



Wet, Wild Adventures & Hot Springs

The Real America region offers pristine and scenic rivers and lakes that attract avid whitewater paddlers and vacationers looking for a thrill as well as those who prefer to float leisurely along at a more relaxing pace or soak their cares away. No matter what your preference, you'll find a lake or a stretch of river suited for you in our region. Come out, away from the crowds, and enjoy these water activities!

Minneapolis/Saint Paul/Bloomington

The international gateway of Minneapolis/Saint Paul/Bloomington is known for nearby water-based activities, whether it is canoeing on one of the lakes or boating on the rivers. A good way to ease into the variety of water adventures that await you in the following itinerary is to take an Anson Northrup Paddlewheeler and Betsey Northrup Party Barge excursion on the mighty Mississippi River from Saint Paul.

North Dakota

The Missouri River in North Dakota offers opportunities for boating, kayaking, canoeing and more. Relax on the deck of the Lewis and Clark Riverboat on the Missouri River at Bismarck during afternoon or evening cruises aboard this 150-passenger paddlewheel riverboat. Or enjoy a pontoon cruise on the S.S. Ruby on the Red River at Fargo.

Many are surprised at North Dakota's only registered waterfall - breathtaking Mineral Springs Waterfall in Sheyenne State Forest near Lisbon. There is a marked trail leading to the falls but keep your eyes open for wildlife on the way. The falls come from an underground spring that drops 8 feet and runs into the Sheyenne River. This State Forest is also home to mineral springs.

At Cross Ranch State Park near Hensler you can rent a canoe or kayak and explore the Missouri River. Beaver Lake State Park near Napoleon offers canoeing and boating. Fort Ransom State Park in the scenic Sheyenne River Valley offers canoeing. Lake Metigoshe State Park provides canoeing and boating activities. At Sully Creek State Park in the Badlands near Medora, you can canoe the Little Missouri River. The Pembina River is the state's only "whitewater river," offering excellent canoeing in the beautiful Pembina Gorge. Those are just a few of the many locations to enjoy North Dakota's waterways.

Montana

In Montana, whitewater, scenic and fishing float trips occur throughout the state. Experienced guides on the Flathead Wild and Scenic River, which border's Glacier National Park, offer a variety of trips on the rives, as well as wildlife and scenic or paddle and saddle tours. Trips range from half-day to five days, including lunch and dinner floats. Whitewater and scenic floats take off on the Gallatin and Yellowstone Rivers from locations in Bozeman, Gardiner and Livingston. Travel in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark as you float the Wild and Scenic Missouri River near Great Falls or the Yellowstone River near Billings. Your water adventure can be as calm as a lazy float or as exhilarating as a rafting adventure, either way, Montana's cool mountain waters await your voyage of discovery.

Chico Hot Springs in Pray is a local favorite, featuring mineral hot springs, fine dining and summer and winter recreation, including dog sledding, fly fishing and mountain biking - with Yellowstone National Park only a short drive away. Lolo Hot Springs is a Lewis & Clark historical site. Year-round facilities include a saloon, restaurant, gallery and natural mineral hot springs pools and lodging. The Fairmont Hot Springs Resort, located between Butte and Anaconda 3 miles off I-90, features two Olympic size swimming pools with temperatures ranging from 31° to 41° C (88° to 104° F). Guests have 24 hour access to the pools, as well as a good location for exploring central Montana. The historic Boulder Hot Springs in Boulder features outdoor and indoor pools.

Wyoming

In Wyoming, Jackson's Snake River offers whitewater below town and scenic floats above. Grand Teton Lodge Company offers a popular series of relaxing float trips on the Snake River at the Base of the Tetons. Whitewater trips also headquarter out of Cody, on the east side of Yellowstone, and the scenic Wind River Canyon is floated by companies based in Thermopolis. Near Saratoga, scenic, fishing and whitewater trips through Northgate Canyon are available on the North Platte River.

For hot springs in Wyoming, Thermopolis, Greek for "Hot City," has two large hot spring complexes, the Star Plunge and Teepee, as well as a free public bathhouse. Temperatures range from cool to 41° C (106° F), and visitors have a choice of a soak or the water slides. Hotels in the park offer massages, mineral pools and deluxe accommodations. Saratoga Hot Springs in Saratoga features several private springs and pools, as well as a free public soaking pool open 24 hours a day all year.

South Dakota

Hot Springs in South Dakota feature the Evans Plunge, the world's largest natural warm-water indoor swimming pool, which is a consistent 30.5° C (87° F). Besides the swimming area, there are three water slides, sauna, steam room, two spas, executive center and more.

The Missouri River, which divides the state of South Dakota in half, offers swimming, boating, camping, picnicking, and hiking. Watercraft rentals are available in Chamberlain, and float trips and houseboats are available in Wagner.

The Pierre/Fort Pierre area has abundant opportunities for sailing, jet skiing and other water-bound activities. Watersports center around the area's two major lakes - Oahe and Sharpe. With more than 2,200 miles of shoreline along its 231-mile length, Lake Oahe has plenty of room for waterskiing, windsurfing, sailing, jet skiing and other outdoor water sports. Single and multi day kayak trips are also available.