

Free to Fairly Cheap Community Events/Activities In and Around Helena
****EXPLORE Our Community****

- If you are interested in ceramic art especially but have a calling to know the impact art can have in a community, the [Archie Bray Foundation](#) provides all of the above. This spectacular mixture of all things art and education in one space to wonder and enjoy at no cost to you, during ‘daylight hours.’
 - Location: 2915 Country Club Ave
 - Contact: 406-443-3502
- [Broadwater Family Nights](#) are a great way to enjoy a local hot spring. This family-friendly opportunity happens every Wednesday evening. Mid-week, for every adult/child combo, there is a significantly reduced price to accommodate families looking for some affordable fun (*kids 13 and under are FREE with one paying adult*).
 - Location: 4920 W US HWY 12
 - Contact: 406-443-5777
- If you are looking to view impactful architecture that has a rich history connecting Helenan’s, visit the [Cathedral of St. Helena](#). Anyone is welcome to visit (*keeping in mind listed mass hours*) this historical phenom in Montana, usually reserved for the eyes of travelers in Europe.
 - Location: 530 N Ewing St
 - Contact: 406) 442-5825
- [Clark’s Bay](#) day use area and shelter space is an easily accessible, fun beach close to Helena’s epicenter. It does have a small entry fee of \$5, but in my opinion, worth every penny. There is a roped off safe area to swim, shelter, volleyball net, and a morning beach comb that makes the experience all the more enjoyable. Usually there is a site manager present to assist with any questions.
 - Location: 5700 York Road
 - Contact: 406-227-3570
- Downtown Helena supports local farmers and sellers via the [Farmers Market](#). This is where you can spend hours meandering, finding trinkets, fresh vegetables and poultry/meat, as well as grab a snack or treat from local venders. This is a great way to get out and see what ‘Montana Made,’ is all about.
 - Location: Fuller Ave.
 - Contact: 406-437-1855

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- **Gates of the Mountain** on Holter Lake with recreation areas is a fabulous place to start. There are guided boat tours (*2 hours in length*), but don't forget, there are 'on your own' ways to experience the unique geography of this place. Fishing, boating, kayaking, viewing, and camping to name a few dominate this location and bring people together all over Montana to experience. Several highlights of the journey are pictographs left by indigenous peoples (*still visible from the water*) AND a powerful memorial remembering those that lost their lives in the Mann Gulch fire, from 1949. There are additional off-shoots, camp-sites, pavilions, and additional amenities that can make this for days' worth of visits with family and friends.
 - Location (*to get you to 'the start'*): Take I-15 North towards Great Falls. Take Exit 209 for Gates of the Mountains. Turn right onto Gates of the Mountains Road and follow for approximately 2.8 miles.
- **Ghost Town's** near Helena are in Elkhorn, Comet, Rimini, and Marysville. While Montana has a rich history with preservation of these once thriving towns, much has remained intact that take you back in history. Be mindful when visiting as there are still people living in and around many of these spaces. Even though several are considered 'state parks,' it is always a good reminder to be on the lookout for signage and private property to respect those that populate these towns.
 - Locations are the names of the towns
 - Elkhorn: 812 Elkhorn Rd., Boulder
 - Comet: 100 Wikes Rd., Jefferson City
 - Rimini: Rimini Rd., Helena
 - Marysville: West of Helena, off MT State Rd. 279 (*twd. Great Divide*)
- Helena's '**Great Northern Town Center**' offers a range of activities throughout the year. Sandwiched between the carousel and Exploration Works, everyone is welcome to enjoy what can be live music to food trucks. Call to learn more about scheduled events, especially with summer pending.
 - Location: 40 West 14th Street, Helena, MT
 - Contact: 406-457-5542

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- Volunteer at [Helena Food Share](#), Helena's recently opened food support to mitigate food insecure individuals. You have to be at least 16 to volunteer, but this provides families with a great way to learn more about our community together through giving back your time in a positive way. It is also worth mentioning that the food here is free and mainly run on donations. If you feel the need to utilize, please don't hesitate to access this resource to assist in mitigating food insecurity.
 - Location: 1280 Boulder Ave.
 - Contact: 406-443-3663
- [Helena Indian Alliance](#) (HIA) offers a range of activities, indigenous games, community events, Pow Wow information, and a plethora of other opportunities to connect with culture.
 - Location: 501 Euclid Ave.
 - Contact: 406-449-5796
- [Hike](#) in and around all things trails throughout Helena that explore almost 100 miles of space to wonder! Mount Ascension is a popular starting point, as well as Mount Helena, amongst many more. Reach out to the 'City of Helena' to gather more intel on trails, their condition, and location.
 - Location: 316 N Park Ave
 - Contact: 406-447-8463 (*'Parks, Recreation, and Open Lands' division*)
- Helena's [Holter Museum of Art](#) has a reasonable admission fee some days, but it is important to note that if you visit the gallery on Friday, it is FREE admission for ALL, with daily free admission 17 under otherwise. This is a great and convenient way to see a variety of art disciplines and artists. Plan your visit soon.
 - Location: 12 E Lawrence St.
 - Contact: 406-442-6400
- The [Last Chance Splash Waterpark and Pool](#) of Helena, offers a great time with the support of both the city and lifeguards on duty. While it does cost a little bit of money, don't forget the youngsters (0-3) are free and the rest of the cost, is cheaper than attending a movie. This provides hours of fun with lots of Helenan's present, providing a great way to meet up and then possibly head to the park nearby to take a break from waterlog.
 - Location: 1203 Last Chance Gulch
 - Contact: 406-447-1559

