

HIKING ITINERARY
CASUAL INN TRIP

BACKROADS
THE WORLD'S #1 ACTIVE TRAVEL COMPANY

Glacier

GLACIER AND WATERTON LAKES NATIONAL PARKS

TO RESERVE YOUR
TRIP CALL
800-462-2848 OR
SIGN UP ONLINE [HERE](#)



Important Facts
at a glance

6 DAYS, 5 NIGHTS

Click [here](#) for departure dates
and pricing details

ROUTE RATING

Levels 1-4

See [below](#) for details.

**IN BUSINESS FOR
29 YEARS,
BACKROADS IS
RECOGNIZED YEAR IN
AND YEAR OUT AS
ONE OF THE WORLD'S
TOP 10 TRAVEL
COMPANIES BY
TRAVEL+LEISURE**

Backroads celebrates the longtime friendship between the U.S. and our neighbors to the north with this spectacular Rocky Mountain hiking adventure in Glacier National Park and Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park. Explore Glacier's chiseled valleys blanketed with wildflowers, and capture breathtaking views of crystal-clear lakes that mirror soaring peaks. A landscape of graceful waterfalls, rugged mountain passes and rolling prairie waits just across the border in majestic Waterton Lakes National Park. Along the way, you'll see the diverse wildlife that call these mountains home, and experience nature at its best on the shores of glacier lakes and scenic trails that lead to dramatic vistas. At the end of the day, enjoy the rustic comforts of historic mountain lodges.

DAY 1

Meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks wearing Backroads T-shirts) at 9 a.m. at the Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish, Montana. The hotel is located at 2 Fairway Drive. **Please arrive in your hiking clothes and have a daypack containing whatever you might need on today's walk (i.e., sunglasses, camera, etc.) and your rain jacket handy.** See "Arriving & Departing" for additional logistics information.

SHUTTLE TO TRAILHEAD 1¼ HOURS

AVALANCHE LAKE HIKE 5 MILES (500-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

Welcome to Glacier Country! After we meet at Grouse Mountain Lodge, your Trip Leaders make introductions and give a brief safety talk. Then we hop in the van for our scenic journey into Glacier National Park, which includes views of beautiful Lake McDonald, the largest lake in Glacier National Park at 10 miles long and 1 mile wide. If it's a calm day, you can see the reflection of the surrounding mountains in its mirrored surface. Arriving at the trailhead, we set off along the mostly flat Trail of the Cedars and wind through a shaded red cedar forest until we cross Avalanche Creek, where you'll have a spectacular perspective on Avalanche Gorge, a popular subject for photographers. The next 2 miles climb steadily for 500 feet to Avalanche Lake, so named by Dr. Lyman Sperry after he noted large avalanche tracks down the walls of the basin surrounding the lake during his first trip to the area in 1895. During spring and early summer, winter's snowpack turns into scores of waterfalls that gush from the highest peaks. The lake's beach provides the perfect spot to eat our pack lunches. Afterward, jump into the chilly water for a swim, if you dare! This afternoon we settle into our first night's hotel, Lake McDonald Lodge, located on the renowned Going-to-the-Sun Road. Tonight we dine at the Belton Chalet, which was completed in 1910, the same year as Glacier National Park's dedication, and was the first hotel to welcome guests arriving by train. *Lodging: Lake McDonald Lodge*



LAKE MCDONALD LODGE
(1 night) Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this lodge features a massive stone fireplace and a veranda overlooking the lake.
Lake McDonald
phone: 406-888-5431
or 406-892-2525
www.lakemcdonaldlodge.com

MANY GLACIER HOTEL
(1 night) The Swiss-style chalet, completed in 1915, sits on the shore of Swiftcurrent Lake.
Glacier National Park
phone: 406-732-4411
or 406-892-2525
www.manyglacierhotel.com

PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL
(2 nights) Perched on a knoll, this historic green-gabled hotel commands breathtaking vistas of the mountains reflected in glacier-fed lakes.
Waterton Lakes
phone: 406-892-2525
www.princeofwaleswaterton.com

