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**Vol.1 No.4**

Cover Photography by Isaias Miciu Nicolaevici

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Photography provided by Nicholas Dean Outdoors and Jeff Bright

Picture yourself in the shadow of towering, snow-capped mountains and untouched coastal rainforests, where bald eagles lazily soar and grizzly bears still roam free.

### **Where Dreams Come True**

Photography provided by Owen River Lodge

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## FEATURES continued

### **An Inspired Adventure**

Photography by Brian Grossenbacher

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### **On the Banks of a Legend**

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Photography by Brian Grossenbacher

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Photograph by Brian Grossenbacher



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WELCOME

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WHERE LIFE  
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TOUR



by Jim Stenson  
Photographs Courtesy of  
Patagonia River Guides





## **S**weet Waters Adventure is a destination travel company specializing in sporting and lifestyle adventures.

We view lodges through a different prism than most travel companies; we see them as an extension of our business and forge a harmonious relationship between them and you. Our mutual success, and your enjoyment are tied together in a collaborative knot.

Our forte involves very selective genres of travel including: fly-fishing, wing shooting, and family adventure travel throughout the world. When you explore our website, you will notice that we do not represent hundreds of lodges. Personalized, hands-on service requires intimate familiarity with the lodge and the customer, which becomes our most important mission. For this same reason, we are able to create lasting relationships with our customers. We want you to become a member of our family and that can only be achieved by the satisfaction you derive from our custom excursions. At SWA, nothing is canned. We do

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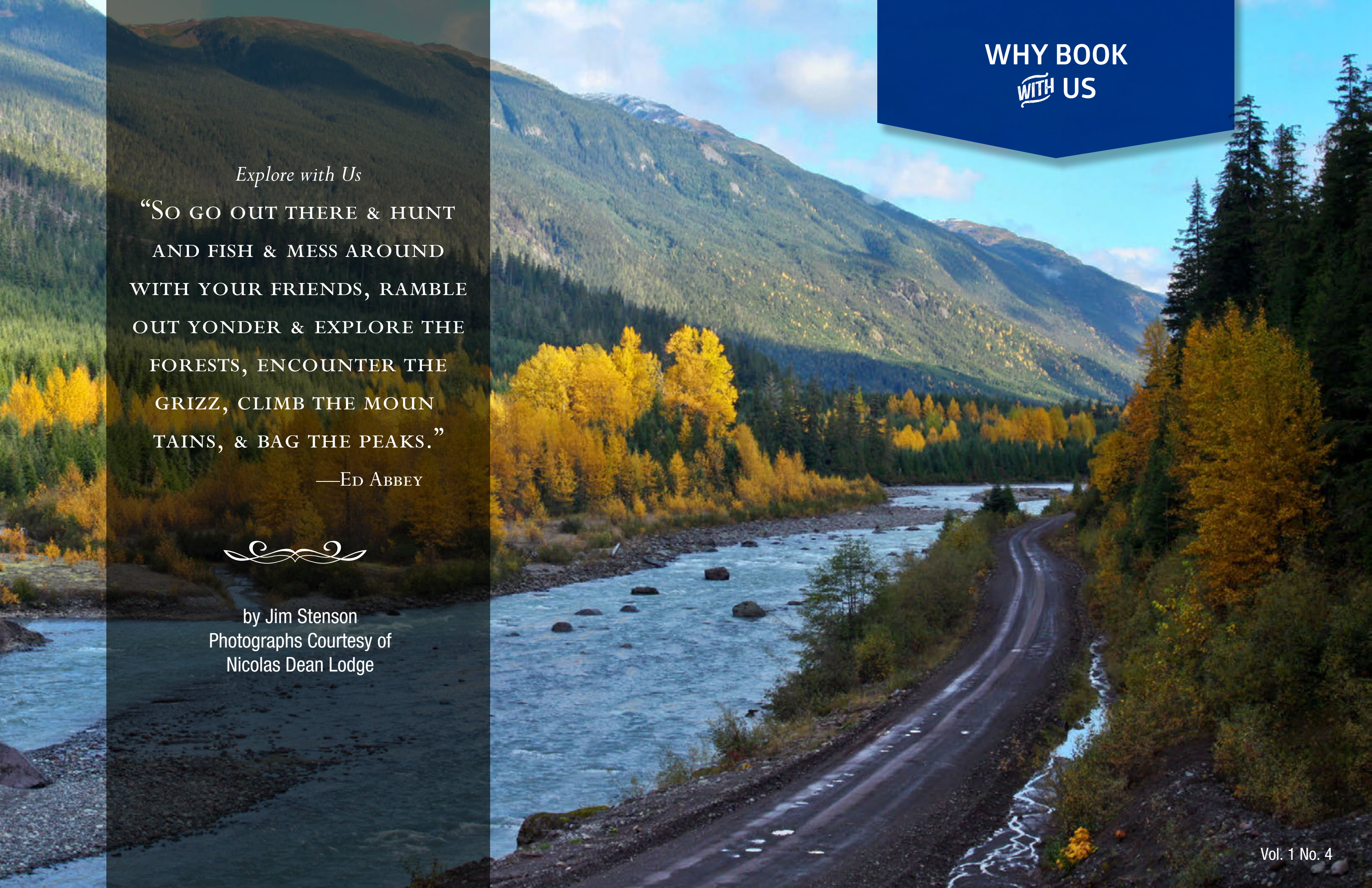
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OUT YONDER & EXPLORE THE  
FORESTS, ENCOUNTER THE  
GRIZZ, CLIMB THE MOUN  
TAINS, & BAG THE PEAKS.”