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- Even for locals, it is a treat to explore Helena by way of the ‘[Last Chance Tour Train](#).’ There is a variety of times offered to explore Helena in a way that recognizes our pace of life and with a historical narrative to assist in uncovering Helena in its foundational years, makes for a great ride. While this is not free, there are affordable offerings to reserve a seat with a variety of times to select from. Full steam ahead!
 - Location: 225 N Roberts St.
 - Contact: 406-442-1023
- In November of 2025, the [Montana Heritage Center](#) will officially be open. Till the Historical Society moves to their newest home, you can still visit a part of it here in Helena. It is located next to the Capital building but only the museum store is open for now. Worthy of noting, you can visit the original *governor’s mansion* for FREE, as provided by the Historical Society. Reach out for specific hours of operation, but it is a free treat you don’t want to miss.
 - Location #1: Securities Building, 101, Last Chance Gulch (*museum store*)
 - Location #2: 304 No Ewing St. (*original governor’s mansion*)
 - Contact: 406-444-2694
- Take a friend and explore all that [Montana Wild](#) has to offer. Entry is free, trails are open, on-site staff are there to assist, and the rescue birds are welcoming and curious. This is a great place to start in the morning or afternoon, then make your way down to Spring Meadow and soak up your knowledge, look for birds, identify bat boxes, and take a nice dip at a lovely recreation site (*more below*).
 - Location: 2668 Broadwater Ave.
 - Contact: 406-444-9944
- Our list wouldn’t be complete without including [Myrna Loy](#) and all they have to offer, which there is not enough space here to fill. The Myrna Loy offers a range of events from film, to live events, celebrations, to family friendly nights. Learn more about this affordable and fun way to engage in what they have to offer.
 - Location: 15 North Ewing Street
 - Contact: 406-443-0287

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- Helena's [Painted Pot](#) offers a range of selective pre-fired ceramics for you to paint. You don't have to pay for an appointment, but you can reserve time OR walk-in. The items you paint do range in cost but start minimally and provide a chance to paint with family/friends to have picked up later after they are fired in the kiln. Painted Pot also hosts several after-hour and/or special events and activities that further support our community as well as amp up your art skills. Reach out to know more.
 - Location: 333 N Last Chance Gulch
 - Contact: 406-443-3799
- Montana has a long and fascinating history when it comes to [Panning for Gold](#). There are several agencies that offer lessons on panning and with explanation of this history. However, it is worthy to share that when using PUBLIC lands (*national, some BLM-managed lands, and state forests*), you can pan for gold and no permits are required. It is important as always with our love for the outdoors that we are mindful of where we are at, not imposing on private land or areas that require permits, and NOT panning in National or State Parks. Read up on permissions if have an inkling to try your hand at this practice to make sure you are protected, as well as our landscape. It is a great activity for everyone to enjoy.
- Visit ONE of over 30 [public parks](#) in Helena! There are many that have a range of equipment included to assist in making your own adventure. Contact the city park system to see about renting facilities or knowing more.
 - Location(s): Varies
 - Contact: 406-447-8000 (*City of Helena, General Line*)
- Visit Helena's Historic [Reeder's Alley](#) and stumble upon the 'oldest intact relic of original Helena.' There are many organizations and shops about, but it is a splendid way to get out of the house and truly connect with Helena's history.
 - Location: 101 Reeder's Aly
 - Contact: 406-843-5247

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- **Sculpture in the Wild** is worth the short drive from Helena to Lincoln. There are works of art displayed around a walking outdoor museum that can take hours to explore! This is a great way to see how art can impact a community in a positive way, while offering a free opportunity to explore nature in a unique curated way. Pack a picnic and head northwest for an adventure that is only the cost of gas. There are great stops along the way, including the Continental Divide's, Flessher Pass.
 - Location: 1970 Sculpture Way, Lincoln
 - Contact: 406-431-0325
- Visit our local pond (*perhaps after visiting Montana Wild*), **Spring Meadow**. Take a fishing pole, lounge in the sun, take a dip, or paddle around. The area is open from 6:30am – 10:00pm. There are park rangers on site, and you can rent a pavilion, paddle board, and life vests!
 - Location: 2715 Country Club Ave
 - Contact: 406-449-5109 (*Park Office*)
- Living in our state's capital, we have a rich history of connecting with our political environment. It is important to know that at any point, you can visit our state's **Capital Building** without appointment or reservation and tour the phenomenal facility to see where so much of how our state is shaped gets done. There are lots of opportunities to support you on a self-guided tour with free copies of booklets to make the best of your adventure.
 - Location: 1301 East 6th Avenue, Helena, MT
 - Contact: (406) 444-4789
- Our annual **Symphony Under the Stars**, brings thousands of attendees together from all over the country to experience the outdoors, under the stars, and listen to fabulous 'symphonic sounds.' This is a FREE event that shouldn't be missed and is held every July. You can reserve a spot with the help of local Boy Scout divisions by holding down your blanket with canned food that eventually becomes donations for Helena Food Share. Keep an ear close for further details regarding the event.
 - Location: 1601 N Benton Ave.
 - Contact: 406-442-1860
- Participate in one of **Helena's triathlons** OR **marathon**/ $\frac{1}{2}$ **marathon**, such as the **Governor's Cup!** There are great ways to train alongside someone, hold each other accountable, assist in reaching goals, and overall have a great time bonding over accomplishing something elite! Regardless of your level of activity, there are great resources to support your training.

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