



Professional Wilderness Guides
Since 1931

7 Lazy P Outfitting, LLC Pack Trip Overview, Expectations & Gear List

We feel that proper preparation and communication = a memorable trip.

If you ever have any questions, by all means call or email us anytime!

All dates given on trip itineraries are for the actual trip departure and return dates. You will need to arrive at the 7 lazy P Guest Ranch no later than the afternoon prior to the date of your trip departure. Guests should plan to leave the lodge mid morning the day after your trip. In other words, an 8 day pack trip will require a 10 day time commitment. So you will need to make your travel arrangements accordingly. If you would like to arrive early or stay later, please contact us for availability. The closest air service is Great Falls, MT which is about 80 miles from the Guest Ranch. We provide complimentary airport shuttle. We may ask guests to be patient and flexible as often times there is more than one person/group arriving at different times throughout the day and it helps us out if we can make one airport pick-up. If your best option for a return flight is early am the day after your trip comes out of the mountains, we can take you to a motel near the airport that after dinner the day your trip comes out.

All lodging and meals the night prior to and after your trip are included in the price of your trip. We have 5 guest cabins of various configurations to accommodate singles, couples, families, or small groups of friends. Meals are served in the lodge and guests are free to relax in the lodge or make their way up to the corral to get introduced to some of the horses and mules. The place will be alive with activity as food and supplies are prepared and the crew is busy assembling gear for the trip.

Most trips can take a maximum of 10 guests. Each trip typically has a 5 person crew which includes 2 packers with the mule strings, a wilderness chef, the trip leader who rides with the guests, and a "5th wheel" who often will ride with the guests and help out wherever needed in camp and on the trail. We may reduce the size of the crew on trips with very few guests and depending on the trip and the group, will sometimes accommodate 11 guests and have a 4 person crew.

On moving days we often have the riders traveling independent of the pack strings to reduce congestion on the trail and allow that portion of the crew to reach a campsite ahead of the guests to begin set up. We try and get on the trail by 9:30 – 10:00 AM. We will stop for a short break prior to lunch, and then stop for about a 30 min. lunch break, then usually one more quick stop in the afternoon prior to reaching the campsite. It is always good to get into a campsite by about 3:30, so depending on the mileage and time required, your guide will manage travel accordingly. When we arrive at a campsite the crew will assist guests in securing their horse. We will have you remove any clothing and the horn bags from your saddle. Guests may need to be patient as the crew works to transform neatly packed mule loads into an accommodating camp. This is a good time to just relax for a minute, everything will be ready shortly.

Camp will consist of a large kitchen fly with a complete kitchen to prepare incredible meals. Guests are provided with high quality tents that comfortably sleep two adults. Single guests may be issued slightly smaller tents. Once instructed on proper tent set-up, we encourage the guests to select their own location and set up their own tents. This is a good activity for guests while the crew is busy setting up the kitchen, getting wood and water, and tending to the stock. If anyone needs assistance, crew members are always there to help. There will be camp stools available. A latrine tent is set up at each campsite and the opportunity for a shower is available on layover days.

Setting up and taking down the camp and putting the whole thing on the backs of mules is an incredible task that is handled efficiently by the experienced crew. It is important for guests to be ready on moving days so as not to delay the process. Layover days are for relaxing and having a leisurely breakfast. On moving days breakfast will be from 7:00am until 7:30am. There is a lot to do and it is always good to have extra time at the end of the day rather than to be late and run into trouble. Cooperation is expected and required on these days.

A Word on “Wilderness”

If this is the first time you will be experiencing a trip like this, it is important to know and understand that the “essence of wilderness” supersedes everything else. Along with incredible scenery and solitude, the element of some risk and uncertainty when traveling and camping in wilderness is a big part of the allure. Fortunately, most of the trips take place without any interruptions. However, the unexpected event can happen, such as sudden and severe storms, or the horses and mules drifting many miles from camp and taking extra time to locate. So expect a smooth and trouble free trip, but always be mindful that wild country will occasionally remind us that we can't always have things go as we planned.

7 Lazy P Summer Pack Trip Gear & Packing List

Here are our suggestions for clothing and gear so that you are comfortable and prepared to enjoy your trip. If you are a seasoned outdoor person, you most likely already know what works best for you. If this is your first trip, or you are unsure of what to bring, this may be of help. Any time you have questions about gear or what to bring, don't hesitate to contact us. Also, if you have any doubts before the trip, we can help you go through your gear at the ranch.

