

VISIONS Montana

June 29 - July 26 (28 days / 4 weeks) • \$4,500

August 3 - 22 (20 days / 3 weeks) • \$3,450

NORTHERN ROCKIES
IMMERSION IN BLACKFEET INDIAN CULTURE
TRAVEL IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS
ROCK CLIMBING, BACKPACKING, HORSEBACK RIDING
POW WOWS, SWEAT LODGES, WESTERN TOWNS AND SITES
65 TO 95 HOURS SERVICE CREDIT

America's fourth largest state is home to less than one million people. Montana is vast prairies and range lands, golden grain fields and wildernesses abundant with timber, water, and wildlife. Spectacular sunsets are daily occurrences. Montana also is home to seven Plains Indian reservations, each a semi-sovereign nation with distinctive histories, traditions and lore. History, politics and prejudice still conspire against Native Americans. With few exceptions, reservations lack adequate housing, economic, health, and other social resources that most Americans take for granted. Indian tribes have the lowest median income of any racial group in the country and the highest percentage of population below the poverty line. [2003 U.S. Census Bureau report.] Unemployment on Montana reservations averages 64%.

VISIONS Montana is a window to the generosity, humor, and traditions that characterize Plains Indian life today. Our home base on the Blackfeet Reservation, which borders Glacier National Park and Canada, is a place of power and beauty. Our long-standing ties since 1991 create opportunities to learn about Plains Indian culture from the inside. Our project partners include the Blackfeet Head Start Program, the Piegan Institute Nizi Puh Wah Sin Immersion Schools and the Blackfeet Land Trust—a unique partnership between the Nature Conservancy and the Blackfeet Nation that is a model of land conservation for other tribes seeking to preserve their lands.

Projects have included playgrounds for schools and Head Start programs, softball fields and basketball courts, picnic pavilions, traditional dance arbors, renovations to community buildings and elders' homes, landscaping. You might do environmental work on wilderness lands and at the Land Trust ranch, help preparations for the annual pow wow.

You will meet tribal historians, civic and spiritual leaders, storytellers, ranchers and naturalists. You will join in a sweat ceremony, possibly help build a sacred sun dance lodge and then witness the sun dance, learn traditional beading, share a meal of meat, berry pudding and fry bread with friends, take in a pow wow. Pow wows are annual summer events, intertribal gatherings when families make camp, renew connections, and celebrate with dancing in full regalia, drumming, stick games, shared stories and food.

Weekends bring rock climbing, hiking, and backpacking in Glacier National Park, the Bob Marshall or Rocky Mountain Wildernesses. We ride horses and relax on the Crossguns family's ranch abutting Glacier Park. In the mountains with Tom Crawford we gather wood for his sweat lodge. We also leave the reservation to see a movie, attend a summer fair or perhaps a rodeo.

WORK HARD PLAY HARD LIVE DYNAMICALLY CONNECT DEEPLY SERVE PURPOSEFULLY SEE DIFFERENTLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

<http://www.visionsserviceadventures.com/programs/montana.htm>