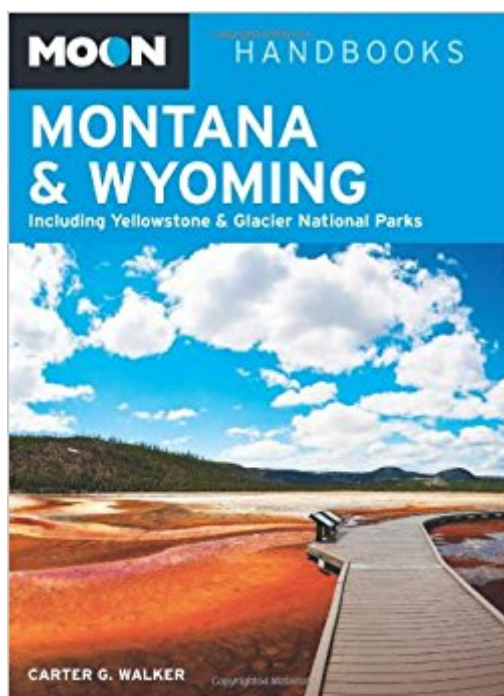


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Moon Montana & Wyoming: Including Yellowstone & Glacier National Parks (Moon Handbooks)



Synopsis

Freelance writer and editor Carter G. Walker introduces you to the best of Montana and Wyoming, from the towering pines of Montana's Glacier Country to the art scene and high style of Jackson Hole and Cody. A longtime resident of Montana, Walker has plenty of unique trip ideas to offer, including Outdoor Adventures, Native American History & Culture, and Old West Meets New West. Whether you're looking to see bison and elk in Yellowstone National Park or attend the Fourth of July Rodeo in Livingston, Moon Montana and Wyoming gives you the tools you need to create a more personal and memorable experience.

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Customer Reviews

From the time she was eight years old, Carter G. Walker made annual family trips out west to a Wyoming dude ranch, where she fell in love with purple mountain majesties and all things equine. When she graduated early with an English literature degree from Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, Carter landed, sight unseen, in Bozeman, Montana and made the West her home. In her two decades as a Westerner, Carter has stoked the flames of her love affair by balancing her intellectual need to tell stories with her physical yearning to explore and appreciate wild places. She has worked as a wilderness guide in Montana and Wyoming; as a naturalist guide in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks; as a wildland and structure firefighter and EMT; and as a publisher, editor, and freelance writer. She is currently the managing editor of *Western Art & Architecture* and a contributing editor to *Big Sky Journal*. She continues to travel the backroads and

little-known parts of the West as fodder for countless magazine features and food for her soul. In 2002, after a ski trip to the North Pole was unexpectedly (but brilliantly!) re-routed through the archipelago of Svalbard, Carter met and married Björn Sæfsteren, an absolute Viking and her hero when it came to the pursuit of adventure. The couple live with their two young daughters, Sissel and Siri; both champion road warriors and cowgirls at heart; in Bozeman, Montana.

The Best of Montana & Wyoming with Carter G. Walker

1. Tell us a bit about the ranch in Wyoming you visited every year. It's quite possibly my favorite place in the world and has been since I was 8-years-old: Eatons Ranch in Wolf, Wyoming. I love it as much for its natural beauty (nestled along Wolf Creek in the Big Horn Mountains) as for its timelessness. The dudes today still do the same thing as the dudes in the 70s (when I was a little girl) or the 50s or even the 30s. It is heaven on earth in my book, and a magical place to spend a week with people you love.
2. What destinations in Montana and Wyoming would you recommend for the first-time traveler? First-time travelers will likely want some of the comforts of home without sacrificing the full flavor of the West. There are plenty of towns; Cody and Jackson Wyoming; Bozeman and Missoula, Montana, come immediately to mind; where travelers can stay in comfortable, often familiar (or even luxe) accommodations with relatively easy access to activities like skiing, horseback riding, and hiking, not to mention glorious mountain surroundings. From Jackson, for example, day trips into the sky-scraping Tetons or nearby Yellowstone National Park are a given. You can head over to the rodeo or watch the nightly shoot-out, but then fill up on world-class sushi at any number of fine restaurants. These towns in particular offer a unique taste of the West without the culture shock of, say, Butte.
3. What are the scenes like in Jackson Hole and Cody, Wyoming? Two very different towns, Jackson is Patagonia and sushi while Cody is buckskin fringe and prime rib. Jackson is visually more spectacular with the Tetons in plain view and skiing opportunities around every corner. Cody is high mountain plateau, wide open spaces and magnificent valleys beyond town. Jackson offers a higher scale of luxury in terms of accommodation, dining and shopping. But Cody's Buffalo Bill Historical Center is world class and unmatched anywhere in the West. Cody is old school cowboys, tried-and-true Westerners. There is some of that in Jackson too, but less so. Jackson appeals to an interesting assortment of ski bums and art collectors. Both towns are well worth visiting and each presents a unique slice of Wyoming.
4. What's the best time of year to visit? Both places have such different personalities depending upon the season, and really all of them can be captivating. Summer is enchanting and all too short. Who couldn't fall in love

with a mountainous wonderland under bluebird skies? Because it's fleeting, summer in Montana and Wyoming verges on mania. The long days and starry nights are filled with farmers' markets, rodeos, county fairs, and more trails than you could ever hike. The only downside, if it can be called that, is that this is primetime for travelers in the West and although there is plenty of room for everyone, you'll need to seek solitude if that's what you're after. On the flip side, winter is long and quiet and sublime. The crowds are gone; the wildlife is often in full-view; and the outdoors is still powerfully enticing. Fall and spring can be fabulous too; think bugling elk or blankets of wildflowers on the plus side, mud season on the down side; but much less predictable (and trickier to pack for).

