REMEMBER THAT TRIP TO MONTANA?
Your kids will. They’ll remember the sky. The mountains. The waters. The wildlife. The history. And how they shared it all with you.
Montana

EASY TO GET TO. HARD TO LEAVE.

Lewis and Clark took the adventurous route (the Missouri River) to Montana, but you can hop on a plane or the interstate. Pick an anchor town in one region of this big state (roughly 500 miles by 300 miles).

**Fun Facts**
- **Highest Point**: Granite Peak, 12,799 ft
- **Lowest Point**: Kootenai River, 1,804 ft
- **World’s First National Park**: Yellowstone National Park
- **State Nicknames**: Big Sky Country, The Treasure State
- **Size**: Montana has more than 147,000 square miles to explore.

**Get Here Fast**
Montana is never far from home, thanks to several airports, year-round or seasonal direct flights from many major cities and easy connections from others.

**Road Trip**

- Kalispell: A Mountain Mecca
  - Just 45 minutes from Glacier National Park, Kalispell provides a dream base camp for epic alpine scenery, water adventures and winter bliss.
  - Ride behind pups with Dog Sled Adventures in Olney, or hit the powder at Whitefish Mountain Resort in Whitefish or Blacktail Mountain Ski Area in Lakeside.

**For the Best Winter Vacation Ever**
- Ride behind pups with Dog Sled Adventures in Olney, or hit the powder at Whitefish Mountain Resort in Whitefish or Blacktail Mountain Ski Area in Lakeside.
- **Make Some Waves**
  - Flathead Lake, the state’s largest body of water, provides prime paddling, even for first-timers. *Sea Me Paddle Kayaking* leads tours that match your family with the right water adventure. Want a more relaxed ride? *Pointer Scenic Cruises* in Bigfork launches boat trips to Wild Horse Island State Park, a primitive park in Flathead Lake. For an adrenaline boost, cruise the North or Middle Fork of the Flathead River with *Glacier Guides and Montana Raft*.

**Kid-Centric Checklist**
- Fuel up on muffins and java at Ceres Bakery.
- Shop Imagination Station Toys for creative playthings.
- Eat a slice of pie at The Huckleberry Patch in Hungry Horse.
- Explore pioneer swag at the Museum at Central School.

**Special Partner Section**

- **Check Out These Three Can’t-Miss Attractions**
  - At Glacier National Park: Going-to-the-Sun Road, Trail of the Cedars and the Apgar Falls Trail hike.
Montana’s capital captivates all ages with grand architecture, memorable rides and adventures among some of nature’s greatest hits.

**Go Free-Range**
Play follow-the-leader along the Missouri River Canyon Trail for up-close views of the storied waterway and stunning limestone cliffs. Or hop on an open-air train for a ride through Helena—and history. The Last Chance Tour Train rolls past the Mansion District’s elegant homes and the Cathedral of St. Helena’s soaring spires. Find classic toys and cool new ones at Lasso the Moon Wonderful Toys, where the name of the game is creativity and imagination.

**Dig For Treasure**
Make like old prospectors and sift for precious stones at the Spokane Bar Sapphire Mine and Gold Fever Rock Shop in Helena. You may find blue-green sapphires.

**Man, Caves!**
It’s really cool at Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park in Whitehall. Limestone caves chilled by “natural AC” show off stunning subterranean decor—stalactites, stalagmites, columns and helictites.

**In Helena, Saddle Up at Summer Star Ranch for a Ride Past “Whoa!”-Inducing Scenery. Or Take a Horse-Drawn Wagon to Dinner at Last Chance Ranch.**

**3 Ways to Soak or Swim**
1. Broadwater Hot Springs, Helena. Surrounded by mountains and just ten minutes from downtown.
2. Boulder Hot Springs Inn and Spa, Boulder. Anchored by a 100-year-old inn.

**Here’s a High Five:**
1. Tap to post pics. With majestic mountains and wildlife, Helena fills your trip with photo ops. So keep your phone handy and create instant social media memories with #visithelenamt.
2. Lace up your boots. Helena has miles and miles of trails. Your family hike can go from parks to meadows to rugged mountains—it’s all up to you.
3. Hold the reins. This roundup’s all fun. Ride hand-carved Montana animals at the Great Northern Carousel.
4. Make science a snap. ExplorationWorks! science museum keeps the formula fresh with hands-on exhibits that change quarterly. Outside, kids love the waterfall, stepping stones, supersized musical instruments and big puzzles.
5. Grab goodies. The walking mall on Last Chance Gulch brims with places to shop, dine and otherwise indulge, plus there’s an outdoor play area. And just try to resist the sweet treats at The Parrot Confectionery.

