



**GLACIER**  
INSTITUTE

# Lake McDonald

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**Lodging & Learning  
Glacier National Park**

Summer 2025

# Lake McDonald Lodging & Learning



Embark on an unforgettable four-day adventure with the Glacier Institute, combining the charm of Glacier National Park's iconic Lake McDonald Lodge with expertly guided explorations of the park's breathtaking landscapes.

Designed for a small group of up to 14 participants, this program offers a unique blend of outdoor education and adventure, led by a highly trained Glacier Institute Outdoor Education Specialist.

Explore iconic trails such as Avalanche Lake, Hidden Lake, and the Highline Trail, uncovering the park's rich ecology, geology, and wildlife. Each day offers moderately strenuous hikes, awe-inspiring views, and opportunities to deepen your connection to nature. Evenings provide time to relax at the lodge and reflect on the day's discoveries.

With trails ranging from tranquil walks through towering cedar forests to the exhilarating Highline Trail, this program caters to moderately active participants eager for an immersive outdoor experience. After full days on the trail, return to the comfort of Lake McDonald Lodge to reflect, relax, and savor your connection to this awe-inspiring landscape.



**Whether you're new to Glacier or returning to explore it anew, this program offers an exceptional way to learn, hike, and create lifelong memories.**

# Why Choose a Lodging & Learning Package?

These newly developed Lodging & Learning packages are developed through a partnership with **Glacier National Park Lodges and the Glacier Institute**. These packages combine the best lodging locations with an exceptional immersive field education experience.

**The Glacier Institute is the official education partner of Glacier National Park.** The Glacier Institute's mission is to strengthen connections to the natural world through outdoor education.

To learn more about the Glacier Institute, visit our website, [glacierinstitute.org](http://glacierinstitute.org).

The Glacier Institute has been delivering immersive educational programs in Glacier National Park for over 40 years. Glacier Institute Outdoor Education Specialists are passionate professionals with extensive training to offer unique and accurate insights into the park's natural and cultural history.

## What's Included?

- 4 Night Stay - Historic Lake McDonald Lodge
- Most Meals - Breakfast and dinner at Russell's Fireside Dining room, to-go lunches
- In-park transportation via a 14-passenger minibus
- Exceptional educational programming with a Glacier Institute Outdoor Education Specialist
- A Nalgene water bottle (gift item)
- Use of high-powered scopes and binoculars from Zeiss Optics



# Program Itinerary



## Day One | Welcome & Orientation

Arrive at Lake McDonald Lodge for check-in at 4:00 p.m. Meet your Outdoor Education Specialist at 6:00 p.m. for an orientation.



## Day Two | Avalanche Lake

**6:30 a.m.:** Start your day with breakfast at Russell's Fireside at Lake McDonald Lodge.

**7:00 a.m.:** Depart for the hike to Avalanche Lake.

**Hike:** Enjoy a 4.6-mile roundtrip trail through ancient cedar and hemlock forests along the Trail of the Cedars boardwalk. Follow Avalanche Creek past glacial erratics and serene wildlife habitats to the stunning glacier-fed basin of Avalanche Lake, framed by towering peaks like Little Matterhorn and Mt. Brown. Savor a boxed lunch surrounded by nature.

**4:00 p.m.:** Return to Lake McDonald Lodge to relax and unwind.

**5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.:** Dine at Russell's Fireside or Lucke's Lounge at your leisure.



## Day Three | Hidden Lake

**6:30 a.m.:** Begin your day with breakfast at Russell's Fireside at Lake McDonald Lodge.

**7:00 a.m.:** Depart for the Hidden Lake Overlook trail.

**Hike:** This 3-mile roundtrip hike (with an optional 2.2-mile extension to the lake) takes you through vibrant alpine meadows at Logan Pass, where Glacier lilies and mountain pink bloom in abundance. Spot Glacier's iconic mountain goats as they navigate rocky ledges and learn about the effects of climate change on this fragile ecosystem. Stunning views of the peaks around Logan Pass make this a must-see destination. Enjoy your boxed lunch surrounded by breathtaking alpine scenery.

**5:00 p.m.:** Return to Lake McDonald Lodge to relax.

**5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.:** Enjoy dinner at Russell's Fireside or Lucke's Lounge.

# Program Itinerary



## Day Four | Highline Trail

**6:30 a.m.:** Begin your day with breakfast at Russell's Fireside at Lake McDonald Lodge.

**7:00 a.m.:** Depart for the Highline Trail at Logan Pass.

**Hike:** This 8-mile roundtrip adventure follows the famous Highline Trail along the dramatic Garden Wall, offering breathtaking views above the Going-to-the-Sun Road. Traverse this iconic ridge to Haystack Butte, where you will have opportunities to spot Glacier's alpine wildlife along the way. *Expect a moderately strenuous hike with some areas of high exposure.* Enjoy a boxed lunch on the trail while soaking in the spectacular scenery.

