

Exploring Glacier Country Montana

By Patrick M Tabor

Few people have discovered the rich resources surrounding Glacier National Park in northwest Montana. Of course the park itself is a national treasure with unique features and activities and it stands out as a flagship for the national park system. Beyond the park, there is much to do in this resource and recreational rich area. Often referred to as "Glacier Country", northwest Montana is teeming with a variety of locations and activities that are sure to match just about any visitors' interests. The area is anchored by Flathead Lake, the largest fresh water lake west of the Mississippi River. There is a unique state park considered a wild life refuge named Wild Horse Island. Accessed by boat, visitors can see wild Big Horn Sheep, trophy Mule Deer, and every so often some wild horses. The lake is flanked by several small towns that are quaint and fun to shop and dine at. Bigfork is a favorite as it is situated in a harbor and is quite picturesque. South of the lake one can find a National Buffalo refuge, the Flathead Indian reservation and the harbor town of Polson. North of the lake is the funky ski town of Whitefish. Whitefish, and the ski area named after it, is bustling year round. There are shops, restaurants and plenty of summer activities including mountain biking down the mountain and a tree canopy tour. Finally there are the wilderness areas. South of the area's central town of Kalispell, is the Swan Valley that has the Mission and Bob Marshall Wilderness Areas forming its western and eastern borders, respectively. The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, or better known as "The Bob", is the largest wilderness complex in the lower 48 states. Hikers, backpackers and back country horsemen have seemingly endless routes to choose from to get away from it all. There is no conceivable activity that one cannot do in this area, from horseback riding to river rafting, skiing in winter or climbing in summer, even scuba diving; it is all here!

About The Author

Patrick Tabor owns Swan Mountain Outfitters which is the largest horseback based outfitting operation in Northwest Montana. With four locations throughout the area, the company utilizes 225 head of horses with over 50 employees. The company is the exclusive trail ride provider in Glacier National Park, and outfits hunting, fishing and summer pack trips into the Bob Marshall. The company also floats the Swan River for fishing or pleasure and conducts fly fishing clinics. Swan Mountain Outfitters also runs a wilderness guide school, training future guides, outfitters, packers and wranglers in a career in the outdoors. Visit our web site at www.swanmountainoutfitters.com. Pat can be reached at pat.tabor@swanmountainoutfitters.com or toll free at 1(800)919-4416.