—ED ABBEY



by Jim Stenson  
Photographs Courtesy of  
Nicolas Dean Lodge





**W**e have spent our own lives outdoors and in the woods or on the water. Our staff has a combined 210 years fly fishing or wing shooting between the seven of us.

We still spend our time out there, sometimes way out there, but we're a little more picky now. Age has refined our tastes and improved our decisions. We choose better locations, little gems tucked away in a valley or a secluded mountain range, always more exotic and beautiful. When you ask us where to go, we're going to tell you about our own experiences with just the kind of detail you want to know. Not the most expensive places, but ones with the things you want. At Sweet Waters Adventure you'll be advised and treated like family by people who have spent their own lives chasing fish, wild birds, and adventure.


When you book with us, we will listen to your idea of the perfect place and talk it over among ourselves. We'll ask you if it's the fish or the birds you're interested in, or the amenities, the

scenery, the other activities, or if you're with a bunch of guys or your family or your work colleagues. All those things matter in choosing the right place—and at the right time. We won't send you to a great place at a bad time of year. It's no wonder they have specials when nobody wants to be there because the fish aren't biting or the weather is iffy. It doesn't cost you anymore to book with us and benefit from our unbiased experience.

There are people who like to fish occasionally and there are people like us—the men and women of Sweet Waters Adventure who have spent more time on the water, in the mountains, in the woods and on the beach than their families really thought was necessary. We do these things because we are lucky enough to have made it work somehow. We do what we love and make the sacrifices necessary to spend time in the outdoors instead of in boardrooms. We make an interesting group of outdoorsman. As a group of fishing bums go, we may have a few too many college degrees among us to fit the definition of bum. Some of us used to be in those boardrooms, but we have come around and we are making it work for us and for you.



Because we have families of our own, we know how important it is that a family vacation truly offers something exciting and memorable for every member of the family. And we know that sometimes you want to get away without them. We can recommend trips to fit both needs. And we can make any trip seamlessly easy—booking your air travel, your lodging, your activities, your guides, handling your transfers, your trip insurance. We'll advise you on what to take, what the weather will be like, what to do if things don't go as planned, and how to get home quickly and efficiently if there's any unforeseen need. Or we can even go with you—on a hosted trip one of us actually goes along and handles everything that comes up as your trip progresses, as well as planning well ahead of time. We become your personal liaison to your chosen lodge, and we can stay as much in the background or foreground as you like.

Booking on your own is tricky. Very few fisheries are good year-round. There are many variables like tides, water temperature, seasons, and weather. Hunting seasons and conditions vary widely. Family-friendly trips have their own challenges. To make things a little more thorny, the number of lodges and outfitters has increased tenfold in the last twenty years. Travel can be complex—just getting in and out of customs in certain countries can be challenging. Health insurance laws can be difficult to understand. Use us to guide you—our services are completely free to the customer. Profit from our experiences, good and bad, which allow us to spare you the bad and create the perfect trip for you. 





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## TRAVEL TIPS

*At Sweet Waters Adventure*  
STICKY FINGERS  
AT THE CAR WASH,  
STEAMED SHRIMP,  
CHEESE GRITS AND  
LIFETIME WARRANTIES



by Jim Stenson  
Photography by Jeff Bright,  
Brian Grossenbacher, Mark Lance,  
Isaias Miciu Nicolaevici, and  
Russell Schnitzer





**S**o here I was, once again arriving in Sanibel, Florida, to chase snook on the beaches for a few weeks. Almost without fail, I've managed to squeeze in several trips each year.

It's one of my favorite haunts and has, I've got to admit, become pretty much a routine that goes like clockwork. Looking back, perhaps too much of a routine, because this time, I was about to be blind-sided.

