



A Legacy Club Journey: Pine Butte Preserve

DATES

July 9–14, 2023
July 17–22, 2023

PRICE

Double Occupancy: \$4,815
Single Occupancy: \$4,815

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

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 planes, and its patchwork of habitats support 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 to 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 look forward to having you join us in this special place.

With nature at your doorstep, you will spend your journey surrounded by breathtaking landscapes while gaining exclusive insight into local programs and strategies. Your trip begins in Great Falls, Montana where your trip leader will meet you at the airport. Transfer to Pine Butte Preserve and get comfortable in your cozy cabin. Over the next few days, take time to explore the preserve on foot, learning about the diverse forests, wildlife, and native flora and fauna. Local TNC staff will accompany you on this journey, guiding you through the history of the lands.

Options to hike, horseback ride and relax amidst the big Montana skies await throughout your stay.



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BEHIND THE SCENES

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

HORSEBACK RIDING

Ride on 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 meandering trails in search of the numerous 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

KEY 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 witness 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.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

Please [click here to read The Nature Conservancy's Code of Conduct](#), our guide to ensuring that we treat each other with respect, fairness, and integrity beyond reproach. We expect our travel partners to adhere to these standards as they lead trips, and we hope that you will embrace this with us.



THE CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

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, 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 The Nature Conservancy's 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 stop at the preserve's Pine Butte Swamp, the largest wetland complex along the Rocky Mountain Front. Remaining true to the property's roots, The Nature Conservancy 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 Great Falls, Montana by the afternoon where your trip leader will transfer you to Pine Butte. Get to know your fellow travelers during a cocktail reception, followed by dinner in the main lodge. After dinner, spend time in the front room with the collection of books, cards and games, or rest in your cabin this evening.

OVERNIGHT AT PINE BUTTE LODGE

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 thousand vertical feet. Look for signs of grizzly bears, moose, and elk; run your hands through the clear water of the creek and 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 on 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, gather for dinner in the main lodge.

OVERNIGHT AT PINE BUTTE LODGE

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 and over crystalline streams, or simply relax on the front porch with your favorite book. In the evening, enjoy a presentation about the Conservancy’s work.

OVERNIGHT AT PINE BUTTE LODGE

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

OVERNIGHT AT PINE BUTTE LODGE

DAY 5 | Enjoy a hike to Our Lake in the morning. The trail climbs up 1,450 vertical feet and is approximately 7 miles round trip. Enjoy a picnic boxed lunch while taking in views of the lake and waterfall. Spend the afternoon at leisure before a final celebratory dinner at the Lodge.

OVERNIGHT AT PINE BUTTE LODGE

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

LODGING



Pine Butte Lodge

Nestled in the foothills along the Rocky Mountain and the South Fork of the Teton River is Pine Butte Lodge. With nature at your doorstep, the lodge’s cozy cabins are the perfect spot from which to explore the property. Take time to explore the Preserve and surrounding areas on foot and horseback looking for flora, fauna, and diverse wildlife.



PRICE DETAIL

Double Occupancy: \$4,815
Single Occupancy: \$4,815

Price is based on a minimum of 14 travelers. Trip size not to exceed 14 travelers.

Price **includes** all lodging, domestic transportation, activities, tips, meals, TNC expert staff and local guides. Price does **not include** your roundtrip flight to Pine Butte, Montana.

PLEASE NOTE: This itinerary is representative of your trip, and like all natural history excursions, activities are subject to modification based on weather and unforeseen events. We will do our best to keep you informed on any necessary changes.