

Information about Red Lodge, Montana

SETTING: The elevation of Red Lodge is 5,555 feet. Annual precipitation in the area is 23.22 inches. Red Lodge, in a sample 30-year period, averaged only 3 days per year with maximum of 90 degrees or warmer and 26 days a year of temperatures of zero or colder. The highest recorded temperature was 101 degrees on July 21, 1931. The lowest recorded temperature was -40 degrees, Feb. 3, 1899. The mean monthly temperature is 42.1 degrees. Snowfall in town averages 150 inches per year, and there is an average of 105 frost-free days between June and September.

PUBLIC INFORMATION: The Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Center is located at the north entrance to Red Lodge and offers information, rest rooms and public telephones.

POPULATION: According to the most recent census, the population of Red Lodge is about 2,300. Including the surrounding area, the population approaches 2,800.

RECREATION: The public lands around Red Lodge offer opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, biking, cross-country skiing, rafting, snowmobiling, photography and other pursuits. There are a number of designated public fishing accesses along area streams.

Skiers and snowboarders from around the country head to Red Lodge Mountain, located six miles from Red Lodge (for complete details, refer to the Red Lodge Mountain section in this guide).

Golfers will appreciate what the altitude does to the length of their drives on the 9-hole Elks Golf Course off the West Fork road and the 18-hole Red Lodge Mountain Golf Course, west of town on Route 78. The city swimming pool, located at 14th and Hauser, is open to visitors, and at Field School Park in town there are public tennis courts, picnic tables and playground equipment for the kids. Lions Club Park, located near the Beartooth Market, also has picnic facilities, playground equipment, and, during the winter, a skating rink. City Park, on the east bank of Rock Creek at the south end of town, has tables and grills for a shady picnic along the rushing waters of the creek (which locals pronounce "crick").

RED LODGE AIRPORT: 4,000 feet of paved runway; lighted VASI; NDR 2 miles north; Unicom-122.8; tie down facilities; 80 and 100 octane. Courtesy car available.

ACCOMMODATION: A variety of accommodations including nine motels, a historic hotel, four condominiums, bed and breakfast lodgings, and furnished guest houses are available by the day or week. Convention packages are available through the Lodging Association. Please call the Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce for more information.

RESTAURANTS: Red Lodge has more restaurants per capita than any other community in Montana. It offers everything from a quick snack or meal to elegant dining.

CAMPGROUNDS: There are two private campgrounds with water, electricity, pumping station and showers. More than 700 units ranging in facilities are on National Forest land. Refer to the Camping section in this guide.

EDUCATIONAL/CULTURAL: The new Peaks to Plains Museum, located in the old Labor Temple at the north end of Red Lodge, features a walk-through simulated coal mine and a variety of displays on different aspects of area history.

Beartooth Nature Center, located near the north entrance to Red Lodge, offers visitors a chance to observe native wildlife up close. The Carbon County Arts Guild runs the Depot Gallery in the old Northern Pacific railway depot at the north end of town. Exhibitions of local artists change regularly throughout the year. The Carnegie Library is a good source of information on area history, culture, flora and fauna, etc. It is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

ESPECIALLY FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY: Several area destinations will appeal to everyone from the very young to the very mature. They include: Beartooth Nature Center, city parks and picnic areas, the Peaks to Plains Museum, pig racing at Bearcreek Downs and Wild Bill Lake along the West Fork of Rock Creek, which is wheelchair-accessible and stocked with rainbow trout. The Visitor Center at the north entrance to town can supply information and other suggestions.