, his home and log-hewn studio sit on the city block where Russell, his wife Nancy and son Jack lived.

But there’s more art to be found in Great Falls, and you’ll find it in an unusual place: the River’s Edge Trail. Spanning nearly 60 miles on either side of the Missouri River, this paved and dirt single-track trail weaves past a state park, five waterfalls, a museum, evidence of the town’s mining history and large public art pieces like a big metal Tyrannosaurus Rex and a goose made of old wrenches, nuts and bolts.

From the C.M. Russell Museum, take 15th Street north and turn east onto River Drive to get to the Caboose trailhead marked by a historic caboose in the park. Hop on the trail to walk, bike or rollerblade to Giant Springs State Park, home to one of the world’s largest natural springs. Walk across the bridge with no railings to watch water flow at a stunning rate of 156 million gallons per day. Also in the park, you’ll find Roe River, one of the world’s shortest rivers.

Along the trail is the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center where once inside, you can pull a canoe (made from the wood of a hollowed tree) against the Missouri River’s strong current to see what Lewis and Clark were up against when they passed through the area. But the center is unique in that it covers the entire 1804-06 journey the two men and their team took. It also tells the stories of their experiences with Plains and Northwest Native Americans. Discover more when you go on the center’s outdoor ranger tour.

Learn more about Great Falls at VisitGreatFallsMontana.org. Visit the C.M. Russell Museum, 400 15th St. N., and learn more at cmrussell.org.
You’ll find one of the West’s great small towns in Livingston, a place that’s attracted ranchers, writers, actors and just regular people who fall in love with the area’s natural beauty and vibrant community.

Explore downtown Livingston and its lively restaurants and shops, some of which have been around since the 1800s. Home to the upscale 2nd Street Bistro, the Murray Hotel and Bar ranked as one of former chef Anthony Bourdain’s favorites in the world. Singer John Mayer has shown up at the hotel bar with his guitar, which surprisingly is not that unusual in this little town known for its big music scene.

Head to The Mint Bar and Grill, The Office Lounge and Liquor Store and Pine Creek Lodge to hear tunes. But don’t miss learning more about Yellowstone at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum. Livingston was the original gateway town to the park. Housed in a 1907 schoolhouse, it contains items from 12,000 years ago to present day and explores park and area history.

Learn more at discoverlivingston.com.
Visit Big Sky

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// Under an hour’s drive from the West Entrance of Yellowstone National Park