

MONTANA / YOUR NEXT CHAPTER

FLATHEAD VALLEY

THE RELOCATION GUIDE

Find your town. Discover your favorites.
Picture your life here.

LOCAL DINING / OUTDOOR DAYS / SCHOOLS

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REALTOR® | Engel & Völkers Western Frontier

A place to belong.



YOUR LOCAL CONNECTION

Hi, I’m Joseph.

I help people find their place in the Flathead Valley, from Whitefish and Kalispell to Columbia Falls, Bigfork, and Lakeside.

My family and I love the lake days, mountain outings, and quiet evenings that make life here special. I’m here to help you explore what that life could look like for you.

MAKE THIS GUIDE YOUR OWN

Start with the map. Pick two towns to explore. Then use the planning pages to turn a beautiful possibility into a practical move.

03	Get your bearings
04	Compare the communities
05-19	Dining, activities & schools
20-21	Prepare for your home & move
22	Keep useful links handy

Find your way around.

Five communities, two lakes, and the roads that connect your everyday life.



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors. Park boundary: NPS / USFS. Terrain: Esri World Hillshade; Esri, Vantor, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community. Selected features; use live maps for navigation.

Try the drives that matter to you: work, groceries, school, and the airport. Allow for seasonal traffic and winter conditions.

[Open a live valley map →](#)

Five ways to feel at home.

Use the setting and your daily routine to build a shortlist.

Whitefish

MOUNTAIN + LAKE

Explore the resort, downtown, and lake access.

05

Kalispell

EVERYDAY CONVENIENCE

Try your errands, services, and regular routes.

08

Bigfork

VILLAGE + ARTS

Walk the village and explore the east lakeshore.

11

Columbia Falls

RIVER + PARK ACCESS

Explore town, the river, and the route toward Glacier.

14

Lakeside

WEST-SHORE LIVING

Visit the waterfront and test your Kalispell drive.

17

Your best match is personal.

Compare the actual address, access, home features, and daily logistics.



01 / EXPLORE THE COMMUNITIES

Whitefish

Whitefish

Mountain mornings. Lake afternoons.

A lively downtown, Whitefish Lake, and mountain recreation give this town several ways to spend a day. Explore the places you would return to in every season.

01

MOUNTAIN RECREATION

02

LAKE ACCESS

03

DOWNTOWN STROLLS

Make a day of it.

Places to eat, rounds to play, and reasons to get outside.

PULL UP A CHAIR

ITALIAN

Abruzzo Italian Kitchen

Fresh pasta and wood-fired pizza on Central Avenue.

[Menu & details →](#)

BREAKFAST + LUNCH

Amazing Crepes

Sweet and savory crepes, coffee, and a casual downtown stop.

[Menu & details →](#)

BURGERS + WINGS

Bulldog Saloon

Downtown sports-bar dining with burgers, wings, and pub food.

[Menu & details →](#)

GET OUT & EXPLORE

GOLF / 36 HOLES

Whitefish Lake Golf Club

North and South courses. Book a seasonal tee time.

[Plan your visit →](#)

MOUNTAIN DAYS

Whitefish Mountain Resort

Winter skiing; summer lift rides, hiking, and mountain biking.

[Plan your visit →](#)

TRAILS

Whitefish Trail

Explore the local trail network on foot or by bike.

[Plan your visit →](#)

LAKE TIME

Whitefish Lake

Build a summer day around public lake access and paddling.

[Plan your visit →](#)

Make it your own: choose one meal and one activity for your scouting trip. Check current hours, reservations, tee times, and seasonal access before you go.

Learning at every stage.

Local public-school options, from elementary through high school.

WHITEFISH SCHOOL DISTRICT #44

K-4 GRADES	ELEMENTARY Muldown Elementary School Start here for the district's elementary grades.
5-8 GRADES	MIDDLE Whitefish Middle School Explore core classes, electives, activities, and student support.
9-12 GRADES	HIGH Whitefish High School Also ask about Whitefish Independent High School, a nontraditional option for grades 10-12.

BEFORE KINDERGARTEN Ask the district about preschool and early-learning eligibility. Compare local childcare hours, openings, and schedules. Ask the district →	COLLEGE + CAREER Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell offers transfer degrees, career programs, and certificates. Explore FVCC →
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Confirm district boundaries, enrollment documents, and transportation for the specific home you are considering.