GLACIER PARK LODGE
(1 night) Set on the park's eastern edge in Blackfoot country, with immense timbers holding aloft the expansive lobby ceiling.
East Glacier
phone: 406-226-5600
or 406-892-2525
www.bigtreehotel.com

**EACH YEAR,
3 OUT OF 4 OF OUR
GUESTS HAVE
PREVIOUSLY
TRAVELED WITH US OR
BEEN REFERRED BY
SOMEONE WHO HAS**

DAY 2

SHUTTLE TO TRAILHEAD VIA GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD 1 HOUR

HIGHLINE TRAIL HIKE 6.8 MILES WITH SHUTTLE (250-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

LONGER OPTION: LAKE MCDONALD OVERLOOK HIKE 9.3 MILES WITH SHUTTLE (500-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

SHUTTLE TO MANY GLACIER HOTEL 1¼ HOURS

We begin our day with a drive over Going-to-the-Sun Road, said to be the most beautiful 50 miles in the world. Cut into the Garden Wall escarpment, this narrow stretch of highway is the only road connecting the east and west entrances to the park. It crosses the Continental Divide at Logan Pass (6,646 feet) and offers stunning views of the park's diverse scenery, from forests and glacial lakes to broad alpine prairies. Our scenic hike is along one of the premier trails in the park—ideal for wildlife viewing, especially bighorn sheep, mountain goats, grizzly bears and ground squirrels. Make your way across some fairly level terrain to an open alpine hillside, partially forested by evergreens. After reaching a vista overlooking Going-to-the-Sun Road, the trail continues toward Haystack Butte—the mountains of the Continental Divide (known as the “Garden Wall”) towering above us on our right, and the triumvirate of Mount Oberlin, Mount Cannon and Heaven's Peak dominating the skyline to our left. Take in this amazing picture before returning the way we came en route to Many Glacier Hotel, which offers panoramic views of Grinnell Point reflected in Swiftcurrent Lake. We gather this evening for dinner in the hotel's dining room. *Lodging: Many Glacier Hotel*

DAY 3

SHUTTLE TO WATERTON LAKES NATIONAL PARK 2 HOURS

CARTHEW-ALDERSON TRAIL HIKE 11.8 MILES (1,500-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

SHORTER OPTIONS: SUMMIT LAKE 5 MILES WITH SHUTTLE (950-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

OR BEAR GRASS FLATS 7.5 MILES WITH SHUTTLE (1,200-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

After breakfast, we shuttle north to Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park, part of the Waterton/Glacier International Peace Park commemorating the long friendship between the United States and Canada. Cameron Lake is the starting point of today's hike along the Carthew-Alderson Trail, which leads through numerous botanical life zones and past the austere Forum Peak to the west and Mount Custer to the south. Be sure to rest at Summit Lake to enjoy the tranquil view and perhaps spot a mule deer or two. This is the turnaround point for the short option, which leaves you time to return to Cameron Lake for a short kayaking adventure (please note that the cost of kayaking is not included in the trip price). Or, you may decide to continue uphill to Bear Grass Flats, where your loftier perch reveals turquoise lakes and the sharp outline of glacially sculpted peaks. If you choose to keep hiking, it's a steep push to the barren, rocky Carthew Summit, but the resulting views are well worth the effort. Come prepared for all weather—it can change in an instant at the summit. A steady descent brings you to Waterton Townsite and the Prince of Wales Hotel. This historic inn is one of the most photographed hotels in North America due to its supremely picturesque setting where “the mountains meet the prairie.”
Lodging: Prince of Wales Hotel

DAY 4

LAYOVER DAY IN WATERTON LAKES NATIONAL PARK

The day is yours to be as active or inactive as you'd like. You can explore one of many nearby trails on foot or horseback, return to Cameron Lake for fishing or kayaking, or take



Top Reasons Why you should take this trip

We provide a variety of route options so you can do as much or as little activity as you like each day.

You don't have to sweat the details! Backroads takes care of everything--from making sure your luggage is waiting for you in your room to appearing with a cool drink or a lift when you need it the most--allowing you to enjoy a carefree vacation full of fun and relaxation.

