Montana Entrances to Yellowstone National Park

Providing three of the five entrances to Yellowstone National Park, Montana isn't just the first gateway into the park, it's the most inspiring.

NORTHEAST ENTRANCE: GARDINER, MONTANA
The only year-round entrance into the park is through Gardiner and leads straight into the heart of Yellowstone.

NORTH ENTRANCE: SILVER GATE/COCO CITY, MONTANA
Enter through Cooke City during the spring, summer or fall to traverse the winding Beartooth Highway.

WEST ENTRANCE: WEST YELLOWSTONE, MONTANA
From this picturesque, all-American small town, take one of the many available year-round tours into the park.

Y E L L O W S T O N E C O U N T R Y M O N T A N A

Map Symbols and Other Features

- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Road
- Continental Divide
- Scenic Drive
- Dam
- Lewis and Clark's Trail
- Montana State Park
- Entrance to Yellowstone National Park

Community Activities

- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Horseriding
- Canoeing
- Whitewater Rafting
- Farmers Market
- Golfing
- Bird Watching
- Rock Climbing
- Zip Lining
- ATV

- Downhill Skiing & Snowboarding
- Nordic Skiing
- Dog Sledding
- Sleight Rides
- Snowcoach Rides
- Snowmobiling

Indicates free Wi-Fi

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Scenic Drives

You’ll be hard pressed to find a road in Yellowstone Country that isn’t scenic. Every switchback will surprise you. Every view is a bolt from the blue. And each mile marker reveals another place to pull over and rethink where you spend those hard-earned vacation days.

From the well-known to the less traveled, you’ll find routes both rugged and relaxed, on and off the beaten path. Take your time and take it all in.

Explore some of our top picks below, or surprise yourself and go your own way, because that’s just as...our open roads are wide open for wandering.

**BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY**

**ROUTE:** Red Lodge to Cooke City  
**ROAD:** U.S. Highway 212  
**MILES:** 68  
**TIME:** 3 hours

“it’s not always about how high you climb, but in this case, it helps. This All-American Road is the highest-elevation highway in the Northern Rockies. On the Road’s Charles Kuralt called it “the most beautiful drive in America.” It’s hard to argue with that. This route consists of the Absaroka and Beartooth mountain ranges, with numerous scenic pull-outs and views of 20 peaks towering over 12,000 feet. Pull over and explore alpine plateaus, glacial lakes, lush forested valleys and cascading waterfalls. Added Bonus: Both Red Lodge and Cooke City are impossible towns not to explore. If you have the time, you’ll be ahead to do just that.”

**GALLATIN CANYON**

**ROUTE:** Bozeman to Big Sky  
**ROAD:** U.S. Highway 191 S.  
**MILES:** 44.1  
**TIME:** 55 minutes

The captivating Gallatin Canyon calls, with towering rock formations, deep forests and valleys for miles. If you’re up for a little off-road exploration, you’ll find hiking trails and mountain lakes on either side of the canyon. Or cast a fly rod into the blue-rhino trout waters of the Gallatin River—also a great place to spot rafters and kayakers. Roadside Attraction Alert: Bighorn sheep. They’re no strangers to the Gallatin Canyon. Capable of scaling sheer cliffs in a fraction of a second, these majestic creatures are often spotted high above the river.

**PARADISE VALLEY**

**ROUTE:** Livingston to Gardiner  
**ROAD:** U.S. Highway 89 S.  
**MILES:** 54.3  
**TIME:** 58 minutes

Follow the Yellowstone River along the soaring peaks of the Absaroka Mountains to the east, with the picturesque Gallatin Range to the west. Stop at Malloch’s Rest Fishing Access Site (1.3 miles from Livingston at mile marker 42), for what might be the most scenic part of the drive—the ultimate in Montana views. This aptly named panoramic river valley is the perfect place to get knee deep in a sleepy stretch of the river to cast a fly rod. On your way back to Livingston, take Route 540 and stop in Pray, MT for a soak at Chico Hot Springs, a historic resort settled in the foothills of the Absarokas.

**ABSAROKEE LOOP**

**ROUTE:** Absarokee to Nye  
**ROAD:** State Highway 419/Nye Road + State Highway 7B  
**MILES:** 21.5  
**TIME:** 34 minutes

Wid the way westward along the wild Stillwater River from Absarokee to Nye. Travel through grasslands and a small burn area into a narrow canyon stretch. This quiet road turns to gravel at the Nye Basin, but stays open year-round. Bring your fly rod. The Stillwater fishing access sites are many and the rainbow, brown and cutthroat trout are as well. Follow Fishtail Creek north right into the town of Fishtail. Fuel up at the Fishtail General Store, founded in 1900, which peddles everything but the kitchen sink—from fishing gear to gifts to hand-dipped ice cream.

**YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK**

**ROUTE:** Gardiner to Mammoth Hot Springs  
**ROAD:** U.S. Highway 89 S.  
**MILES:** 54.4  
**TIME:** 1 hour + 40 minutes

**ROUTE:** Norris Geyser Basin to Canyon Village  
**ROAD:** Norris Geyser Basin  
**MILES:** 12.3  
**TIME:** 21 minutes

**ROUTE:** Canyon Village to Tower-Roosevelt  
**ROAD:** Grand Loop Road  
**MILES:** 18.7  
**TIME:** 17 minutes

**ROUTE:** Tower-Roosevelt to Cooke City  
**ROAD:** U.S. Highway 212 E.  
**MILES:** 33.2  
**TIME:** 50 minutes

Take the long, scenic route from Gardiner to Cooke City, Montana through the northwest corner of Yellowstone National Park. First stop: Mammoth Hot Springs. Spend a day or more exploring steaming thermal features like hot springs terraces, hiking or biking, or touring historic Fort Yellowstone and the Albright Visitor Center. Up next: The unique rainbow-colored Norris Geyser Basin is the hottest thermal area in Yellowstone. From there, head to Canyon Village to witness Yellowstone’s 2.0-mile-long Grand Canyon. Next stop: Yellowstone’s Tower-Roosevelt area to visit Tower Fall, Calcite Springs Overlook, Lamar Buffalo Ranch and the Roosevelt Lodge. Last stop: Cooke City by way of the Lamar Valley.

**WINTER IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK**

Winter transforms the park into a sublime wonderland of steamy geysers against pure white snow. From West Yellowstone, take a snowcoach or snowmobile tour into the park to view Steamboat Geyser—the world’s largest. Embark on the surreal with an overnight at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge.

**MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS**

Miles of walking paths allow visitors to explore the steaming thermal area in Yellowstone. From there, head to Canyon Village to witness Yellowstone’s 2.0-mile-long Grand Canyon. Next stop: Yellowstone’s Tower-Roosevelt area to visit Tower Fall, Calcite Springs Overlook, Lamar Buffalo Ranch and the Roosevelt Lodge. Last stop: Cooke City by way of the Lamar Valley.

**BOWLAKE RANCH**

Red Lodge Mountain provides the ultimate ski vacation—mixed terrain, bowl is known for its light, dry powder and the steep chutes experts crave. It’s not always about how high you climb, but in this case, it helps. This All-American Road is the most beautiful drive in America. It’s hard to argue with that. This route consists of the Absaroka and Beartooth mountain ranges, with numerous scenic pull-outs and views of 20 peaks towering over 12,000 feet. Pull over and explore alpine plateaus, glacial lakes, lush forested valleys and cascading waterfalls. Added Bonus: Both Red Lodge and Cooke City are impossible towns not to explore. If you have the time, you’ll be ahead to do just that.

**HIBERNATION IS FOR THE BEARS**

You’re a snow seeker and Montana’s Yellowstone Country is an alpine mecca of diverse winter terrain, both wild and tamed. We get deep with over 400 inches of the fluffy white stuff every season. So get out, feel the crunch of snow underfoot, breathe in the crisp winter air and leave your tracks on as many mountains as you can.

**SLOPES AND RESORTS**

Home to three of Montana’s four largest ski areas, Yellowstone Country owns some of the best skiing in North America. Big Sky Resort offers 5,800 acres of terrain with 4,350 feet of vertical drop and unbelievable views. Bridger Bowl is known for its light, dry powder and the steep chutes experts crave. Red Lodge Mountain provides the ultimate ski vacation—mixed terrain, spectacular vistas and inviting après decks.

**SNOWMOBILING**

West Yellowstone is one of the “best of the best” snowmobiling destinations in North America. The season starts early and ends late, averaging 153 inches of dry, powdery snow each year. Cooke City is equally amazing, with late-season backcountry snowmobiling extending into June and sometimes even July.

**NORDIC SKIING**

Nordic skiing + super volcano = a volcanic winter wonderland with miles of untouched snow through national forests and state parks. Notable trails in Yellowstone Country: Lone Mountain Ranch in Big Sky, Bozeman and Rendezvous Ski Trails in West Yellowstone.

**DOG SLEDDING**

Mush your way through Montana trails to a hot springs soak or a backcountry yurt. Outfitters and lodges in Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Paradise Valley offer half-day, full-day or overnight guided excursions of this increasingly popular winter activity.

**SLEIGH RIDES**

Offer half-day, full-day or overnight guided excursions of this increasingly popular winter activity. Outfitters and lodges in Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Paradise Valley offer half-day, full-day or overnight guided excursions of this increasingly popular winter activity.

**FALL FOR COLOR IN YELLOWSTONE**

There’s always plenty of room to breathe in Montana, but in the fall, perhaps even a little more. Autumn in Yellowstone Country is pure gold. Brown trout are biting. Elk are bragging. Birds are migrating overhead. Hibiscus are in bloom alongside tamaracks and rivers are lined with the oranges and yellows of aspen and cottonwood trees. Evening sunlight filters through autumn’s hues. Fall is the time to take a scenic drive, fish a quiet river, bike or hike the park. See Montana in full color.

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