

MONTANA FLY FISHING LODGE

ABSAROKEE, MONTANA



PRE-TRIP TACKLE & TRAVEL PLANNER

GPS Coordinates: 45°27'30.06"N 109°27'3.56"W

WWW.THEFLYSHOP.COM

Trip Questionnaire: Once you have arranged your travel details, please click on the link below. This will take you an electronic questionnaire form that we ask you to complete and submit to The Fly Shop. Please be sure to click the **“Submit”** button at the end of the form. The information provided will help us -- and the outfitter best coordinate your trip. THANK YOU!

Trip Questionnaire: [Click Here](#)

Getting to Montana Fly Fishing Lodge:

Montana Fly Fishing Lodge is located just outside the small town of Absarokee, in Stillwater County, Montana, approximately 14 miles south of Columbus on Highway 78. It is named after the Crow Indians who formerly inhabited the land. It is a scenic one hour drive from the Billings Montana Airport (BIL) that hosts 6 airlines with non-stop flights to and from 21 US destinations, and connections all over the world. Complimentary airport shuttles from the Billings airport are included in the package.

Airport Shuttles: Shuttles can be arranged from Billings (BIL) airport to the lodge and ARE included in the price of the trip.

Guests can arrive at any time after 3pm, preferably before 6pm, as dinner is normally served around 7:00 PM.

Some guests prefer to rent a car and make the drive to and from the lodge on their own. It is nice have a vehicle for mobility If you want to see more of the area.

Please remember to follow these driving directions and do not plan on using GPS, as that will NOT get you to the lodge!

GATEWAY CITIES

From the East - Billings, MT (60 miles, 1 hour drive/shuttle time)

From the South - Cody, WY (90 miles, 1 hour and 30 minutes drive/shuttle time)

From the West - Bozeman, MT (120 miles, 2 hours and 12 minutes drive/shuttle time)

BILLINGS, MT [Driving Directions/Map](#)

Airport (BIL) Billings Logan International Airport: 406.247.8609

Alaska Airlines: 800.252.7522

American Airlines: 800.433.7300

Delta Airlines: 800.221.1212

Frontier Airlines: 801.401.9000

United Airlines: 800.241.6522

Car Rentals

Alamo/National: 800.227.7368 or 406.388.6694

Avis: 800.633.3469 or 406.252-8007
Budget: 800.218.7992 or 406.388.4091
Enterprise: 800.736-8222 or 406.294.2930
Hertz: 800.654.3131 or 406.388.6939
Chamber of Commerce Billings Chamber of Commerce: 406.245.4111

CODY, WY [Driving Directions/Map](#)

Airport (YRA) Yellowstone Regional Airport: 307.587.5096
Delta/Skywest: 800.221.1212 or 307.587.9740
Skywest/United:: 800.864.8331 or 307.587.9740
Mesa Airlines/United: 800.864.8331 or 307.587.9740

Car Rentals

Avis: 800.633.3469 or 307.587.4082
Budget: 800.218.7992 or 307.587.6066
Hertz: 800.654.3131 or 307.587.2914
Thrifty: 800.367.2277 or 307.587.8855
Chamber of Commerce Cody Chamber of Commerce: 307.587.2777

BOZEMAN, MT [Driving Directions/Map](#)

Airport (BZN) Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport: 406.388.8321
Delta Airlines: 800.221.1212
United Airlines: 800.241.6522
Frontier Airlines: 800.432.1359
Alaska Airlines: 800.547.9308

Car Rentals

Budget: 800.527.0700 or 406.388.4091
Enterprise: 800.261.7331
Hertz: 800.654.3131 or 406.388.6939
Alamo/National: 800.227.7368 or 406.388.6694
Chamber of Commerce Bozeman Chamber of Commerce: 800.228.4224 or 406.586.5421

Trout Tackle & Equipment

All rods, reels, leaders, tippet and flies are provided during your stay at Montana Fly Fishing Lodge
Below is a guide if you would like to bring your own gear to use during your stay.

Fly Rods:

Multi-piece 6, 5 & 4 weight fly rods will cover most of the fishing situations you'll encounter. If you enjoy streamer fishing, we recommend bringing a nice light weight, fast-action 7 weight. We strongly recommend a multi-piece travel rod (3, 4 or 5 piece). Rods we recommend are:

- Scott Fly Rods
- R.L. Winston Fly Rods
- The Fly Shop Signature Fly Rods

Fly Reels:

Good quality, lightweight fly reels, with simple disk drags or pawl drags, are the best choice. Reels should be filled with fresh 20 pound backing. Reel models to consider might include:

- The Fly Shop's Signature Reels
- Galvan Reels
- Ross Reels

Fly Lines:

Floating lines are used almost exclusively. If you have a type III sink tip for a 6-7 weight for throwing streamers on the Yellowstone, be sure to bring it along.