Traveling with Backroads is about making connections: with places and people, history and culture, fellow travelers--perhaps you'll even discover something new about yourself!

Our Trip Leaders have undergone hundreds of hours of training and are the best in the industry.

**WHEN YOU SIGN UP
FOR A TRIP, YOU'LL
RECEIVE A
COMPREHENSIVE
TRAVEL PLANNER
WITH ALL THE
INFORMATION YOU
NEED TO PLAN
AND PREPARE**

a cruise on Waterton Lake. (Please note that horseback riding, fishing, kayaking and the cruise are not included in the trip price.) If you hop aboard a boat to Goat Haunt, the northern gateway to Glacier National Park, you can hike to Rainbow Falls or Kootenai Lake, where moose are sometimes seen, or walk up to Goat Haunt Overlook for spectacular views of Waterton Lake below. When you're near the lakes, keep an eye out for birds, including kingfishers, spotted sandpipers, red-naped sapsuckers and white-crowned sparrows. There's also time to shop for souvenirs in Waterton Townsite. Whichever activity you choose, you'll be surrounded by a spellbinding tableau of peaks, broad lakes and rugged glacial valleys. You're on your own for dinner to try one of the restaurants in Waterton Townsite. *Lodging: Prince of Wales Hotel*

DAY 5

SHUTTLE TO MANY GLACIER VALLEY 1½ HOURS

ICEBERG LAKE HIKE 9 MILES (1,200-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

SHORTER OPTION: PTARMIGAN 5 MILES (700-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

SHUTTLE TO EAST GLACIER 1½ HOURS

After breakfast, we shuttle to the striking Many Glacier Valley. In the shadow of Mount Wilbur to the south and the Ptarmigan Wall to the north, we head out to Iceberg Lake, whose frigid waters often harbor icebergs well into summer. At one time, this lake was said to have been home to Montana's elusive fur-bearing trout. The claim, however, turned out to be nothing more than a yarn spun by local mountain men in hopes of hoodwinking a few gullible newcomers. Although you won't spot any hairy fish today, you'll be awed nonetheless by the beauty of the Many Glacier area. Surrounded by wildflowers, you'll encounter a steep 900-foot climb before a gradual ascent to the lake. You'll be treated to sublime views of Swiftcurrent Pass and the surrounding peaks that make up the dramatic Many Glacier Valley. While enjoying a rest at Iceberg Lake, search the rocky slopes for bighorn sheep. Later we shuttle to our next retreat, the venerable Glacier Park Lodge, nestled at the foot of Squaw Valley Mountain. Built in 1913, this grand hotel features a lobby lined with massive 40-foot-high Douglas fir pillars (hence the lodge's Blackfoot nickname, *Oom-Coo-La-Mush-Taw*, or "Big Tree Lodge"). *Lodging: Glacier Park Lodge*

DAY 6

TWIN FALLS HIKE 5 MILES

LONGER OPTION: UPPER TWO MEDICINE LAKE 7.2 MILES (375-FOOT ELEVATION GAIN)

SHUTTLE TO GLACIER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND WHITEFISH 2 HOURS

After a short shuttle to Two Medicine Valley, we enjoy a scenic boat ride across Two Medicine Lake aboard the *Sinopah*, built in 1927 and named for one of the prominent peaks in the area. The boat was launched the following year and has been a fixture on Two Medicine Lake ever since. The very first visitors to the park depended on the *Sinopah* to transport them between campsites and other activities within the park to West Glacier and the train station. After ferrying across the lake, we begin our hike from the lake's western shore and follow a narrow trail over level terrain to Twin Falls, a paired cascade divided by an island. Continuing through dense forest and meadows, you emerge on an open hillside bursting with wildflowers before ending at the bridge over the outlet of Pray Lake. From here, it's just a bit farther to Two Medicine Lake Campground, where we gather for a farewell picnic before shuttling to Glacier International Airport and Whitefish. Please see "Arriving & Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.



Backroads' route rating system is the most comprehensive and accurate in the travel industry. To find out how these ratings translate into varying levels of physical challenge and activity, please visit our Web site

—www.backroads.com—

and select the route rating button for the trip of your choice.

