

# NEZ PERCE ADVENTURE TOUR

A Lewis & Clark Idaho Auto Tour



*Incredible beauty, time-honored traditions,  
great get-away places, all along the way*



*Welcome to the heartland of  
the Nez Perce People*

*Where cultural and traditional  
practices live on today*

## THE NEZ PERCE (Nee-Me-Poo)

### NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery would not have survived their trek over the Bitterroot Mountains in 1805 if not for the help they received from the Nez Perce people. Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and the Nez Perce leaders they met envisioned a lasting friendship between the Nez Perce and the young United States. This friendship was shattered in 1877 when bands of the Nez Perce who were not living within the reservation boundaries created by the 1863 Treaty were forced to abandon their homeland. From June to October of 1877, Chief Joseph, Lean Elk, Chief Ollikut, Chief White Bird and others led 750 – 800 Nez Perce men, women and children along with approximately 2,000 horses and 200 dogs on an arduous journey totaling 1,170 miles over the Rocky Mountains and the rugged Yellowstone country, through Montana to the Canadian border, including Chief Looking Glass who at first was on the reservation but once his village was attacked he also joined in the Nez Perce flight.



Today, the 1,170 mile **Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail** is administered by the Forest Service. Historic sites and battlefields are part of the historical units that are designated the **Nez Perce National Historical Park** – a park of a people for all people. There are 11 sites in Idaho under the Spalding Unit and 16 sites in the Upper Clearwater/

White Bird Unit. The Trail can serve as a connecting link between peoples to bring together friendship, respect and a greater understanding. Travelers can visit the historic sites and visitor centers and attend Nez Perce events and cultural exchanges for a better understanding of the Nez Perce people and their culture.

The scenic vistas, parks, mountain ranges, rivers, forestlands and prairies along the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming are unequalled in their wonder and beauty.



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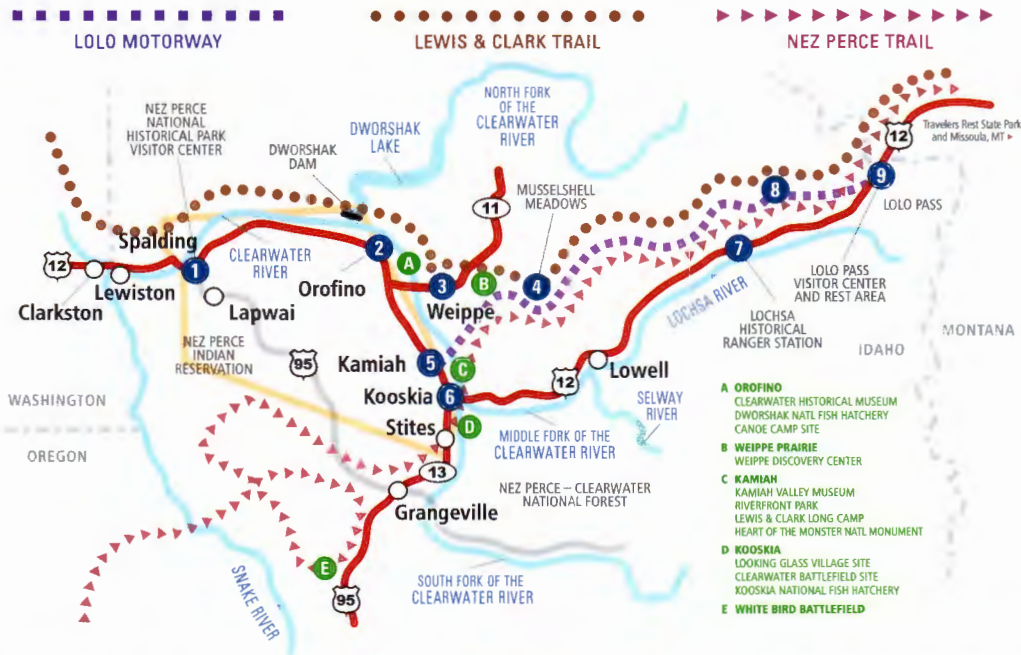
For more information visit [NezPerceTour.org](http://NezPerceTour.org)





# THE NEZ PERCE ADVENTURE TOUR

Experience the beauty of this wondrous land



Nearby **Lapwai** is the seat of government for the Nez Perce Indian Tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Northern Idaho Indian Agency. Many Idaho “firsts” happened in the historic Lapwai Valley. In 1836, the Nez Perce Indian Mission was established by Reverend Henry Spalding who was the founder of Idaho’s first school. In addition, the Northwest’s first books were printed on the region’s first printing press. At **Fort Lapwai**, the leaders of the Nez Perce non-treaty bands met to discuss treaty negotiations.

