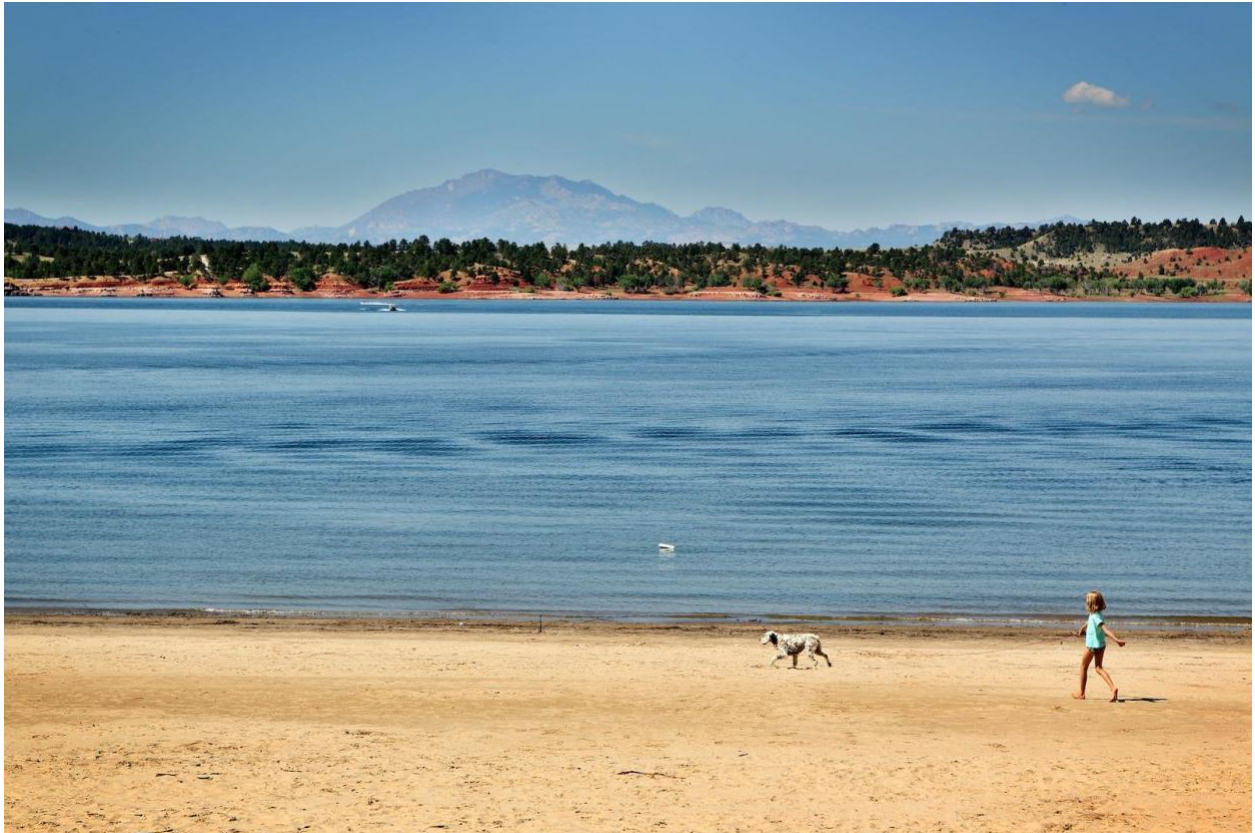


THREE DAYS OF FAMILY VACATION FUN IN PLATTE COUNTY, WYOMING



Platte County, Wyoming is characterized by wagon wheel ruts carving the route of the Oregon Trail and highways that will take you to both Yellowstone National Park and Devil's Tower National Monument. But if you look a little closer you'll see reason to plan your family vacation to this corner of Wyoming, not through it.



If you imagine your family road trip to Wyoming including warm, welcoming locals, cool water to play in, and some superfluous stops you can brag about on Instagram, Platte County is where you need to point the car. Start on the southern end of the region and work your way north.

