

Self-Guided Tours

Coal mines, Flying Pigs and Banana Cream Pie

Follow Highway 308 up and out of Red Lodge for a lovely bird's eye view of town and, beyond it, a wide sweep of landscape that's pure Montana: snowcapped mountains, verdant foothills and forget-me-not skies. Continue east on 308 and the scenery changes entirely to the thirsty, sagebrush-dotted bluffs and plateaus of rattlesnake country. Here you can see clear to Wyoming and the Pryor and Bighorn mountains that rim the horizon. Just a few miles from Red Lodge are the coal mines of Washoe and Bearcreek. Markers offer geologic and historic details, including the story of the Smith Mine Disaster of 1942. Don't miss the pig races at the Bearcreek Saloon and Steakhouse. Next door, at the Hungry Bear Cafe, the banana cream pie is a hit.

Rolling Hills, Potters and the Territory's Biggest Burger

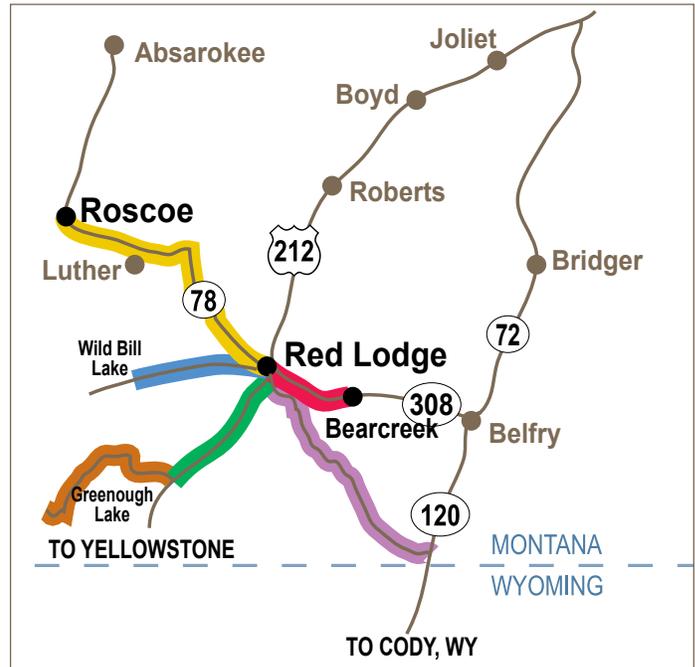
The drive west from Red Lodge on Highway 78 to the tiny ranching communities of Luther and Roscoe takes you through the kind of lush green country that's the stuff of postcards. Cows and horses graze the hillsides and the mountains seem close enough to reach out and touch. There are no services in Luther; still, it's worth the detour for the views and the sweet little schoolhouse. Home to the famous Grizzly Bar and its equally famous fare, Roscoe is also home to noted potters Janet Hero Dodge and Julie Dickinson. Visit their downtown-Roscoe gallery, Pioneer Pottery, at 11 Aspen Lane. If you have time to dally, follow the signs from Roscoe to East Rosebud Lake, which is so picturesque you'll swear you've landed in a scene from Heidi.

Tailgate Picnics, Gurgling Streams and the Big One That Got Away

Follow Ski Run Road for about 3 miles then turn on West Fork Rock Creek Road for a short drive that leads to all kinds of outdoor fun. Home to many footpaths that access the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, the West Fork canyon is also home to the pristine waters of Wild Bill Lake. Wheelchair accessible and stocked with trout, Wild Bill Lake is a fine spot for a picnic and a wonderful destination for the entire family. A little farther up the road, Basin Lake Trailhead offers an easy, scenic hike along Basin Creek. On your way back in to town, be sure to stop at the Elk Refuge viewing station. Bring your binoculars!

Not for the Faint of Heart!

For breathtaking views of Rock Creek Canyon and Hellroaring Plateau, take Highway 212 south of Red Lodge to Parkside Campground. Cross Rock Creek and follow the gravel road up, up, up! At the road's end, alpine lakes and the sweeping Hellroaring Plateau await you.



Wildflowers, Walks and Snow-Crested Peaks

Follow Highway 212 south from Red Lodge for a gorgeous drive along the waters of Rock Creek. 12 miles south of town, Greenough Lake campground offers fishing access to the lake and Rock Creek. You'll also find hiking and biking trails and gorgeous, wildflower-studded scenery here. Continue up the Beartooth Highway to Vista Point for a breathtaking view of Rock Creek Canyon, Hellroaring Plateau and the sky-high summits of the Beartooth Mountains.

Retrace the Past on Meeteetse Trail

This scenic 4WD road began as an Army supply trail in 1881 that started at Meeteetse, Wyoming came through Red Lodge and continued on to Coulson (now Billings). The road brought the first mail, supplies and settlers the 100 mile distance from Meeteetse to Red Lodge and was originally called the "100 Mile Route". Several years after its opening, stage coaches began to travel the Meeteetse regularly. To retrace the steps of the past, take Highway 212 3/4 miles south of Red Lodge and take the gravel road angling southeast and across Rock Creek. You will come out on Hwy 72 near the Montana-Wyoming border. Meeteetse Trail – Just south of downtown Red Lodge, you'll find Meeteetse Trail. Originating in Meeteetse, Wyoming, the road brought the first mail, supplies and settlers the 100-mile distance from Meeteetse to Red Lodge and was originally called the "100 Mile Route."