



Pine Butte, Montana

DATES

July 12 - 17, 2020

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

PRICE

Double Occupancy: \$4,235

Single Occupancy: \$4,235

Despite its size, Montana is the third-least populated state in the country, meaning that vast expanses of land continue to exist as pristine, untamed spaces of wildness. Pine Butte is such a place, and The Nature Conservancy is working to ensure that it remains one of the jewels in the Crown of the Continent. The area is one of the last places in the lower 48 where grizzly bears roam free on the plains, and its patchwork of habitats supports a remarkable level of biodiversity. In addition to on-the-

ground land management, the Conservancy is working with local ranchers on collaborative stewardship and conservation tools. Community-based partnerships like this help ensure land protection and restoration efforts are sustained long into the future. The Conservancy's Pine Butte Swamp Preserve recalls an earlier time of rugged, American beauty, and we invite you to experience this special place. Thank you for your interest in traveling with The Nature Conservancy.



PHOTO: © ROBERT GRANZOW



PHOTO: © SIMON WILLIAMS/TNC

BEHIND THE SCENES

Take a behind-the-scenes tour of TNC conservation projects focused on preserving one of the remaining pristine Western landscapes and listen to naturalists talk about North America's largest intact ecosystem.

HORSEBACK RIDES

Ride horseback through the high meadows of the Rocky Mountain foothills and set out on trails that pass lush wetlands, century-old pines, rock outcrops, alpine streams and views that never end.

WILDLIFE VIEWING

Hike the many wandering trails in search of the many species that roam the preserve. In addition to 200 types of birds, you can find beaver, muskrat, mink, elk, moose, mountain lion, bobcat, lynx, black bear, mule deer and bighorn sheep.

Your trip supports the local communities you're traveling in and The Nature Conservancy's efforts locally and globally. This trip has been planned specifically by The Nature Conservancy's team of scientific experts and travel liaisons to immerse you in the work the Conservancy is doing on the ground that has global consequences.

TNC TRAVEL VALUES

ACCESS:

Travel with renowned Conservancy experts and local partners for an exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience. You won't just see amazing places, you'll see how you are helping save them.

IMPACT:

See how your commitment to our planet and your passion for conservation are making a difference. You will see the wild places and the communities you are impacting.

KNOWLEDGE:

Learn how we are applying the latest cutting-edge science to affect global change and drive conservation.

INSPIRATION:

Immerse yourself in local cultures and awe-inspiring landscapes to foster your own connection to our world.

GLOBALLY MINDED:

Elevate your understanding of our work by seeing first-hand how TNC and our partners act locally and how we turn local results in to global impact by scaling solutions that work.



ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

PINE BUTTE PRESERVE

HORSEBACK RIDING

HIKING

BIRD WATCHING

WILDLIFE VIEWING

PINE BUTTE PRESERVE

In 1979, TNC began acquiring portions of several cattle ranches and a dude ranch to assemble the Pine Butte Preserve. Pine Butte is part of a landscape that the Blackfeet people have called home for countless generations. The Old North Trail, used by Native Americans for thousands of years, cuts through the preserve. Tipi rings and a buffalo jump, and associated drive lanes testify to the presence of prehistoric plains dwellers. Scant remains of homestead structures dot the preserve, while ranching activities continue as they have for the past century. The location of a Metis settlement from the late 1800s and early 1900s along the South Fork of the Teton River now serves as our management headquarters.

Today, the property serves as a migration corridor for grizzly bears, mountain lions, mule deer, lynx, moose, bighorn sheep and other wildlife traveling between grasslands of the Great Plains and higher elevations in the Rockies. Many stops at the preserve's Pine Butte Swamp, the largest wetland complex along the Rocky Mountain Front. Remaining true to the property's roots, TNC works with ranchers and other partners to conserve the landscape at a larger, more meaningful scale to benefit the area's unique ecology, spectacular wildlife and local, often traditional, livelihoods.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrive in Pine Butte by the afternoon. Meet your trip leader and fellow travelers during a cocktail reception in the main lodge. Gather in the front room, stocked with a collection of books, cards and games or rest in your appointed cabin.

