



DAY TRIP TO GARNET

From Missoula · Granite County, Montana



GOLD MINING

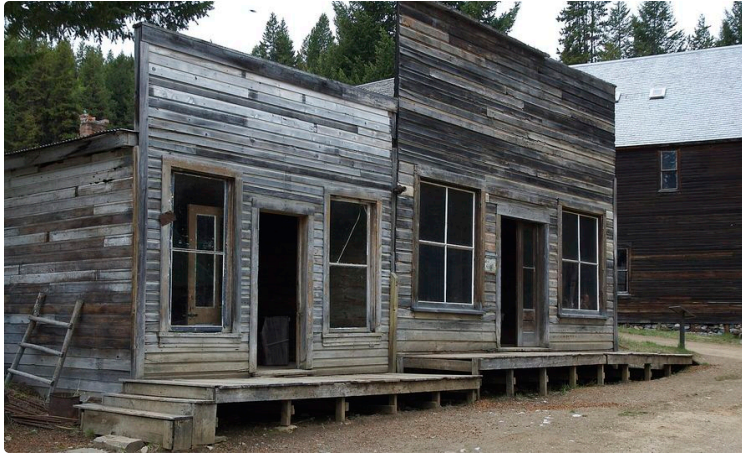


Photo: Seamus Murray from New York, USA, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0

OPEN, BLM SITE

Public land run by the BLM with a per-person fee. Open year-round; wheeled access is normally May to December, subject to snow; skis, snowshoes or snowmobiles in winter.

This plan is for the summer visitor-center season. Garnet is a day out from Missoula: an hour and a quarter each way, a few hours in the town, and a trail if you want one. There is no food for sale, so pack a lunch for the picnic tables. The visitor center and the open buildings run from May through September; outside those months the town is still open, but the buildings are locked and from January the road is closed to vehicles.

A SAMPLE DAY

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ 8:30 a.m. | Leave Missoula on I-90 and MT 200. Allow about an hour and a quarter, more if the gravel is wet. |
| ☐ 10 a.m. | The visitor center opens. Pay the fee, pick up the self-guided trail brochure and start with the Wells Hotel and Kelly's Saloon. |
| ☐ 11 a.m. | Walk up the slopes among the cabins, then look in on Davey's store. |
| ☐ 12:30 p.m. | Lunch at the picnic tables. |
| ☐ 1:30 p.m. | Choose the Sierra Mine Loop or continue onto the Placer Trail; the association allows about an hour for the Placer walk. |
| ☐ 3 p.m. | Head back down Garnet Range Road to MT 200 and Missoula. |

The preservation association describes Garnet Day as a June event. Confirm the next event date with the BLM at 406-329-3914.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The Wells Hotel.** Three stories of dark siding. Shoot it from across the street in the morning, or from low on the boardwalk against the sky.
- **Inside Kelly's Saloon.** The bar with its bottles and cans, lit from the back window. Expose for the room, not the window.
- **Davey's store.** The saws on the wall and the shelves of tins. A wide lens from the doorway takes in the whole counter.
- **Cabins on the slope.** The log cabins above the main street, with the trail climbing behind them.
- **Night sky.** The BLM's own photo on this page was taken under the Milky Way in August. Confirm access arrangements before planning a night visit.
- **Drones.** Not mentioned by the BLM. Ask before you fly.



USGS topographic map, 1919 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	38 mi, about 1 h 15 min each way from downtown Missoula.
OPEN	Year-round. The BLM gives the visitor center as typically open daily, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., May through September, weather depending; the preservation association's FAQ gives 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call the BLM for that day's opening. Fees are charged when the road is open to vehicles, usually May through October.
ADMISSION	\$10 a person, 16 and over; under 16 free. Pay cash or check at the fee envelope, by card or online at the kiosk, or buy a day pass on Recreation.gov. An America the Beautiful pass covers the holder and up to three other adults.
TIME ON SITE	The BLM doesn't say. The preservation association says the Placer Trail takes about an hour and the Warren Park Trail two to three hours, so allow half a day with a walk.
RESTROOMS	The BLM's 2024 business plan lists three permanent toilet facilities; the preservation association FAQ describes two bathroom locations.
FOOD AND WATER	No food. The business plan lists a potable public water supply and picnic tables; carry what you need for the trails.
ON FOOT	The town is walked on dirt paths and boardwalks, and some buildings are open to enter. Close doors behind you and stay off fragile floors.
PETS	The preservation association FAQ allows leashed dogs.
WEBSITE	blm.gov/visit/garnet-ghost-town

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Stay out of mine shafts, tunnels and unstable buildings.
- 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 46.82528, -113.33889 · 46°49'31"N
113°20'20"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/montana/garnet/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

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