You want functional and practical articles of clothing, just what you need and not one thing more. A good rule of thumb is a change of underclothing for every two days, an extra pair of trousers, and two extra shirts. Remember when you are packing that you will be wearing the first two days of clothes. Also, there will be opportunities to launder a few articles like socks and t-shirts if needed.

UNDERCLOTHING

- T-Shirt, Socks, Underwear
 - 1 set for every two days. You may want a special pair of socks for hiking or a pair that you will wear in wading sandals for fishing.
- Long Underwear
 - A light set of tops and bottoms for cold, rainy days and nights. Synthetics or Merino, no cotton.

In addition to what you will be wearing when we leave the ranch, you will want:

- 2 shirts – long sleeved are best, one lighter, one heavier
- Extra pair of jeans or other durable trousers that are suitable for riding
- You may also like to bring a pair of light hiking pants/ shorts and a swimsuit

FOOTWEAR

- Western boots are fine if you prefer them to ride in, but are not mandatory.
- Don't bring lighter, fashion boots or others of questionable quality as they will likely fail, especially if they get wet (which they will).
- The best option is a good pair of gore-tex lined, medium weight hiking shoes. They will keep your feet dry in wet weather, are fine for riding, and will save bringing an extra pair for hiking.
- Tennis shoes or equivalent for camp wear.
- Crocs or water sandals for bathing and wading.

OUTER LAYERS

Heed your own temperature tolerance level when assembling your outerwear for the trip. It may be in the 80's one day and drop to the 40's at night, or lower if there is a storm. The high country trips will usually see some frost at least one night.

- Fleece sweater or pullover. You may also want to add a light down or synthetic vest.
- Quilted jacket, down or synthetic. Add a shell jacket for additional warmth, or use your rain jacket.
- Rain Suit – The best you have or can afford. Pants and jacket are the only way to go for these trips. You need to stay dry, saddle slickers and oil skins are not practical or effective. No ponchos please.
- Hats – Ball caps are good, a brimmed hat if you choose.
- A beanie for cool mornings.
- Gloves – a light pair and a synthetic or wool pair that will keep you warm when wet.

SLEEPING GEAR

Please Note: We cannot accommodate “cowboy bedrolls”. They are just too big and bulky for these trips.

You want a sleeping bag that will keep you warm down below 30 degrees or so. Since they are rated a little high, I would choose one that is rated for 15, or even 0 if you have trouble sleeping warm. Again, use your personal temperature tolerance level.

- Mummy bag – the back-packing style mummy bags are lighter, save on space, and are warmer. There are ones with a looser cut if you don't like the tighter bags.
- Self-inflating pad – no shortage of options here. Reasonable size and thickness please.
- Camp pillow – small and compressible. Your jacket in a stuff sack works well too.

TOILETRIES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

- Toilet kit with usual items and anything else you may anticipate needing. It's a long ride to the drug store!
- Prescriptions, pain relievers, antacids, etc.
- Baby wipes
- Sun screen, insect repellent, chap stick
- Bath towel & wash cloth
- Soap & shampoo, biodegradable preferred

MISCELLANEOUS

- Headlight and extra batteries
- Camera, card, batteries and/or charger unit for cell phone camera.
- 2 medium size water bottles (the giant Nalgene type will not fit in your horn bags)
- Day pack for hikes – one that is light, simple and easily compressible into your duffel is the best. Day packs will not be taken on the horses when riding.
- Light weight, collapsible hiking poles if you intend to do extensive hikes on layover days.
- Note pad or journal, book for reading, deck of cards
- Sunglasses – bring (2) pair of cheap ones. Your horse will not apologize for stepping on your expensive ones.
- Glasses – extra pair of glasses if you use them
- Compact binoculars, optional.
- Beer, boxed wine, etc. This will be packed with the groceries. (No glass bottles.)
- EpiPens – if you need to have an EpiPen close by, it is best to have 2 with you and 2 more in your gear. Be sure to let us know if you have the need to use an EpiPen.

