

MONTANA'S SCENIC BYWAYS & HIGHWAYS

DRIVING UNDER THE BIG SKY

Sometimes the roads less traveled – or not – offer some of the most spectacular vistas and memorable moments often bookended by charming small towns. With over 11,000 miles of roads (mostly paved) criss-crossing the state, there's no shortage of amazing landscapes to captivate your view. Take your time, enjoy the drive and treat yourself to a night of Montana hospitality.

Montana's Designated Scenic Byways

The US Forest Service and the US Bureau of Land Management developed a series of criteria for roadways – both paved and unpaved – to be designated an Official Scenic Byway. Of these, the most important criteria is their outstanding scenic value. Montana holds 10 designated routes, on both paved and un-paved roads. Here are five designated byways that combine easy access with breathtaking views that make the miles or kilometers seem like moments.

- ✚ **Beartooth Highway** (Red Lodge, Cooke City & Yellowstone National Park) – This seasonal All American Road connects two historic communities with one national park – Yellowstone. It's also noted as the "The most beautiful drive in America." This 54 mile (87 km) highway cuts through the 13,000 foot peaks of the Beartooth Range where you'll experience mountaintop plateaus, crystal lakes, wildlife and wildflower abundance and one of the nation's most scenic rest areas! www.beartoothhighway.com

- ✚ **Lake Kootanusa Scenic Byway** (Libby & Eureka, Glacier Country) – Connecting Libby Dam to British Columbia, the 90 miles (145 km) of Hwy 37, parallel the Kootenai River and Lake Kootanusa, bridging two countries. Kootanusa's name is derived from the Kootenai Indians, Canada and USA. The rocky outcrops present refuge for bighorn sheep while a narrow fjord-like gorge is formed between the Purcell and Salish Mountains. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2135



ALONG LAKE KOOCANUSA

- ✚ **Kings Hill Scenic Byway** (White Sulphur Springs & Belt, Russell Country) – The rugged beauty and year-round recreation found on this route encourages your exploration. Stretching 79 miles (127 km) on Hwy 89, trailheads, ski hills, pristine lakes, watchable wildlife, mining communities, breweries and hot springs invite you to slow down and savor the fresh air. It's also a chance to connect Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks for a drive of a lifetime. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2055



SUMMER IN THE PIONEER MOUNTAINS

- ✚ **Pioneer Mountains Scenic Byway** (Wise River, Dillon & Jackson, Gold West Country) – Bisecting the Pioneer Mountains, this 49 mile (79 km) byway is dual purpose. In the summer, drive to fish, hike or dig for crystals amid lush forests, open meadows and ghost towns. In the winter, the route becomes a National Recreation Snowmobile Trail, inviting a different outlook as you snowmobile or ski the road. Afterwards, savor a soak in an outdoor hot spring. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2136

- ✚ **St. Regis – Paradise Scenic Byway** (St. Regis & Paradise, Glacier Country) – Originally a meandering trail, this short 30 mile (40 km) byway, winds along the Clark Fork River, is bookended by I-90 and Hwy 200, two major roads (and scenic in their own right) in northwest Montana. Its motto: "The River, The People, The Land" invites you to discover the beauty and cultures that call it home. www.byways.org/explore/byways/2137

For more information on Montana's driving requirements and other scenic drives, check out the Montana Department of Transportation website at www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo or www.visitmt.com/experiences/scenic_adventures.



MONTANA'S SCENIC BYWAYS & HIGHWAYS

DRIVING UNDER THE BIG SKY

In Montana, one might ask a local "What's your favorite drive?" In response, you might get "the inspiring Going-to-the-Sun in Glacier," "Hwy 200 which stretches from the eastern prairies through the western slopes," to simply "my driveway." To help you on your search for "your favorite drive," here are some roads and routes that will not only expand your horizons, but your appreciation of the Big Sky Country.

✚ Scenic Highways & Roads

Giant Springs Road (Great Falls, Russell Country) – The first Montana State Historic Byway, this short, 3 mile (4 km) drive leads to the one of the world's largest natural springs and the shortest river in the world, located in Giant Springs State Park. Picnic beside the rivers – the Roe and the Missouri – and unwind from the day.

✚ **Going-to-the-Sun Road** (East & West Glacier, Glacier Country) – This aptly named road in Glacier National Park offers sky top vistas, alpine fields of wildflowers, watchable wildlife, cascading waterfalls, crystal lakes and mountain majesty. Each corner on this 52 mile (83 km) engineering marvel, will leave you awed. In fact, it's considered a National Register of Historic Places *and* a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, each testifying to its uniqueness in an inspiring park.

www.nps.gov/glac

✚ **Pintler Veterans' Memorial Scenic Highway** (Drummond & Anaconda, Gold West Country) – Montana Hwy 1 is a driver's delight that shouldn't be missed! Experience ghost towns or golfing, sapphire mines or candy shops, wildflower meadows or waterfalls; the 60-mile (98 km) Pintler beckons a ride off I-90 to explore without adding mileage.

✚ **Warrior Trail Highway** (Crow Agency & Alzada, Custer Country) – The 212-mile (341 km) via Hwy 212 is the shortest distance to the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument from the Black Hills of South Dakota. On this two-lane road, you'll drive past five battle sites between U.S. and Native Americans and experience the sweeping prairie landscape and the badlands that challenged both early pioneers and native cultures.

www.thewarriortrail.com



GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD



CENTRAL MONTANA'S HWY 80

✚ **Drive the Top 10** (Statewide) – The Top 10 Scenic Drives in the Northern Rockies is your gateway to adventure, where unique experiences await around every turn. Montana is host to five Drives: Beartooth All American Road, Montana Scenic Loop, Northwest Passage Scenic Byway, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Loop and the Yellowstone-Grand Teton Loop. Connecting these are three Trails: the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail, the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail and the David Thompson Historic Route.

www.DriveTop10.com

✚ **MontanaScenicLoop.com** (Glacier, Gold West and Russell Country) –

The 400 mile (643 km) Montana Scenic Loop brings out the best of the best. Whether its mountain majesty, charming communities, Native American culture or year-round recreation, this scenic loop provides ample opportunity to immerse yourself in Montana.

✚ **Any road in Montana** – Need we say more? Yes, we are confident that while under our Big Sky, the charming communities you encounter, the wildlife you see, and the diversity of the landscape viewed, you will have no problem finding your own "favorite drive", whether or not it's labeled...After all, isn't what you believe the most important? So relax, slow down and enjoy the scenery.

For more Montana events, recreation insights or road trip ideas, explore www.visitmt.com and find *your* Montana destination that begs to be explored via the road.



www.visitmt.com