

Montana Winter - Yellowstone & Big Sky



Trip Summary

This Montana Adventure is exactly what you might be looking for if you're looking to "get away from it all" this winter. With a base in Gardiner, Montana for the first several days of this trip, discover a different side to our world's first national park by exploring Yellowstone by cross country ski and snowshoe on the lookout for bison, moose, and the elusive wolf. The latter half of your trip is spent in Big Sky dog sledding and exploring powdery trails away from the crowds in Montana's own slice of winter wonderland paradise.

Itinerary

Day 1: Bozeman / Mammoth Hot Springs / Gardiner

Meet in Bozeman and shuttle a short distance to the Museum of the Rockies, recognized as one of the world's finest research and history museums • After you've had your fill of checking out all the neat displays, the group will head to lunch at one of Bozeman's many restaurants • A 1.5-hour transfer through beautiful Paradise Valley eventually brings us to the original entrance of Yellowstone, where we'll enter in to our world's first national park under the Roosevelt Arch • This afternoon, we walk among the steaming orange, yellow, and white travertine terraces of Mammoth Hot Springs before making our way back down to Gardiner to check into our hotel • Tonight, we enjoy dinner together in small town Montana • *Overnight The Ridgeline at Yellowstone (L, D)*

Day 2: Lamar Valley / Cooke City / Gardiner

We depart at sunrise to enter into Yellowstone on the lookout for wildlife standing out against a snowy backdrop • We make our way to Yellowstone's famed Lamar Valley, "The Serengeti of the West", where we keep an eye open for wolves, bison, elk, moose, and bighorn sheep • Eventually, we leave Yellowstone via the Northeast Entrance, where the tiny town of Cooke City resides, home to nearly 100 hardy, year-round residents • Here, we'll enjoy brunch at a local café before making our way back into Lamar Valley for our afternoon activity • Strap on snowshoes for a quiet walk through lodgepole pine forests as we leave behind yeti-sized footprints in the deep snow • Late afternoon, we drive back to Gardiner for a chance to relax before meeting up for dinner at a local restaurant • *Overnight The Ridgeline at Yellowstone (B, L, D)*

Day 3: Tower Fall / Gardiner

After breakfast, we drive into Yellowstone for the last time on this trip to the Tower Fall trailhead • Here, we click on our cross country skis for a quick lesson and then we whisk off for a scenic ski to Tower Fall • Along the way, you'll glide under basalt lava cliffs with views of the Yellowstone River running through Black Canyon • Upon arrival to Tower Fall, we'll view the 132-foot drop and the unusual rock columns before settling in for a wintry picnic lunch • The ski back to the trailhead is mostly downhill and a quick trip to our ending point • After driving back to Gardiner, enjoy some time to yourself before dinner with the group • *Overnight The Ridgeline at Yellowstone (B, L, D)*



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Day 4: Gardiner / Big Sky

This morning after breakfast, we hit the road to transfer to Big Sky, Montana via Bozeman (3 hours + stops) • Upon arrival to Big Sky, we'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before heading out on a snowshoe excursion to explore the local area • Big Sky is a mecca for winter sports enthusiasts and we'll be sure to take advantage of the different activities on offer in this breathtaking winter wonderland • This afternoon, we check into our hotel, Huntley Lodge, where all the action is happening at the base of the ski resort • Tonight, enjoy a dinner on your own within walking distance of the lodge • *Overnight Huntley Lodge (B, L)*

Day 5: Big Sky

This morning, we embark on a dog sled tour through the wintry backcountry, with views of majestic snow-covered mountains and frost-laden pines as your backdrop • After this one-of-a-kind experience, warm up and enjoy a tasty lunch at a nearby restaurant • This afternoon, we strap on our cross-country skis again for a glide along the ski trails of the Meadow Village • We end our trip tonight with a horse-drawn sleigh ride to an oil-lantern-lit cabin for a family-style prime rib dinner • *Overnight Huntley Lodge (B, L, D)*

Day 6: Big Sky / Bozeman

This morning, we head out on one last ski or snowshoe before making the hour-long drive back to Bozeman through picturesque Gallatin Canyon • You'll be dropped off at the Bozeman Airport or your post-trip Bozeman hotel • *(B)*

** Big Sky Ski Resort is home to the "Biggest Skiing in America" at 5,850+ skiable acres. You might consider extending your trip to include a day or two of skiing on your own. Please talk to your Adventure Consultant for details.*

***Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*

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Activities

Snowshoeing: 1.5 miles to 3 miles, easy to moderate terrain, no experience necessary.

Cross-Country Skiing: 3 to 5 miles, easy to moderate terrain, no experience necessary.

Dogsledding: Professional mushers will provide instruction and a safety talk as well as accompany guests throughout the morning tour.

