



Around Yellowstone

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

The 43,750-sq-mile Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem doesn't suddenly end at the park fence. Enveloping the park kernel is a protective cushion of national forests and wilderness areas that offer almost as much scenic splendor as the park itself, but without the crowds and the pesky permits. Try to allocate at least a few days to explore this exceptional area.

Latched onto Yellowstone Park's northern boundaries, the three gateway towns of Gardiner, West Yellowstone and Cooke City serve as functional visitor hubs, good for a bed and a bite to eat, but it's the four corridors that radiate out from the park that offer the real scenic draws. Plan your itinerary to combine the stunning Beartooth and Gallatin routes, or the Beartooth, Wapiti and Chief Joseph Scenic Hwy via the Wild West town of Cody, and you'll have the ultimate add-on to a classic Yellowstone trip.

Road Distances (miles)

Bozeman	145				
West Yellowstone	230	90			
Cody	110	210	135		
Gardiner	170	80	55	130	
Cooke City	130	140	100	75	55
	Billings	Bozeman	West Yellowstone	Cody	Gardiner

Note: Distances are approximate

BEARTOOTH ROUTE

Billings

📍 406 / POP 105,000 / ELEV 3300FT

Montana's largest city has more in common with the dusty plains of eastern Montana than the more-celebrated Rocky Mountain scenery out to the west of the state. It shouldn't be a priority on your Yellowstone itinerary, but it's not a bad place to overnight before heading to the park or catching your flight home.

Ernest Hemingway brought some excitement to Billings in November 1930 when he crashed his car on the way home from Yellowstone National Park. He broke his right arm and had to spend seven weeks in the town's St Vincent's Hospital.

Sights

Western Heritage Center

MUSEUM

(📍) 406-256-6809; www.ywhc.org; 2822 Montana Ave; adult/senior & child \$5/3; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue-Sat) If you have time in Billings, explore the changing exhibits and excellent artifact collection here, representing the various cultural traditions of Yellowstone Valley.

Yellowstone Art Museum

GALLERY

(📍) 406-256-6804; www.artmuseum.org; 401 N 27th St; adult/child \$6/3; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue, Wed & Sat, to 8pm Thu & Fri, 11am-4pm Sun) Combining a collection of Western art with visiting exhibitions, the YAM is on the site of the 1916 Yellowstone County Jail. Admission is \$1 on the first Saturday of the month.

Moss Mansion

HISTORIC BUILDING

(📍) 406-256-5100; www.mossmansion.com; 914 Division St; adult/senior \$10/7; 🕒 10am-4pm Tue-Sat, 1-4pm Sun) Billings' most interesting historic home, the Moss was built in 1903 by local captain of industry PB Moss. The Moorish-style entryway and atmospheric staff kitchens are particularly interesting. Fans should attend the special behind-the-scenes tour (\$25) every second Saturday.

The Rims

AREA

Cycle or hike Chief Black Otter Trail from near the airport for the best overview of the city (great at dusk) as far as the distant Bear-tooth Mountains, and to visit the grave of Yellowstone Kelly, an early scout and guide.

Sleeping

Billings KOA

CAMPGROUND \$

(📍) 406-252-3104; www.billingskoa.com; 547 Garden Ave; tent/RV sites from \$36/45, cabins from \$85; 🕒 Apr-Oct; 🚰🚽) America's first KOA

campground is in a scenic spot by the Yellowstone River, 0.5 miles south of I-90, not far from downtown.

Dude Rancher Lodge

MOTEL \$

(📍) 800-221-3302; www.duderancherlodge.com; 415 N 29th St; d from \$89; 🍷🍷🍷) Road-weary travelers will appreciate this downtown motor lodge, a fine and friendly motel with groovy oak furniture dating back to the 1940s, Western touches like split-log paneling and cattle-brand carpet, plus flat-screen TVs and in-room coffee. The attached diner is a local breakfast favorite.

Riversage Billings Inn

MOTEL \$

(📍) 800-231-7782; www.billingsinn.com; 880 N 29th St; r \$72-96; 🍷) Most rooms here are updated to include a microwave, refrigerator and breakfast.

Cherry Tree Inn

MOTEL \$

(📍) 800-237-5882; www.billingscherrytreeinn.com; 823 N Broadway; r \$65; 🍷🍷) Good-value, if somewhat dated; central location.

Northern Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(📍) 406-867-6767; www.northernhotel.com; 19 N Broadway; r \$209; 🍷) The historic Northern was recently renovated, combining its previous elegance with fresh and modern facilities. Breakfast or lunch is in the attached 1950s diner, and the Ten restaurant offers one of best dinners in town.

Josephine's Bed & Breakfast

B&B \$\$

(📍) 406-248-5898; www.thejosephine.com; 514 N 29th St; r \$95-115, ste \$135-170, all incl breakfast; 🍷🍷) For those who prefer a more convivial experience, this B&B is down-home and attentive. All five rooms come with private bathroom.

Eating & Drinking

Some locals claim the **Rex** (www.therexbillings.com; 2401 Montana Ave; mains \$17-37) serves the best steak in town, while others only eat beef at **Jake's** (www.jakesbillings.com; 2701 1st Ave N; mains \$14-36).

McCormick Cafe

BREAKFAST \$

(www.mccormickcafe.com; 2419 Montana Ave; meals \$7-10; 🕒 7am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8am-3pm Sat, 8am-2pm Sun; 🍷🍷🍷) For espresso, granola breakfasts, French-style crepes, good sandwiches and a lively atmosphere, stop by this downtown favorite.

Caramel Cookie Waffles

EUROPEAN \$

(www.caramelcookiewaffles.com; 1707 17th St W; mains \$5-8; 🕒 7am-5pm Tue-Sat; 🍷) Better known as the Dutch Brothers, this place