



DAY TRIP TO BANNACK

From Dillon · Beaverhead County, Montana



GOLD MINING



Photo: Mr Hicks46, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

STATE PARK

Run by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks as Bannack State Park. Open daily all year except December 24 and 25; day-use fee for nonresidents.

From Dillon, Bannack is a drive of under an hour and an easy day. There's no food service at the park, so pack a lunch for the picnic shelter or eat in Dillon. Summer brings the longest visitor center hours; the rest of the year the park still opens every day but two.

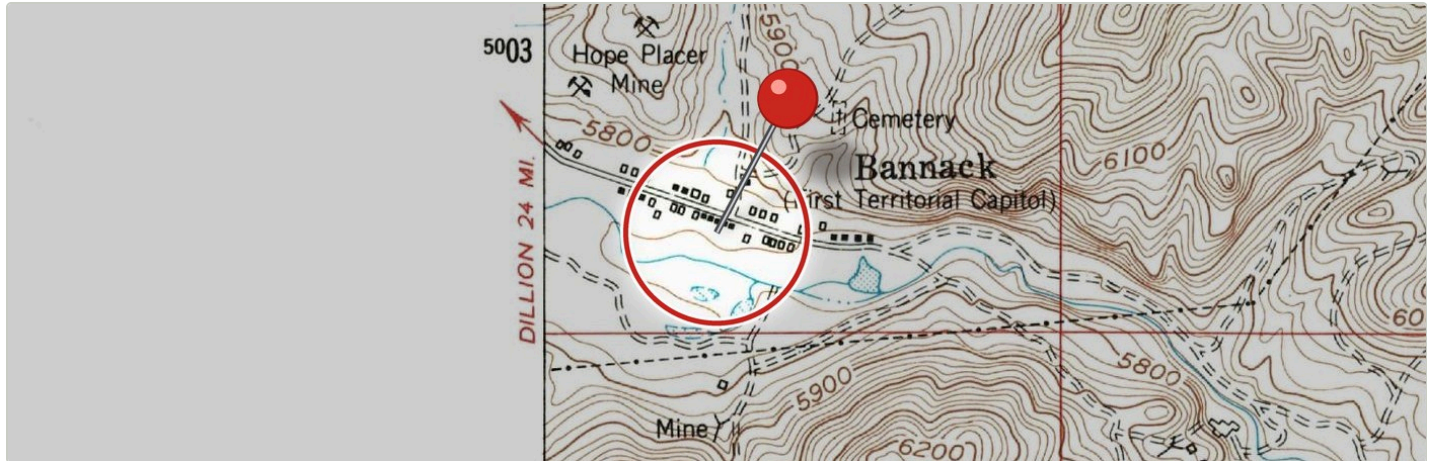
A SAMPLE DAY

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|------------------------------------|---|
| ☐ 8:15 a.m. | Leave Dillon. The drive is 25.5 miles, about 43 minutes, by I-15 and MT 278. |
| ☐ 9 a.m. | The visitor center opens. Pick up a map and join a walking tour if one is running. |
| ☐ 10 a.m. | Walk Main Street: the Hotel Meade and its staircase, the Masonic hall and school, the Methodist church and the cabins between them. |
| ☐ 12 p.m. | Packed lunch at the picnic shelter. |
| ☐ 1 p.m. | Walk up to the cemetery on the slope north of town, then walk back along Grasshopper Creek. |
| ☐ 2:30 p.m. | Head back to Dillon. |

Coming from Butte? Allow about an hour and 40 minutes each way. In late October the park runs evening Ghost Walk tours with actors; reservations are required.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **Main Street from the hill.** The hillside above town gives the long view of the street, the Hotel Meade and the creek's trees, as in the photo at the top of this page.
- **The Hotel Meade.** The brick front and its two-level porch face the street; inside, the curved staircase is best shot wide from the hall.
- **The Masonic hall.** Its tall white front and cupola stand out in winter against snow on the hills.
- **The cemetery.** Wooden grave fences in the sagebrush north of town.
- **Interiors.** Many buildings are dark inside. Expose for the room and let the windows burn out.
- **Bannack Days.** Re-enactors, wagon rides and gunfights on the third weekend of July make good video.



USGS topographic map, 1952 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	25 mi, about 43 min each way from downtown Dillon. From Butte: 88 mi, about 1 h 41 min.
OPEN	Daily, all year, except December 24 and 25. 2026 hours: 8 a.m. to sunset; from October 13, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitor center 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. otherwise. FWP says hours may change with staffing. The same FWP page also says the visitor center is open only from Memorial Day through Labor Day, so call ahead outside summer.
ADMISSION	Nonresidents \$8 per vehicle, or \$4 on foot, by bike or by bus. Free with a Nonresident Entrance Pass, and for Montana residents who paid the state parks fee with their vehicle registration. Bannack Days admission is separate: \$5 a person or \$20 a family in 2026.
TIME ON SITE	FWP gives no figure. Walking tours start at the visitor center.
RESTROOMS	Flush and vault toilets are listed for the park.
FOOD AND WATER	No food service is listed. Drinking water is available in summer only. There's a picnic shelter and a group picnic site.
ON FOOT	In a 2026 notice FWP said most of the more than 50 historic buildings are open to the public.
PETS	Allowed, by FWP's park page. It asks visitors to leave pets at home during Bannack Days.
PHOTOGRAPHY	FWP lists photography as a park activity. Its page doesn't mention drones; ask at the visitor center before you fly.
WEBSITE	fwp.mt.gov/stateparks/bannack-state-park

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Keep out of unstable buildings and off fenced ruins.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 45.16111, -112.99556 • 45°09'40"N
112°59'44"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/montana/bannack/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.