

POPULAR EVENTS IN BILLINGS — MONTANA'S TRAILHEAD

Where shadows of the towering Rimrocks meet the mystic waters of the Yellowstone River, Billings serves as Montana's Trailhead for whatever awesome adventures visitors seek under big skies. In recent years, Billings has witnessed an influx of talented and innovative artists, chefs and creators who compliment a community with a rich history. But there is perhaps no better way to explore the spirit of Montana's largest city than by attending one of the many events Billings hosts each year. From fine arts to rodeos, Billings' eclectic lineup of cultural experiences helps reveal the deeper soul of the region.

SYMPHONY IN THE PARK

On any given day at Pioneer Park in Billings, you might find kids splashing about in a wading pool, families gathering for a BBQ or a group of friends playing football. However one Sunday each June, the park is filled with the sounds of the Billings Symphony Orchestra and Chorale. Since 1973, Symphony in the Park has been a cherished event for locals and visitors alike. Along with the headline performance by **the Billings Symphony**, activities like an "Instrument Petting Zoo" and a kids conducting contest make Symphony in the Park perfect for the entire family.

MONTANA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL

For one weekend every June, Billings is transformed into "Billingshire" for the annual **Montana Renaissance Festival**. Three locations within the festival - the King's Stage, the Bard's Stage and the Shire - offer round-the-clock entertainment ranging from music to magic, while fine artists and craftsmen (and craftswomen) demonstrate their medieval skills.

MAGIC CITY BLUES

Since 2002, **Magic City Blues** has welcomed music fans from all over the country to the heart of Downtown Billings for a three-night urban music festival under big Montana skies. Past performers have included George Thorogood & The Destroyers, ZZ Top, John Fogerty, and Steve Miller Band to name just a few, along with many other well-known national, regional and local acts. Magic City Blues is held annually in early August.



CROW FAIR

Join the Billings community and the Crow Tribe in a celebration of Native American culture during the **Crow Fair** - the largest Native American event in Montana and one of the biggest powwows in the country. The Crow Fair begins on the third Thursday in August and attracts more than 50,000 spectators and participants from the around the world. Daily parades showcasing traditional bead, buckskin and leather work, an All-Indian rodeo, and horse races demonstrating the best in Indian horsemanship are all among the most popular events.

MONTANA FAIR

Join a celebration of Montana's agriculture with a visit to **MontanaFair** at MetraPark, the region's largest event with attendance of almost 250,000 each year. Nearly 10,000 participants will earn cash prizes and ribbons for their competition entries, which include just about everything you could imagine: beer, wine, pickles, arts and crafts, horticulture and, of course lots of agriculture including horses, cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and even bunnies.

In addition to admiring the talent of regional farmers, makers and artists, families can enjoy a shaded park featuring kid's carnival rides, as well as a nearby "Kid's World" exhibit that offers free games and activities. Or, chow down on some traditional fair fare, like corn dogs, BBQ, corn on the cob, and fresh lemonade. Stages throughout the fairgrounds boast free entertainment including music, comedy, variety acts and even hypnosis.

When the sun sets, the excitement kicks into high gear with events like Supercross and the PRCA Pro Rodeo, along with concerts at the First Interstate Arena from renowned performers such as Kesha, Cody Johnson and the Eli Young Band.

MontanaFair takes place over nine days beginning the second week of August.

BURN THE POINT

Take a stroll back in time to see what Montana's Trailhead was like in the 1950s and 1960s, when a constant flow of youngsters and their cars cruised the streets of Downtown Billings, "burning the point." The area between 2nd and 3rd Avenues North and North 29th and Broadway was the place to be back then to meet and greet with friends, and the tradition continues today with **Burn the Point**. Every Labor Day weekend, car enthusiasts from all over gather in the streets to enjoy the rumble of classic cars and reminisce of what cruisin' was all about. More than 500 cars participate in an early evening parade, followed by live music and dancing, making Burn the Point one of the most popular events in Billings.

MINT FILM FESTIVAL

For fans of the big screen, the **Montana International (MINT) Film Festival** is a must-see. Over five days every September, the festival celebrates films that have a strong narrative core, characters with emotional depth, and the ability to push creative, technical, or social boundaries, helping to discover the next generation of great filmmakers. The MINT Film Festival also is a great opportunity to get a feel for the Hollywood lifestyle, experiencing the red carpet, watching groundbreaking films, attending after parties, and meeting actors and directors.

SPORTING EVENTS IN BILLINGS

Billings' iconic landscape tempts outdoor adventure seekers with every type of terrain and countless ways to explore it. Trails and mountain passes inspire awe when explored by foot, bike or horseback, while ancient rock faces challenge explorers to reach new heights. Nourish your competitive spirit by partaking in one of the region's events that tests athletes of all skill levels, or by watching and cheering on your favorite participants.

MONTANA MARATHON

Sponsored by the Billings Family YMCA, the **Montana Marathon** has been a bucket-list race for runners of all skill levels for more than 40 years. The challenging, USATF-certified course meanders through wide-open prairie lands and Downtown Billings, and while the first 10 miles feature gently rolling hills, the final 16 miles cover a drop of about 1,000 vertical feet. In addition to the full marathon, half and 10K events also are available.

BIG SKY STATE GAMES

Amateur athletes of all ages and skill levels who reside in Montana and neighboring states participate in the **Big Sky State Games** – an Olympic-style sports festival featuring events typical of the Olympic and Pan-American Games as well as emerging sports and local favorites. Spring sports include those such as curling, figure skating, ice hockey and flag football, while summer events range from archery to arm wrestling. Most recently, more than 10,000 athletes competing in 35 different sports participated in the Big Sky State Games, making the event the number one state games in the nation in per capita participation.

406 DUATHLON CHALLENGE & 5K

Since 2016, athletes from all over have visited Billings to participate in the **406 Duathlon Challenge & 5K**, a challenging run and bike ride across the city and the rugged territory surrounding it. Three courses of different lengths (short, medium and long) are sure to challenge the beginner and elite racer alike, and teams of two can opt to tackle the medium or long courses as part of a relay race. The short course is a 2-mile run and 10-mile bike ride; the medium course is a 5K run and 20-mile bike ride; and the long course is a 10K run and a grueling 24-mile bike ride.



MONTANA WOMEN'S RUN

Born in 1982 from the desire of men of the Yellowstone Rim Runners club wanting to put on a race for the women in their lives who'd been managing club races for years, and with the help of the Junior League of Billings, the **Montana Women's Run** is now one of the largest runs in the entire state of Montana. Today, the race is managed by women members of the Rim Runners, and the goal of the Montana Women's Run is to promote health and fitness among women, especially those who otherwise would not exercise. As such, the race appeals to runners of all ages and abilities, with awards ranging from age 8 and under, to age 90 and over. As of 2019, the Race has donated over \$1,360,600 to benefit local women's services.