

MONTANA'S BASECAMP

The official visitor guide of Great Falls, Montana.

*FIND ALL 4 FALLS
WITH EASE*
pg. 19

*ACTUAL EXPERTS
SHARE 9 DAY HIKE
RECOMMENDATIONS*
pg. 26

*10 SIGNATURE
EVENTS TO
PLAN AROUND*
pg. 37

*16 DAYS OF ART
AND ADVENTURE
PLANNED FOR YOU*
pg. 47

VISIT
Great Falls
MONTANA

VisitGreatFallsMontana.org



Cory Reeves
Great Falls Mayor



Scan to watch an
intro to Great Falls!

WELCOME TO GREAT FALLS!

Welcome to the City of Great Falls! We love our community and hope you'll enjoy Great Falls whether you're here for a weekend getaway, a family vacation, on business, attending a meeting, or considering a new place to call home. Whatever the reason, I appreciate this opportunity to extend to you a warm and hearty welcome to Montana's Basecamp!

Our central location within Montana gives us the most diverse landscape in the state! Rivers, mountains, plains, buttes, and bluffs make us one of the best recreational communities. Our community takes pride in our modern services, first-class facilities, limitless cultural opportunities, and extensive programs and services for all ages. We are committed to the preservation and protection of the environment and take great pride in our city parks. The safety of our residents and visitors is a priority. Consider this your invitation to visit the many art attractions throughout the city and stop into our downtown stores.

The City of Great Falls is a caring community where neighbors support each other, and families grow and prosper in a safe and healthy environment. No matter if you are here for a short time, a long while, or have chosen to make this your home, please enjoy yourself. If you are visiting, we hope that you'll experience the warmth and hospitality of our community and the many reasons to return. If you've chosen to make Great Falls your home, we hope that you will feel community pride and will come to fully appreciate the value of being part of our great city.

Thinking of Moving Here? Visit LiveInGreatFalls.com.



#VisitGreatFalls #GreatFallsMontana #BestofBasecamp

WHAT YOU'LL FIND

With its prime location, Great Falls makes the ideal basecamp for all your adventures.



**Glacier
National
Park**



**Little Belt
Mountains**



**Highwood
Mountains**



**Bob Marshall
Wilderness**



**Missouri
River**



**Yellowstone
National
Park**



**Freezeout
Lake**



**Benton
Lake Wildlife
Refuge**

GREAT FALLS 101

Whether you're planning a visit, moving, or are a longtime local, there are a few things you ought to know about Great Falls.

Cascade County Seat

3,373 Feet of Elevation

58,434 Residents

3rd Largest City in Montana

19.9 Square Miles

Mountain Time Zone

12
Museums

5 State
Parks

3
Rivers

2
Wilderness
Areas

1 Wildlife
Refuge

GTF ✈️

Great Falls International Airport is serviced by Delta, United, Alaska, and Allegiant Air with direct service to Seattle, Denver, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City. Seasonal flights available direct to Chicago.

Amtrak 🚂

Great Falls is 85 miles south of Shelby, a station drop for the Empire Builder.

Greyhound 🐾

Great Falls is accessible by Greyhound Bus Lines. Salt Lake Express serves Great Falls.

Average Temperatures by Month

Degrees Fahrenheit

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
↑	32	32	43	52	63	72	83	82	71	55	41	30
↓	20	18	27	35	43	50	56	58	51	38	27	18

Great Falls Montana Tourism
15 Overlook Drive
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 761-4436

CONTACT & SOCIAL



information@VisitGreatFalls.org



VisitGreatFallsMontana.org



@VisitGreatFalls



@VisitGreatFallsMontana



@VisitGreatFalls

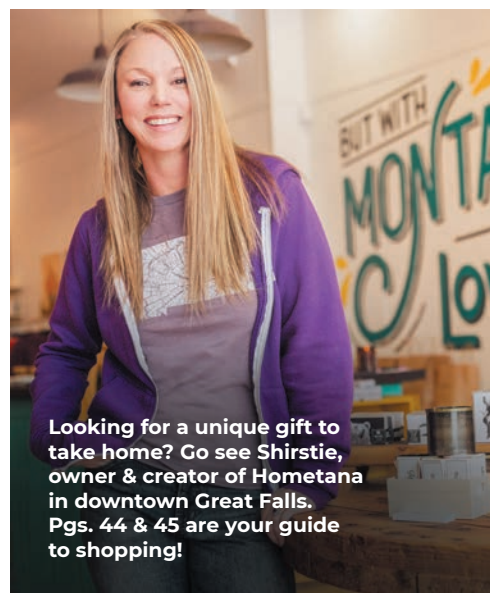
**LISTEN TO
OUR PODCAST
WE'RE NO
DAM
EXPERTS**

©2024 Great Falls Montana Tourism. When we created this all the information was correct. However, things change so there may be errors now. We apologize for that, don't hold it against us. This magazine is printed for free distribution.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Only in Great Falls

- 4-5 **Get Your Local Stuff**
- 6 **C.M. Russell**
- 7-8 **The Museum Capital**
- 10-11 **The Art Part**
- 24 **9% of the State's Parks**
- 31 **Montana's First Ski Hill**
- 35 **Western Art Week**
- 36-37 **Events Highlight**
- 38 **Voyage to the Unknown**
- 42 **Epic Experiences**
- 44-45 **Shop Til You Drop**



Looking for a unique gift to take home? Go see Shirstie, owner & creator of Hometana in downtown Great Falls. Pgs. 44 & 45 are your guide to shopping!

Get Out & Explore

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| 12 | Great Buffalo Hunt | 28-29 | City Park Sampler |
| 13 | Beer & A Show | 32-33 | Scenic Drives |
| 14-15 | River Adventures | 39 | Sports of All Sorts |
| 18-19 | Find the Falls | 40-41 | Dining Options |
| 20-23 | Glacier & Yellowstone | 52 | Tips for Good Pics |
| 26 | Day Hike Options | | |

Locals Tell All

- 9 **Native American History**
- 16 **River's Edge Trail**
- 24 **Sluice Boxes State Park**
- 27 **The Chinese Wall**
- 30 **Snowshoe Silver Crest**
- 34 **Western Art Capital**



French pressed tequila, hibiscus, & grapefruit
@ Elevation 3330,
410 Central Ave, Suite 201.
More Drinks to Drink on pg. 43



Great Falls has the place to get your six pack and a pound. Find many other dining options on pg. 40.

TAKE IT HOME

Great Falls is packed full of local flavor, finds, and fun. Here are some of our favorite things you can take home to share with others. Or keep them all to yourself—we won't tell!



CANDY

Get your fix at Candy Masterpiece. Choose from over 150 flavors of fudge, 25 flavors of salt water taffy pulled in house every Friday, truffles, chocolate creams, caramels, barks, and bulk candy.



POPCORN

With recipes dating back to 1931, The Popcorn Colonel has a variety of gourmet flavors, classics like Kettle and Caramel Corn, and local faves like Montana Mix. Their monthly specials, like Black Licorice in October, are highly sought after.



MEAT

A new-school meets old-school craft butcher counter, Central Avenue Meats is here to bring you locally sourced Montana beef! So, make sure you have a cooler or buy one at Scheels, North 40 or Big Horn Outdoor Specialists.



COFFEE

Locally-roasted beans from Morning Light (may we recommend the Charlie Russell Blend) are a must! Be sure to try beans from Electric City Coffee & Bistro, Crooked Tree Coffee, and Al Banco too!



LIBATIONS

The most local beer is in Great Falls, Montana. Grab growlers, six packs, crowlers, whatever you desire, from Mighty Mo and Jeremiah Johnson Brew Company.



HAND-DYED YARN

The Farmer's Daughter Fibers offers a wide range of yarn, hand dyed, and bundled into color collections. Find patterns to create your next creation too. You'll want all the colors, even if you don't knit.



ART

You're in Montana's Basecamp for ART & Adventure so grab some art. You'll find options at Electric City Coffee and Bistro, Winston Galleries, and the gift shops at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, C.M. Russell Museum, and History Museum.



LOCAL FOOD

When you visit a place known for its agriculture, plan to take home local products like Smoot Honey, Timeless Seeds, and Great Harvest Bread from 2J's Fresh Market. Find Parkers Hangover Tonic at Pizazz for a Bloody Mary or Caesar!



COWBOY GEAR

Go back home with a little more than just Great Falls in your heart!

Don some new boots, a hat, great jewelry, and maybe a rope. Let Hoglund's help you get your western duds done right.



WOOD

Take home some hard wood from Great Falls. The Good Wood Guys operate an urban saw mill where they create custom pieces as well as great take-n-make projects everyone will enjoy! The team can even share stories about where their products come from.



THE OL' STANDBYS

Find all the staples you have come to expect when you travel—like apparel, hats, stickers, mugs, and more at Montana's Largest Specialty Dry Goods Store, Dragonfly. Or, Hometana, which offers custom Montana-made apparel. Check out Cassiopeia Books and museum gift shops for amazing books about Montana.

CM RUSSELL

Famed cowboy artist, Charles Marion Russell, is cornerstone to the history and culture of Great Falls. Today, Great Falls is home to not just the museum that bears his name, but also to the home he shared with his wife Nancy, and his studio, all in one expanding complex. Since we haven't yet found someone to make hologram Charlie a reality, let us tell you a little bit about this fella.

In a time before everyone had a camera in their pocket, Charlie captured everyday life in the west. His work covers nearly all media: pencil, watercolor, pen and ink, oil, and sculptures. It also covers every subject: first people, women, wildlife, landscapes, historic events, cattle rustling, and gun fights.

Charlie created over 4,000 pieces of art in his lifetime, 2,000 of which are part of the C.M. Russell Museum's collection today. It was common in the late 1800's and early 1900's to find Charlie's work throughout the business community in Great Falls. Charlie would often adorn letters with sketches and

provide his work as gifts. It seems everyone in the area had a story about Charlie.

One story is about the Exalted Ruler that once hung in the local Elk's Lodge, where Russell was a member. The story goes that Charlie provided the lodge this painting in lieu of payment for a bar tab. It hung in the lodge for many years, getting covered by dust, cigarette smoke, and likely spilled drinks; a far cry from a museum quality environment. A community effort raised funds for the Museum to purchase this painting and restore it to its current glory. It adorns the walls of the legacy gallery now with a plaque that commemorates all those who helped fund the purchase.

Hear more stories about Charlie and his work in Episode 13 of the podcast, We're No Dam Experts, or by watching the 3-part series "C.M. Russell and the American West" on Montana PBS.



