Things to do in the Greater Yellowstone Area that are not in Yellowstone

**Hiking**

 **Beehive Basin**

Beehive Basin Trail No. 40 is a 7.1 mile heavily trafficked out and back trail located near Big Sky, Montana that features a lake and is rated as moderate. The trail is primarily used for hiking, trail running, camping, and backpacking and is best used from May until October. Dogs are also able to use this trail.

 **Storm Castle Peak**

Storm Castle Peak is a 4.7 mile heavily trafficked out and back trail located near Gallatin Gateway, Montana that features a river and is rated as moderate. The trail is primarily used for hiking, walking, nature trips, and bird watching and is accessible year-round. Dogs are also able to use this trail.

 **Lava Lake**

Lava Lake (Cascade Creek) Trail is a 5.5 mile heavily trafficked out and back trail located near Gallatin Gateway, Montana that features a lake and is rated as moderate. The trail offers a number of activity options and is best used from March until October. Dogs and horses are also able to use this trail.

 **Big Springs Interpretive trail**

Big Springs Interpretive Trail is a 2.4 mile moderately trafficked out and back trail located near Island Park, Idaho that features a river and is good for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for hiking, walking, and nature trips and is best used from May until October. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash.

 **Mount Hebgen Trail**

Mount Hebgen Trail is a 9.2 mile lightly trafficked loop trail located near West Yellowstone, Montana that offers the chance to see wildlife and is rated as moderate. The trail is primarily used for hiking and bird watching.

**Henrys Lake Trail**

Henrys Lake Trail is a 4.4 mile lightly trafficked out and back trail located near Mack’s Inn, Idaho that features a lake and is good for all skill levels. The trail offers a number of activity options. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash.

**Cabin Creek Trail**

Cabin Creek Trail is a 4.9 mile lightly trafficked out and back trail located near West Yellowstone, Montana that features a lake. The trail is good for all skill levels and is primarily used for hiking, trail running, nature trips, and fishing.

**Horseback riding**

 **Diamond P Ranch**

It is an easy walking distance to the Diamond P Ranch from Yellowstone Park KOA. They offer trail rides for all levels of experience with some of the best guides in the industry. You can experience 1/2 day and full day trips along the Continental Divide in the beautiful Gallatin National Forest. 406-646-0606

 **Eagle Ridge Ranch**

An authentic Old West working cattle ranch, located in the heart of Yellowstone Country, with horseback riding, boating, fishing, and even cabins to rent. The ranch is located near Island Park, Idaho just 25 miles from the West Entrance of Yellowstone National Park. The ranch has fantastic family style guided horseback rides in the beautiful mountains near the Continental Divide. Guests who ride horses can also fish and boat in our private lakes at no extra charge-no license required. Bring a picnic and stay for the day.

**White Water Rafting & Other Adventures**

 **Montana Whitewater**

Montana Whitewater has provided wonderful outdoor experiences for many years. They activities they offer include but are not limited to: Rafting, Tubing, Fishing, Kayak lessons and more. 63960 Gallatin Rd. Gallatin Gateway, MT 59730 406-763-4465

 **Geyser Whitewater**

Geyser Whitewater provides white water rafting, kayaking, tubing, zip lining, and fly fishing and much more. For the rafting they offers different levels of rafting so you can have an adventurous trip of your experience level while you're here. 46651 Gallatin Road Big Sky, Montana 406-995-4989

**Lake trips & Fishing**

 **Madison River**

The Madison River ranks as one of the top trout fly fishing waters in Montana. Trout, both rainbow and brown, are very high—particularly upstream from Ennis. Moreover, the trout are sizable—you won’t find many half-starved, eager to take anything trout in the prime fishing waters of the Madison. Finally, the Madison River ranks as one of the prettiest rivers in Montana. So even if the fish aren’t biting, it’s never a really bad day on the river. There are several distinct sections on the Madison River. Each are covered separately on this page.

 **Gallatin River**

The Gallatin River offers is excellent dry fly fishing on a river that receives relatively low fishing pressure in beautiful surroundings. The fish are not finicky eaters, either, which makes the Gallatin River an excellent place for learning how to fly fish. Along its upper stretches, the river is not very deep, allowing easy bank-to-bank wading. The trout on the river, consisting of both brown and rainbow trout, average around 12 inches. Grayling and cutthroat trout are also found in the Gallatin River.

 **Hebgen Lake**

At Hebgen Lake you can explore the spacious mountains as well as troll or fly fish the fresh waters, enjoy water sports on the lake, hike a variety of mountain trails, or simply relax in the quiet serenity of the Rocky Mountains. The Kirkwood Marina has boat rentals for fishing, waterskiing, tubing, and leisure as well as paddle craft such as Kayaks, Stand-up Boards and Pedal Boats for fun on the water. In addition, the Marina has dock slips available for your own boat.

 **Henry’s Lake**

One of Idaho's great high mountain lakes, Henrys Lake is the kind of place that fishers dream about. Anglers fish for cutthroat, brook and cut-bow hybrid trout in what is considered one of the finest trout fisheries in the West. Henrys Lake is a great place for day use activities and plenty of opportunities for hiking, biking, picnic and much more.

 **Cliff and Wade Lake**

Cliff and Wade Lakes sit on a geologic fault that formed a chasm that filled with water; cliffs surround much of the lakes' shorelines. Cliff Lake is the larger and somewhat more isolated of the two. Wade Lake is more easily accessible and receives more use; it's spring-fed and stays partly ice-free in the winter. These lakes are great for day use picnics, bird watching and hiking. Cliff Lake offers some exceptional canoeing, especially in the remote coves; canoes and lodging available at Wade Lake Resort (406) 682-7560.