- Scientific Anglers & Rio Freshwater Floating Fly Lines

Leaders & Tippet:

Keep it simple on leaders; 9' leaders tapered to 5X, 4X and 3X (throw in a couple of 7.5' 0X leaders for throwing big bugs). Two - three of each leader size should be plenty. Bring fresh tippet in sizes, 5X, 4X, 3X and 0X. Scientific Anglers, Rio, and Seaguar make some of the best tippet and leader material available.



Note:

Guides will provide all flies during your stay at Montana Fly Fishing Lodge and this is included in the cost of your trip, but you might bring some of your favorite trout flies as outlined below.

Month	Insect/Bug	Sizes	Patterns
APRIL-	Midges	#16-20	BH Zebra Midge, Skittering Midge, CDC emerging Midge
MAY	Blue Wing Olive (BWO)	#16-20	CDC Dun, Missing Link, Film Critic, Micro Mayfly Nymph
	March Brown	#12-14	Improved Sparkle Dun, Hunchback March Brown, PT nymph
	Salmon Flies(Giant Stone Fly)	#2-6	Pat's Rubberlegs, Flush Floater, Morning Wood Special
	Streamers(Leeches & Sculpin)	#2-8	Slumbuster, Home Invader, Sparkle Minnow
	Caddis(Grannom)	#14-18	Olive Jiggy Caddis, Olive Poopah, Silvey's Beaded Pupa
JUNE	Salmon Flies	#2-6	Pat's Rubberlegs, Flush Floater, Morning Wood Special
	March Brown	#12-14	Improved Sparkle Dun, Hunchback March Brown, PT nymph
	Green Drake	#10-12	Foam Profile Green Drake, Missing Link, Hunchback GD
	Golden Stone	#4-8	Crowd Surfer Stone, Morning Wood Special, PB Golden Stone
	Pale Morning Dun	#14-20	Film Critic, Sparkle Stacker, Missing Link, GB Poxyback PMD
	Brown Drake	#8-10	Missing Link, Quigley's Split Flag Adams
	Streamers	#2-8	Slumbuster, Home Invader, Sparkle Minnow
	Caddis(Spotted Sedge)	#14-18	Amber Jiggy Caddis, Amber Bubbleback, Silvey's Beaded Pupa
JULY	Caddis	#12-20	Missing Link, E/C Caddis, Jiggy Caddis, Poopah
	Flavs	#14-16	Missing Link, Film Critic, Parachute Adams
	Yellow Sally	#14-16	Missing Link Yellow Stone, Silvey's Chubby Sallie
	Golden Stone	#4-8	GB Poxyback Golden Stone, Double Dutch Bug
	Brown Drake	#8-10	Missing Link, Quigley's Split Flag Adams
	Callibaetis	#14-18	Film Critic, Missing Link, Poxyback Callibaetis Nymph
	Green Drake	#10-12	Foam Profile Green Drake, Missing Link, Hunchback GD
	PMD	#14-20	Film Critic, Sparkle Stacker, Missing Link, GB Poxyback PMD
	Hoppers	#6-14	Hopper Grande, Morrish Hopper, Head Turner Hopper
	Mahogany Dun	#16-18	Missing Link, Hackle Stacker, D&D Cripple, Flashback PT
	Streamers	#2-8	Slumbuster, Home Invader, Sparkle Minnow
AUGUST	Hoppers	#6-14	Hopper Grande, Morrish Hopper, Head Turner Hopper
	Beetles	#10-18	Hi-Vis Beetle, Carl's Cicada, Chubby Chernobyl
	Ants	#16-20	Hegan Ant, Carl's Foam Ant, Parachute Ant, Schlotter's Ant
	Yellow Sally	#14-16	Missing Link Yellow Stone, Silvey's Chubby Sallie
	PMD	#14-20	Film Critic, Sparkle Stacker, Missing Link, GB Poxyback PMD
	Callibaetis	#14-18	Film Critic, Missing Link, Poxyback Callibaetis Nymph
	Caddis	#12-20	Missing Link, E/C Caddis, Jiggy Caddis, Poopah
	Mahogany Dun	#16-18	Missing Link, Hackle Stacker, D&D Cripple, Flashback PT
	Streamers	#2-8	Slumbuster, Home Invader, Sparkle Minnow
SEPT	BWO	#16-20	Missing Link, Film Critic, Hackle Stacker, Micro Mayfly nymph
OCT	Hoppers	#6-14	Hopper Grande, Morrish Hopper, Head Turner Hopper
	Ants	#16-20	Hegan Ant, Carl's Foam Ant, Parachute Ant, Schlotter's Ant
	Beetles	#10-18	Hi-Vis Beetle, Carl's Cicada, Chubby Chernobyl
	Midges	#16-20	RS2 Sparkle Wing, Midge Hanger, Harrop's CDC Midge
	Tricos	#20-24	CDC Trico spinner, Parachute Profile Spinner, LC Cripple
	Mahogany Dun	#16-18	Missing Link, Hackle Stacker, D&D Cripple, Flashback PT
	Streamers	#2-8	Slumbuster, Home Invader, Autumn Splendor, Sex Dungeon
	October Caddis	#6-10	Skating October Caddis, Tungsten October Pupa