MUSEUMS FOR ALL



GALERIE TRINITAS

1301 20th Street South
800-856-9544

Dedicated to Sister Mary Trinitas Morin's legacy, the museum is on the campus of University of Providence, where she taught for 33 years. Sister Morin was a multi-media artist, and her works and others are on display here.



FIRST PEOPLES BUFFALO JUMP STATE PARK

342 Ulm Vaughn Road
Ulm, Montana
406-866-2217

North America's largest
bison cliff jump and National
Historic Landmark.



LEWIS AND CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER

4201 Giant Springs Road
406-727-8733

North America's most extensive
display of the Corps of Discovery's
expedition, from St Louis to the
Oregon coast and back.



CM RUSSELL MUSEUM

400 13th Street North
406-727-8787

Voted Montana's Best Museum
housing over 2,000 pieces of
CM Russell's works.



MONTANA MUSEUM OF RAILROAD HISTORY

400 3rd Street Northwest
DZook@mt.net

Watch a meticulously crafted
model railroad layout run
and get hands on with
an actual caboose.



CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF MONTANA

22 Railroad Square
406-452-6661

Montana's first and largest
Children's Museum. Engage with
20 hands-on exhibits, including a
real plane's cockpit and an
actual coffee shop.



MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE MUSEUM AND AIR PARK

90 Whitehall Drive
406-731-2705

The largest military model aircraft displays in the northwest with World War II Era barracks.



THE URSULINE HERITAGE MUSEUM

2300 Central Avenue
406-452-8585

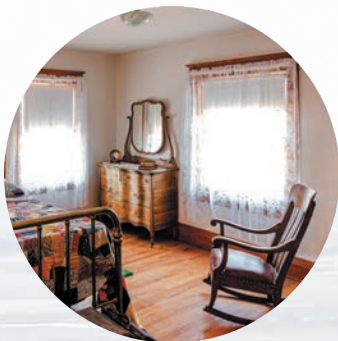
Learn the story of the Ursuline Sisters who came to Montana in 1884 as missionaries to the Native Americans and settlers.



PARIS GIBSON SQUARE MUSEUM OF ART

1400 1st Avenue North
406-727-825

The Square is the leading contemporary art museum in North Central Montana. One of the two permanent installations focuses on a Montana stick figure artist. The remaining galleries change to highlight artists with intriguing stories to tell.



BROTHER VAN HOUSE

113 6th Street North
406-453-3114

Enhance your Historic Lower North Side Residential walking tour by walking into and touring the home of William Wesley Van Orsdel, or Brother Van, from 1910.



THE HISTORY MUSEUM

422 2nd Street South
406-452-3462

Preserving all the things that have ever happened in Cascade County, you can spend days in just the 4,500 square foot archive and research center. It's quite the tall order, but anything you want to know about Cascade County can be found here.



MONTANA ROOM

301 2nd Avenue North
406-453-0349

The Montana Room, located within the Great Falls Public Library, holds a special collection of Montana materials. It houses the only display of the original stained-glass windows from the first library in Great Falls--The Valeria Library which was named after Paris Gibson's wife.

FIRST PEOPLES BUFFALO JUMP

Native American History

Great Falls, Montana was a crossroad for a number of tribes prior to colonization. Many Indigenous people laid claim to the area, including Shoshone, Blackfeet, Crow, Nez Perce, Kootenai, Gros Ventre, and Assiniboine – but mostly, this was considered Blackfeet territory.

The reason it was so popular? The Missouri River. The river offered, if you will, a demarcation line. The Missouri River doesn't provide a lot of great places to cross; however, here, in what is now Great Falls, the waters are shallow, and the ease of crossing appealed to the tribes and the sought-after buffalo.

Great Falls may not strike you right away as a mecca of Native American history, but it's here to discover, nugget by nugget. It's spread across all the cultural

assets in Great Falls, but most notably, it's at First People's Buffalo Jump State Park and National Heritage Area.

Many people want to get to the edge of the jump and look out. Really, to get a full understanding of the buffalo jump, people need to know how they were used. The only way you can do that is to turn around and face backward. You will notice stones in a line, shaped like a V, with an apex that comes to the buffalo jump. Those stones created drive lines. Cattle were relatively easy to herd, but you don't herd buffalo. So, they had to be influenced in a specific direction. Then, at the critical moment when the buffalo are where they needed to be, they were stampeded over the edge of the cliff.

The buffalo jump was not the only method for Native Americans to get the

much-needed food and materials to survive on the plains, but it was the most effective numbers-wise. You could get a lot of buffalo in just one maneuver, but it took a lot of planning. The stampeding was just the first part of the buffalo jump experience. Whole camps were set up below where the women would come in and start the butchering process of the meat. Some of the meat was processed immediately and some was made into pemican to be stored and used through winter.

Learn more about the Native American history connected to Great Falls and pemican at North America's largest buffalo jump Visitor Center, located below the jump, or by listening to Episode 14, 18, and 22 of the podcast, *We're No Dam Experts*.



James Parker Shield
Little Shell Chippewa
and Great Falls Resident



Environmental Art

Ever wondered why Great Falls is called Montana's Basecamp for Art and Adventure? The adventure part may be obvious by our location with several mountain ranges visible from town, plains, and the Missouri River that runs right through our city. The art? Well, with 12 museums and over 40 murals lining the streets of downtown we like to say we have art around every corner. If you're looking to check out all the street art, we've got you covered! Check out the map below and the corresponding key to the right to guide your downtown art walk. Oh, and spoiler alert: there are more murals to come.



- 1 301 Central Ave.**
by Buckeye Blake
- 2 302 2nd Ave. N.**
by Jim DeStaffany and Andrew Fowler
- 3 302 2nd Ave. N.**
by Zak H Zakovi
- 4 423 1st Ave. N.**
by Jim DeStaffany and Andrew Fowler
- 5 509 1st Ave. N.**
by Jenna Morello, Fasm and Aaron Vickery
- 6 9 5th St. S.**
by CamerIsf
- 7 15 5th St. S.**
by CamerIsf, Leaf Argotti, Wes7svn, Sheree Nelson, Tommy Kauston and Geoff Guich
- 8 17 7th St. S.**
by CamerIsf and Allison Bamcat
- 9 8 5th St. S.**
by CamerIsf
- 10 608 1st Ave. S.**
by CamerIsf
- 11 315 1st Ave. S. and 4th St. N.**
by Various Local Artists
- 12 114 3rd St. S.**
by Jim DeStaffany and Andrew Fowler
- 13 101 Central Ave.**
by Ryan Rhodes
- 14 509 1st Ave. N.**
by Aaron Vickery, Daniel Toledo and Leaf Argotti
- 15 17 7th St. S.**
by Allison Bamcat
- 16 504 Central Ave.**
by Sheree Nelson
- 17 612 1st Ave. S.**
by CamerIsf and Local Artists
- 18 1st Ave. N. Underpass**
by Local Artists
- 19 132 1st Ave. N.**
by Mike Hollerin
- 20 6 5th St. N.**
Various Murals
by Sheree Nelson, CamerIsf, Fasm, Ricky Watts, Tana Murray
- 21 111 Central Ave.**
by DaFlemingo
- 22 618 Central Ave.**
by Ricky Watts
- 23 1 1st Ave. N.**
(under walking bridge)
by Rachel Kaiser
- 24 705 Central Ave.**
by Vizsla Bacon
- 25 614 Central Ave.**
by Sheree Nelson
- 26 525 1st Ave. N.**
by John Pepion
- 27 525 1st Ave. N.**
by Louis Still Smoking
- 28 815 1st Ave. N.**
by Cobre
- 29 509 1st Ave. N.**
by CamerIsf
- 30 721 Central Ave.**
by Royyal Dog
- 31 420 Central Ave.**
by Senta
- 32 411 Central Ave.**
by Fasm
- 33 509 1st Ave. N.**
by Vizsla Bacon
- 34 710 1st Ave. N.**
by Max Sansing
- 35 718 1/2 Central Ave.**
by Fasm
- 36 619 Central Ave.**
by EverydayResearch
- 37 612 Central Ave.**
by Ratur
- 38 620 Central Ave.**
by La Morena
- 39 13 5th St. N.**
by Rilie Tane
- 40 24 5th St. S.**
by Ian Ross
- 41 306 1st Ave. S.**
by CamerIsf
- 42 117 Suite A Park Dr. S.**
by Louis Still Smoking
- 43 112 Central Ave.**
by Joseph Toney



The Great Buffalo Hunt

As a nod to the important role bison played in the history and culture of the area, our community has added artistic representations of these larger-than-life animals around town. See if you can find them all!

Rainboffalow

Milwaukee Station
1 River Dr

Buffalo Ponies

Johnson Building
417 Central Ave

The Four Seasons

Great Falls
International Airport
1920 Airport Ct

The Seven Brothers

Great Falls Chamber
of Commerce
100 1st Ave N

Faces of the West

KOA Campground
1500 51st St S

Sacajawea –**Montana to the Pacific**

Great Falls High Fieldhouse
1900 2nd Ave S

Buffalo Nights

Great Falls Clinic Lobby
3000 15th Ave S

Shape Of Things To Come II

Heritage Inn
1700 Fox Farm Rd

Saving the Buffalo

US Bank
1700 10th Ave S

Buffalo Spring Tales

Bravera
Bank Lobby
1019 7th St S

**Dance By The Light
Of The Moon**

Great Falls College MSU
2100 16th Ave S

Morning Star Buffalo

First Interstate Bank
2601 10th Ave S

America's Great Plains

DA Davidson Company
2nd St & Central

Trails Plowed Under

CM Russell Museum
400 13th St N

Pishkun

CM Russell Museum
400 13th St N

Tatanka

Paris Gibson Education Center
2400 Central Ave

Bountiful Visions

Benefis Women's &
Children's Center
2720 10th Ave S

Prickly Pear & Buffalo Hair

Chili's
1420 Market Place Dr

Mighty Mo

Sletten Cancer Institute
1117 29th St S

The Bison Branch

Lewis & Clark
Interpretive Center
4201 Giant Springs Rd

**Keepers Of An
Ancient Covenant**

Little Shell Tribal Headquarters
511 Central Ave W

Learn more about this uniquely Great Falls adventure by listening to our "We're No Dam Experts" podcast, Episode 35: The Keepers of the Buffalo.



Great Buffalo Hunt



Local Beer

Over 750,000 acres of malt barley are planted in Montana annually—a good bit of it within 50 miles of Great Falls. When harvested, it's hauled straight into Great Falls and malted. That malt is then delivered directly to the back doors of Jeremiah Johnson Brewing Co, Mighty Mo Brewing Co, and others. It doesn't get more local than that!



