



DAY TRIP TO VIRGINIA CITY

From Ennis · Madison County, Montana



GOLD MINING



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LIVING TOWN

A living county seat of 219 people (2020 census) with a state-run historic district open in summer, per the Heritage Commission's 2026 pages and a photo of May 29, 2026.

Virginia City is a summer day out from Ennis, about half an hour over the hills on MT 287. Walk Wallace Street and Boot Hill in the morning, ride the Alder Gulch Shortline to Nevada City and back after lunch, and stay for a show if one is on. The state-run season is Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day; in late October 2026 it was over for the year, so confirm next summer's dates before you go.

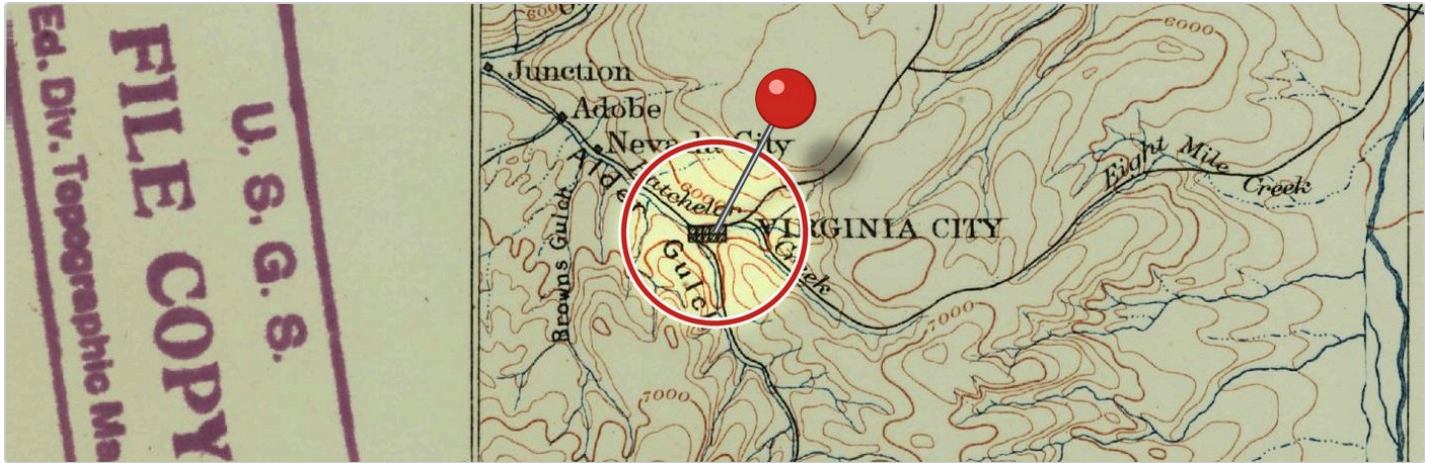
A SAMPLE DAY

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| ☐ 9:30 a.m. | Leave Ennis on MT 287 over the hills; about half an hour. |
| ☐ 10 a.m. | Walk Wallace Street's boardwalk and the side streets, then climb to Boot Hill. |
| ☐ 12:30 p.m. | Lunch on Wallace Street. |
| ☐ Afternoon | Ride the train from the Depot to Nevada City and back. |
| ☐ Evening | Stay for the Opera House or the Brewery Follies if they're playing. |

Coming from Bozeman? It's about 1 hour 41 minutes by MT 84 and US 287.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **Wallace Street.** The boardwalk and false fronts, best from across the highway.
- **Boot Hill.** The wooden grave markers, with the town below.
- **The Opera House.** Its white balcony and columns on Wallace Street.
- **The train.** Catch it leaving the Depot, or film the gulch from the car.



USGS topographic map, 1888 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	14 mi, about 27 min each way from downtown Ennis. From Bozeman: 67 mi, about 1 h 41 min.
OPEN	The Montana Heritage Commission gives 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Its page names no year.
ADMISSION	Walking the town is free. The train, the Nevada City museum and the shows charge.
TRAIN	In 2026 the Alder Gulch Shortline ran daily May 23 to September 7, with a departure from one end or the other every half hour from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; the ride is about 15 minutes; adults \$10 round trip, \$8 one way. Tickets in person only at the Virginia City Depot, 413 West Wallace Street. No trains in bad weather.
SHOWS	The 2026 Opera House season ran "The Bat" June 17 to July 19, "Vaudeville's Greatest Hits" July 24 to August 2 and "Xantippe" August 5 to September 6. The Brewery Follies were also on the 2026 concessionaire list.
RESTROOMS	Public restrooms at the Virginia City Depot and the Bovey Visitor Center in Nevada City.
FOOD	State concessionaires in 2026 included the Wells Fargo Bar & Grill, the Shop at the City Bakery, the Virginia City Coffee Depot and the Bale of Hay Saloon.
CONTACT	Montana Heritage Commission, 406-843-5247, weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
WEBSITE	virginiacitymt.com

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 45.29611, -111.93694 • 45°17'46"N
111°56'13"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/montana/virginia-city/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

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