

Visiting Bozeman Montana

By [Kristin Henning](#) | June 5, 2019 | Categories: [Active Travel](#), [Eat Drink Stay](#), [Nature and Wildlife](#), [North America](#), [United States](#)

Don't tell anyone. If I followed the advice of some Bozeman, Montana, residents, I would just skip this post. Bozeman is so appealing—and so fast growing—it's not surprising visitors are advised to keep the story quiet. After all, it's only human to want to guard beautiful things. And, Bozeman is beautiful.

But on the other hand, the town is so intrinsically cool, that even rapid expansion hardly dampens the vibe—and even enhances it in some respects. The caricatures of the male-dominated, dog-friendly, eco-avid population give way to jokes about dogs outnumbering women at parties or about “Mantana,” where engineering and agriculture schools traditionally attracted more men than women.

These days, according to Towncharts' 2017 population data, Bozeman (population close to 50,000) is 52% male. More telling is that it's young: median age 28. Many students simply stay on. Population growth over the past decade is over 15%, bringing the total living in the Gallatin County valley to about 100,000.

With all that change, Bozeman works because it is a community, a town that walks, works, hikes, fishes, skis, eats, drinks and eyes the local news together. It feels entrepreneurial, relaxed, and confident, with a healthy concern about how it grows. City and park planners proceed with care, working alongside historic preservationists. Meanwhile, everyone proclaims the glory of easy access to trails and streams within 30 minutes of town.

Historic Bozeman was established in 1864 on the heels of the fur trade and in the midst of the gold rush and Homestead Act. From the get-go, the town was enhanced by its proximity to Yellowstone National Park. What makes Bozeman click today is a combination of factors: [Montana State University](#), the skiing at nearby [Big Sky](#), and the steady interest in [Yellowstone National Park](#). (Yellowstone, the country's first national park, was inaugurated in 1872.)

With these attractions comes a well-funded, growing airport. The Bozeman-Yellowstone International Airport (BZN) is served by Delta, United, American, Allegiant, Jet Blue, Frontier and Alaska—which means nonstop service from most major U.S. cities. Yellowstone Park tourism and the monied powers-that-be in Big Sky are sure to support future expansions.

Still, Bozeman keeps its independent spirit and unique personality. That’s what makes it livable—and a great little destination for tourists, too. Here are a few ways to get a taste of Bozeman and the nearby parts of the state of Montana.



Everything but the kitchen sink in this Lark Hotel light fixture that seems to represent Bozeman’s blend of practicality and creativity.

Hotels in Bozeman

The Lark, 122 W. Main St. The Lark presents a unique model of hospitality, one that welcomes you to your mod room in this totally refurbished motel (ours with a nice picture window looking down Main Street) and also invites you to get out and see the town and surrounding area. Whether you are on a road trip or basing out of Bozeman, you can relax on the Main Street patio with fire pit, or research your next move in the lobby/map room. The Lark staff are prepared to hook you up with guides or specifics, as you wish. The location on Main Street is perfect, and I’d swear, if I didn’t know better, that this place was designed as a locals hang-out.