Jeremiah Johnson Brewing Company's production facility is located in downtown Great Falls. There, 7 staple brews are produced and packaged, including the flagship and award-winning Scotch Ale named Mountain Man. Mountain Man + Jeremiah Johnson, get it? Just to add to the story, Jeremiah Johnson Brewing Co is owned by a guy named Jeremiah Johnson and his wife Katherine. The brewery also produces special, one-off seasonal beers. Their award-winning brews can be found in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Washington, North Dakota, South Dakota and beyond.

Mighty Mo Brewing Company's production facility is also in downtown Great Falls and is attached to their brew pub, so you can see the beer brewing while you drink it. The Mighty Mo is named after North America's longest river, the Missouri, which runs right through town. The Mighty Mo has 6 beers that are produced year-round. Head brewer, Casey, gets creative with seasonal brews, so try 'em when you can. General Manager Seth ensures you have a well-rounded experience by offering amazing pizza made with local flour, natural wines, live music, and an outdoor patio.



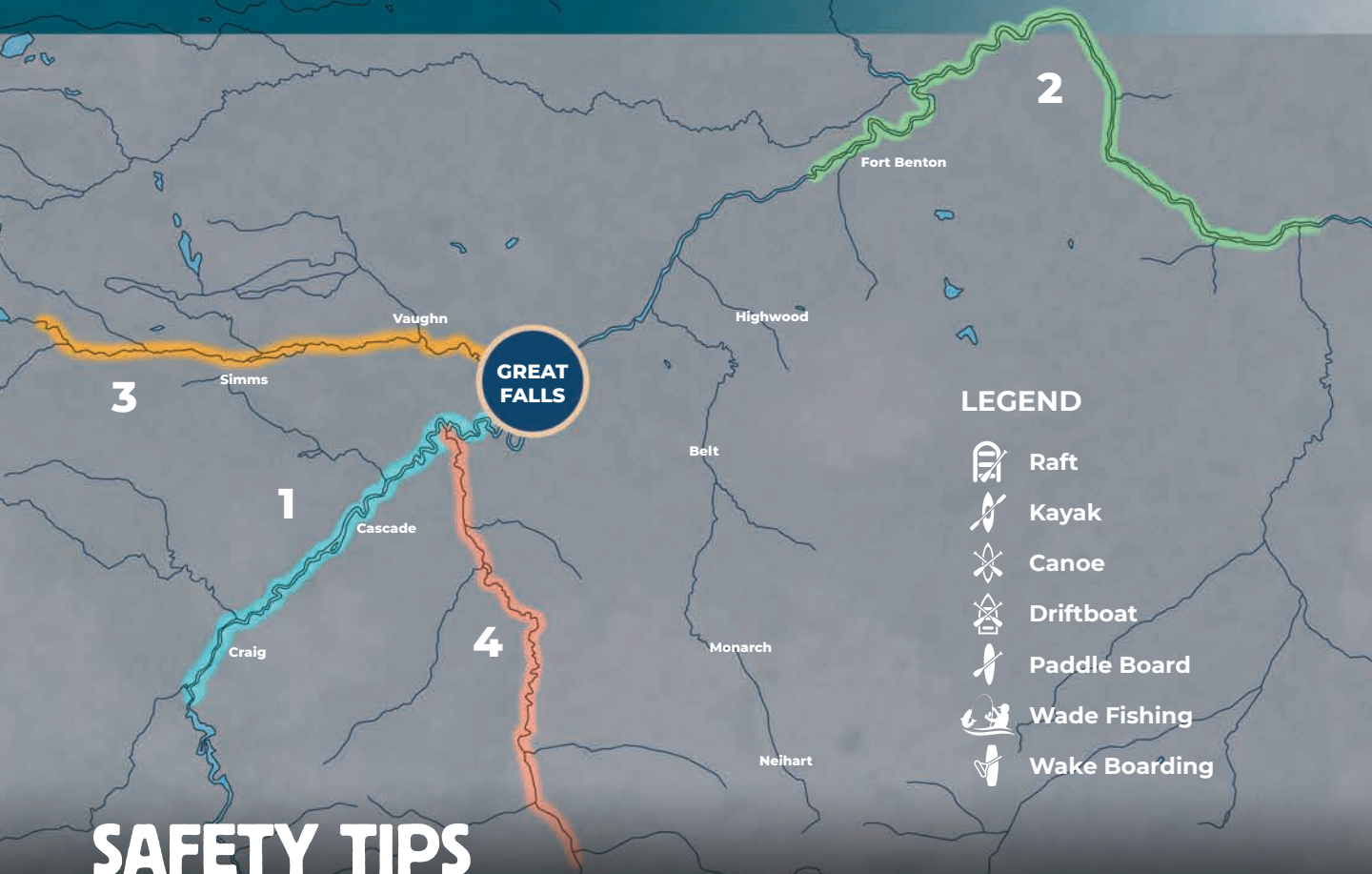
Symphony

Before you flip past this page, you need to know that Great Falls Symphony performances are AHH-MAZING, no matter your musical taste. The Great Falls Symphony is comprised of a mix of local and professional talent, some Juilliard trained. Nine principal musicians are employed, who also form the world-touring Chinook Winds and Cascade Quartet. Famous musicians sometimes join the symphony for a real treat! In 2019 Béla Fleck was here and Yo-Yo Ma in 2004 and 2016. Itzhak Perlman graced the Mansfield stage in 2005 and Midori in 2007, just to do a little name dropping.

Founded in 1959, the symphony has a long history in Great Falls. The Great Falls Symphony season runs through the fall and winter so if you're visiting during our colder months make sure to get tickets. All performances are held inside the Mansfield Center for Performing Arts.

RECREATE ON THE RIVER

A river runs through it? In Great Falls it does! The Missouri River runs right through town and is just one of the many rivers that runs through the area, offering plenty of opportunities for river-based adventures! Here we have highlighted our favorite local stretches.



SAFETY TIPS

BE SURE TO BRING:



A lifejacket



1 throw rope for every person on a boat



1 river knife for every person on a boat



A GPS



Potential hazards like downed wood or bear sightings by calling local river outfitters



Water levels and temperatures - visit waterdata.usgs.gov



Bear spray



A change of clothes in a dry bag



A first-aid kit



Wool or a quick-drying material (not cotton)



The weather - bring appropriate clothing



Route for rapids and blind river curves

1

MISSOURI RIVER (BELOW HOLTER):**Level of Difficulty:** Class I, suitable for beginners**Popular Access Points:** Holter Dam, Wolf Creek Bridge, Craig, Dearborn, Mid-Canon, Mountain Palace, Prewett Creek, Pelican Point**Local Outfitters/Shuttles:** Montana River Outfitters**Other Outfitters/Shuttles:** Headhunters, CrossCurrents

2

UPPER MISSOURI RIVER BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT:**Level of Difficulty:** Class I, suitable for beginners**Popular Access Points:** Fort Benton, Loma, Coal Banks Landing, Judith Landing**Local Outfitters/Shuttles:** Montana River Outfitters**Other Outfitters/Shuttles:** Upper Missouri River Guides, Missouri River Outfitters

3

SUN RIVER:**Level of Difficulty:** Class I-II at normal flows with a few more difficult spots; Class V for 2.5 miles below Gibson Dam**Popular Access Points:** Highway 287 bridge, Lowry Bridge, Simms Bridge, Fort Shaw Bridge, Sun River Old Railroad Bridge, Vaughn Bridge**Outfitters/Shuttles:** Not available

4

SMITH RIVER:**Permit Required:** Visit <https://fwp.mt.gov/stateparks/smith-river> to enter lottery**Level of Difficulty:** Class I-II, suitable for beginners**Popular Access Points:** Camp Baker, Eden Bridge**Local Outfitters/Shuttles:** Montana River Outfitters**Other Outfitters/Shuttles:** Smith River Outfitters, Smith River Flyfishing, Blackfoot River Outfitters

THE RIVER'S EDGE TRAIL

"In the late 1980's, Chuck and I were riding our bikes along Lower River Road. At a curve, with a double line, a trailer passed Chuck, then a speeding motorcycle passed the trailer, and then a dog ran out. I thought it was the end of my husband. The motorcycle rider yelled at me for having a dog on the road. The dog wasn't mine, so I returned the favor." This is the moment Gerry Jennings recounts as the beginning of developing a safe bike path in Great Falls.

That near-death experience was still fresh in Chuck and Gerry's mind when they attended a community engagement session where they shared their vision for a bike path. Others

agreed and a recreational trail was proposed as part of the Vision 2000 plan for Great Falls.

In the beginning, 5.5 miles of trail was proposed between the Warden Bridge and Giant Springs State Park, running along the abandoned Burlington Northern railbed—can you say Rails to Trails? A committee of around twelve folks gathered in July 1990 to figure out where this trail would go. Chuck recalls "The Broadwater Bay meeting is where we first met Doug Wicks. He thankfully had time on his hands and a passion for trail development. He and his wife Karen, a nurse, were very committed to the effort."

Over 30 years later, Chuck is still involved in what is now The River's Edge Trail. 53 total miles (and growing) of trail, complemented by 28 works of art. "It is what it is because of Doug and Karen Wicks, a community who brought it to life, the support of the City of Great Falls, and numerous volunteers that work to improve the experience still today," shares Gerry.

The Urban Loop pelican statue, created by Alex Smithson, is in honor of Doug. And, that swing across from that pelican is where you'll often find Karen enjoying their labor of love and remembering the impact her husband had on Great Falls.

Get this map at the
Tourism Basecamp at
15 Overlook Drive



Scan to see more
Art Along the Trail

BIKING

Great Falls is your basecamp for biking with mountain, road, and trail rides to fit all styles. Check out a few rides we love to inspire your adventure! Be sure to grab a map from the Forest Service office, Bighorn Outdoor Specialists or Scheels before you hit the pedals.