 **Earthquake Lake**

The driving adventure begins as you pass through the Madison River Canyon, which was struck in 1959 by one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded on the North American continent. Measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, the earthquake caused an enormous landslide and sent 80 million tons of rock tumbling into the canyon, obstructing the flow of the Madison River. The water soon backed up behind the fallen rocks and formed Quake Lake. As you drive along the banks of the water, the effect of the changing earth can be seen all around. Be sure to stop at the pullouts and scenic overlooks, go to the Ghost Village, and visit Refuge Point.

**Animal Fun**

 **Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center**

~UPDATE AS OF MARCH 17, 2020 THE DISCOVERY CENTER IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. CHECK THEM OUT ONLINE AND ON FACEBOOK FOR SOME VIRTUAL FUN. At the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, see live grizzly bears, wolves, birds of prey, and more at this one-of-a-kind, AZA accredited, not-for-profit wildlife park. The Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center is open 365 days a year and the bears do not hibernate. Take part in educational opportunities including Keeper Kids (hide bear food), Wolf Enrichment, Safety-in-Bear-Country programs, Ranger Talks, a world-class bear museum, films, and presentations. 201 S Canyon Street West Yellowstone, Montana 59758 (406) 646-7001

 **Bear World**

Experience bears like you never have before. Bear world offers bottle-feeding cubs, Wildlife Excursions and a lot of educational videos on bears. Visit the petting zoo and even take the kids on the amusement rides. Bear world is located in Rexburg, Idaho. 6010 S Bear World Road, Rexburg ID 83440 208.359.9688

**6 Bonus Ideas**

 **Virginia City**

The very much alive ghost town, Virginia City, Montana, is frozen in time. It is a remarkably well-preserved Old West Victorian gold mining town just 50 miles west of Yellowstone National Park (90 miles by road). When the gold ran out, there was still enough left so that homes and businesses were occupied, but there was not enough wealth to remodel the buildings. So it froze, and now represents the whole Victorian era. Virginia City is the true and original Old West. It is a gem, held within an incredibly rich area of natural beauty, recreation and history.

 **Ennis, Montana & Willie’s Distillery**

Ennis, Montana is a beautiful area that is known for its fishing. Ennis is also a wonderful spot to see wildlife. At times in the spring, you can see thousands of elk at once. This is also one of the best locations for spotting antelope, deer, coyotes, and—on rare occasions—wolves. Drive carefully through this area, especially early morning and dusk when these animals are on the move. Ennis is also the home to Willie’s Distillery. Montana’s own offers distillery tours of their German made copper pot stills and make sure to stop by the tasting room to try some of the best cocktails and whiskey in Montana.

 **Mesa Falls**

This scenic byway includes the Upper and Lower Mesa Falls. You will arrive at the Upper Falls first, where a boardwalk leads from the historic Big Falls Inn, now the visitor center and gift shop, right to the brink of the Upper Mesa Falls. You will then travel another mile down to the Grandview Overlook of Lower Mesa Falls. At 114 feet high for the Upper Mesa Falls and 65 feet high for the Lower Mesa Falls, they offer equally spectacular views in a beautiful forest setting. Both falls can be viewed in full: Lower Falls from a quarter mile and the Upper Falls from just a few feet away.

 **Lewis and Clark Caverns**

Hike and experience amazing geologic wonders at Montana's first and best-known state park showcase of one of the most highly decorated limestone caverns in the Northwest. Only Paradise tours offered at this time. The Paradise tour will guide you to the largest, most decorated rooms of the cave. Tour length is approximately 1 mile and the tour takes about 1 1/2 hours. Pre-registration and pre-payment is required. To reserve tour tickets, learn how to prepare for your visit or discover current Park restrictions, call (406) 287-3541. Tickets are limited. They are only booking tours within a 2-week window from the date you call. Paradise Tours will be offered Friday-Monday, hourly from 9:15am-5:15pm. Call for tickets even if it is the day you’d like to take a tour.

 **Sawtell Peak**

The summit is located near Henrys Lake and Big Springs, Sawtell Peak can be accessed by a heavily trafficked road that is about 13 miles long and involves a 3,440ft incline from US 20 to the summit. The best time to drive this is later in the summer (opens June 1) making sure that the snow is melted.

 **St. Anthony Sand Dunes**

Ever want to go to the desert while in the greater Yellowstone area? Now’s your chance. The St. Anthony Sand Dunes consists of 10,600 acres of clear, shifting, white quartz sand. Although much of the sand dunes is managed as a wilderness study area, the area is popular for high off-road vehicle use. Dunes up to 400 feet high attract riders from throughout the west. ORV and ATV users are a very common sight here. Others prefer to explore the dunes on horse and on foot.

Information:

<https://www.destinationyellowstone.com/>

<https://www.visitmt.com/listings/general/lake/cliff-and-wade-lakes.html>

<https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/parks/henrys-lake>

<https://www.montanawhitewater.com/>

<https://www.raftmontana.com/geyser-whitewater.html>

<https://virginiacitymt.com/>

<https://www.williesdistillery.com/>

<http://stateparks.mt.gov/lewis-and-clark-caverns/>

<https://www.blm.gov/visit/st-anthony-sand-dunes>

<https://www.bigskyfishing.com/rivers/>

<https://www.alltrails.com/?ref=header>