LEVEL 1

2–5 miles/day
2–3 hours/day

LEVEL 2

5–7 miles/day
2–4 hours/day

LEVEL 3

7–9 miles/day
3–5 hours/day

LEVEL 4

9–11 miles/day
4–6 hours/day

**ASK FOR REFERENCES
FROM PAST GUESTS
WHO HAVE TAKEN THE
TRIP THAT INTERESTS
YOU**

ARRIVING & DEPARTING

Please note that meeting and departing times provided here were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change. **PLEASE DO NOT BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS UNTIL YOU ARE CONFIRMED ON YOUR VACATION AND HAVE VERIFIED THE DETAILS OF ARRIVING & DEPARTING WITH YOUR TRIP CONSULTANT.**

MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

On the first day of the trip, we meet at 9 a.m. at the Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish, Montana. The lodge is located at 2 Fairway Drive (phone: 406-862-3000). (To avoid any unnecessary stress on the meeting day, you should arrive in Whitefish at least one day beforehand.) **Please arrive in your hiking clothes and with a daypack containing whatever you might need on today's walk (i.e. rain gear, sunglasses, camera, etc.).**

CONCLUSION OF THE TRIP

Our trip ends between 1:30 and 2 p.m. at Two Medicine Lake Campground. From here, we shuttle 2 hours to Glacier Park International Airport in Kalispell, arriving between 3:30 and 4 p.m. (Please schedule your return flight for after 5 p.m.)

After leaving the airport, we arrive in downtown Whitefish between 4 and 4:30 p.m. for drop-offs at the following hotels:

Grouse Mountain Lodge; 2 Fairway Drive; Phone: 800-321-8822 or 406-862-3000; www.grousemountainlodge.com

Good Medicine Lodge; 537 Wisconsin Avenue; Phone: 800-860-5488 or 406-862-5488; www.goodmedicinelodge.com

Garden Wall Bed and Breakfast; 504 Spokane Avenue; Phone: 888-530-1700 or 406-862-3440; www.gardenwallinn.com

Hidden Moose Lodge; 1735 East Lakeshore Drive; Phone: 888-733-6667 or 406-862-6516; www.hiddenmooselodge.com

Best Western Rocky Mountain Lodge; 6510 Highway 93 South; Phone: 800-780-7234 or 406-862-2569; www.bestwestern.com

Please see “Where to Stay Before & After Your Trip” for additional information on these hotels.

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

We suggest flying into Glacier Park International Airport (airport code: FCA; www.glacierairport.com) in Kalispell, Montana. Kalispell is served by Alaska Airlines/Horizon Air, Delta Airlines, Northwest Airlines and United Express.

For help arranging air transport to and from your Backroads trip, please work with your own travel agent, the airline directly or an online travel site. For assistance locating a travel agent, please visit www.backroads.com/gettingthere. (Note that most travel agents and online travel sites charge a fee for their consulting services.)

SHUTTLE SERVICE FROM GLACIER PARK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO WHITEFISH, MONTANA

Kalispell Taxi & Airport Shuttle Service (406-752-4022) provides service from Glacier Park International Airport in Kalispell to Whitefish. The shuttle is about \$20 for the first passenger, \$1 more for each additional person, and takes about 20 minutes. Reservations



Note

While the information presented here details this trip's planned routes, activities, accommodations, meeting and departing times, we are constantly seeking new opportunities to enhance this itinerary and your experience. Naturally, we will keep you up to date on any changes that may affect your arrival, departure or lodging.

**ORGANIZE A
BACKROADS PRIVATE
TRIP FOR YOUR
FAMILY, FRIENDS OR
COLLEAGUES FOR THE
TRIP OF A LIFETIME**

Hotel Room Rate Guide
(U.S. dollars per night)

Up to \$100	◆
\$101–200	◆◆
\$201–300	◆◆◆
\$301–500	◆◆◆◆
\$501 and up	◆◆◆◆◆

are recommended. Please call the company for the most up-to-date information.