North Pilgrim Creek

Little Belt Mountains
22 Miles Out & Back
14.5 miles with shuttle
Trailhead is about a 1.5 hour drive from Great Falls, through Monarch



Bender Creek

Little Belt Mountains
14 Mile Loop or 6 Miles Out & Back
Trailhead off Hughesville Road about a 1.5 hour drive from Great Falls



Eden

Foothills of Little Belt Mountains
42 Miles Out & Back
Light to moderately traveled paved two-lane road with tough hills



Urban Loop

Rivers Edge Trail
6 Mile Loop
Loop is paved and starts right in Great Falls at Overlook Park



South Shore

River's Edge Trail
Lower Route Expert, Upper Route Easy
16 Miles Out & Back
Trailhead in Great Falls at Rainbow Dam Overlook



Windy Mountain Loop

Highwood Mountains
9 Mile Loop
Trailhead at Thain Creek Campground, just over an hour drive from Great Falls



Jones Creek

Rocky Mountain Front
6 Miles Out & Back
Jones Creek Trailhead is just under 2 hours from Great Falls, through Choteau



LEGEND



Trail



Mountain



Road



Loop



Easy



Intermediate



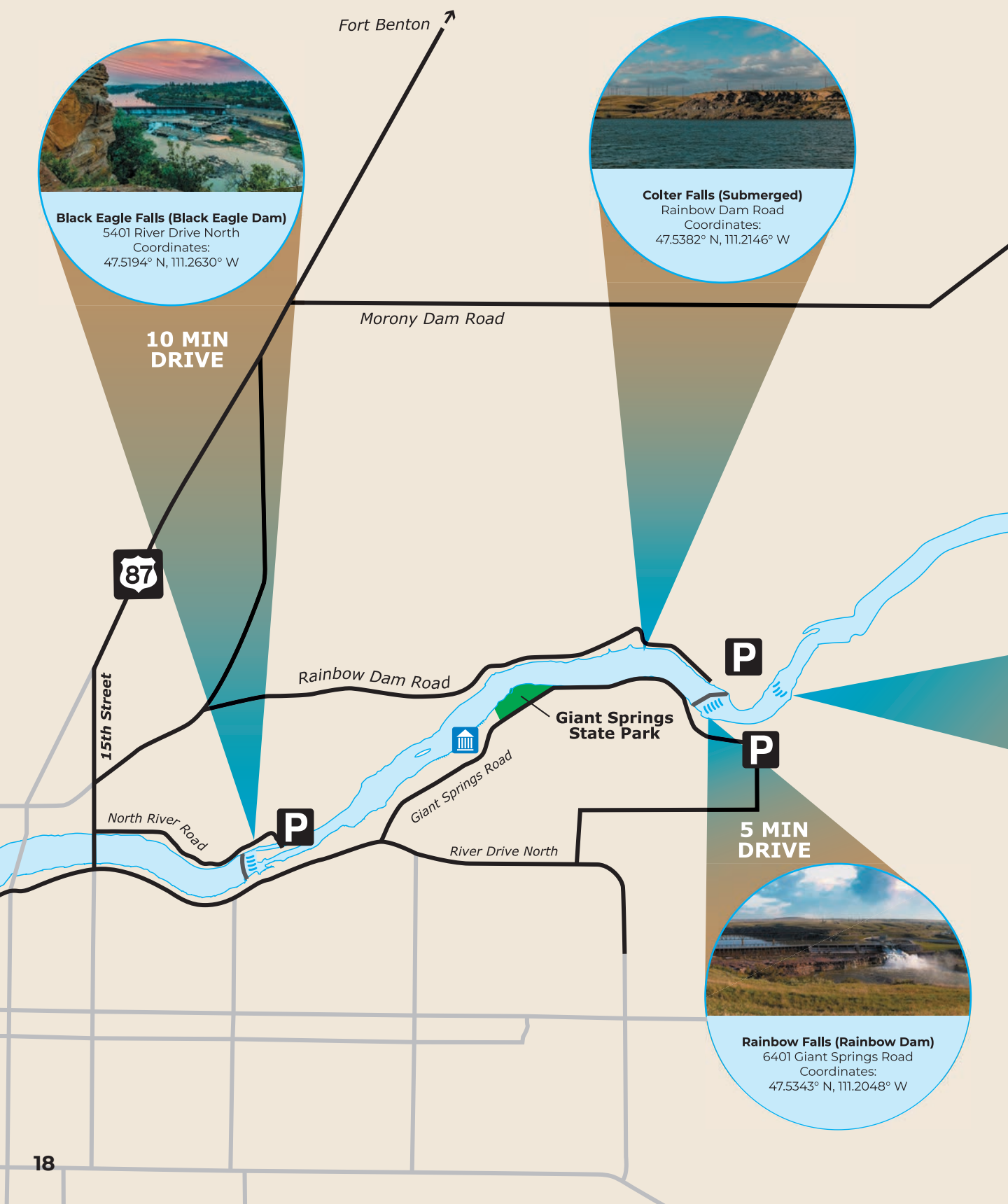
Expert

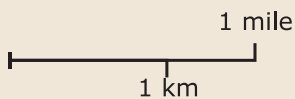
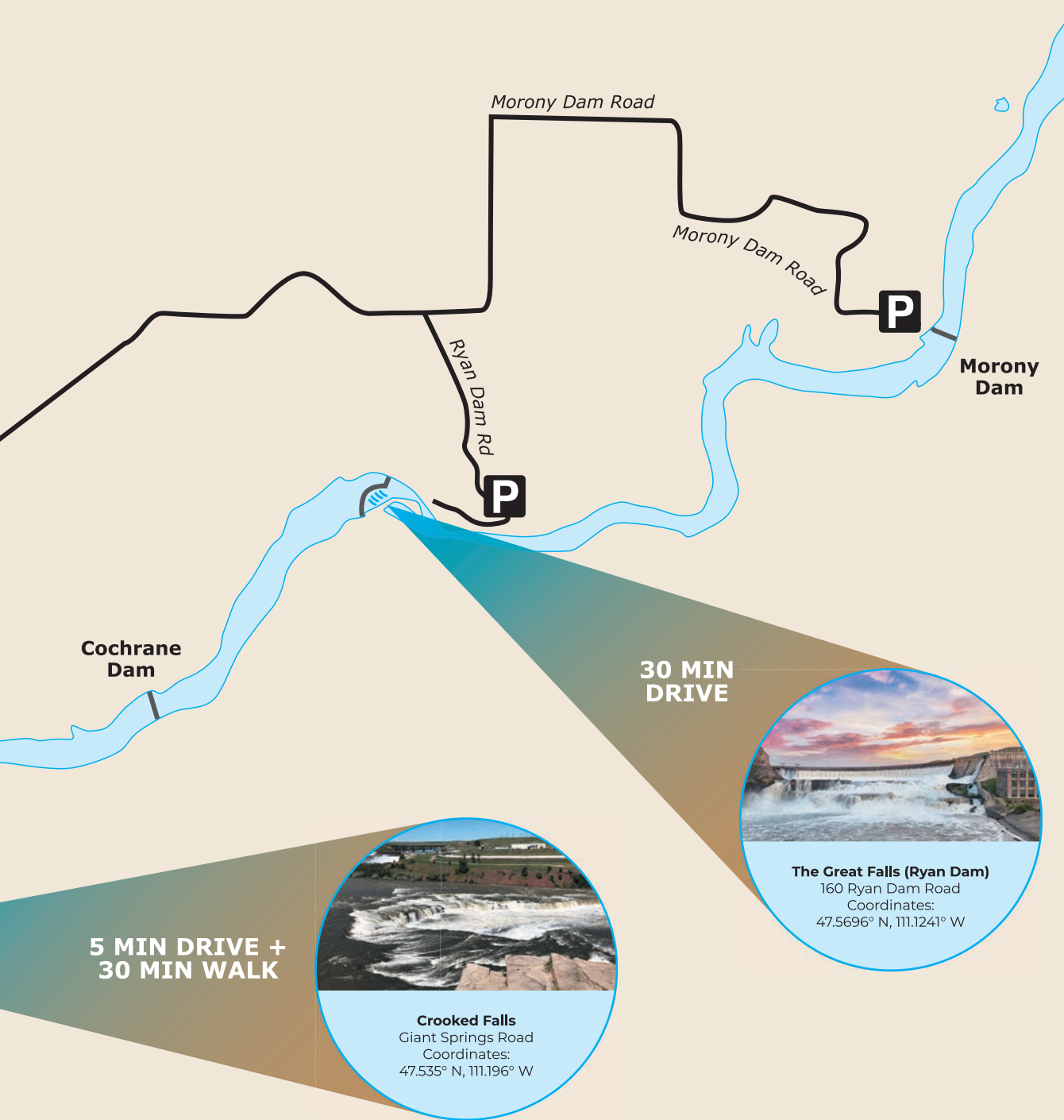


Out & Back



THE FALLS OF GREAT FALLS





 **Lewis & Clark
Interpretive Center**

 **Dam**

 **Fall**

 **Trail Parking**

*** Travel times from Lewis &
Clark Interpretive Center**

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK



This National Park is all Montana's. We should share that it borders Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta, Canada, and together, these two parks form the world's first International Peace Park. When in Great Falls, you are 156 miles to the East Entrance of Going-to-the-Sun Road. This equates to a Montana Drive time of just under 2.5 hours.

Great Falls - East Glacier I-15

Total Miles: 156

Estimated Time:

2 hours, 17 minute

Great Falls - East Glacier Hwy 44

Total Miles: 139

Estimated Time:

2 hours, 6 minutes

Great Falls - East Glacier Hwy 89

Total Miles: 137

Estimated Time:

2 hours, 9 minutes


Great Falls - East Glacier Hwy 200

Total Miles: 168

Estimated Time:

2 hours, 48 minutes

 **26** named Glaciers
(down from 80 in 1850)

 **1** through road,
Going to the Sun Road

 **12** rock glaciers

 **6** Entrances

 **71** species of mammals

 **700** miles of hiking trails



Glaciers are present, but pay close attention as it isn't easy seeing an active glacier. The two easiest glaciers to see are Jackson Glacier which is visible from Going-to-the-Sun Road at the Jackson Glacier Overlook and Salamander Glacier, visible as you enter Glacier National Park from Many Glacier.

Open all year! Although, not always at every entrance to every mode of transportation.



Make sure you get your reservation ticket to enter Glacier. Get the current details at [nps.gov/glac](https://www.nps.gov/glac). Make sure to get your vehicle reservation tickets for entrances that require it.

This information is just to get you a little excited and oriented to what you can do in addition to experiencing Great Falls. If you need more specific Glacier planning resources check out [nps.gov/glac](https://www.nps.gov/glac), send us an email, or call our office. We are always happy to send visitors any printed resources we have available.



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK



Although the world's first national park is mostly in Wyoming, you're close to it when you are in Great Falls—225 miles to the North Entrance to be exact. This trip equates to a Montana Drive time of just over 3.5 hours.

Great Falls - West Yellowstone

Total Miles: 270

Estimated Time:

4 hours

Great Falls - West Yellowstone

Total Miles: 265

Estimated Time:

4 hours, 7 minutes

Great Falls - Gardiner

Total Miles: 225

Estimated Time:

3 hours, 35 minutes

Great Falls - Cooke City

Total Miles: 355

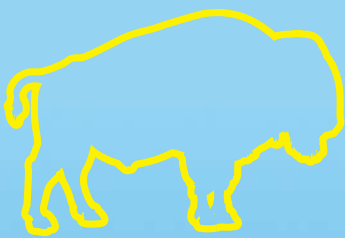
Estimated Time:

6 hours, 23 minutes



 **3,472** square miles **1,000+** miles of trails **52** picnic areas **500** geysers (300 active) **290+** waterfalls **10,000** hydrothermal features

It's open all year, but not always at every entrance or to every mode of transportation.



