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Editor's Note:

WORD document attached titled: State Staycation.doc

Photo attached titled: carissa mine 09.jpg

Note: Higher resolution image available upon request.

Photo Caption: The Carissa mine is just one of the sites you could see when you travel around Wind River Country on less than a tank of gas this summer.

Photo Credit: Jennie Hutchinson

Take a “Staycation” in Wyoming: Visit Wind River Country to experience a vacation without leaving the state.

Fremont County, WY - The new buzz word this season is “Staycation” – a vacation that is spent close to home and enjoying all that the surrounding area has to offer. This can be an alternative to pricey, sometimes stressful, long distance travel. Why go to costly far away destinations when you can enjoy all that Wyoming has to offer -- in Wind River Country, Fremont County.



Families are changing the way they vacation this summer. In a recent story by Good Morning America, it was noted that, “About 50% of American Travelers are changing their travel plans because of soaring fuel prices and sticking closer to home, according to a survey by the travel website TripAdvisor.” If you are one of those travelers, here are a few suggestions for your “staycation” in Fremont County.

Atlantic City and South Pass City State Historic Site – Two real gold mining towns, one now designated as a state historic site. Take a tour of the Carissa Mine (reservations required) and see the original buildings in South Pass City State Historic Site. Stories tell of buried treasures around Wind River Country, including several caches of gold that are believed to be hidden near Miner’s Delight, as well as the “Oregon Trail Treasure” that is reputed to be stashed along the Sweetwater River in the Red Desert, and Old Ike’s lost mine, which is located near Lander according to local lore. www.southpasscity.com 307-332-3684. Enjoy the Second Saturday Scotch Sampling at Six at 7,600 Feet in Wyoming’s Wind River Range! During the first event, the president of the Wyoming State Liquor Association said, “this two-bit Cowboy Saloon has the finest selection of single malt Scotches in the state.” Scotland’s distilleries suggest Scotch should be shared among friends. So grab your friends and plan to attend these single malt Scotch tasting events at the Miner’s Delight Inn Bed & Breakfast. Plan to stay the night at the Inn and indulge yourself with a gourmet breakfast. Miner’s Delight Inn B&B, Atlantic City, www.minersdelightinn.com 307-332-0248 or 888-292-0248

Red Canyon - A few minutes north of Atlantic City on Hwy. 28, you can enjoy the spectacular view of Red Canyon, an amazing geological site. For 19th century prospectors and miners in the rich gold fields of South Pass, the crimson mouth of Red Canyon meant a change in diet. From the wind-swept sagebrush prairie, they could descend nearly 2,000 feet down a steep wagon road to the fruit orchards and vegetable gardens in the warm valley below where they purchased fresh produce - a welcome switch from wild game meat. Today Red Canyon still draws travelers and stops them in their tracks. Approximately 15 miles south of Lander on Hwy. 28 you can pull over for a stunning vista of wildflowers woven into the strata of iron-laden Triassic rock - as red as an Irish setter. Pack a picnic and grab your fishing pole and take the county dirt road down into the canyon to find the public fishing spot on the Little Popo .

Trails - The Oregon – California - Mormon & Pony Express Trails - Historic trails crisscross Wind River Country, taking advantage of the easy access South Pass provides over the north-south barrier formed by the Rocky Mountains and the Continental Divide. To view the wagon ruts head take Hwy. 28 until you cross the Sweetwater River, just after the South Pass Rest Area. On the south side of the bridge, you'll see a dirt road on your left marked Oregon Buttes Road, County Road 446. Driving down this road 2.8 miles brings you to a marker and instructions to the true Continental Divide and South Pass Summit on a dirt, two-track road. You will be on the most pristine sections of the Oregon-Mormon Trail. <http://www.wind-river.org/do.php?cat=attractions&keyword=Oregon/California/Pony Express Trail>

Lander – Enjoy traveling art shows at the Lander Art Center (<http://www.landerartcenter.com>) as well as the quaint shops and restaurants that line Main St. Imagine riding (or strolling) down Main St. and glancing at a building (now the Grand Theatre) once owned by Calamity Jane's sister and where Calamity visited. Head down 2nd St. and find the Courthouse and jail (now a newer Courthouse) where George "Butch" Cassidy was once jailed in 1892 & 1894! For more western history of the area visit the Museum of the American West and the newly-opened Fremont County Pioneer Museum, both located at 1445 Main St. www.amwest.org 307- 335-8778 or www.fcpm.org 307-332-3373