District information & enrollment →



02 / EXPLORE THE COMMUNITIES

Kalispell

Kalispell

Make everyday life part of the tour.

Kalispell brings shopping, services, and downtown destinations into the same home search. Give yourself time to explore both the practical stops and the places you would go for fun.

01

SHOPS + SERVICES

02

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

03

PARKS + TRAILS

Make a day of it.

Places to eat, rounds to play, and reasons to get outside.

PULL UP A CHAIR

BARBECUE

The Desoto Grill

Smoked meats and house-made sides in the historic Forge building.

[Menu & details →](#)

DINER + SWEETS

Norm's Soda Fountain

A downtown stop for burgers, ice cream, and soda-fountain treats.

[Menu & details →](#)

STEAKHOUSE

Mercantile Steak

A steak dinner in the historic Kalispell Mercantile building.

[Menu & details →](#)

GET OUT & EXPLORE

GOLF / 27 HOLES

Buffalo Hill Golf Club

Choose the Championship 18 or the Cameron 9.

[Plan your visit →](#)

GOLF / 18 HOLES

Village Greens

An 18-hole course with practice facilities in Kalispell.

[Plan your visit →](#)

TRAILS + VIEWS

Lone Pine State Park

Add a hike and valley views to a day of exploring town.

[Plan your visit →](#)

HISTORY + DOWNTOWN

Northwest Montana History Museum

Local history, then a downtown stroll.

[Plan your visit →](#)

Make it your own: choose one meal and one activity for your scouting trip. Check current hours, reservations, tee times, and seasonal access before you go.

Learning at every stage.

Local public-school options, from elementary through high school.

KALISPELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS / DISTRICT 5

K-5 GRADES	ELEMENTARY Six District 5 elementary schools Edgerton, Elrod, Hedges, Peterson, Rankin, and Russell. Ask the district about early-learning programs.
6-8 GRADES	MIDDLE Kalispell Middle School District 5’s middle-school option; confirm placement by address.
9-12 GRADES	HIGH Flathead High School / Glacier High School Check the high-school attendance boundary and explore programs at the assigned school.
BEFORE KINDERGARTEN Ask the district about preschool and early-learning eligibility. Compare local childcare hours, openings, and schedules. Ask the district →	COLLEGE + CAREER Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell offers transfer degrees, career programs, and certificates. Explore FVCC →

A Kalispell mailing address can fall in a separate elementary district. Confirm both elementary and high-school boundaries before choosing a home.

District information & enrollment →



03 / EXPLORE THE COMMUNITIES

Bigfork

Bigfork / Photo: © EnjoyYourParks.com

Village walks. Lakeshore weekends.

Bigfork pairs a compact village center with arts, the Swan River, and the northeast side of Flathead Lake. Build your visit around both the village and the surrounding area.

01

ARTS + PERFORMANCE

02

VILLAGE SHOPS

03

EAST-SHORE EXPLORING

Make a day of it.

Places to eat, rounds to play, and reasons to get outside.

PULL UP A CHAIR

BREAKFAST + LUNCH

Echo Lake Cafe

Homestyle breakfast and lunch on Highway 83 in the Bigfork area.

[Menu & details →](#)

VILLAGE CAFE

Pocketstone Cafe

Scratch-made cafe fare on Electric Avenue in the village.

[Menu & details →](#)

WOODS BAY

The Bonfire

Seasonal cooking and shared plates south of Bigfork in Woods Bay.

[Menu & details →](#)

GET OUT & EXPLORE

GOLF / PRIVATE / 27 HOLES

Eagle Bend Golf Club

A private club with three nines. Ask about membership and guest access.

[Plan your visit →](#)

LIVE THEATER

Bigfork Summer Playhouse

Plan an evening around the current performance calendar.

[Plan your visit →](#)

LAKESHORE

Wayfarers State Park

A nearby Flathead Lake outing for trails, picnicking, and swimming.

[Plan your visit →](#)

WALK + EXPLORE

Swan River Nature Trail

Pair a trail walk with village galleries and shops.