Wildlife is present, but it's wild. There is no guarantee you will see bison, bear, or elk.



This information is just to get you a little excited and oriented to what you can do in addition to experiencing Great Falls. If you need more specific Yellowstone planning resources check out [nps.gov/yell](https://www.nps.gov/yell), send us an email, or call our office. We are always happy to send visitors any printed resources we have available.



STATE PARKS

Sluice Boxes State Park

The first time I went down Belt Creek into Sluice Boxes State Park, I had basically just started kayaking. The day we went kayaking was a particularly cold day and it was overcast. It was in April or early May. I was dressed for the conditions in a drytop, which is a top that keeps the water off of you. It has little gaskets that go around your neck and your sleeves, but it was over a short wetsuit. I thought, that's okay, I'll be in the boat probably, most of the time. However, I was not. I fell out of my kayak several times while going down Belt Creek in the Sluice Boxes.

A lot of people, later in the season, put in at Logging Creek, and go down through Sluice Boxes. We put in at Monarch. It only took us about 4 hours because the water was up and running. But, when we hit the entrance rapid, there was a big rock with a Coleman

Canoe wrapped around it. So, we had to go around that and I wondered, oh my gosh, what am I getting myself into?

Once we got past the Riceville bridge, we started actually getting into the Sluice Boxes. I had passed all the rapids and big rocks, and it started to seem like it was pretty level. But, in all actuality there is a lot of undercut cliffs. When the water gets turbulent like that, it aerates so much that you almost start to lose buoyancy in certain spots. You will find there are weird little eddies in there that go back and forth. I had to stay very loose to make sure I didn't tip over.

The group of characters I went with was a small group of six people. All of them seasoned kayakers and the experience of falling into the water was all mine. When I got out of the water, my legs were as red as my hair used to be. It was quite the ordeal.

My advice is to not go during mountain runoff, like I did my first time kayaking Belt Creek which is a Class III. Consider starting your journey at Logging Creek. Be sure to wear a well-fitting lifejacket designed for kayaking and be prepared for the conditions. Prepare to encounter hazards such as downed trees and undercut cliffs. Consider wearing a drysuit if the air and water temperatures combined are under 100 degrees. Before you begin, make sure you are familiar with the water levels and check the CFS (cubic feet per second) on Belt Creek. Do your homework and map your adventure so you can truly enjoy the adventure of kayaking Belt Creek in Sluice Boxes State Park.



Roland Taylor

Great Falls
Resident and
International
Photographer





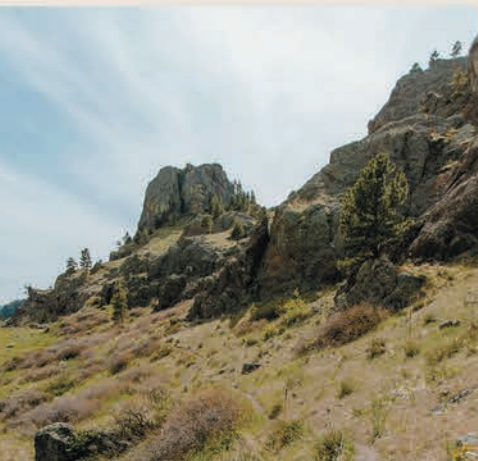
Giant Springs State Park

- World's largest spring flows at a rate of 156 million gallons of water per day
- Stays at constant 54 degrees Fahrenheit year-round
- Home to the shortest river in the U.S.—The Roe River
- Most visited State Park in Montana
- Visitors can enjoy views of the Missouri River and a fish hatchery



Sluice Boxes State Park

- Can be hiked, wade fished, or floated
- Belt Creek runs through the limestone box canyon
- Former home to a silver mining operation with relics still scattered throughout
- Upper trailhead offers panoramic views of the canyon
- Lower trailhead offers ground-level views and multiple creek crossings



Tower Rock State Park

- 424-Foot high igneous rock formation located by Missouri River
- Landmark for Native American tribes for centuries
- Noted in the journal of the Lewis & Clark Expedition
- Open for day use only
- Excellent spot for hiking and photography



Smith River State Park

- 59-Mile stretch of river through a remote canyon
- Home to world-renowned trout fishing
- Requires a permit to float due to popularity
- River is only accessible by non-motorized watercraft
- Has one put-in point (Camp Baker) and one take-out point (Eden Bridge)

DAY HIKES



Shared Use Trail



Pedestrian Use



Horse Use

Great Falls makes a great basecamp for day hikes in many of the area mountain ranges. We've listed a few favs here for inspiration, but this list is NOT designed to serve as a map. Make a stop at the Forest Service office, Big Horn Outdoor Specialists or Scheels for a legit trail map.



Windy Mountain Loop in the Highwood Mountains

- Trailhead at Thain Creek Campground, just over an hour drive from Great Falls
- Portion of route on gravel road
- Approximate 9 mile loop



Memorial Falls in the Little Belt Mountains

- Trailhead is off Hwy 89, just over an hour from Great Falls
- Approximate 1.5 miles out and back



Big Baldy & Rhoda Lake in the Little Belt Mountains

- Trailhead is off Hwy 89, near King's Hill Cabin
- On gravel road 3328, about 2 hours drive from Great Falls
- Approximate 4 mile loop



Porphyry Peak in the Little Belt Mountains

- Trailhead near Kings Hill Campground, just under an hour and half drive from Great Falls
- Trail is road that is open July & August
- Approximate 4 miles out and back



Jefferson Creek in the Little Belt Mountains

- Trailhead is off Hwy 89, just past Memorial Falls, just over an hour drive from Great Falls
- Trail is a road
- Approximate 8 miles out and back



Devil's Glen in the Rocky Mountain Front

- Dearborn Trailhead is just under an hour and half drive from Great Falls
- Approximate 6 miles out and back



Our Lake in the Rocky Mountain Front

- South Fork Teton Trailhead is just under 2 hour drive from Great Falls
- Portion of route on gravel road
- Approximate 7 mile loop



Mount Wright in the Rocky Mountain Front

- West Fork Teton Trailhead is just under 2 hours from Great Falls, through Choteau
- Portion of route on gravel road
- Approximate 8 mile loop



Cataract Falls in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

- Trailhead is Elk Creek, about an hour and half drive from Great Falls, through Augusta
- Portion of route on gravel road
- Approximate 1 mile out and back

BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS

The Chinese Wall

There are seven natural land features you can see from space; the Bob Marshall Wilderness' Chinese Wall is one of them. The Bob Marshall Wilderness complex is the largest wilderness area in the lower 48 and literally 40 miles as the crow flies from Great Falls. In 2011, when I couldn't fight forest fires as a hotshot anymore, I lived on a lookout 17 miles back in The Bob that overlooked the Chinese Wall.

There are seven upthrusts, and the Chinese Wall happens to be the most consistent one.

It's really a cliff band of 26 miles, maybe 33 miles long, and 1,000-foot cliffs. There are seven bands, and the band I was on looked back at the Continental Divide, which is the Chinese Wall.

I have a picture that I took of the Chinese Wall, which I had commissioned by an artist, and painted for me. I have this massive thing in my office now, which is pretty cool. It's an incredible feature. Depending on where you enter The Bob, it can be a day trip. Again, it's a 17-mile hike to get back to it, one way, and it's a wilderness

area, so you can't have anything mechanized, no bikes, no dirt bikes, no vehicles, but you can have horses.

Be brave enough to try something new. There are many bears deep in the Bob, so you need to be bear aware if you do go back there. Have your pepper spray, know what to do when you run into wildlife, take care of nature - pack in, pack out, watch the weather as it comes through. It's incredible to get out of the day-to-day routine, get away from cell phones, and really get perspective in life.



Kelley Aline
Great Falls
Resident and
Backcountry
Firefighter

“Be brave enough to try something new.”

RIVERSIDE PARKS

We're so in-love with the Missouri River, we make sure everyone has an opportunity to enjoy it in their own way. If strolling, skateboarding, swimming, or smelling the flowers are among your favorite activities, then our riverside parks are calling!



Riverside Railyard Skate Park

- 9' deep bowl + more
- Full pipe
- Half pipes
- Clamshell
- Street course
- Free



River's Edge Trail

- 28 works of art on the trail
- Panoramic view of Great Falls through a free telescope at the Warden Park Gazebo
- Singletrack trails—built to IMBA standards
- Up-close views of the five nearby falls of the Missouri
- Access to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center
- Walk, bike, hike or mosey



Electric City Water Park

- RipTide Slide
- Lazy River
- Power Tower Plunge with 20' high slides
- Largest heated outdoor swimming pool in the state
- Children's Squirt Zone



Gibson Park

- The only remaining building from the original townsite, Vinegar Jones Cabin built in 1884
- Ducks, geese and swans in summer
- Flower labyrinth garden
- Play structures
- Art—Gibson Glass & statues of historical figures

**One of the Top
5 Skate Parks
in the Pacific
Northwest**

**53 Miles
Along the
Missouri
River**

**Fun
for All
Ages**

**Jewel
of the Great
Falls Park
System**

SNOW

SILVER CREST

A little history: Chuck and I came to Great Falls 47 years ago with our 4 young children. Of course, we had heard about Showdown for winter recreation. Then we heard there was this place called Silver Crest Trails in the Little Belt Mountains, a perfect place for us to recreate with the children.

We pulled the little ones in a pulk, which is a sled that doesn't have deep rudders. We were harnessed up like a reindeer pulling the kids and they loved it.

At the point we started going, Silver Crest didn't have the big, beautiful parking lot, there weren't the number of people skiing, and the number of snowmobiles up there was much lower. The Great Falls Cross Country Club (GFCCC) did the heavy work getting grants, grooming trails, and working with the Forest Service for non-motorized, mostly winter recreation.

“The first step is easy: if you can walk, you can snowshoe!”

Fast forward to 2010 when I was at a GFCCC meeting with about 20 other people. The Forest Service wanted to use the interior of the Silver Crest area for snowshoeing—a pretty unpopular idea with many of the club members. There were a few of us who thought it was important to get more people coming to Silver Crest to get out in the winter. At that point we formed the Silver Crest Trails Association and continued the volunteer grooming and maintenance of the trail system.

The addition of snowshoeing has been fantastic. There is respect between the cross-country skiers and the those who snowshoe. We now have four spots along the trail that are very well marked where snowshoers can cross, from one place to another, without problems. It has multiplied tremendously the number of people using the parking lot and enjoying winter at Silver Crest. Also, with the increased number of amenities - latrine, shelters along the trails, benches to sit on, billboards for announcements and instruction, we have seen a great increase in the numbers of outdoor enthusiasts from other areas of the state. They love the snow and the elevation of Silver Crest.