ASSEMBLING YOUR PILE OF STUFF

You will need a duffel bag, long and narrow is best for packing. A bag that is about 32”-36” long x 14”-16” in diameter should hold all your gear. If you are using a smaller bag your sleeping bag and pad may not fit. You may bring those in another bag or just loose and we will combine them in the loads. **Your clothing, sleeping bag, and pad should all weigh 35# or less.** Be sure and line your duffel with a garbage bag or put your clothes in ziplock bags to keep contents dry in case of a downpour on the trail. Same for sleeping bags.

Your rain gear and light jacket will go with you on your saddle at all times. We will provide horn bags for your lunch, water bottles, camera, gloves, etc. There will also be a mule (the consumer protection mule) that travels with you and your wrangler that will have a first aid kit, satellite communication, and room for any miscellaneous articles.

BEAR AWARE

We frequently get asked about bears and any risk they might present. Native wildlife, rugged country, weather, fire, horses & mules all present risk. It is the element of some risk that gives Wilderness its allure, but know that bear encounters in the Bob Marshall Wilderness are rare. Being mindful and aware is the best frame of mind for all activities. We have bear spray available on the trips for our staff and guests to carry when on hikes and fishing. Guests are welcome to bring their own. Be aware that bear spray is not allowed on any flights.

It is important to not have food in or near your sleeping tent. Any food or snacks should be stored in with the camp groceries.

For more information about bear encounters, visit www.bebearaware.org.

FIREARMS

Some guests inquire about bringing a handgun. Please contact us if you are considering bringing a handgun. If your intent is for protection against bears, know that bear spray is much more effective.

WATERFILTERS

We often get questions about drinking water in the backcountry. We carry large capacity, high-end ceramic filters for camp use. If you have concerns, feel free to bring your own tablets, steripen, straw, filter, etc.

COMMUNICATION

Being in the Wilderness is the perfect time to unplug and lose track of time!! There is not cell service where we are going, however, we do have an InReach for satellite communication. If you choose to bring your own satellite communication (which is not necessary), we ask that you keep it discreet.

ALCOHOL POLICY

Moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is allowed. 7 Lazy P Outfitting, LLC offers no alcohol for sale, obtaining libations is the responsibility of the client. Canned beer and boxed wine only, liquor should be in plastic to save weight. Staff will make final decisions on amounts taken based on available space and weight with other cargo. Inappropriate behavior, including vulgar language, will not be tolerated. 7 Lazy P Outfitting, LLC staff will intervene, and may remove, any individual who becomes disruptive or a threat to safety.

FISHING

The streams we get into are not large and are easily wadeable. On the high country trips there may only be a couple of days for fishing. So unless your trip is fishing specific, we ask that you keep the gear minimal and not bring waders, using instead water shoes to wade with. Thanks!

- Montana fishing license (can get one online at www.fwp.mt.gov or locally)
- Fishing rod – a 4 wt rod will be fine in most situations. Pack rods if you have one.
- A few incidentals – tippet, float-ant, and extra leader or two
- A short list of dry flies will most likely do, however some like to bring a few Nymphs and Streamers
 - A few to consider:
 - **Dry flies:** Royal Wulfe, Royal Coachmen, Crazy Goof's, Elk Hair Caddis, Joe's Hopper, Dave's Hoppers, Pale Evening Dunn, Parachute Adams, Stimulators
 - **Nymphs:** Copper John, Prince Nymph
 - **Streamers:** Muddler Minnow, Woolly Bugger
 - 7 Lazy P usually has boxes of appropriate flies available to purchase for \$35.
 - If you are an avid fisherman, you will have your own list. This is just a few of the common flies for our area. Barbless hooks are recommended.
- Spinning outfits: if you bring a spinning rod, make sure lures are single hook.

WHAT TO CARRY WITH YOU ON YOUR HORSE

Guests will be issued horn bags. We find these superior to traditional saddle bags, to carry lunch, 2 water bottles (the giant plastic or tall metal bottles are too big to fit securely in the horn bags so bring more moderate sized water bottles that you can easily drink from while riding), camera, gloves, ibuprofen, a little TP, etc. Rain gear and extra jackets will be tied behind your saddle. There will be one mule that accompanies the guest group, who the crew will refer to as the Consumer Protection Mule. This mule will have a first aid kit and satellite phone. There is also room for extra gear that folks might have that does not safely fit on their saddle.