[Plan your visit →](#)

Make it your own: choose one meal and one activity for your scouting trip. Check current hours, reservations, tee times, and seasonal access before you go.

Learning at every stage.

Local public-school options, from elementary through high school.

BIGFORK SCHOOL DISTRICT #38

K-5 GRADES	ELEMENTARY Bigfork Elementary School Explore elementary enrollment, classroom information, and student services.
6-8 GRADES	MIDDLE Bigfork Middle School The middle-school program includes sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.
9-12 GRADES	HIGH Bigfork High School Explore academic pathways, activities, and college-credit opportunities.

BEFORE KINDERGARTEN Ask the district about preschool and early-learning eligibility. Compare local childcare hours, openings, and schedules. Ask the district →	COLLEGE + CAREER Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell offers transfer degrees, career programs, and certificates. Explore FVCC →
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Some Bigfork-area addresses are served by other elementary districts. Ask which elementary, middle, and high school serve your exact address.

District information & enrollment →



04 / EXPLORE THE COMMUNITIES

Columbia Falls

Columbia Falls

River days. A route toward Glacier.

Columbia Falls offers a town base near the Flathead River and the route toward West Glacier. Explore local streets and river access before heading out on a bigger adventure.

01

FLATHEAD RIVER

02

TOWN EXPLORING

03

GLACIER DIRECTION

Make a day of it.

Places to eat, rounds to play, and reasons to get outside.

PULL UP A CHAIR

SEASONAL DINING

Three Forks Grille

Montana ingredients and
Mediterranean-inspired dinner dishes.

[Menu & details →](#)

PIZZA

North Fork Pizza

Specialty pies on Nucleus Avenue; primarily
pickup with limited seating.

[Menu & details →](#)

MEXICAN

Vaqueros

Mexican favorites in a casual Nucleus Avenue
restaurant.

[Menu & details →](#)

GET OUT & EXPLORE

GOLF / 18 HOLES

Meadow Lake Golf Course

An 18-hole course in Columbia Falls, open to public
play.

[Plan your visit →](#)

RIVERSIDE

River's Edge Park

Walk, picnic, and explore the Flathead River setting.

[Plan your visit →](#)

RIVER ACCESS

Teakettle river access

Explore a local Flathead River access point near
the east end of town.

[Plan your visit →](#)

PARK DAY

Glacier National Park

Head toward West Glacier; check access and
conditions before your trip.

[Plan your visit →](#)

Make it your own: choose one meal and one activity for your scouting trip. Check current hours, reservations, tee times, and seasonal access before you go.

Learning at every stage.

Local public-school options, from elementary through high school.