After an uneventful ten-hour drive from Mobile that took me through familiar territory – east across the Florida panhandle, through Pensacola and Tallahassee, then a right turn south toward Tampa Bay – I arrived at the condo I've stayed in for the last five years. It was great to get out of the cab and stretch my legs. The smell of fresh salt air coming off the Gulf filled my nose, bringing back fond memories of previous visits to this magical barrier island. A moment passed and I turned back to the cab of my truck and reached reflexively behind the seat for the pack I had filled with my favorite reels and – Whoa! – it was much too light. But, I've got ahead of my story. Let's rewind to the beginning.

On the way out of town, I stopped by Bebo's, a Mobile, Alabama institution, where you can get a car wash, wax, and even an oil change while you snack on munchies that would hardly qualify as health food – besides, I had a customer appreciation card burning a hole in my glove compartment.

*The smell of fresh salt air coming off the Gulf filled my nose, bringing back fond memories of previous visits to this magical barrier island.*

I can't keep myself from injecting a bit of local lore. Thirty or forty years ago, Bebo's was a hangout of sorts where crime, corruption, and clandestine meetings went down. Today, it's a thriving enterprise where the affluent bring their luxury sedans, from Beemers and Mercedes to the occasional Bentley, and you can observe young men swarming around the pricy cars in a flurry of flashing white terrycloth.

But I digress. For some reason, I've always believed that a clean truck gets better gas mileage. A longtime fan of Myth-Busters, I probably got that impression from Adam Savage or Jamie Hyneman, and if they did say it was so, I would embrace



their verdict as gospel. After all, I'm a man of science.

As on most of my road trips, the bed of my truck was full to the gunwales with high-end fly rods and containers of various and sundry stuff that I conceivably could, but most probably

*Being a cautious guy, my reels always go  
in the cab behind the seat in an  
oversized bum bag.*

would never, need. Being a cautious guy, my reels always go in the cab behind the seat in an oversized bum bag. After all, I've reasoned that, while the canopy over the truck's bed can always be locked, it's just got to be safer when my reels are hidden away safely behind the seat. Right? Well, not this time.

The truck moved slowly through the swirling suds and revolving brushes, eventually taking its place in the long line of other dripping vehicles waiting to be vacuumed and towel-dried. My 2002 Dodge Ram pickup hardly rated a second glance. On this particular day I watched as two employees, an elderly black couple, moved methodically around my truck, and the only time the younger workers approached was to push my old faithful out of the way to make more room for the chariots belonging to the members of the city's upper crust and nouveau riche. I stood there for a few minutes, not thinking of anything in particular before ducking inside to settle up and get enough cash to tip the







workers who all seemed to be laboring so hard just to make a few bucks. It's never seemed very fair, the way others work so tirelessly just so I can drive around in a spanking-clean, albeit aging truck.


One of the car wash crew waved me over to my rig with a towel, as three or four others were just finishing off the grill and inside of the cab's windshield. The older couple had moved on to another no-status ride. "Good job," I thought as I handed a fiver to the young man who had signaled me.

O.K. so now it's ten hours later, 650-plus miles down the road, and the gut-wrenching realization that I've been ripped off by some kid who probably had no idea of what he had sto-

len is beginning to sink in. Two of my treasured reels, a Tibor Everglades and a Rip Tide, were simply gone. To replace those Tibors out of pocket, the tab would be upward of fifteen hundred dollars! Enough to ruin my trip? Well, I'm not suggesting I just shrugged it off, but four years earlier my close friend, Mark Lance, had persuaded me to take out a personal articles policy with my insurance company. Sure, when I made the discovery, I was pretty ticked-off and my feathers more than a little ruffled, but because of that advice, it saved not only the day, but a considerable amount of money as well.

Immediately following Mark's practical suggestion, I carefully cataloged and photographed my rods, reels, flies, fly-tying





material, waders, boots, camera gear, and accessories. With pencil and paper (and I confess a calculator) in hand, I carefully figured out what it would cost me to replace everything at today's value and no, because Sandra, my wife is a regular reader of this column, I am not going to tell you what the value was. Then I called my friendly agent at State Farm, who I'd worked with for years, and purchased a policy that would replace any and everything if it were lost or stolen for any reason, anywhere in the world, regardless of who was at fault. I was surprised how reasonable it was to obtain such a policy. That's off the record, of course. I don't want my rates to go up.

The upshot and happy ending – two weeks later when I returned to Mobile from Sanibel, I contacted that same agent who filed my claim the very same day. I wasn't even asked to

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file a police report or, as I had dreaded, contact management at Bebo's Car Wash. It was all handled just the way it should have been – tidy, timely and totally tactful. I can go back to Bebo's because, truth be told, I love that place.