Halfway between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, Helena extends a friendly wave and points out hands-on ways to have fun in the capital of Montana.

HELENA BIGGEST FAMILY ROOM EVER

HELENAMT.COM
Bozeman **YELLOWSTONE’S BACKYARD**

A jumping-off spot for the world’s first national park, Bozeman beckons hikers, climbers, rafters and tubers to play and stay close to nature.

GET SOME HANG TIME

The high rope course at Big Sky Resort, an hour south of Bozeman, dangles you 20–30 feet above the ground (safely harnessed and spotted by a guide). It’s a great way to view Lone Mountain.

HIKES YOU’LL LIKE

**Sweet Trail Mix**

- You can cover Drinking Horse Mountain Trail, right outside of town, in about an hour.
- Fairy Lake Trail, just over a mile, circles a lake in a forested bowl at the foot of Sacagawea Peak.
- The M Trail, a gift from Montana State University’s class of 1918, lies just 4 miles outside Bozeman—look for the big white “M.”

SET A PLAYDATE

The Playful City USA award-winning city promises serious fun for families.

Outdoor recess: Raft, bike or hike. Or take a field trip to Garnet Ghost Town.

Park and ride: Cool off in a water park or ride a carved pony at A Carousel for Missoula.

Do the floss: On Family Friendly Friday at the Top Hat, kids dance to live bands.

Wild ice cream: At Big Dipper or Sweet Peaks, try Mexican Chocolate, Honey Cinnamon or Huckleberry.

Kid science: Learn hands-on at the Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium, or University of Montana spectrUM Discovery Area.

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Great Falls THE HEART OF ADVENTURE

Along the Missouri River, Great Falls delivers the Montana you imagined: waters, wildlife and wilderness wrapped in a long coat of cowboy culture.

ROYAL ROUTE

The 71-mile Kings Hill Scenic Byway rules. It passes lakes and streams, trailheads, campgrounds, old mines and wildlife. It’s also a gateway to snow sports, hot springs and museums for winter exploring.

WATCH THE BIRDIES

Keep an eye on the waterfowl and other wildlife that flock to “prairie potholes” (shallow wetlands) formed by ancient glaciers. Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Great Falls attracts 240 species of birds, as well as coyotes, badgers, porcupines, deer and pronghorn.

3 FOR THE SHOW

Trio of Traditions

1. Immerse yourself in state culture at the Montana State Fair (July 26–August 3). Soak in waves of concerts, carnival fun, food, livestock shows and crafts.

2. See nearly 100 of Montana’s best rodeo cowboys take on the state’s orneriest animals during the Montana PRCA Pro Rodeo Circuit Finals (January 10–12, 2020).

3. At the Lewis and Clark Festival (June 14-16), celebrate the explorers with live music and Native American dance, plus check out the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center.

WADE INTO THE WILDERNESS

at Heaven on Earth Ranch in Great Falls, where you can spend a day fishing or horseback riding. Or take a multiday trip with Montana Safaris in Vaughn—horses and males transport you and your gear.

EXPLORE THE CORE

In the middle of the state, natural beauty and vibrant culture amaze and delight. Get outside and stay outside! In Great Falls, hop on the River’s Edge Trail for views of canyons, waterfalls, mountains and prairies. Kick back at the ranch. Guest ranches cater to families. Triple J Wilderness Ranch offers a special horseback riding program for kids, plus family meals, campfires and stargazing. Be creative. Browse the Lewistown Art Center for Montana art and gifts, hit the Red Ants Pants Music Festival in White Sulphur Springs (kids get in free), and see a show at the century-old Orpheum Theatre in Conrad.
Billings A REAL EYE-OPENER

Even the food looks bigger in Billings, a city of large-scale landscapes perfect for adventurers. Feast your eyes and feed your soul.