CAN I BRING MY PERSONAL SADDLE OR SADDLE BAGS?

We get more than a few folks who would like to bring their personal saddles. We understand the desire to do this, however there are lots of different saddles out there and many are not configured the best for what we are doing. If you are driving and you would like to bring your saddle along that is fine. Just know that we are very particular about proper saddle fit and 7 Lazy P Outfitting, LLC reserves the right to determine if your saddle will be acceptable. Cantle saddle bags are not used. They add extra weight and improper weight distribution.

HORSEMANSHIP

Aside from our wonderful crew, the most important piece of equipment on our operation is our riding and pack stock. Without them, you and I wouldn't get very far. They're not just essential transportation, they are creatures we care deeply about and their welfare is one of our highest priorities. Making sure that you have a safe experience with your horse is important to us. We give a short seminar prior to departure from the trailhead, but here are some things to ponder in the meantime. Many of you have at least some riding experience, some may even have their own mounts, and some may have never been on a horse before. If this is your first time riding, or it has been years since you were on a horse, getting some riding in before the trip is great if you can do it. It should sharpen your skills and raise your confidence level.

Keep these thoughts in mind when riding.....

- Your horse is a thinking, feeling creature. Be kind and don't ask him to do the impossible. He is your partner, not your slave. Treat them with respect and they will take care of you. They know the drill.
- When riding the trail, one of the crew will usually be in the lead. We will always stop and start together. Don't hesitate to call out anytime you need to stop for any reason. The entire group will wait, otherwise your horse will probably not stand still for you to remount as he will want to catch up to the other horses. This may be the number one opportunity for an accident. Make sure the person in front of you waits for you to get back on. Before remounting it is also a good time to check your cinch, especially if it has been awhile.
- Try not to become dead weight on your horse's back. This is really hard on them. It may not seem like it, but you can make a dramatic difference with your posture. Stay up on your stirrups and help the horse out when going up or down hills and crossing bogs and logs. Riding a horse should be an interactive endeavor. Put some life in your seat and try to move with the horse and not against him. They will appreciate it and so will we.
- We will get off and walk periodically. This is really important to avoid sore knees. Your butt may be tired at the end of the day, but that will recover quickly. Knees that are tweaked and sore from riding too long can give you trouble the whole trip. So, when you feel your knees getting stiff, get off and walk for 15-20 minutes. We will let everyone know when we are on a good stretch of trail to walk.
- The crew will do the saddling, but it doesn't hurt for you to keep an eye on your equipment. Make sure your cinch is snug before mounting and watch the position of your saddle and pad, especially going downhill. If you think there is a problem with any of your equipment be sure and let your guide know. It will probably only take a second to fix and could prevent a wreck.
- The best way to avoid any problems is to use good sense when riding. If it doesn't look or feel right it probably isn't, don't get yourself into a jam by ignoring your gut feeling.
- **Horse training by guests.** From time to time we get some who feel compelled to try and put some "corrective training" on their horse. Please don't. Although usually well intended, it is important to keep in mind that these horses have to deal with all kinds of people, most of whom have little experience. For their own sanity these horses have learned to tune out confusing and non-relevant requests from their riders and yet still do an amazing job of safely transporting them safely over some very challenging trails. They know their job and they do it remarkably well. They are not champion reining horses, their ground manners may not always be perfect, and they will eat along the trail any chance they get. So be as tolerant and forgiving of their imperfections as they have to be of yours and you should both get along great.

DIRECTIONS TO THE 7 LAZY P

The 7 Lazy P Guest Ranch is located 27 miles west of Choteau, Montana. The physical address is 2250 Teton Canyon Road, Choteau, MT. If you plan to use google maps or siri to get you there, you probably won't make it as cell service ends before you get there. So here are some old fashioned directions.

From Choteau, Montana head north on highway 89. 4 miles north of Choteau, you will turn left or west onto Teton Canyon Road. Turn at the brown Ski Area sign. Head west up this blacktop road to mile marker 18. After mile marker 18, the road turns to gravel. Go approximately 4 miles. Watch for signs for Cave Mountain Recreation Area and a sign for 7 Lazy P. Turn left at those signs. Across the bridge and up around the corner, and there you are at the 7 Lazy P!! The lodge phone is 406-466-2222. You can also text Danelle at 406-781-7496 if you need anything.

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