## Traveling from West to East – The Nez Perce Adventure Tour is your road to adventure!

The 202-mile **Northwest Passage Scenic Byway**, Idaho’s longest Scenic Byway which is also an All American Road, is considered by most as one of the most scenic and historic routes in America. This is one auto tour you will never forget. You’ll follow US Highway 12 along the Clearwater River Canyon, on to the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River and the Lochsa Wild and Scenic River, to the spectacular Bitterroot Mountains, and through the Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest.



This is the legendary route of Lewis and Clark on their way westward to the Pacific and their return trip back home as well as the scenic and historic Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail.

Starting at the Nez Perce National Historical Park near Spalding and continuing east you’ll see the picturesque towns of Orofino, Kamiah, Kooskia, the Clearwater River and Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest culminating at historic Lolo Pass and the Lolo Pass Visitor Center, a strategic mountain pass that helped shape the America we know today.

In Idaho, the **Nez Perce National Historic Trail**, the **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail**,

and the **Pacific Northwest Scenic Byway** all parallel US Highway 12 through some of the most beautiful scenery in America.

Significant **Nez Perce National Historic Trail** museums and historical sites in Idaho include: **Nez Perce National Historical Park (Spalding Area)**, **Heart of the Monster**, **Looking Glass Village**, **Clearwater Battle**, and **Lolo Pass** on US Highway 12, **Weippe Prairie** on Idaho State Highway 11, **Musselshell Meadows** on Forest Roads 100 and 535, and the **Lolo Motorway** on Forest Road 500. Other important sites on this route include **Dunwell’s Ferry** and the **Powell Ranger Station**. Some but not all historical sites and battlefields are part of the historical units of the NEPE in Idaho

**1. Nez Perce National Historical Park Visitor Center at Spalding** – features a number of displays, priceless artifacts, and programs on the history of the Nez Perce people (Nimiipuu).

## 2. Orofino –

This mountain town is a headquarters for outdoor recreation activities. Just north is the 54 mile long **Dworshak Lake** where boating, camping, hiking, fishing and the Visitor Center make a trip to this lake special. Nearby is the **Dworshak National Fish Hatchery** which releases millions of fish into the wild each year. **Dworshak Dam** is an amazing sight to behold. At 717-feet it is the highest straight-axis concrete dam in the Western Hemisphere.



History also abounds here. **The Clearwater Historical Museum** brings to life the exciting history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with displays, murals, and artifacts on the famed Corps of Discovery and just outside of Orofino is the **Canoe Camp Site** where the Expedition stopped in 1805 and with the help of the Nez Perce people built canoes for their trip westward to the Pacific.





**3. Weippe** – (Idaho State Highway 11) Lewis and Clark followed an Indian trail through the rugged Bitterroots that had been used for generations for hunting and trade. It was at **Weippe Prairie** that the Expedition first met the Nez Perce people starting a friendship that began in 1805. **The Weippe Discovery Center** and living landscape tell this incredible story at the actual place where it happened.

**4. Musselshell Meadows** – (Forest Roads 100 and 535) is the site of a traditional Nez Perce Camp which was the first nontreaty Nez Perce camp after leaving Weippe Prairie in 1877.

**5. Kamiah** – Kamiah is a wonderful focal point for your Northwest Passage Scenic Byway adventure. Nestled in a scenic mountain valley along the beautiful Clearwater River, the town is your gateway to a number of recreational opportunities including float trips, fishing, and hiking. Its main business district has a Western and Victorian look and colorful original artwork can be seen on the buildings and parks of Kamiah. **The Kamiah Valley Museum** features early farming and medicine, Mammoth bones, and authentic crafts made by the Nez Perce. At **Riverfront Park** you can have a quiet picnic beside the Clearwater and take the Nature Trail upstream. The Kamiah Welcome Center has a Lewis and Clark exhibit.

The Kamiah Valley is literally surrounded by history. At Kamiah is the **Lewis and Clark Long Camp** where Lewis and Clark stopped for a few weeks in 1806 on their return trip back home waiting for the snow

to melt in the towering Bitterroot Mountains. You'll see an interpretive display regarding this event in the Riverfront Park beside the bridge. Near Kamiah is the **Heart of the Monster National Monument** a major prehistoric site and historic crossing point for the Nez Perce and non-treaty Nez Perce who crossed the Clearwater River at this location during the 1877 war. Kamiah also hosts a number of special events occurring throughout the year like the annual **Kamiah Free BBQ Days** held in early September.