Discovery: To visit Yellowstone in the months of November to March is to uncover a whole different side to our world's first national park...without the crowds! Mid-winter, Yellowstone morphs into a stunning wonderland, complete with snow-laden pines, frozen waterfalls, and abundant wildlife. In the winter, the northern one-third of the park, especially Lamar Valley, is home to wolves, bison, elk, coyotes, and mule deer, who are driven from the deep snow of the forests and upper elevations to forage and hunt for food in the open meadows near the road, creating optimal wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors. Also featured on this trip is Big Sky, Montana, home to the "Biggest Skiing in America." While you won't downhill ski on this adventure, you'll have a chance to leave the ski throngs behind as you cross-country ski, snowshoe or dogsled quiet backcountry trails with your knowledgeable, local guide team. Come to Montana mid-winter to discover a quiet side that most visitors never get to experience!

Austin Adventures guides are experienced facilitators and regional experts. They will take the time to explain the details of each activity, answer any questions and demonstrate the use of all equipment. Each activity has been carefully planned to include options for all levels. Most importantly, Austin Adventures guides will help you select the distance that's right for you.

Distinctive Accommodations

Nights 1 - 3: The Ridgeline at Yellowstone

The Ridgeline Hotel is located in Gardiner, Montana just outside the north entrance of the Park on the banks of the Yellowstone River. Within walking distance to just about any restaurant in Gardiner, this is the perfect accommodation to spend exploring small town Montana. After a day on the trails, enjoy a comfortable bed and the whirlpool tubs or sauna.

Nights 4 & 5: Huntley Lodge

Located in the heart of Big Sky Resort's Mountain Village, this traditional slope-side ski lodge was part of the late NBC News broadcaster Chet Huntley's original vision for Big Sky Resort. The 200-room resort features old-time charms but receives continual care and upkeep. Boyne Beds – known for their overstuffed mattresses, quality bedding and pillows – are a mainstay in each room. Huntley Lodge guests can enjoy the pool and hot tubs as well as easy access to dining and shopping.

Meals

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. All meals: breakfasts, lunches, snacks, dinners, refreshments and receptions – except one dinner on your own – are included as indicated by itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.



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Arrival & Departures

Please plan on arriving at least one day prior to your trip departure. Day one of your itinerary starts at 8:30 or 8:45 am, depending on your hotel. Your trip ends with a drop-off at either the Bozeman airport (12:00 pm) or your Bozeman hotel (12:30 pm). Please make flights for 1:30 PM or later.

Trip Price

\$3,698 (\$680 single supplement)

Trip Length

6 days/5 nights

2021 Dates

February 21 – 26
February 28 – March 5
March 7 – 12

Host City

Bozeman, Montana
Airport code: BZN

Reservations & Availability

1-800-575-1540

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Trip Reservations

Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A \$500 per person deposit is required to confirm your reservation. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods:

Toll free: 800-575-1540

Phone: 406-655-4591

Online: austinadventures.com

Email: reservations@austinadventures.com

Mail: Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

** We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

Included in the Trip Price

- Double occupancy rooms with private baths.
- All meals as listed in itinerary (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner).
- Fully trained, first-aid certified professional guides and knowledgeable local partners.
- Any necessary equipment – all safe and well maintained.
- Vehicle support and land transportation during the trip.
- Austin Adventures T-shirt, water bottle, luggage tags and luggage service.
- Pre-departure and packing information.
- Incidental expenses such as taxes, dining and housekeeping gratuities, local partner and expert gratuities and national park entrance and permit fees.

Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gratuities to Austin Adventures guides.
- Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities.
- One dinner during your trip.
- Pre-and post-trip accommodations and associated expenses.
- Air and land transportation to/from host cities.
- All types of personal insurance.
- Personal expenses.

Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.



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Private Custom Trips

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

Solo Travelers

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement". If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. We at Austin Adventures will do our best to match you with a suitable roommate of the same gender before departure. If you book 90 days or more before the trip and we cannot find you a roommate, 50% of the private room cost will be due at final payment time. If you book within 90 days of departure and we cannot find you a roommate, the full private room charge will be applied. If we do find you a roommate between final payment and before the trip departs, we will refund the single supplement amount paid. Some exceptions apply.

Child Age and Pricing on Family Adventures

Family Adventures are suitable for children seven years old and up. Children who share a room with one or more adults receive reduced rates. The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

Cancellations and Refunds

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

***As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

Cancellation 91 days or more before trip departure – Full trip payment refunded less a \$300 per person administration fee

Cancellation 61-90 days before trip departure – Full trip payment less 25% per person is refunded

Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure – No refund is given

Our Guarantee

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.