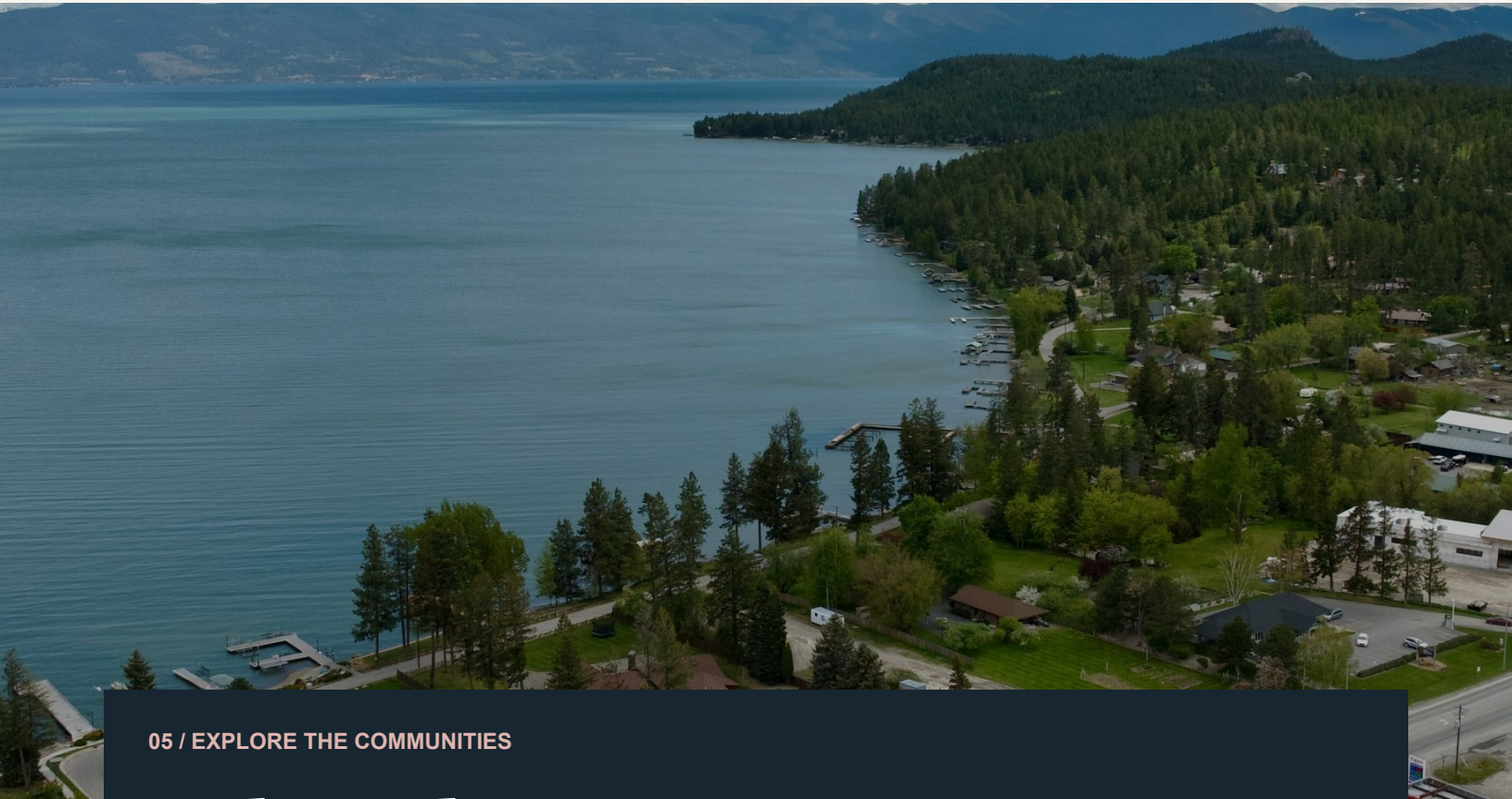
COLUMBIA FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT #6

K-5 GRADES	ELEMENTARY Glacier Gateway / Ruder Elementary Two district elementary schools. Confirm assignment and early-learning options with the district.
6-8 GRADES	JUNIOR HIGH Columbia Falls Junior High School Explore the junior-high program, activities, and transition from elementary school.
9-12 GRADES	HIGH Columbia Falls High School Review graduation pathways, electives, activities, and student services.

BEFORE KINDERGARTEN Ask the district about preschool and early-learning eligibility. Compare local childcare hours, openings, and schedules. Ask the district →	COLLEGE + CAREER Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell offers transfer degrees, career programs, and certificates. Explore FVCC →
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Check elementary assignment, transportation, and enrollment with District 6. Outlying properties may be in a different elementary district.

District information & enrollment →



05 / EXPLORE THE COMMUNITIES

Lakeside

Lakeside-area scenery / from the original guide

Find your rhythm on the west shore.

Lakeside sits along the west side of Flathead Lake. Start at the waterfront, explore nearby recreation, and test the connections you would use for shopping and services.

01

FLATHEAD LAKE

02

WEST-SHORE ACCESS

03

OUTDOOR DAYS

Make a day of it.

Places to eat, rounds to play, and reasons to get outside.

PULL UP A CHAIR

BREW PUB

Tamarack Brewing Company

Pub fare and a creekside patio at the Lakeside brewery.

[Menu & details →](#)

WATERFRONT

Harbor Grille

Casual American dining overlooking Flathead Lake.

[Menu & details →](#)

NEARBY / SOMERS

Somers Bay Cafe

A breakfast-and-lunch stop in neighboring Somers.

[Menu & details →](#)

GET OUT & EXPLORE

LAKE DAY

Volunteer Park

Explore Lakeside's public waterfront park.

[Plan your visit →](#)

WINTER RECREATION

Blacktail Mountain

Plan a ski day above Lakeside; check operating dates and conditions.