**6. Kooskia** – Kooskia is often referred to as the "Gateway to the Wilderness." Kooskia was initially settled as a farming community but the town quickly became a destination for lumberjacks, trappers, and miners. At Kooskia outdoor adventurers can enjoy a peaceful float down the Clearwater River or experience the excitement of a guided raft trip down the Lochsa River. Just south of Kooskia on Idaho State Highway 13 you can follow the South Fork of the Clearwater River and see the historic **Clearwater Battlefield** site which is one of 38 important sites, 37 of which are located on US Highway 12 in Idaho, Oregon, and Montana. Also located near Kooskia is the Looking Glass Village site.



**At the Kooskia National Fish Hatchery** there is an outdoor interpretive trail relating the history of the 1877 war and the flight of the Nez

Perce people. This is a unit of the NEPE, and a site along the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail.

**7. Lochsa Wild and Scenic River and the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station** – Going east on US Highway 12 you will take the Clearwater River which becomes the Lochsa Wild and Scenic River, one of the last great, wild rivers in America. As you head east on US Highway 12 you will encounter the twists and turns of the river and will enter into the magnificent Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest on your way up to the Bitterroots and Lolo Pass. At the **Lochsa Historical Ranger Station** you can take a self-guided tour back to the days of a Forest Ranger in the 1920s.

**8. Lolo Motorway** – The Lolo Motorway, **Forest Road 500**, can be accessed from the west at Kamiah, Idaho. Take a right off of US Highway 12 onto the Kamiah-Pierce Road 100 and proceed to the Lolo Forks Campground where you'll cross a bridge and turn right onto Forest Road 500. From the east take Parachute Hill Road, Forest Road 569, off of US Highway 12 just east of the turnoff to Powell Ranger Station. You can also take Saddle Camp Road 107 near Milepost 140, 27 miles west of Powell Ranger Station. The Motorway provides those with four-wheel drive vehicles with a scenic experience second to none. This is a rugged section of the Lewis and Clark and the Nez Perce National Historic Trails. Contact the Nez Perce – Clearwater National

Forest offices at (208) 926-4274 before going adventuring.

**9. Lolo Pass Visitor Center and Rest Area** – Your Northwest Passage Scenic Byway experience culminates at Lolo Pass and the **Lolo Pass Visitor Center and Rest Area**. The all-log Visitor Center was remodeled in 2003 to resemble an historic, 1930s era Ranger Station. Inside you'll find exhibits and displays about the Lolo Trail and the natural and cultural wonders in the area. A nearby interpretive trail circles the beautiful wetland area around the Visitor Center.



Historic **Lolo Pass** is at the crest of the Bitterroot Mountains and was used for hundreds of years by the Nez Perce people on their way east to hunt buffalo and by the Salish people on their way west to fish salmon. The Lewis and Clark Expedition also used the Lolo Trail and crossed over Lolo Pass on their historic journey west in 1805 and their return trip east in 1806. In addition to Lewis and Clark, the Nez Perce and the U.S. military also used this historic trail in 1877.



U.S. Highway 12 has incredible viewsapes of the trail blazed by the Nez Perce and followed by Lewis and Clark



# EXPLORING THE LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL

It was Lewis and Clark's greatest challenge... finding a route across the seemingly impassable Bitterroot Mountains. They were looking for Lolo Pass. A route Salish Indians had told them would still be open over the mountains even though they could see snow up on the peaks. After continuing north to what is now known as Travelers' Rest State Park, they turned their sights to the West where Lolo Pass loomed high above them.

On September 11, 1805 they headed up country. It rained, snowed, and hailed on them. Clark and an advance party went out ahead hunting for anything that moved. Four days later they came to a place they called "Hungry Creek", because they had nothing to eat and the weather was getting worse. Desperate, they continued on and came out of the mountains at Weippe Prairie where the Nez Perce greeted and fed them. Two days later, Lewis and the rest of the Corps staggered in and shared in the Nez Perce hospitality.



Thanks to the Nez Perce people, the Corps of Discovery would survive. Although still weak, Clark and 10 of his men proceeded down the Clearwater shoreline where they found ponderosa pines large enough to cut and burn out for dugout canoes. On October 7th, the canoes were completed and the members of the Corps were well enough to proceed on. On November 7th, after coursing the Snake and Columbia Rivers, Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery at last arrived at the Pacific... thanks in large measure to the hospitality and help of the Nez Perce people.

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The Lolo Motorway

If you're looking for an experience with whitewater rafting, premier fishing, spectacular scenery, outstanding outdoor experiences, plus lively communities to have fun in, *this auto tour is just right for you!*



National Park Service  
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