DRIVING TO WHITEFISH, MONTANA

Whitefish is located approximately 130 miles north of Missoula. From Interstate 90, go north on Route 93 outside of Missoula. Continue north on Route 93 through Kalispell all the way into Whitefish. When you reach the last traffic signal, stay on Route 93 and continue for about 1 mile; the Grouse Mountain Lodge is located on the left, just past the golf course. You can leave your car in the hotel parking lot for the duration of the trip.

TAKING THE TRAIN TO WHITEFISH, MONTANA

Amtrak (800-872-7245; www.amtrak.com) provides service from Seattle and Chicago to Whitefish (WFH). Discounts are offered to seniors and children; sleeping cars are available at a higher fare. Please contact Amtrak for the most current schedule and fares.

WHERE TO STAY BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TRIP

SUGGESTED ACCOMMODATIONS

For help arranging pre- or post-trip hotels in conjunction with your Backroads trip, please work with your travel agent or the hotels directly. For assistance locating a travel agent please visit www.backroads.com/gettingthere. (Note that most travel agents charge a fee for their consulting services.)

Of course, we also recommend extending your stay at any of the hotels that we visit on this trip; see the sidebar above for details.

Please refer to the Hotel Room Rate Guide in the sidebar for starting double-occupancy rates. Note that the chart reflects the Internet and/or Best Available rates, which were accurate at the time of printing, but **hotel rates are always subject to change**.

Note: Whitefish is a small town, and accommodations fill up far in advance. We strongly recommend that you reserve your hotel room early.

WHITEFISH

Many of the hotels listed below provide complimentary transportation to Grouse Mountain Lodge and to and from the Glacier Park International Airport in Kalispell. Please inquire when you make your reservation.

GROUSE MOUNTAIN LODGE (OUR MEETING LOCATION ON DAY 1 & A DROP-OFF LOCATION ON DAY 6)

Adjacent to Montana's only 36-hole golf course, selected by *Golf Digest* as "one of the top five courses in the state of Montana," this lodge-style property offers an assortment of activities, including tennis and mountain biking. Mountain views and occasional elk, moose and deer sightings can be appreciated from the inviting lobby. **Mention you're a Backroads guest, as a special rate may be available.** 2 Fairway Drive; Phone: 800-321-8822 or 406-862-3000; www.grousemountainlodge.com; 145 rooms. Rates: ◆◆◆

GOOD MEDICINE LODGE (A DROP-OFF LOCATION ON DAY 6)

You'll immediately feel at home in the cozy surroundings of Good Medicine Lodge, which features wood furniture, vaulted timber ceilings and lodgepole pine beds. Highlights of your stay will include proximity to Big Mountain, Glacier National Park and every outdoor pursuit you can imagine, as well as a healthful breakfast buffet each morning of granola, yogurt and fresh-baked cobblers. Request a room with a balcony for wonderful mountain

Hotel Room Rate Guide	
(U.S. dollars per night)	
Up to \$100	◆
\$101–200	◆◆
\$201–300	◆◆◆
\$301–500	◆◆◆◆
\$501 and up	◆◆◆◆◆

views. 537 Wisconsin Avenue; Phone: 800-860-5488 or 406-862-5488; www.goodmedicinelodge.com; 9 rooms. Rates: ◆◆

GARDEN WALL BED AND BREAKFAST (A DROP-OFF LOCATION ON DAY 6)

Highly praised by *Sunset Magazine* as the “Best of the West” and by *Mountain Living Magazine* as one of the “Best Mountain Bed and Breakfasts,” this restored 1920s home radiates warmth and charm with its antique décor, claw-foot tubs and covered front porch, the perfect spot to take in the scenery. The innkeepers’ passion for the region is evident in their vast outdoor and historical knowledge of the area as well as in the historic photographs and first-edition books of Glacier National Park on display. This inn earns a wonderful reputation for special touches, such as the delivery of a pot of coffee or tea to your room with a single rose one half-hour before breakfast is served. 504 Spokane Avenue; Phone: 888-530-1700 or 406-862-3440; www.gardenwallinn.com; 5 rooms. Rates: ◆◆