Our grandson's Eagle Scout project was producing wooden signs for the cross-country trails and routing them out with the names of all the different trails such as Silver Dyke, Sluice Box, 89er, etc. All trails are named after mining locations or other factors to do with mining, which was an important economic activity in the Monarch/Neihart area of Northcentral Montana.

The location of Silver Crest Trails is about 2 miles north of Showdown Ski area and 6.5 miles south of Neihart. Turnoff is marked by a sign that reads USFS Winter Recreation Area.

I recommend layering like an onion when you are looking to get out and recreate! The first step is easy: if you can walk, you can snowshoe. Get more insight about Silver Crest and what to use when layering like an onion on Episode 12 of the We're No Dam Experts podcast!

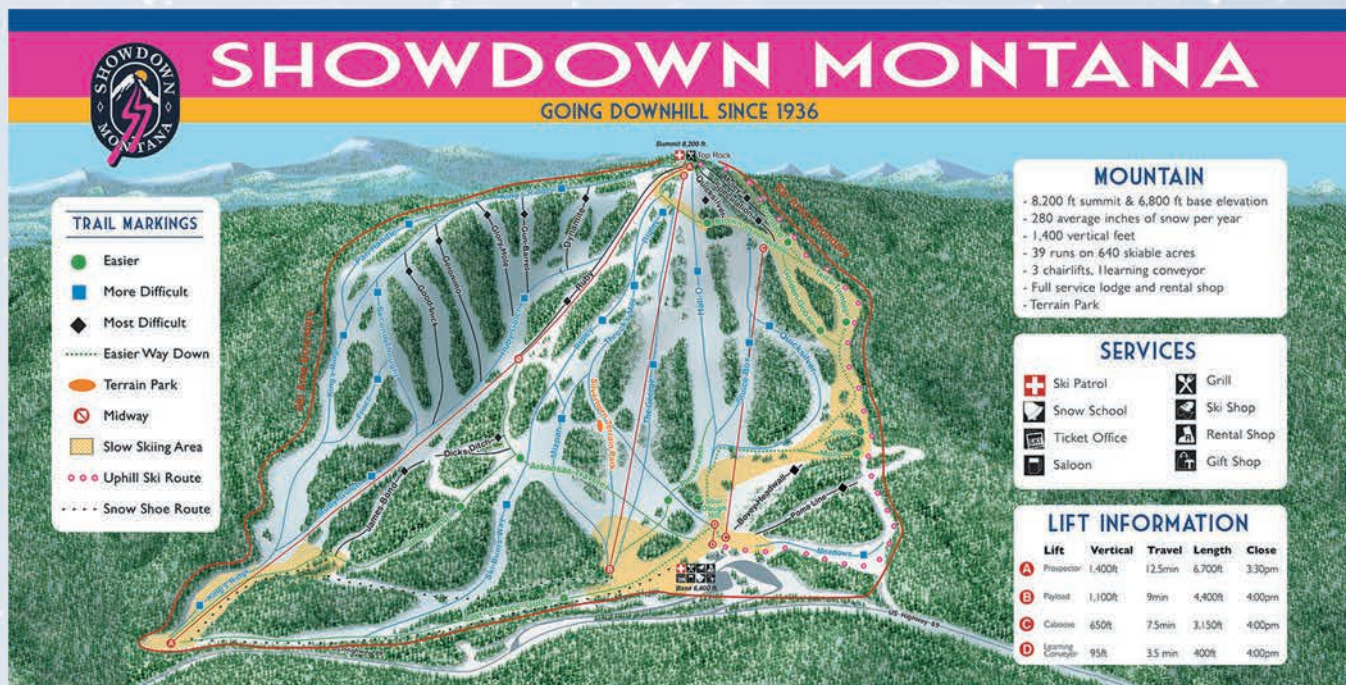


Gerry Jennings
Great Falls
Grand Champion
Resident



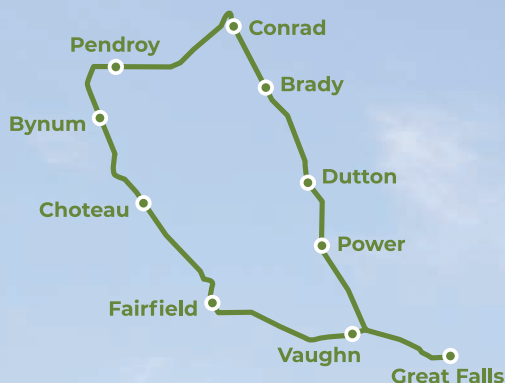
SHOWDOWN MONTANA

Winter adventures await at Showdown, Montana's first ski hill. With a base elevation of 6,800 feet, this ski hill offers access to some of Montana's best skiing and snowboarding on an average of 240 inches of 100% snowfall per year. The mountain's top elevation is 8,200 feet offering more than enough space to recreate the entire winter season. With 640 skiable acres, 36 runs, 3 chairlifts, and a surface conveyor for beginners! Our local ski hill offers gear rentals, a pro shop, daycare, ski school, two restaurants and a bar! Showdown is sure to show you a memorable time.



SCENIC BYWAYS

Expand your exploration of Montana's Basecamp for Art and Adventure with a scenic drive! Check out some of our routes around the area. The options have something to interest everyone whether it is dinosaurs, mountains galore, deep-rooted Montana history, or endless waves of grain. Remember to buckle up, adhere to all traffic laws, and respect the rules of public and private property.



Teton Loop

This all-paved route showcases Freeze Out Lake, the Rocky Mountain Front, a dinosaur museum, and rolling fields of wheat and barley.

Total Miles: 162

Estimated Time:
3 hours



Cascade Loop

Travel this route, comprised of paved and gravel roads, to see the wonders of Gibson Reservoir, the Rocky Mountain Front, and area rivers and dams.

Total Miles: 200

Estimated Time:
4 hours, 5 minutes

LEGEND

- UNPAVED ROAD
- PAVED ROAD



Lewis & Clark Loop

A smooth trip of paved road will take you from high plains to river valleys as you retrace the steps of Lewis & Clark's historical trek.

Total Miles: 138

Estimated Time:
2 hours, 16 minutes



Meagher Loop

See mountains, high plains, river valleys and wheat fields galore as you take this paved and gravel route towards Kings Hill Scenic byway.

Total Miles: 202

Estimated Time:
4 hours, 10 minutes



Judith Basin Loop

Pavement ahead as you travel the rolling hills with epic mountain views through our rich agricultural area, with plenty of historical finds.

Total Miles: 201

Estimated Time:
3 hour, 40 minutes



Scan to see our
scenic drives

Western Art Week

Western Art Capital of the World

Great Falls has been my home since 1961—I'll let you do the math on just how long I have been here. Western Art Week got its start way back in 1969 with the very first Russell Art Auction. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life, and one I have loved with all my heart since then!

Western Art Week was born out the need for the local Ad Club to come up with a new fundraiser after a change in administration at the state level deemed giving away a real Cadillac at our successful Cadillac Dinner fundraiser as a lottery. After losing our fundraiser, we needed to come up with a new idea.

I had attended my first auction for the treasures of dear Abby Welsh in the gymnasium of

Geraldine, Montana. I bought a cut glass candy dish, that I still use, for \$7.50. I thought to myself, this auction had all the elements of excitement, it was prosperous, and everybody had a good time... so, why not have an auction in Great Falls? I first pondered who the most famous person in Great Falls was. Obviously, Charlie Russell! Further, Great Falls was home to a great institution which such an auction could benefit, the C.M. Russell Museum (formerly called C.M. Russell Gallery).

We started planning in December of 1968 and, by March of 1969, the first Russell Art Auction was held. One important thing was needed to make the first auction go well—a good auctioneer. My late husband suggested I take a listen to Jack Raty, who did all the farm auctions in the area. He had never sold a piece of

art in his life, but he had sold a lot of cattle. We met in the Rainbow Hotel coffee shop where he sold me the sugar bowl from the center of the table with his wonderful chant. We hired him on the spot! The first catalogue was eight pages with seventy-six pieces of art. The auction was held in the Rainbow Hotel and drew people from all over Montana and beyond!

Today, Western Art Week includes educational symposiums, quick draws, essay contests, 16 shows (and growing), and the famed Russell Art Auction. People still travel from all over the nation to be in the Western Art Capital of the World for one week in March!



Norma Ashby-Smith
Great Falls Resident
and Western Art
Week Founder

"Western Art Week got its start way back in 1969 with the very first Russell Art Auction."



Art Show Tips

800+ Artists

16 SHOWS give or take

VARIETY OF VENUES throughout Great Falls

ALWAYS CLOSEST TO MARCH 19TH, Charlie Russell's Birthday

1

Weather is weather. It may shine, it may rain, it has no impact on the day. Get out and have fun.

2

Western Art is more than an oil painting of a cowboy from the 1800's. We have that, but there is so much more, like: jewelry, wood carvings, bronzes, native dance performances, furniture, gun powder art, antler carvings, live music, and soil art.

3

Give the art its space. Some art is meant to be handled (hello, Western Jewelry and Furniture!) and other art is meant to have some breathing room and distance from your red wine. If you aren't sure if you can touch a piece, just ask. The artist will appreciate it.

4

Talk with the artist. They want to tell you where they painted the piece, how it's different than their other work, or how it took them eight months to find the perfect piece of leather to complete the piece. If the show area gets busy and you aren't going to buy, free up the artist's time so they can meet with their other guests.

5

Have your art sent home. You might arrive by plane or a packed car and don't want to take the chance damaging the art in transit. You can ask an artist to ship the art and you can even ask for a different frame for the piece. It may cost a little more, but it will be customized to your taste and arrive safely.

6

Bring the kids—and a plan. Kids LOVE art, they have to. Isn't it the reason they color on our walls? Bring them to the art show and let them see and touch (if appropriate), all the mediums found in the shows. If they fit in one, bring a stroller to keep them in for when they shouldn't be too close to the art.

7

Respect the artist's talent and the price of their art. It takes artists years to perfect their craft. If the large original isn't in your budget, ask for a smaller Giclée print or a business card and start saving up to buy a piece later. They may even offer payment plans! See if you can make mutually beneficial arrangements to make the piece yours.

Signature Events

Need dates to plan your trip around or want to see a full list of events in Great Falls? Head to our website at VisitGreatFallsMontana.org/FindEvents



ArtsFest Montana

ArtsFest is an August celebration of Art. New murals are installed across Great Falls, vendors display their hand-crafted creations, and live music can be enjoyed.