Sinks Canyon State Park – This State Park is named for its mysterious disappearing river. Halfway down the canyon, the Middle Fork of the Popo Agie plunges underground into a great limestone cavern called the Sinks only to bubble up into a calm pool a quarter mile downstream at the Rise. Sinks Canyon is also a mecca for both novice and pro rock climbers. Wildlife viewers will find themselves in heaven with the abundant wildlife that call Sinks Canyon home, including the special summer resident, a bighorn sheep ram. Every Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. in July you can learn about the area through educational programs at the visitor's center such as "The Wolf, its ecology, biology and habitat" or "Archaeology of the Legend Rock Petroglyphs, 20 years of research." For more information call 307-332-6333 or visit <http://wyoparks.state.wy.us/Events/index.asp>

Dubois – Find genuine western hospitality and fixin’s at the Chuck Wagon dinner and show at the KOA campground (<http://www.koa.com/where/wy/50156/>), or grab your partner for some square dancing at the Rustic Pine (call 307-455-2772). For a quieter pace, enjoy the short trek to the ancient Torrey Basin Petroglyphs. Contact the Dubois Museum for details at 307-455-2284 – registrations required. www.duboismuseum.org

Wyoming Centennial Scenic Byway - The Wyoming Centennial Scenic Byway begins in Wind River Country near Dubois and weaves its way up to picturesque Togwotee Pass above 9,000 feet in elevation. Here towering breccia cliffs of volcanic debris from the Yellowstone caldera eruption were carved by water into stunning sand-castle like turrets and battlements. They surround the highway as it skirts the southern edge of the Absaroka Mountains. www.wyomingtourism.org/overview/Centennial-Scenic-Byway/2693

Wind River Canyon National Scenic Byway - Wyoming’s newest Scenic Byway stretches for 34 miles beginning in the desert plains near Shoshoni, and then travels through the spectacular Wind River Canyon before ending near Thermopolis, home to the world’s largest mineral hot spring. The highlight of the scenic byway is Wind River Canyon, renown for its sheer rock walls, which tower 2,000 feet above the valley floor in a series of steep, vegetated slopes and vertical cliffs. Excellent fishing and whitewater rafting are also available in the canyon using a local Native American outfitter. Visit www.wyomingtourism.org/overview/Wind-River-Canyon-Scenic-Byway/31254

Wind River Indian Reservation – Fort Washakie

Fort Washakie is the oldest community on the reservation. Originally called Fort Brown, the name was changed in 1878 to honor Chief Washakie, who negotiated the treaty establishing the reservation. The legendary Buffalo Soldiers-the name given to U.S. Cavalrymen of African descent-were stationed at Fort Washakie in the late 1800s. Today many of the original military buildings can be seen in the Fort Washakie Historic District. It’s home to the cemeteries where both Chief Washakie and Lewis and Clark’s Shoshone guide, Sacajawea, are buried. You will find a trading post and gift store that specializes in locally made Indian artwork. The Chief Washakie Plunge, a pool fed by a natural hot-spring, is open year-round to the public. Call 332-4530. For get more information on the Wind River Indian Reservation visit <http://www.wind-river.org/info/reservation/index.php>

Wind River Indian Reservation – Ethete and St. Stephens

Ethete and St. Stephens are centers of the Northern Arapaho culture on the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Heritage Center at St. Stephens Mission provides insight into the Northern Arapaho tribe and its rich culture. You can also see traditional Arapaho designs used by local native artisans to create their unique arts and crafts and exquisite beadwork available at the St. Stephens Art Center. 307-856-7806
<http://www.northernarapaho.com>

Indian Powwows offer one of the best ways to learn about life on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Open to the public, these gatherings occur throughout the summer.

Powwows are dance contests and celebrations. Tribal members go to meet friends, dance, catch up on the news and honor the past. Each of the reservation communities host powwows. For a complete Powwow schedule go to and to learn more about Powwow etiquette, go to <http://www.wind-river.org/info/reservation/index.php>

Riverton - The Wind River Heritage Center, a mountain man and fur trapping museum, 1075 S. Federal, is dedicated to preserving the natural and human history of the West. The Center features the Jake Korell Wildlife Collection which includes mounts of Wyoming big-game species such as bison, bears and grey wolves, and a 720-pound silver-tip grizzly bear. For more information call the Wind River Heritage Center 307-856-0706. July will also offer rodeos, car shows, a hot air balloon rally, and a festival in the park. Call the Riverton Chamber at 856-4801 or visit www.rivertonchamber.org

Casinos - There are four Indian Gaming Casinos to play games of chance and gambling in the area. The Wind River Casino offers top-notch musical concerts, cultural dancing and performances. Go on-line to learn about event times and see some of their many specials offered during the summer season at http://www.wind-river.org/about_search.php?subcat=reservation&keyword=Casinos

Vacations don't have to break the bank. Remember, you can always find plenty do in your own beautiful state. A complete calendar of events going on year-round and seven self-guided driving tours in Wyoming's Wind River Country are on the website at <http://www.wind-river.org>

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