Recommended Clothing and Equipment

Montana Fly Fishing Lodge does provide waders and boots if needed.

Clothing:

The weather in South Central Montana is constantly changing. One afternoon it may be 90° (+) and sunny, down right hot; then only a few hours later it may be windy and hailing. July and August are more stable month and typically high pressure, sunny and hot. You are typically dressing light and wearing sun protective clothing and trying to stay cool. Early and late season brings more unpredictable and cooler weather, so you should always plan for any possible weather. Clothing strategies should be based on the "layering system." By using the "layering system," anglers can adapt to whatever Mother Nature dishes out. The whole idea behind layering is to trap heated air (generated by your body and stored between the different layers of insulation), thus keeping you warm.

Here is the formula preferred by the staff at The Fly Shop®:

1... Base Layer: Start off with a synthetic fabric next to your skin. This often is a pair of thermal underwear (tops and bottoms) and they usually come in three weights: light, mid and expedition. According to your individual metabolism, pick what is best for you. Synthetic (non-cotton) materials retain little moisture and "wick" moisture away from your skin. This is very important when you are walking in waders or when outside temperatures heat up.

2... Thermal Layer: Your second layer of insulation should match the weather and conditions you are going to be fishing in. Lightweight insulation for cool weather, midweight for colder conditions and heavyweight for really frigid days. Fleece is an outstanding choice here in either tops and bottoms or overalls. Merino Wool is also a good choice as it stays warm when damp, though dries very slowly.

3... Outer Shell (Rain Jacket & Waders): Your final layer should be a breathable rain jacket and waders.

- 1 set light or mid weight – Patagonia, Simms, and others (tops and bottoms)
- 1 set heavyweight – Patagonia, Simms, and others (tops and bottoms)
- 1 layering jacket – A lighter weight jacket that can fit under your wading jacket or that can be used by itself

Rain Jacket:

High quality Gore-Tex® type products are the best. Your rain jacket should be 100% waterproof and breathable. Rain jackets must be seam sealed, multi-layered, of QUALITY construction and from a recognized outdoor clothing company. Jackets specifically designed for fly fishermen are the best. We have listed a few of our favorite brands below.

- Skwala
- Patagonia
- Simms

Wading Equipment:

Stocking foot, breathable waders are the only way to go. Neoprene waders are antiquated, do not permit moisture to escape, are heavy and cumbersome and only appropriate for sedentary fishing (float tubing) where insulation is the only concern. "Breathable" waders have totally revolutionized wading equipment. You will experience little or no moisture build-up inside the waders, even after a

long hike; they wear like iron, and are comfortable to be in all day. Lastly, "Breathable" waders take up a fraction of the space neoprene waders take-up when packed in your duffel bag. All waders should be worn with synthetic fiber under-wader wear for maximum comfort, minimum moisture retention, and warmth. For safety we strongly recommend wearing a wading belt at all times.

- Simms Waders
- Patagonia Waders
- Skwala Waders

On the hot summer days of July and August wet wading can be a great choice. This does not mean leave your waders at home, but a pair of wading socks and quick dry shorts is all the extra things you need and you will have the option to wet wade.

Socks:

Anglers should bring enough socks to alternate on a daily basis. For a week's fishing trip, three pairs should be fine. Do not wear the same socks every day, but alternate, leaving one pair to dry and air while wearing the other set. Wool, polypro or a combination of both are the best choices in sock material. Try on your socks with your waders and wading boots before you leave for your trip to ensure that you have plenty of room to move your toes. Being unable to move your toes and cramping of your feet in your wading boots are the biggest reasons for numb toes and cold feet. We've experienced great success with the disposable air-activated heating pads available at many outdoor stores. Removal from the cellophane wrapper activates them and they then simply stick to the outside of socks for hours of cozy warmth.