Downtown Summer Jam

A series of outdoor concerts located in downtown with food and beverage vendors. Plenty of space for dancing and bring a chair if that's more your style.



Montana State Fair

Fair food, rides, vendors, concerts, rodeo, and horse racing are all part of Montana's State Fair starting the end of July.



Lewis & Clark Festival

Experience 1805. This annual festival showcases reenactments, stories of the incredible journey, and opportunities to try your hand at being part of the expedition.



Luminaria Walk

This annual event is a unique time to explore the River's Edge Trail. Stroll beside hand decorated paper luminaries that line the trail and enjoy live music, vendors, and good dam scenery.



Montana Brewfest

This is Montana's largest with over 40 breweries and ciders showcasing their creations. Remember back on page 13 when we told you about our beer. This June event is amazing.



Parade of Lights

This annual event kicks off the festive winter season with the arrival of Santa at the end of the parade! This event held in November is full of floats full of sparkling lights and Christmas Cheer!



Montana Pro Rodeo Circuit Finals

Each January, the top cowboys and cowgirls descend on Great Falls to ride the finest stock and vie for year-end titles and cash prizes.



Christmas Stroll

The annual Christmas Stroll happens in December, downtown. It includes live music, events, food trucks, and shopping.



Farmers Market

Local food, hand crafted products, and food vendors are among some of the things you will experience Saturdays at 8:30 am to 1:00 pm, between the first Saturday of June through the last Saturday of September.



4th of July Hootenanny

This is a concert that takes place on July 4th in the streets of downtown. Local food and beverage vendors are available to enhance the experience. Check out more about this event in Tip #3 on page 51.



Great Falls Sports

Aliens in Great Falls

What we are about to share with you is highly disputed, however, it's a story that is essential to understanding the name of our beloved baseball team.

It was a fall day in 1950 in Great Falls, Montana and the general manager of the minor-league baseball team, Nick, alongside his secretary, Virginia, were out at the stadium, when he saw it. A bright flash of light coming from overhead that prompted Nick to grab his 16 mm movie camera and film for :16 seconds capturing two rotating flying circle objects. Nick and Virginia

witnessed two jet fighters pass by shortly after the filming stopped.

Now, Nick couldn't believe that had happened, so he shared his story, with friends, family, community groups, and the media. The story quickly spread around the nation – Nick had seen UFOs! Soon, Nick and Virginia were being interviewed by military personnel at Malmstrom Air Force Base and the film Nick had taken was being analyzed.

The official determination of what Nick and Virginia saw – reflections from the F-94 jets. What happened next was more

studies, more analysis, and a few unanswered questions regarding 3 feet of film. This story today is referred to as the Mariana Incident, and many people believe that what Nick saw in the sky that fall day was a UFO. Since then, countless others have claimed to see unidentifiable flying objects in the area, making Great Falls, Montana the most active location in North America for UFO sightings.

Nick Mariana was the general manager of the minor league baseball team. They are now called the Great Falls Voyagers and their mascot, an alien named Orbit. The Voyagers are 4-time Pioneer League Champions and always in pursuit of their next title.





GREAT FALLS AMERICAN HOCKEY

The Great Falls Americans are a NA3HL League Junior A ice hockey team that plays at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Bring your family for an action-packed game of hockey!



UNIVERSITY OF PROVIDENCE ATHLETICS

The Argonauts boast Frontier Conference championships in Basketball, Volleyball and Wrestling and compete in conference Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, and Track & Field. Women also play Softball and Volleyball, and men participate in Hockey.



GREAT FALLS VOYAGERS

Come to Centene Stadium to see the Great Falls Voyagers, 2018 Pioneer League Champs, hit it out of the park! With the level of competition higher than ever, you're sure to catch a great game.



ELECTRIC CITY SPEEDWAY

The Electric City Speedway is your destination for exciting stock car racing and the can't-miss annual Dynamic Motors Demolition Derby.



GOLFING IN GREAT FALLS

Golf more your speed? We have 4 courses. One with an old barn, one with views of grain elevators, one with views of our famed Black Eagle Falls, and a private course on the Missouri River.



DISC GOLF

Come play a round at one of our 3 courses: West Bank Park is home to a 9-hole course; an 18-hole course awaits at Warden Park with epic views of the city; and an 18-hole course PLUS practice tees just opened at Wadsworth Park.

A Few Dining Recommendations



TRACY'S FAMILY RESTAURANT
127 Central Avenue



CELTIC COWBOY
116 1st Avenue South



ROADHOUSE DINER
613 15th Street North



ELECTRIC CITY COFFEE
319 Central Avenue



ENBÄR

8 5th Street South



DOUBLE BARREL COFFEE HOUSE CAFE

1500 9th Avenue South



LEGEND

Open For:



Breakfast



Lunch



Dinner



Weekend Brunch



THE BLOCK
4 5th Street South



FIRE ARTISAN PIZZA
107 5th Street North



STREET BURGERS
2319 10th Avenue South



**CLARK & LEWIE'S
RESTAURANT**
17 7th Street South



5TH & WINE
214 5th Street South



**SMOKED. AMERICAN
BARBECUE**
203 2nd Avenue North



TERIYAKI MADNESS
1710 10th Avenue South



Scan for more
dining options!

8 Great Great Falls Experiences



ESCAPE THE FALLS

511 Central Avenue

Can you escape before time runs out?



WHEELS OF THUNDER

1609 12th Avenue North

This roller rink offers fun for all ages.



SIP 'N DIP LOUNGE

17 7th Street South

Famous tiki bar with mermaids and live music.



HI-LINE CLIMBING CENTER

608 1st Avenue South

Challenge yourself with unroped bouldering.



THE NEWBERRY

420 Central Avenue

Get your tickets now for an evening out.



EL CONEJO CANTINA

518 Central Avenue

Great Falls' first tequila lounge!



BRUSH CRAZY

315 Central Avenue

Release your inner artist here.



MONTANA VETERANS MEMORIAL

1025 25th Street North

Take a moment to honor Montana's veterans.

10 Drinks to Drink



FISHBOWL
@ Sip 'N Dip
Lounge
17 7th
Street South



**GHOST IN THE
CELLAR**
@ Kellergeist
111 Central
Avenue



**CINNAMON
OMBRE LATTE**
@ Crooked
Tree Coffee
501 1st
Avenue North



**PHAT COWZ
MILKSHAKE**
@ Street Burgers
2319 10th
Avenue South



**MIXED BERRY
SMOOTHIE**
@ Electric
City Coffee
319 Central
Avenue

* OR ANY BEER AT THE DO, HEIDELBERG LOUNGE OR SNITS
THERE ARE DRINKS AT THE STADIUM SPORTS BAR & CASINO YOU COULD CHECK OUT TOO

CLOUDBLAST
@ Mighty Mo
Brewing Co
412 Central
Avenue



TOM & JERRY
@ City Bar
709 Central
Avenue



JUNIPER
@ Enbär Craft
Cocktail Lounge
8 5th
Street South



FLAT WHITE
@ Al Banco
112 Central
Avenue



BAJA BURRO
@ The
Wild Hare
518 Central
Avenue



Shopping



The Blue Rose

419 Central Avenue

This boutique, featuring women's and men's fashion and a few home goods, was started over 13 years ago by Tracy. The name of her store holds great meaning and ties to the beautiful art that hangs behind the counter. Ask her about it when you stop in. Tracy is amazing at helping you find what you'll love!

Pizazz

403 Central Avenue

Perhaps the greatest kitchen store ever! This local staple, owned by Veronica, has been offering kitchen gadgets and cooking staples for over 36 years. And now they have the Corner Market full of meats, cheeses, wine, grab-n-go food, sit and eat delights, oil and vinegar, and cooking classes! Pizazz is the reason we are hooked on charcuterie!



Dragonfly Dry Goods

504 Central Avenue

Montana's largest dry goods store comes by its title honestly! You're going to need to take your time, so ask if you can store your bag behind the counter so you can devote all your attention to looking in every corner. Alison, the owner, has filled her store with family fashion, shoes, jewelry, drink wear, handbags, home décor, and all things Montana.



Bighorn Outdoor Specialists

206 5th Street South

Beth and Chris have owned this adventure hub for more than 12 years. Their passion for the outdoors is contagious. If hiking, biking, climbing, kayaking, floating, skiing, or even walking is your thing, the gear you need is here. Get more out of your exploration by asking their staff's advice.

Kaufman's Menswear Centre

411 Central Avenue

A cornerstone in downtown since 1894, Brian is the 4th generation of Kaufman outfitting fashion-forward men. Best known for their well-tailored suits, Kaufman's can fill your casual needs for cozy sweaters, jackets and other modern threads. Stop by and check out their selection—you'll be glad you did.



Scheels

1200 10th Avenue South

Our friends in North Dakota house the corporate headquarters, but we are proud to partner with them for a store here. Scheels is Great Falls' largest sporting goods store. They have the gear you need for fishing, hunting, golfing, baseball, volleyball, corn hole, and more. They also have arcade games, a coffee bar, and experts to help in every department.

Holiday Village Mall

1200 10th Avenue South

A bunch of stores all in one location! Ya gotta love a mall! We sure love ours. You'll find the usual mall stores such as JCPenney, Maurices, Claire's, Hobby Lobby, Famous Footwear, Bath & Body Works, and more. There are even some local gems that will catch your eye. All indoor, it's a place for the fully committed shopper.



Itineraries

For those who like to plan ahead, here are some ideas on how to spend your days in Montana's Basecamp. A stop in Glacier or Yellowstone National Park can be added to any of these itineraries as well. You can find more details about most of the stops and attractions listed in these itineraries throughout this guide. Adventure awaits!

THE ART OF FALL

Day One

- See the Lee Steen Exhibit at The Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, and since you're there, take in all the other exhibits
- Enjoy the fall foliage from Rainboffalow to Black Eagle Falls
- Get recommendations for your new favorite wine at 5th and Wine

Day Two

- Drive out to Scapegoat Wilderness and hike to Cataract Falls
- Back in Great Falls, go shopping for new fall staples: scarf, boots, sweater
- Take in a performance by the Great Falls Symphony

Day Three

- Bike North Pilgrim Creek in the Little Belt Mountains
- Enjoy drinks and charcuterie by the fire at Celtic Cowboy

WINTER WONDERLAND

Day One

- See the landscapes of this area through Charlie's eyes with a trip to C.M. Russell Museum
- Walk the Urban Loop of the River's Edge Trail
- Try a flight of locally brewed beers at the Mighty Mo downtown
- Enjoy dinner and get your rest. Tomorrow's a big day!