OVERNIGHT IN PINE BUTTE

DAY 2: After breakfast, hike one of the many trails that wind through the surrounding landscape. Trails range from 1 to 4 miles and can vary in elevation gain from virtually flat to a few thousand vertical feet. Look for signs of grizzly bears, moose and elk; run your hands through the clear water of a creek; and once every so often, stop to look up and appreciate why this area is nicknamed "Big Sky Country." Enjoy a packed lunch either on the trail or back at the lodge. In the afternoon, ride horseback through the high meadows of the Rocky Mountain foothills and see the same types of flora and fauna Lewis and Clark may have encountered almost 200 years ago, and experience firsthand why local conservation efforts are so important. In the evening, we will gather for dinner in the main lodge.

OVERNIGHT IN PINE BUTTE

DAY 3: Today's activities are determined by your interest. After breakfast, choose between hiking, horseback riding along the local equestrian trails through diverse forests, over crystalline streams and to mountain outcrops or simply relax on the front porch with your favorite book. In the evening, enjoy a presentation about the Conservancy's work.

OVERNIGHT IN PINE BUTTE

DAY 4: After breakfast, take a comprehensive tour of Pine Butte. The surrounding lands support a third of the plant species in Montana and many rare wetland species such as yellow lady's slipper, Macoun's gentian, and Craw's sedge. About 200 species of birds and 43 species of mammals also call the preserve home. During the hike, feel free to make observations and ask your Nature Conservancy expert questions. In the later afternoon, gather for tonight's dinner and evening wildlife viewing.

OVERNIGHT IN PINE BUTTE

DAY 5: Enjoy a hike to Our Lake in the morning. Our Lake hike climbs up 1,450 vertical feet and is approximately 7 miles round trip. Then, enjoy a picnic boxed lunch while taking in views of the lake and waterfall. Spend the afternoon resting and relaxing at the main lodge.

OVERNIGHT IN PINE BUTTE

DAY 6: After breakfast, say farewell to Pine Butte and transfer as a group to Great Falls International Airport.

LODGING

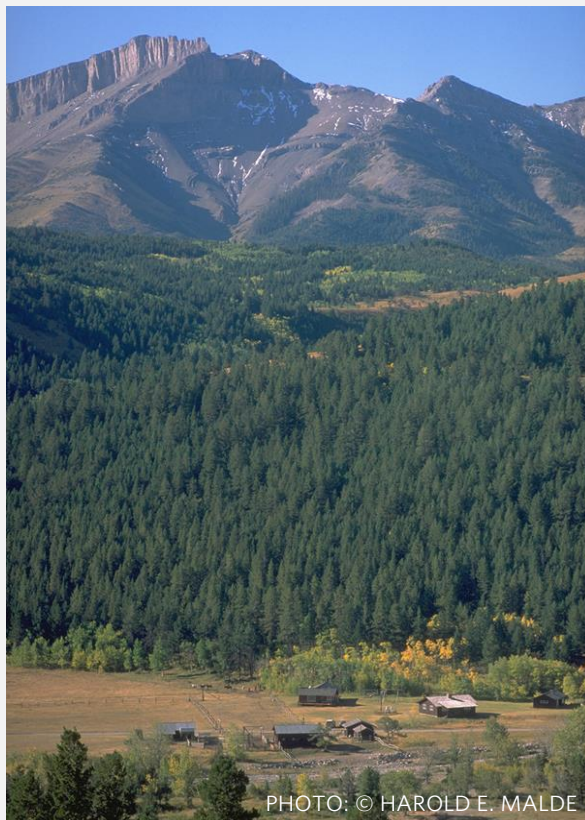


PHOTO: © HAROLD E. MALDE

PINE BUTTE LODGE Nestled in the foothills along the Rocky Mountains and along the South Fork of the Teton River.



PHOTO: © SIMON WILLIAMS/TNC