DAY 1: CHUGWATER & WHEATLAND

As you drive north from the Wyoming state border on I-25, the first town you'll reach is Chugwater. You know those little chili packets you buy when you're trying to impress the kids with your chili skills but you're short on time? They come from this Wyoming town. Five ranch families founded Chugwater Chili in 1986, and now you can buy the packets around the world and get a free sample in their hometown anytime.

After the savory treat, take the kids for a sweet treat at Wyoming's oldest operating soda fountain, which still serves old-fashioned shakes and malts. They'll love it and won't even make you feel old for the nostalgia you're feeling right now.

Explore town a bit, maybe even pick up a souvenir or two by local artisans, then pile back into the car.

From Chugwater, you will drive just 25 miles north on I-25 to Wheatland, located in the heart of Platte County. This is where you'll spend the rest of your day and the night.

Wheatland was founded not on wheat, but on water. This essential resource created ranching and recreation economic foundations for the community. Those currents continue to run strong in Wheatland. Start by wandering through the vibrant, historical downtown and check out their mural project to get a sense of this history. Pick up some Western knowledge and souvenirs, then head out of town for an evening on the lake.



Drive the 20 minutes to Grayrocks Reservoir to watch the sunset from the shores. There are plenty of access points where you can settle in with a picnic blanket, some snacks, and a camera. Keep a sharp eye out for birds of all kinds.

When you've had your fill of beautiful, peaceful spaces, grab a delicious meal in town at Windy Peaks Brewery and Steakhouse, then fall into bed.

DAY 2: GUERNSEY, HARTVILLE, AND GUERSEY STATE PARK

Rise bright and early and pick up a scone or breakfast burrito at the Wandering Hermit. Schedule a little extra time to browse the bookstore before heading out on today's adventure. After all, you may need something new to read next to the next lake you're headed to.

This time, you'll continue north to Guernsey and Hartville. You'll reach Guernsey first, but the neighboring communities lie only 8 miles apart and share access to Guernsey State Park, where your day's adventure awaits.



Guernsey sits directly on the Oregon Trail. In fact, before it was a town, it was known as “the emigrants’ washtub,” because this is where pioneers gathered to bathe and wash clothes. Consider this experience on your way to visit Register Cliff, where emigrants etched their names as they made their way

west on the iconic Oregon Trail. If you and the kids want to learn more about this remarkable part of American history on your family vacation, your first stop in the Guernsey State Park must be the Guernsey Museum.

When your kids are itching to run, step outside the museum and set them loose. Whether you're there to fish, read your book on the shore, mountain bike, boat, or hike, you and your family will find vast and dramatic vistas at every turn. Settle in and enjoy.



At day's end, let your heart guide you—straight to Hartville. Once a booming mining town complete with shootouts in the main street, this “bedroom community” for Guernsey State Park visitors now has two operating businesses. The first is the post office, where you can get a special Valentine's Day stamp. The second is the Miner's and Stockmen's Steakhouse & Spirits, where you'll have dinner. This is Wyoming's oldest bar, and to this day it serves some of the best steaks in the state, if not the country.



Overnight in Guernsey. Try not to think about the fact that tomorrow is your last day of feeling swept away in Platte County, Wyoming.

DAY 3: GLENDON STATE PARK

The stop on this family vacation in Platte County will take you to Glendon State Park, one of the state's most remarkable bodies of water.

In Glendon, you'll once again encounter the Oregon Trail, as well as a town that was once one of the first telegraph stations on the Overland Stage Express. Today, Glendon's biggest draw is the state park. The lake is known across the state for its water sports and record-setting fish. The beautiful body of water is surrounded by more than 40 miles of non-motorized trails. Soak up this reservoir from boat, shore, or trail.



When it's finally time to get off the lake, grab a bite to eat at the Old Western Saloon & Steakhouse. Be sure to linger over your meal and savor your family vacation to and through Platte County.