**5:00 p.m.:** Return to Lake McDonald Lodge to unwind.

**5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.:** Relax and dine at Russell's Fireside or Lucke's Lounge.



## Day Five | Departure

Pack your bags and enjoy a final morning at Lake McDonald Lodge. Check-out is by 11:00 a.m. as you bid farewell to your Glacier adventure.



# Frequently Asked Questions



## HOW FIT DO I NEED TO BE?

- Participants should be prepared to hike up to 8 miles in a day with elevation gains of up to 825 feet. Depending on the group's pace and preferences, hikes may be shortened to prioritize educational quality.
- The Glacier Institute follows a strict hike as a group policy, ensuring all participants stay together for a safe, engaging, and enriching educational experience.
- Participants should be prepared for changing environmental conditions that may exasperate existing health conditions. Please make considerations for elevation, seasonal allergies, and air quality due to fires and bring any necessary medications.

## WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

Much of the program time will be spent outdoors, and participants should be prepared for various mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are essential. Summer temperatures can range from below-freezing in the mornings to 85° Fahrenheit in the afternoons. Layering garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide clothing choices.

***The Outdoor Education Specialist will carry a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.***



# Frequently Asked Questions



## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:

- **What do the vehicles look like?**
  - They are 2016 Ford Transit Vans that seat a max of 15 people.
- **What are the staff's qualifications?**
  - Our staff arrive each season with tremendous passion and diverse backgrounds. They immediately undergo an intensive three-week training period, during which they become Certified Interpretive Guides and Montana Master Naturalists.
- **Am I guaranteed to go on the hikes listed in the itinerary?**
  - We will do our best to follow the itinerary that was crafted for this trip. However, Glacier National Park occasionally closes trails for weather, trail conditions, wildlife, or fires. In the case of a closure, we will find another suitable location to explore.

## WHAT WILL I EAT?

- **Breakfast 6:30 am daily, Russell's Fireside.** First-come, first-served, Lake McDonald Lodge front desk will provide a coupon for the cost of the meal and gratuity.
- **Lunch will be boxed and ready for each day's adventure.** Please complete a form with the dining room the night before. Lunches can be picked up by 7 am.
- **Dinner 5-9:30 pm daily, Russell's Fireside or Lucke's Lounge.** Reservations not accepted; first-come, first-served. The Lake McDonald Lodge, front desk staff, will provide you with a coupon for the cost of the meal and gratuity.
- ***Please discuss any dietary restrictions with the dining staff, and they will make every possible effort to accommodate your needs.***



# Terms & Conditions

Itineraries are subject to change. Unforeseen cancellations of Program activities due to inclement weather or mechanical difficulties will be supplemented with extended touring routes or alternative activities. Refunds will not be issued for canceled activities.

Rates include taxes, fees, and gratuity, with the exception of the NPS Entrance fee, which must be paid upon entering the National Park. Rates, taxes, and fees are subject to change and based on approved local, state, and NPS fees at the time of the session date.



## Deposit/Refund Policy:

**The following policies apply to Glacier Institute Lodging & Learning packages. If you cancel:**

- 60 days or more prior to the start of your package, 100% of your payment will be refunded.
- 30 days or more prior to the start of your package, 50% of your payment will be refunded.
- If you cancel fewer than 30 days before the start of your program, your full payment will be forfeited.
- Please call the Central Reservations Office at 855-SEE-GLACIER (855-733-4522) to cancel.

We recommend the purchase of travel insurance to help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to unforeseen circumstances.



# About The Glacier Institute

The Glacier Institute, a nonprofit and the official education partner of Glacier National Park and Flathead National Forest, is a trusted leader in outdoor education. With over 40 years of experience, we offer immersive, expert-led programs that foster deeper connections to the natural world while cultivating critical thinking and understanding.

Our week-long courses provide in-depth, hands-on learning guided by seasoned educators and topic experts. Participants gain more than knowledge—they leave with a renewed perspective and a profound appreciation for the environment.

As a nonprofit, we're dedicated to making outdoor education impactful and accessible, ensuring every experience is both meaningful and transformative. When you join a Glacier Institute course, you'll gain skills, insights, and memories that will stay with you long after you leave the trail.



**“We only protect what we love, we only love what we understand, and we only understand what we are taught.”**

*Jacques-Yves Cousteau*