OFF-ROAD PERSPECTIVE

Jump in a jeep for a four-wheel-drive foray into the Rockies on Montana Fun Adventures Tours. Or dive deep into Native American customs at Crow Fair (Hopee Capital of the World).

3 GREAT ESCAPES

Parks & Rec

1. Hell Creek State Park near Jordan feels like heaven for anglers, campers and boaters. It’s set on the Hell Creek Arm of Fort Peck Lake.
   For wildlife watchers, it’s game on at Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, about 60 miles southwest of Glasgow. Spot bugling elk, mule deer, red foxes and coyotes.

2. Revel in solitude. The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Lewistown is a haven anchored by the 149-mile Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River.

3. Makoshika State Park holds the fossil remains of dinosaurs, plus a paleontology lab.

RED LODGE, A SMALL TOWN ON THE WAY TO YELLOWSTONE, IS BIG ON OUTDOOR REC, WHITWATER RAFTING, RELAXING FLOATS, TRAIL TREKS, WAGON RIDES AND SKIING.

BUNK IN A Rustic Room

Kempton Hotel, Terry. Built in 1902 and full of retro character—and some say ghosts. Famous guests include Teddy Roosevelt and Calamity Jane.

Dude Rancher Lodge, Billings. Looks like an old frontier ranch house—knotty pine paneling, custom Western furniture and carpets stamped with ranch brands.

Beartooth Basin Bunkhouse, Belt. Rooms have rugged names like Cowboy Up, Riding ‘n’ Roping and Hold Yer Horses. You’re guaranteed a mountain or river view.

DINE DOWNTOWN

Heft a world-champion burger at retro-vibe fave, The Burger Dive. Try not to drool over the mega cinnamon rolls (14 ounces) at Stella’s Kitchen and Bakery. If the giant pretzel appetizer (large pizza size) at Montana Brewing Company doesn’t win over the kids, the nachos and the mac ‘n’ cheese will.

MUSEUM MASH-UP

See a Western bar (with a bullet hole and slug intact) and a rare elk-hide tepee at the Valley County Pioneer Museum in Glasgow. The Children’s Museum of Northeast Montana offers younger kids hands-on learning in play settings like a post office, general store and tree house.

MONTANA FUN ADVENTURES TOURS, BILLINGS

SOUTHEAST MONTANA

SPECIAL PARTNER SECTION

Glasgow NATURALLY INTRIGUING

A finger on a spinning globe gave this old railroad town its Scottish name. Enjoy the beauty of Fort Peck Lake and dig into well-preserved history.

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DINO-NAMIC DUO

Peck’s Rex, a life-size model of a Tyrannosaurus rex found nearby, greets you inside Fort Peck Interpretive Center and Museum in Fort Peck. At Great Plains Dinosaur Museum and Field Station in Malta, spy rare fossils of humbling dinosaurs, delicate plants and ancient sea creatures.

WALK A DINOSAUR TRAIL

Or run it—you never know, right? Makoshika State Park holds the fossil remains of dinosaurs, plus a paleontology lab.

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ULTIMATE TRAILHEAD

Attention, pioneer families: Billings not only rewards you with easy access to Yellowstone National Park (via the Beartooth Highway), but also gifts you the inspiring Rimrocks, Pompeys Pillar and paths to adventure that start right outside your hotel room. The city’s proximity to unspoiled nature assures that your Big Sky Country experiences include down-to-earth folks, restful places to stay, memorable meals, refreshing beverages and big helpings of Western heritage. Plus, you’ll have opportunities to see native animals like grizzly bears, river otters and eastern gray wolves—at ZooMontana, the only attraction of its kind in the Northern Rockies.

CONNECT WITH NATURE

• Set off on more than 40 miles of hiking and biking trails around Billings and along the Yellowstone River, including one just for craft beer-lovers—the Billings Brew Trail.
• Even if you’re not a history buff, a gorgeous overlook makes it worth a trip to the new Yellowstone Kelly Interpretive Site. The landmark honors one of Montana’s most notable frontiersmen.
• Nature spots abound in Billings, including Pictograph Cave State Park. A short trail (less than a mile) takes you through a series of caverns marked by Native American art. Turn the journey into a scavenger hunt with kids.

