

# Montana Travel Guide

Edmonds → Savenac West Cottage → Helena

December 17–18, 2025

---

## Essential Information

<b>DEPARTURE</b>	December 17 · 9:00 AM PST · Edmonds, WA
<b>ARRIVAL (Day 1)</b>	~5:15 PM MST · Savenac West Cottage
<b>ARRIVAL (Day 2)</b>	Mid-afternoon · Helena, MT
<b>TOTAL DISTANCE</b>	545 miles over two days

**COTTAGE ACCESS** Combination: 2348

**CHECK-IN** 2:00 PM MST

**CHECK-OUT** 11:00 AM MST

**Note:** With a 9:00 AM departure, you will arrive after sunset (~4:30 PM MST). Detailed dark-arrival directions for finding the cottage are on page 2.

---

## Day 1: Edmonds to Savenac

406 miles · approximately 7 hours with stops

### Timeline (9:00 AM Departure)

<b>9:00 AM PST</b>	Depart Edmonds via I-5 N → I-405 S → I-90 E
<b>10:00 AM</b>	Snoqualmie Pass (elevation 3,022 ft)
<b>10:45 AM</b>	Cle Elum — first services after pass
<b>11:15 AM</b>	Ellensburg — terrain flattens east of here
<b>1:30 PM</b>	Spokane — recommended fuel/food stop
<b>2:15 PM</b>	Coeur d'Alene, ID
<b>3:15 PM</b>	Fourth of July Pass (3,081 ft)
<b>3:45 PM PST</b>	Lookout Pass (4,710 ft) — ENTER MOUNTAIN TIME
<b>4:45 PM MST</b>	Exit 16 / Haugan — watch for exit sign
<b>~5:15 PM MST</b>	Arrive Savenac West Cottage

### Signage & Landmarks

**Mile 52 — Snoqualmie Pass**

Summit signage clearly marked. Pass often visible ahead as you climb. Watch for chain-up areas if conditions require. Gas stations at summit.

**Mile 280 — Spokane**

Do NOT exit into downtown. Use freeway services at Exits 277–285. Look for travel plazas visible from highway. Last major services before Montana.

**Mile 390 — Lookout Pass / State Line**

Sign: "Welcome to Montana" at summit. Ski area visible on right. **Clocks forward 1 hour to Mountain Time.** Your phone may update automatically.

**Mile 406 — Exit 16 / Haugan**

Sign: "Haugan / Big Creek Road" — this is your exit. Only ~10 miles past state line. Easy to miss if fatigued. Watch for it.

# Finding Savenac West Cottage

*Dark arrival procedure — read before you need it*

## **Step-by-Step from Exit 16**

1. Take Exit 16 (signed "Haugan / Big Creek Road")
2. At the stop sign, turn LEFT (north) onto the frontage road
3. IMMEDIATELY turn RIGHT onto the access road — this is the first right after the stop sign
4. Cross the cattle guard (you'll feel and hear it)
5. Follow the gravel road ~0.5 miles into the Savenac compound
6. Look for signage directing you to West Cottage

## **Cottage Access**

— **Lock Box Combination: 2348** —

Lock box is located at the cottage entryway. Contains the key to the front door. Return key to lock box at checkout.

## **What to Look For in the Dark**

- **Cattle guard** — unmistakable bump and metallic sound confirms you're on the right road
- **Gravel surface** — road transitions from pavement to gravel after the cattle guard
- **Compound buildings** — several structures in the historic nursery site
- **Directional signs** — should indicate cottage locations within the compound
- **Porch light** — cottage may have exterior lighting

*If confused: The compound is small. Drive slowly with high beams. Look for cottage signage. The Outback handles the gravel road without difficulty.*

---

# Savenac West Cottage

## **Amenities**

- Full kitchen: electric stove, microwave, refrigerator, utensils
- Bathroom: hot water, shower, flush toilet
- Electric heat — reliable
- Two bedrooms: one queen bed, two twin beds
- **Bring:** bedding, towels, toilet paper, food, garbage bags (pack out trash)

### ***Nearby Services (Walking Distance)***

- Family restaurant (hours may be limited in December — don't rely on it)
  - Gas station
  - General store
  - **Cell service:** Limited to none. Plan accordingly.
- 

## **Day 2: Savenac to Helena**

*139 miles · approximately 2.5 hours driving + lunch stop*

### ***Timeline (Late Morning Departure)***

- 10:30 AM MST** Depart Savenac — return to I-90 East at Exit 16
- 12:00 PM** Arrive Missoula — lunch stop
- ~1:30 PM** Depart Missoula — continue I-90 East
- 2:00 PM** Exit 174 / Garrison Junction — take US-12 North
- 2:30 PM** Arrive Helena

Missoula offers plenty of lunch options near the freeway (Exits 96–105). No significant mountain passes on this leg. Stay on I-90 East until Garrison Junction (Exit 174), then US-12 North to Helena. Ample daylight available with this schedule.



---

Prepared December 2025 · Rompus Information Network

*"A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving."*

— Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*