[Plan your visit →](#)

LAKESHORE TRAILS

West Shore State Park

Head south of Lakeside for trails, swimming, and lake views.

[Plan your visit →](#)

GOLF DAY TRIP / POLSON

Polson Bay Golf Course

27 public holes at the south end of Flathead Lake; this is in Polson, not Lakeside.

[Plan your visit →](#)

Make it your own: choose one meal and one activity for your scouting trip. Check current hours, reservations, tee times, and seasonal access before you go.

Learning at every stage.

Local public-school options, from elementary through high school.

SOMERS LAKESIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT #29

K-4 GRADES	ELEMENTARY Lakeside Elementary School The district's elementary campus is in Lakeside.
5-8 GRADES	MIDDLE Somers Middle School The district's middle-school campus is in neighboring Somers.
9-12 GRADES	HIGH / KALISPELL Flathead High School A high-school pathway for Somers/Lakeside students. Confirm assignment and enrollment with Kalispell Public Schools.

BEFORE KINDERGARTEN Ask the district about preschool and early-learning eligibility. Compare local childcare hours, openings, and schedules. Ask the district →	COLLEGE + CAREER Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell offers transfer degrees, career programs, and certificates. Explore FVCC →
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District 29 serves elementary and middle grades. Verify the high-school boundary and transportation separately for your property.

District information & enrollment →

Before you choose a home.

Bring these questions on your tour. The answers depend on the address.

☐ HEATING + ENERGY

What heats the home? Ask for recent utility bills, service records, and details on any backup heat.

☐ WATER + SEPTIC

Is the home on public systems or a well and septic? Ask what records, inspections, and maintenance details are available.

☐ INTERNET + CELL SERVICE

Which providers serve this exact address? Confirm available speeds and test cell reception where you will use it.

☐ WINTER ACCESS

Who plows the road and driveway? Ask about maintenance arrangements, costs, steep grades, and parking in snow.

☐ PROPERTY UPKEEP

What will the roof, siding, trees, and grounds need? Review condition, maintenance history, and any association responsibilities.

☐ LAKE ACCESS

Is access public, shared, or included with the property? Ask your team to verify recorded rights, dock arrangements, and restrictions.

TURN QUESTIONS INTO A CLEARER DECISION

I'll help you gather the details and identify questions for the right local professionals before you move forward.

From first visit to first night.

A flexible sequence to make the move feel more manageable.

1

START WITH YOUR PRIORITIES

- ☐ Choose your must-haves: location, access, space, and routine.
- ☐ Build a shortlist of towns and a comfortable monthly budget.

2

PLAN YOUR SCOUTING TRIP

- ☐ Tour homes and test everyday drives.
- ☐ Confirm school assignment and service availability by address.

3

PREPARE FOR THE PURCHASE

- ☐ Connect with a lender if financing and review your options.
- ☐ Review property details, inspections, and timing with your team.

4

GET READY TO ARRIVE

- ☐ Arrange movers, utilities, internet, and key handoff.
- ☐ Plan your first grocery run and keep essentials easy to reach.

Keep your plan flexible as home availability and closing dates change.

Keep these close.

Tap a resource to check details, conditions, or plans before you go.

Whitefish golf →	Courses, tee times, and seasonal details
Whitefish trails →	Trail information and stewardship
Kalispell →	Downtown, parks, and local exploring
Bigfork →	Village information and community events
Columbia Falls →	City parks and recreation
Flathead Lake parks →	Wayfarers, West Shore, and other lake units
Somers & Lakeside schools →	Lakeside Elementary and Somers Middle
Glacier National Park →	Trip planning, conditions, and access
Glacier Park International Airport →	Airport and flight information
Montana road conditions →	Check your route before traveling

Sources checked: October 27, 2026. Restaurant, activity, and school names link to source sites on their respective pages. Local details can change; linked organizations provide current information. School assignment depends on the property address. Photography includes supplied town images and scenic images from the original guide. Bigfork photo: © EnjoyYourParks.com.



Your next chapter starts with a conversation.

Tell me what you want everyday life to feel like.
We'll use that to build a focused plan for your move.



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Each office independently owned and operated.