- 3 pair of Wading Socks.

Wading Boots:

Felt soled wading boots are highly recommended as they offer superior ankle support and are exceptional for hiking to and from waters. Felt is still allowed Montana, but keep in mind it is illegal to use felt boots in Yellowstone National Park. Simms, Patagonia and Korkers make some good models to consider. Korkers are nice because you can change out felt soles for rubber, or studs depending on each situation. For the most part the rivers fished by Shields River Lodge do not pose any real difficult wading situations, however the mostly gravel bottoms do get covered in algae (slime) and can be slippery. In these situations, studded boots can be handy. Gravel guards are a must. Make sure if you are bringing felt wading boots, they are clean and dry to prevent the spread of invasive species.

- Korkers Wading Boots
- Simms Wading Boots
- Patagonia Wading Boots

Wool or Polypropylene Gloves:

For Early and late season, fingerless gloves are great for cold and or rainy days. Neoprene gloves are fine, but retain a lot of water when wet. We have had the best success with synthetic or wool gloves.

- Simms Half-finger Gloves or Flip-mitt Gloves

Fishing Vest or Tackle/Vest Pack:

For vests, we like high quality products that offer options. Many of the best new vests can be attached to your favorite backpack, sling or pack. Choose one that has room for a rain jacket, or camera in the back. Brands we like are Patagonia, Simms and Fishpond. If you prefer a tackle pack, take a good look at Fishpond, Patagonia, or Simms.

Small Day Pack:

This can be an important article to include while packing. We like a waterproof, top-loader day pack that can hold extra gear, clothes, flies, camera, snacks, etc.

Boat Bag:

A waterproof boat "dry bag" can be extremely handy for storing extra clothes, tackle and camera equipment while on a raft. The white water type "dry bags" are the best.

Fishing Hat:

July and August in Montana can be clear and bright with lots of sun. A good hat to keep the glare off your eyes and the sun off your face is imperative. Look for a hat that is comfortable and that has a good size brim.

Line clippers, Pliers, Hemostats, & Hook File:

These are essential to any fisherman and should not be left behind.

Polarized Sunglasses:

Fly fishing is often a very visual experience. Spotting the fish is part of the excitement, and part of the challenge. Good quality polarized sunglasses are a must. Polarized sunglasses not only let you spot fish more effectively, but also protect your eyes from the intense sunlight experienced in Montana, as well as hooks. Costa and Smith make some of the best in the industry.

Camera:

Waterproof digital or splash-proof digital cameras are handy. If you are going to take your digital SLR camera, make sure you have a waterproof case for it. The best waterproof cases we have found to protect expensive camera equipment are made by Pelican Products, www.pelican.com. Don't forget your flash unit.

Headlamp:

Our favorite is the Loon Nocturnal Headlamp, preferring models with LED bulbs and that can be recharged.

Sun Protection:

The summer weather in Montana is generally pleasant with average temperatures ranging between the low 60's and mid 90's. Wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts, and frequent use of sun block (SPF 30+ UVA/UVB) are highly recommended. Sun gloves will save the backs of your hands.

Bug Repellent:

Although bugs are usually not too big a problem in Montana especially mid-summer. But there are spots with some biting insects and mosquitos and a bottle of bug dope with active ingredient DEET is not a bad idea to include in your tackle bag.

Camp Shoes:

After a long day of fishing, it's nice to get out of your waders and slip into a comfortable pair of shoes to wear around the lodge. Crocs are a great choice and super lightweight.

Wading Staff:

If you use a wading staff on your home waters, then bring it, it will come in handy.

Gratuities:

Gratuities are a personal decision based on services rendered. Normally, guides are tipped daily as you may have a different guide each day. We recommend that you tip your guide on a daily basis, somewhere in the nature of \$100-\$120 per day, per boat/guide (usually shared between two anglers). For the lodge staff, (chefs, housekeeping, wait staff, etc.) we recommend \$50 per day per person. If you have any questions concerning gratuities, please feel free to call or ask the lodge owner for guidelines.

As soon as you have your flight schedule finalized to Montana, please forward it to us at travel@theflyshop.com , so that we can coordinate your transfer to the lodge.

Fishing Licenses:

If interested you may purchase your Montana fishing license(s) before your trip. This can be done online in about five minutes, and will mean more time on the water and less time spent at a store. If you would prefer to wait until you are at the ranch, they are more than happy to help you with whatever you need.

