



PHOTO COURTESY HALEY HUECKMAN

explore
LIKE A LOCAL



PHOTO COURTESY SHERRI GIFFIN

Hiking

GET OUT & GO

IN GRANT COUNTY

High places and low places and everywhere in between – if you enjoy hiking, Grant County has a variety of trails to offer.

From short, nearby jaunts to long, remote treks; from lofty mountain peaks to the low valley floor; and from open, painted hills to shaded, lush forests – there’s bound to be a trail to suit your taste and ability.

So grab your backpack, pack a lunch, or head out after lunch, and let your feet lead you on your next Grant County adventure.

EASIEST TRAILS

ARCH ROCK TRAIL - Trail #258, Blue Mountain Ranger District, Malheur National Forest (MNF), Open: April to November, Length: 0.3 miles, Elevation: 3,968’ - 4,270’, Use: Light, Hiking; Horses allowed, Mountain Biking and ATVs prohibited.

ROADS END TRAIL - Trail #201A, Blue Mountain Ranger District, MNF, Open: July to October, Length: 1.5 miles, Elevation: 4,270’ - 8,000’, Use: Moderate, Hiking; Horses allowed, Mountain Biking and ATVs prohibited.

NORTH FORK MALHEUR TRAIL - Trail #381, Prairie City Ranger District, MNF, Open: April to November, Length: 12.4 miles, Elevation: 4,000’ - 4,880’, Use: Light, Hiking; Horses and Biking allowed, ATVs prohibited.

Into hiking, mountain biking or horseback riding? You have found a haven for all that and more. Grant County offers a wide variety of scenery and trails for any adventurers’ heart.

There are over 1.3 million acres of non-wilderness lands that comprise the Long Creek, Prairie City, Bear Valley and Burns Ranger Districts, where you will find hundreds of trails and roads to choose from.

What are you waiting for? Slip on your best hiking boots, grab your helmet or saddle up your horse and get exploring!

Following is contact information for the Malheur National Forest. Because of differences in elevation, location and other conditions, some trails may open later than others. Hikers and riders are encouraged to contact the appropriate ranger district office to confirm the status of trails.

Malheur National Forest Service
431 Patterson Bridge Rd.
John Day, OR 97845
541-575-3000

MODERATE TRAIL

MALHEUR RIVER TRAIL - Trail #303, Emigrant Creek Ranger District, MNF, Open: April to November, Length: 7.6 miles, Elevation: 4,400’ - 4,620’, Use: Light to Medium, Hiking; Horses allowed, Mountain Biking and ATVs prohibited.

MORE DIFFICULT TRAILS

JOAQUIN MILLER TRAIL - Trail #219, Blue Mountain Ranger District, MNF, Open: June to November, Length: 6.0 miles, Elevation: 5,600’ - 7,700’, Use: Light, Hiking; Horses allowed, Mountain Biking and ATVs prohibited.

MALHEUR RAIL TRAIL - Trail #382, Prairie City Ranger District, MNF, Open: May to October, Length: 12.5 miles, Elevation: 4,000’ - 9,038’, Use: Light, Hiking; Horses allowed, Mountain Biking and ATVs prohibited.

Prairie City Ranger District
327 Front St.
Prairie City, OR 97869
541-820-3311

SHERRI GIFFIN

For Sherri Giffin of John Day, riding horses and mules in Grant County is a “beautiful thing.”

In fact, Giffin said she and her friend, Deb Bennett of Mt. Vernon, call it “exploring” — “because you never know where the next ridge or draw may take us and the beauty we may find while going to that next spot.”

The “exploring” pair rode almost 600 miles each last year, and feel privileged to see such critters as wild horses, deer, elk, bear, antelope and more while out adventuring.

“I really wouldn’t describe what we do as trail riding as there are a limited amount of trails available due to maintenance issues and snow, depending on the previous winter,” she said. “We get out as soon as the weather permits and the established trails are not cleared yet of snow or maintained yet.”

She said finding a deer or elk horn is a bonus, along with spotting wild horses. And for the latter, riders need to trek to the Murderers Creek and Deer Creek areas, she said.

Giffin has been riding and camping with horses forever. It’s always been a family thing, she said. And living so close to the mountains, they’re often able to go riding after work.

A Grant County resident for 30 years, she still gets excited over finding a new place.

The list of favorite locations is endless she said, but Fields Creek, Strawberry Mountain, Canyon Mountain and Bear Valley are all “beyond what words can describe in a single sentence.”

“I would recommend the McClellan Trail. I definitely would put shoes or boots on your animals. You can make a day ride or do a pack trip. The rating is about 7-8, with a few 10s. It’s gorgeous and well worth the trip,” she said. “Moments that stand out for me are finding horns, horses and babies in the spring and being with family and friends ... and proving to my husband there are elk there.”