5. Describe Montana's Glacier Country. How about high, wide and handsome? Though the description was made famous by Joseph Kinsey Howard's 1943 masterpiece on the state, it could easily apply to Glacier Country. The geography of the region is spectacularly rugged and supremely dramatic. These are postcard mountains and coffee table book lakes. The whole area is an outdoorsman's paradise with hiking, boating and fishing opportunities as only a starting point. And in summer, when the cherries and huckleberries ripen, the region can provide some epicurean adventures as well.

6. One of Montana's nicknames is "Big Sky Country". Does that fit well? Of all of Montana's nicknames (the aforementioned; High, Wide and Handsome; The Treasure State; The Land of Shining Mountains, etc.) none is more fitting than Big Sky Country. The truth is that everywhere in the state; from the mountains to the plains; the sky is huge and puts everything else into larger-than-life perspective.

7. What about "Cowboy State" for Wyoming? Perfectly apropos. The bucking bronc on Wyoming's license plates somehow captures the spirit of the state. The cowboy mindset is real here; for better or for worse; and plays out across Wyoming day in and day out in everything from art and culture to politics.

8. What's your favorite weekend getaway spot? Such a tough one. It depends upon the time of year, but I will never turn down a trip to Butte. I absolutely LOVE Butte, Montana. I love it the way I loved Mark Stisser in junior high. He wasn't the best looking guy on the field and he had a terrible reputation and plenty of baggage, but that boy had more personality, more charm, and a greater joie de vivre than the rest of the football team put together. (Still does, if you must know.) Butte is like that. You know you shouldn't love it, what with the Superfund sites and the mining scars and the regular bar brawls, but you just can't help yourself. The city is like nothing else in Montana. There is a phenomenal history here from the stunning (if crumbling) architecture to the indefatigable spirit of the people. Walking the streets of Butte, popping into the old brothels and mansions which today

are museums, dining on pasties and ale, I never feel more like a Montanan than I do in this rough-and-tumble town.⁹ What are some of the area's best-kept secrets? The truth is, this whole part of the country is a well-kept secret if you're just willing to venture 150; even slightly 150; off the beaten path. For example, more than 3 million people visit Yellowstone National Park every year, but fewer than 2 percent of them ever get more than a mile from any road. That leaves millions of acres (2.2 million to be precise) of pristine wilderness ripe for exploration. And as for other well-kept secrets, I would venture to say that just about all of eastern and much of central Montana could be so categorized. Makoshika State Park in Glendive is fascinating and ruggedly beautiful. Medicine Lake National Wildlife refuge is like a wetland oasis in a sea of tall waving grass. The solitude of the place will take your breath away, and for birders, this is paradise. Fort Benton, not far from Great Falls, is an absolute gem with one of the state's most glorious old hotels and a restaurant that rivals just about anything in the state. The area is rich with history, offers plenty of riverine activity and is long on charm. Yet, plenty of Montanans who have spent their entire lives in the state have never been. In Wyoming, I see Buffalo as one of the best under-the-radar destinations. Where else can you stay in the hotel that inspired a classic 147; The Virginian and sit in the stands for an all-girls rodeo? Buffalo is fantastically authentic.

Very good details for each of the small towns we passed through and bigger destinations. Very helpful to give us an initial steer for things to see and do or where to eat. Nothing beats the up to date info provided by the National Parks (Yellowstone and Grand Tetons for our trip) but this book was the best one stop shopping for overall general information. Couldn't have set our itinerary without it!

Spent a lot of time researching on web and in books - this was one of the BEST !! planned my two week vacation out west and it was perfect. Recommend all the books by Moon; I bought three of them and have used them all. Love the trips in the front pages with short to do lists based kind of time you have to spend there. Everything was ACCURATE ! Will buy another Moon book to plan my next vacation!

I ordered Moon Montana & Wyoming to give me an orientation to southwest Montana for a planned visit. I was particularly pleased with the detail regarding small festivals and points of interest that are not only on main roads but off the beaten path, as well. I have visited Montana many times but was

always dependent on others to plan by itineraries. This time I knew nearly as much as my hosts and could self-guide myself through some gorgeous countryside. I would recommend this book for visitors to Montana, no matter how many times you've passed through the area. I think you will find the format and attention to detail to be a profitable reading and research experience.

This travel guide is the BEST travel guide I have ever used. Descriptions are detailed and offer accurate information about sights to see, places to eat, and places to stay. My husband and I were able to plan each day the evening before so that we didn't miss special areas and activities. When we travel in the future, I'll look for a guide like this one to use, again!

Best Wyoming guidebook out there, but I don't think it is as complete as previous issues, particularly in the restaurant area. Having said that I have to say that it is still my "go to" guidebook. This book, in conjunction with Yelp and a back roads guide book give me what I was looking for.

We spent two weeks following all the recommendations that were in this travel book. We were never disappointed and used it exclusively. It was a great vacation enhancer.

Good recos for small towns and a broad range of things to do. I also went to Yosemite, and the recos were not that detailed and didn't help me plan that part of my trip as much as I would have liked.

This book has been very helpful in planning our trip to Montana. The maps are good and we found hotels easily,

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