HIDDEN MOOSE LODGE (A DROP-OFF LOCATION ON DAY 6)

This charmingly rustic lodge is perched on a hillside and bordered by nature trails leading to Whitefish Lake, gardens and the Nature Conservancy. The Hidden Moose boasts “hearty Montana-sized breakfasts” and guest rooms featuring 9-foot windows and private decks from which to soak up pristine wilderness views. Inquire about complimentary mountain bikes and other nearby activities upon arrival. 1735 East Lakeshore Drive; Phone: 888-733-6667 or 406-862-6516; www.hiddenmooselodge.com; 13 rooms. Rates: ◆◆

BEST WESTERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN LODGE (A DROP-OFF LOCATION ON DAY 6)

This comfortable mountain lodge is located near Glacier National Park and features comfortable rooms with mountain views. Complimentary continental breakfast and airport shuttle service offered to guests. High-speed Internet access is available in select rooms. 6510 Highway 93 South; Phone: 800-862-2569 or 406-862-2569; www.bestwestern.com; 79 rooms and 12 suites. Rates: ◆◆

HIBERNATION HOUSE

Head to Hibernation House for a tidy (albeit tight on space) room with one queen bed and two bunks. Located within the extensive Big Mountain Resort complex, the alpine-style hotel offers a hearty buffet breakfast (included in the rate), an indoor hot tub, laundry facilities and quick access to the hiking trails on Big Mountain. 3812 Big Mountain Road; Phone: 800-858-5439 or 406-862-1982; www.stayatbigmountain.com; 25 rooms. Rates: ◆

PINE LODGE

Located on the Whitefish River with views of The Big Mountain and Glacier National Park, this cozy retreat is the perfect place from which to pursue all sorts of outdoor activities, no matter the season. Amenities include an indoor/outdoor swimming pool and outdoor hot tub. 920 Spokane Ave.; Phone: 800-305-7463 or 406-862-7600; www.thepinelodge.com; 66 rooms. Rates: ◆◆

PTARMIGAN VILLAGE

These condos-in-the-woods give you plenty of room to spread out: Each comes with a fully equipped kitchen, separate bedrooms and spacious living room with a fireplace or wood stove (not to mention CD players and VCRs). Set on 52 acres 6 miles from Whitefish, the Village features horseshoe pits, nature trails, fishing pond and a playground. Nearby Whitefish Lake has a private beach for summer dips. 3000 Big Mountain Road;

Hotel Room Rate Guide
(U.S. dollars per night)

Up to \$100	◆
\$101-200	◆◆
\$201-300	◆◆◆
\$301-500	◆◆◆◆
\$501 and up	◆◆◆◆◆

Phone: 800-552-3952 or 406-862-3594; www.ptarmiganvillage.com; 50 units. Minimum stay of two nights. Rates: From ◆◆

KANDAHAR LODGE

This three-story, family-style Alpine lodge is nestled on Big Mountain at 7,000 feet, about 20 minutes from downtown Whitefish. It features an enormous stone fireplace, period antiques mixed with Scandinavian furnishings, and beautiful panels of etched glass reflecting natural scenes by Whitefish artist Myni Ferguson. Please note that transportation is not provided by the hotel, and that taxi service into town is limited. 3824 Big Mountain Road; Phone: 800-862-6094 or 406-862-6098; www.kandaharlodge.com; 50 rooms. Rates: ◆◆◆◆

THE LODGE AT WHITEFISH LAKE

Created in the tradition of the grand lodges of the west, this luxury hotel with a waterfront pool and spa is host to Whitefish's summer glitterati. The Boat Club restaurant provides a sophisticated reminder of regattas past while the Coffee Dock gets you plugged in and wired up for your day. 380 Wisconsin Avenue; Phone: 877-887-4026 or 406-863-4000; www.lodgeatwhitefishlake.com; 63 rooms. Rates: ◆◆◆◆◆

We hope you've found this information useful, but nothing substitutes for speaking with one of our experienced Trip Consultants. Please call 800-462-2848 Monday-Sunday, between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific time.