Day Two

- Hit the slopes at Montana's First Ski Hill
- Return to Great Falls and enjoy a warm dinner followed by a stop at Kellergeist Pub Theater for a cocktail
- Enjoy LIVE music at The Newberry

Day Three

- See where Great Falls has been with a tour of the History Museum
- Take a short drive to Freezeout Lake and watch the birds
- Walk around the Historic Fort Shaw, in Fort Shaw
- Go shopping for your Great Falls mementos
- Have a billowing drink at Elevation 3330

Day Four

- Head out for snowshoeing at Silver Crest
- On your way back to Great Falls, stop and hike into Memorial Falls
- Take a selfie overlooking Sluice Boxes State Park
- Walk around the current Urban Art Exhibit



SEE ALL THE THINGS

Day One

- Leisurely stroll through Great Falls' Historic Railroad District
- Drive out to the Little Belt Mountains and hike Sluice Boxes State Park
- Enjoy your evening with some local Jeremiah Johnson beer

Day Two

- Tour the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and spend some time talking with the Rangers
- Take a hike on the Windy Mountain Loop in the Highwood Mountains
- Finish the Judith Basin Scenic Loop to Fort Benton, through Geraldine, to Belt and back to Great Falls

Day Three

- Drive out to the Rocky Mountain Front and hike to Our Lake
- Finish the Teton Scenic Drive Loop through Pendroy and back to Great Falls
- See some of our mining history while you golf Anaconda Hills
- Make new friends and enjoy a craft cocktail outside at Great Falls' first craft cocktail lounge, Enbär

Day Four

- Experience an Urban Wood Mill at The Good Wood Guys. Honestly, you're going to love this
- Drive out to the old townsite of Morony and hike the Sulphur Springs Loop of the River's Edge Trail
- Enjoy the races at Electric City Speedway and watch that sun set from the bleachers – two great experiences in one!

Day Five

- Float the Missouri River. Done right, this will take all day
- Watch the mermaids and enjoy drinks at the Sip 'n Dip Lounge

FAMILY FUN

Day One

- Explore Giant Springs State Park and bring coins to feed the fish at the fish hatchery
- Spend all afternoon floating the Lazy River, heading down the RipTide Slide, or going down the Power Tower Plunge, at Electric City Water Park

Day Two

- Head to the Farmer's Market and enjoy a pony ride
- Create a masterpiece at Brush Crazy
- Hop on a scooter for a trip around downtown to see all the art murals. Take a selfie with your favorite piece!
- Take in America's past time and cheer on the Great Falls Voyagers at Centene Stadium

Day Three

- Stop at Gibson Park to see the ducks, geese, and swans
- Visit the first home built in Great Falls, Vinegar Jones Cabin
- Stop and smell the flowers at the Gibson Park garden
- Make time to play at the Children's Museum of Montana where there is an interactive plane cockpit on display
- Treat yourself after a day of play with a famous milkshake from Street Burgers

Day Four

- Drive out to The Great Falls and cross the suspension bridge onto Ryan Island for the best views of our namesake
- Head to West Bank Park and play on the Kaboom play structure along the banks of the Missouri River
- Grab some goodies at Candy Masterpiece




Lodging





COMING SOON!
TownePlace Suites
513 3rd Street NW




Alberta Motel 
1101 Central Avenue W
406-452-3467




Comfort Inn  
1120 9th Street S
406-454-2727





Extended Stay America  
800 River Drive S
406-761-7524



Best Resting Motel 
5001 River Drive N
406-268-8333





Comfort Inn & Suites  
1801 Market Place Drive
406-455-1000




The Great Falls Inn  
1400 28th Street S
406-453-6000




Best Western Plus Riverfront  
600 River Drive S
406-761-2600




Crystal Inn Hotel & Suites  
3701 31st Street SW
406-727-7788




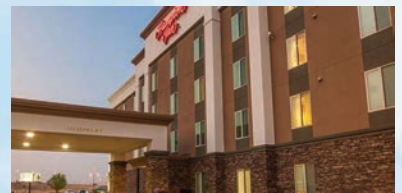
Grizzly Inn 
1214 13th Street S
406-564-1976




Central Motel 
751 Central Avenue W
406-453-0161



Days Inn 
101 14th Avenue NW
406-727-6565



Hampton Inn  
2301 14th Street SW
406-453-2675



Scan for
more
lodging
information



Heritage Inn
1700 Fox Farm Rd
406-761-1900



Mid-Town Motel
526 2nd Avenue N
406-453-2411



Sleep Inn/Mainstay Suites
520 Country Club Blvd
406-761-4600



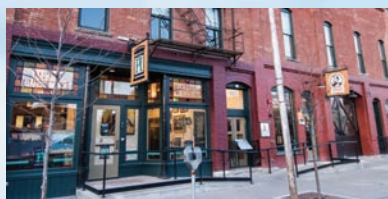
Hilton Garden Inn
2520 14th Street SW
406-452-1000



Motel 6
2 Treasure State Drive
406-453-1602



Springhill Suites
421 3rd Street NW
406-952-4444



Historic Hotel Arvon
118 1st Avenue S
406-952-1101



O'Haire Inn
17 7th Street S
406-454-2141



Staybridge Suites
201 3rd Street NW
406-761-4903



Holiday Inn Express
1625 Marketplace Drive
406-453-4000



Plaza Inn
1224 10th Avenue S
406-452-9594



The Gibson
621 Central Ave
Opening May 2023



Holiday Inn Great Falls
1100 5th Street S
406-727-7200



Royal Motel
1300 Central Avenue
406-452-9548



Travelodge by Wyndham
220 Central Avenue
406-761-3410



Imperial Inn
601 2nd Avenue N
406-452-9581



Ski's Western Motel
2420 10th Avenue S
406-453-3281



Wingate By Wyndham
1000 9th Avenue S
406-454-3000



VISIT
Great Falls
MONTANA

My Travel Planner

<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DATE:	

Lodging

Must Do

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Must See

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Eat & Drink

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Tips for the Best Dam Trip

#1

Coordinate travel to include or avoid events. You may be a person that wants to be here for specific events, or you may want to know when specific events will be here so you can avoid crowds. What floats your boat is fine with us.

#2

Fly into Great Falls for your Yellowstone and Glacier National Park adventures. GTF has the lowest average fares in Montana and rental cars are reasonable.

#3

4th of July in Great Falls is pretty epic. You'll get a parade, free Hootenanny downtown, baseball, and fireworks over the Missouri River. If you love freedom, you'll love our town's celebration.

#4

Rodeos and PowWows don't occur every day and they aren't usually events that happen together. If you want to experience both during your trip, plan very strategically – it can be done, but it's usually a very specific date range.

#5

We have all the seasons, sometimes all in one day. Come visit Spring, Summer, Winter, or Fall – Great Falls is ready for you to recreate anytime.

#6

There are 4 falls in Great Falls. If you missed this back on page 18, we'll wait while you to go and refresh yourself. The falls are neat all year round, but in late May and June, they will take your breath away.

#7

Guided services need to be scheduled. Occasionally a guided fly fishing or Upper Missouri River Breaks trip can be coordinated when you get here, but we recommend getting that scheduled well in advance.

#8

Not everything you want to experience may be easy to get to. For example, you cannot drive up to the Chinese Wall. We know it's big, but you'll still have to hike into the Bob Marshall Wilderness to see it.

#9

You may need to acclimate before you recreate. If you're coming from a lower elevation, even if you fit as a fiddle, the higher elevation may take some wind out of your sails.



Capture Your Visit Like a Pro

There is no doubt that while you are visiting Great Falls, you will see some stunning views. Whether you're a professional photographer or someone getting familiar with their lens, we have the spots just for you. Before you get to capturing all there is to do and see in Great Falls, brush up on your photography skills with these tips from internationally published photographer, Tony Bynum. If you need more tips on how to recreate responsibly, like how to not be eaten by bears, check out Episode 31 of We're No Dam Experts. Remember to tag us in your photos to be featured on our Instagram [@VisitGreatFalls](#).



CAPTURE THE WILDLIFE, NOT THEIR ATTENTION

Our untouched wilderness makes it easier to see wildlife in the area. Make sure you have the right lens to capture the wildlife you see from a distance, and don't disrupt their mealtime, otherwise they may add you as their next course.



PATIENCE PAYS WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING BIRDS

Great Falls is ideal for photographing birds with locations like Benton Lake Wildlife Refuge and Freezeout Lake Wildlife Management Area. Each location offers photographers over 12,000 acres to shoot. Try using the Rule of Thirds for an evocative image.



EXTREME TEMPS CAUSE EXTREME BEAUTY

Giant Springs State Park is a crystallized winter wonderland when the temps drop below zero. Waterfowl flock to the area since the Giant Springs remain a constant 54°F. Get the most out of your wardrobe and dress in layers to comfortably capture the scene.



FAST WATER LOOKS COOL WITH SLOW SPEEDS

Whether it's one of our falls during spring runoff, or Belt Creek, use long exposure to have a blurred water effect with a crisp landscape. You'll need your tripod, and a plan before you go. Spring Runoff is beautiful, but it can be dangerous if you choose to enter the water. Always know your limits.



CAPTURE OUR BIG SKY WITH SMALL APERTURES

Stunning landscapes beg to be photographed crisply. Use a small aperture to have more of the landscape in focus, and, depending on the time of day, you may need to use a tripod to accommodate the slower shutter speeds that small apertures require.



BLACK EAGLE FALLS AND BEYOND

While some of our favorite photos shared by visitors are those of Black Eagle Falls, take a hike to get deeper into the area and see scenes to which few venture. Make sure you're prepared for your hike and bring plenty of water, snacks, bug and bear spray. Just remember, if you pack it in, pack it out.

~~Hosts that don't have faces for TV or voices for radio, yet here they are.~~

Do we tell them this isn't a typo? We mean DAM, as in the S we have in our city

or "The Best Dam Podcast about the Best Dam Town". Also need to say that it is a hilariously educational travel podcast"

Why doesn't it say our names? If we're going to become famous, it should list our names

Our podcast is a work in progress, and so is this ad

Add "Original music by Joel Corda"

Recorded claims from Great Falls, Montana
Released every week

Do we need to say it's on all other podcast platforms too, even YouTube?



WereNoDamExperts.com

a production by
VISIT
Great Falls
MONTANA

ADVENTURE AWAITS



VISIT
Great Falls
MONTANA

VisitGreatFallsMontana.org

DID YOU HAVE TIME
TO VISIT ALL 43?

pg. 11

DOES THE ALIEN
STORY LEAVE YOU
WITH QUESTIONS?

pg. 38

SHOULD FALL IN
MONTANA'S FIRST
TREE CITY USA WITH
33,000 TREES BE #10?

pg. 51