TAKE THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

It’s one of America’s most beautiful drives—the Beartooth Highway, a 68-mile route leading right into the northeast entrance of Yellowstone National Park. Rising almost 3,000 feet of elevation in 12 miles, it’s one of the world’s highest roads, with post-worthy photo ops at every turn.

APPRECIATE ART

Check out contemporary and historic art of the Rocky Mountain West at the Yellowstone Art Museum. And browse the collection of artifacts and exhibits at The Western Heritage Center, showcasing the stories of life in the Yellowstone River Valley.

LIVE IT UP DOWNTOWN

With award-winning burgers and James Beard-nominated chefs, Billings shows its restaurant chops. Here’s a must-try menu:

• Locally grown flavors at The Fieldhouse
• Ice cream at Big Dipper
• Refined pub grub at Last Chance Pub and Cider Mill

VISITBILLINGS.COM/PARENTS
Indian Country RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE

Experience the varied languages, culture and histories of native tribes in Montana. Ancient traditions carried on today enrich the state’s diverse cultural heritage.

SEE NATIVE ART AND ARTIFACTS

Study paintings, sculptures and photography created by Northern Plains peoples at the Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning. Exhibits display tribal clothing, weapons and household items.

POW WOW CELEBRATION

Come to North American Indian Days (July 11–14) in Browning for drumming and dancing, a parade, fun run and rodeo. The Rocky Boy’s Annual Powwow (August) in Rocky Boy’s features cultural demonstrations as well as ethnic and traditional food. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes hold the People’s Center Celebration and Pow-wow (August 17) in Pablo. The Fort Belknap Indian Community, home to the Nakoda and Aaniiih nations, hosts Milk River Indian Days (July 19–21) and a Veterans Day powwow (December 21–22).

VIEW TRIBAL CULTURE THROUGH Expert Eyes

1 On Blackfeet Cultural History Tours, a native guide rides along in your vehicle to explain historic tribal sites.
2 The Battle of the Little Bighorn (aka Custer’s Last Stand) comes to life via a Crow guide on Indian Battle Tours.
3 Montana Journeys offers small-group tours led by native Montanan anthropologists and archaeologists.

INDIAN BATTLE TOURS

Most powwows are open to the public—an emcee explains what’s going on. Heed any rules about taking photos. FYI: You may be invited to dance!

STATE PARKS

BANNACK, THE FRIENDLY GHOST TOWN

The Old West echoes in deserted streets and empty buildings. The site of Montana’s first big gold strike, once-booming Bannack, left behind more than 60 log-and-frame structures. Start your tour of Bannack State Park at the visitors center. During Bannack Days (July 20–21), watch demos of pioneer skills, try your hand at panning for gold or making candles, take retro rides and move to old-time music. You may even see a gunfight or stagecoach robbery. During Living History weekend (September 19–22), interpreters depict 1860s life at sites like a mining camp, blacksmith shop, general store, school, saloon, boarding house, butcher shop and church.

STATEPARKS.MT.GOV

BEAUTY AND BEASTS

Parents fall in love with the scenery; kids get googly-eyed over creatures.

Head to Makoshika State Park in Glendive for rugged badlands and dinosaur fossils. The visitors center’s exhibits tell tales as old as time, while trails beckon hikers and cyclists. Follow the Montana Dinosaur Trail to Makoshika Visitors Center, Frontier Gateway Museum and Carter County Museum. Marvel at life-sized replicas of dinosaurs and take part in fossil digs. Prefer live creatures? ZooMontana in Billings, the state’s only zoo and botanical park, spotlights native Montana critters.

SOUTHEASTMONTANA.COM
LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE

Now that you’ve gotten a bird’s-eye view of Montana, go to VISITMT.COM/PARENTS to swoop down for details and updates on regions, events and attractions.

From general inspiration to specific trip ideas, VISITMT.COM is your source for places to go and things to do in Big Sky Country. With a wealth of information on the national parks, Native American nations, outdoor activities, history, culture and more, there is something for every adventurer.

TRAVEL RESOURCES

VISITMT.COM/plan-your-trip.html

Road conditions (available statewide):
511 or MDT511.com

Travel Info Mobile App: MDT.MT.GOV/TRAVINFO

National Parks:
Glacier National Park 406.888.7800
Yellowstone National Park 307.344.7381

#MONTANAMOMENT