If you choose to drive to Yellowstone National Park, you will need to purchase a Yellowstone National Park license during your stay. We do not plan where you will be fishing in advance, and much of that decision is based on weather, water temperatures, fishing preferences, and similar factors that are impossible to forecast. Depending on the length of your stay, it may be beneficial to purchase a two-day, two two-days, or a ten-day license. For longer stays (5+ nights) we recommend the ten-day option. We are happy to answer any questions you may have and make recommendations based on your reservation!

[Click here to buy online](#)

Communications:

With Montana Fly Fishing Lodge located just outside of the town of Absarokee, Montana, you can expect modern communications, including Wi-Fi (though it is a rural area and not always consistent, with some limited streaming possible, such as with Netflix), as well as cellular service (inside the lodge and on some of the surrounding lodge property, but not always on the fishing rivers).

Dining:

Be prepared for an amazing culinary experience while staying at Montana Fly Fishing Lodge. The four course private chef selections include an appetizer, salad, entrée with vegetables and of course a dessert to complete the meal. The menu varies but some of the favorites are; Steak medallions w/gorgonzola or cracked pepper sauce, a filet Mignon (6 oz.) with gorgonzola sauce & sautéed mushrooms, prime rib (slow roasted with a garlic/peppercorn rub). Surf options that are popular are Teriyaki honey glazed salmon on cedar plank, salmon with lemon pepper aioli or a parmesan crusted tilapia. Stay healthy with salad options which include spinach with glazed walnuts, balsamic, & feta, Caesar salad w/parmesan & croutons or a romaine wedge with thick cut bacon chunks, tomato, gorgonzola & blue cheese crumbles.

Liquor:

Montana Fly Fishing Lodge features an open, well bar and provides fine wines paired with dinner. (Top shelf wine and spirits are extra). With advance notice the lodge can bring a bottle of the requested spirits and mixer in and have them ready for the guest, for an additional cost. Please give us time to arrange this with the lodge so they can be prepared for your stay.

Non-Angling Guests:

Montana's Big Sky Country is an unsurpassed place for outdoor adventure. If you or any of your group want a day away from your fly rod to experience all that Montana has to offer, Montana Fly Fishing Lodge is happy to assist you with arranging activities such as hiking, biking, rafting, horseback riding, ATV tours, shooting sports, exploring Livingston or Red Lodge, shopping, museum and art gallery hopping or take a drive over the Beartooth pass which winds its way to almost 11,000' from Montana to Wyoming on the Beartooth Plateau.

Contact numbers**Montana Fly Fishing Lodge**

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Absarokee, MT 59001
(406) 780-0015

Lincoln Powers

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(406) 855-5149

The Fly Shop®

800-669-3474 • BUS. 530-222-3555

(Open 7 days a week, 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) E-mail: travel@theflyshop.com

Montana Fly Fishing Lodge Travel Checklist

All the fishing gear is provided by the lodge and there are items for sale at the gift shop as well.

Must have Items

- Airline Tickets and this travel planner
- Valid Passport or Real ID
- Wallet (Cash for Tip, Credit Cards)
- Polarized Sunglasses
- Headlamp
- Wading Socks (For Wet wading)
- Toiletry Articles
- Prescription Medications
- Rain Jacket
- Light Socks
- Heavy Socks
- Slacks, Pants
- Quick Dry Shorts/Pants (wet wading)
- Undershirts, under shorts
- Under-wader wear
- Light pile or fleece pants
- Fishing Hat (Sun Hat)
- Stocking cap
- Fleece or layering jacket/pullover
- Long-sleeved Fishing shirts
- Sun Screen SPF 30+
- Lip Balm
- Fishing License
- Fly Reels (Appropriate Line/Backing)
- Spare Spools, Spare Lines
- Leaders
- Tippet
- Split shot
- Fly boxes (Dries, Streamers, Nymphs)
- Floatant
- Indicators
- Tools (Nippers, Scissors, Hemostats)
- Hook file or Stone
- Knot Tool
- Fishing Vest/Day Pack
- Boat Bag
- Garbage/Zip-Lock bags
- Short-sleeved Shirts
- Shorts
- Belt
- Camp Shoes
- Fishing Gloves
 - Sun Gloves (Summer)
 - Fleece Gloves (Fall/Winter)
- Pen and Pencil
- Reading Book
- Water Bottle (Hydro flask)
- Reading Glasses
- Extra pair of Sunglasses
- Camera, battery charger, storage cards
- Tape measure
- Insect Repellent
- Aspirin
- Wading Staff
- Flask

Optional Items

- Waders
- Wading Belt
- Wading Boots
- Bandana or Buff
- Smart phone/Tablet
- Fly Rods