

PREMIUM EDITION

THE ULTIMATE GLACIER GUIDE 2026

A 50-mile road across the Continental Divide, turquoise lakes carved by ancient ice, and some of the highest grizzly bear density in the lower 48. The Crown of the Continent.

2026 Fact-Checked · No More Vehicle Reservations, New Shuttle Tickets, and Every Trail Explained

1910

ESTABLISHED

~25

GLACIERS REMAINING TODAY

50MI

GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD

1932

FIRST INTERNATIONAL PEACE
PARK

GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD

GRIZZLY COUNTRY

ALPINE LAKES

BEST HIKES

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This is a free preview of the complete 26-page guide. Below is everything included when you purchase — a few real sample pages follow so you can see the depth and quality before you buy.

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SAMPLE PAGES FROM THE FULL GUIDE

The next 3 pages are pulled directly from the guide, exactly as they appear in the PDF you'd download after purchase — original page numbers included.

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Trail of the Cedars + Avalanche Lake

An accessible cedar forest boardwalk, extending to a genuinely striking mountain lake

NO PERMIT REQUIRED**EASY TO MODERATE****0.9–5.9 mi**

DISTANCE

Minimal–500 ft

ELEVATION

30 min–3 hrs

TIME

Jun–Oct

SEASON

TRAIL OVERVIEW

A flat, paved, wheelchair-accessible loop through old-growth cedar and hemlock forest, with a connecting trail continuing to Avalanche Lake — a strikingly turquoise lake set beneath steep cliffs streaked with seasonal waterfalls.

TRAILHEAD + LOGISTICS

Avalanche Creek, on Going-to-the-Sun Road on the west side of the park.

CROWD STRATEGY

Extremely popular, especially the accessible Trail of the Cedars loop; the parking area fills early on summer days.

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS

Avalanche Lake's turquoise color and the surrounding waterfall-streaked cliffs are best photographed at midday, when light reaches the lake surface most directly.

LOCAL INSIDER TIP

Neither Trail of the Cedars nor Avalanche Lake are served by the park shuttle in 2026 — you'll need to drive and park yourself, so plan your timing around the lot filling early.

TRAIL TIPS + WARNINGS

None significant on Trail of the Cedars itself; the Avalanche Lake extension has real, if moderate, elevation gain.

FAMILY NOTE

Trail of the Cedars alone is fully accessible and an excellent option for any mobility level.

PERMITS + ACCESS

Backcountry Camping, Fishing + the New Shuttle Ticket System

Every day hike in this guide requires nothing beyond your entrance fee. Overnight backcountry camping and the new 2026 Logan Pass shuttle ticket are the two systems worth understanding in advance.

Activity	Permit?	How to Get It	Cost
All day hikes in this guide	NO	Standard park entry only	Free with entrance fee
Overnight backcountry camping	YES	Recreation.gov advance reservation, or walk-up permits at ranger stations	Nightly per-person fee applies
2026 Logan Pass Shuttle (every rider, age 2+)	YES (ticket)	Recreation.gov, released 60 days ahead or at 7pm the night before	\$1 processing fee per ticket
Fishing (most park waters)	NO state license needed	Follow park fishing regulations; no separate Montana state license required inside park boundaries	Free
Motorized boating	YES	Park boat permit + mandatory invasive species inspection	Fee applies

GRIZZLY COUNTRY — BEAR SPRAY IS NOT OPTIONAL HERE

Glacier has one of the highest grizzly bear densities remaining in the lower 48. Carry bear spray on every hike beyond the immediate developed areas, know how to use it before you need it, hike in groups where possible, and make noise on blind corners and near running water, where bears may not hear you coming. Trail closures for bear activity are common and should always be respected.

DAY-BY-DAY

The Perfect 3-Day Glacier Itinerary

This itinerary assumes the full Going-to-the-Sun Road is open, typically mid-June through some point in October, and a West Glacier or Whitefish base.

D1

Going-to-the-Sun Road + Logan Pass

Region: **West Glacier / Logan Pass** Arrive by 8am for the best parking odds

MORNING

- Drive Going-to-the-Sun Road from Apgar, stopping at Avalanche Creek for Trail of the Cedars and, if time allows, Avalanche Lake.
- Continue to Logan Pass for the Hidden Lake Overlook hike, mindful of the 3-hour parking limit starting July 1, 2026.

AFTERNOON/EVENING

- Continue over the pass to St. Mary for Wild Goose Island viewpoint and dinner in St. Mary or back at Lake McDonald Lodge.

D2

Many Glacier

Region: **Many Glacier** The park's most scenic developed area

MORNING

- Drive to Many Glacier early; consider the Grinnell Glacier Trail (with the boat shuttle option) or Iceberg Lake, both full-day commitments.

EVENING

- Dinner at the historic Many Glacier Hotel dining room, with lake and mountain views.

D3

Highline Trail or Two Medicine

Region: **Logan Pass / Two Medicine** Pick based on your legs and the crowd

What's Inside

Built for people actually planning a trip to Glacier, not skimming a blog post. Here's everything you get.

26
PAGES

9
TRAIL PROFILES

1
MAJOR 2026 SHUTTLE SYSTEM
EXPLAINED

2026
FACT-CHECKED

TRIP-LEVEL PLANNING

- › Exactly how the 2026 Logan Pass shuttle ticket system works — boarding locations, release windows, and which trails it does and doesn't serve, since Glacier eliminated its old vehicle reservation system this year.
- › The new 3-hour Logan Pass parking limit starting July 1, 2026, and how to plan longer hikes around it.
- › A complete 3-day itinerary covering Going-to-the-Sun Road, Many Glacier, and the Highline Trail.

FULL DEPTH, NOT A SUMMARY

- › **9 full trail profiles** — the Highline Trail, Grinnell Glacier, Hidden Lake Overlook, Iceberg Lake, and more, each with logistics, crowd strategy, photography tips, and insider notes.
- › The real story on the park's actual glaciers — how many are left, why they're retreating, and how that's different from the ice-age landforms most visitors are actually looking at.
- › Where to stay (the historic Great Northern Railway lodges), dining, serious grizzly-country safety guidance, a photography guide, and a "Combining Parks" section for Waterton Lakes, Canada.
- › An FAQ and one-page cheat sheet for a fast pre-visit refresher.

BUILT TO USE IN THE FIELD

Every page is designed to be read on your phone at the trailhead, with no cell signal required once it's downloaded.

YOU'VE SEEN THE PREVIEW

Get the Full Glacier Guide

Everything in this preview — plus the rest of the guide in full detail. Fact-checked for 2026 and built to use in the field.

\$15

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