Now, every time I purchase a new piece of equipment, I



faithfully catalog and photograph it, and then add it to my policy and, as of this writing, the price of the coverage has remained the same. That covers sticky fingers at the car wash – now on to steamed shrimp, cheese grits, and lifetime warranties.

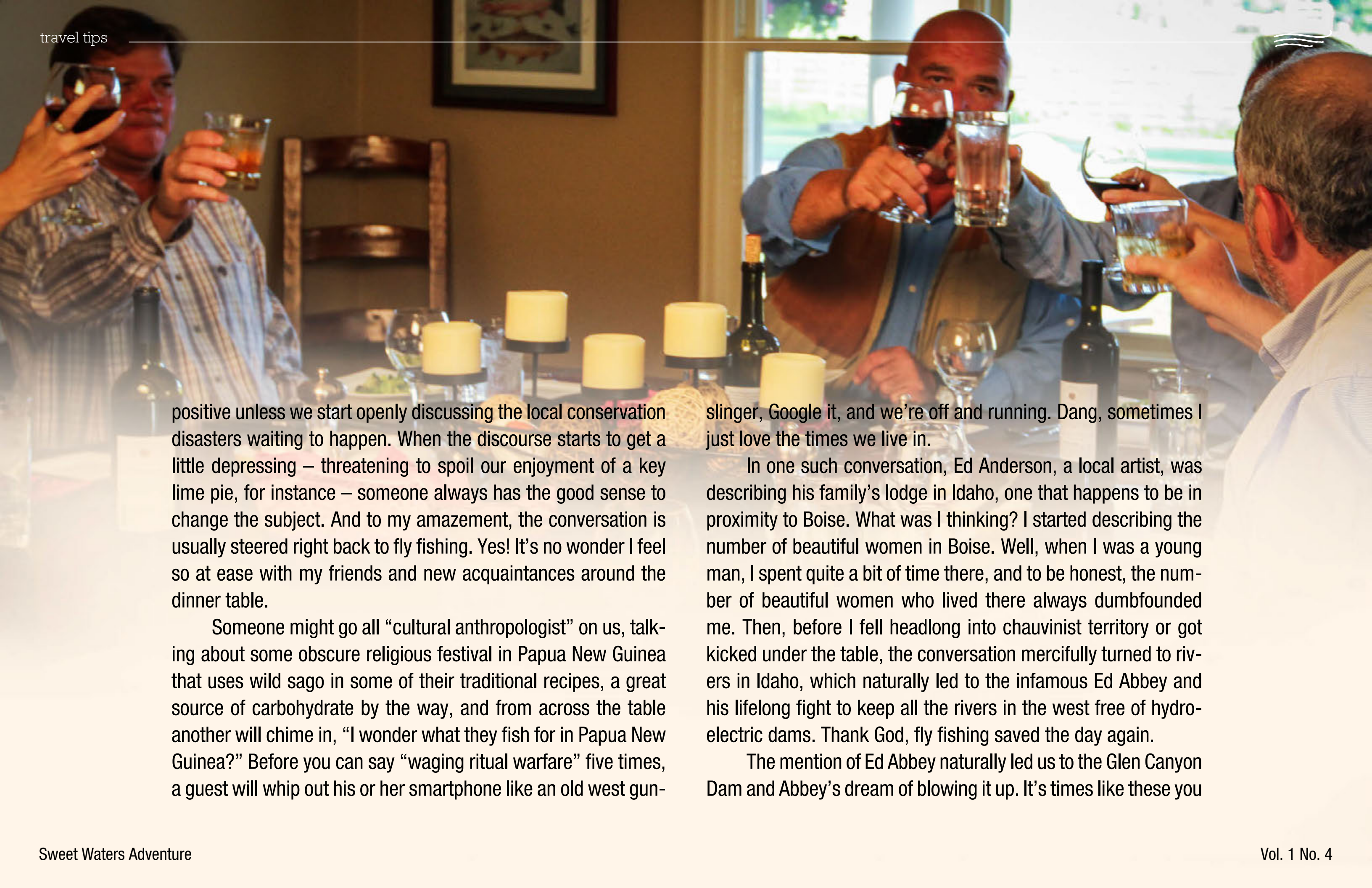
Besides personal and sometimes, as my previous account acknowledges, painful experience, where do I glean some of my most useful travel tips? Well, frequently at the dinner table. And ours is a large one.

When I have a chance, and I'm not on the water chasing snook, I like to have a few friends over for dinner, and sometimes a few grows into a dozen. Our guest list is normally made up of good friends I've known for years and, more than occasionally, it's newfound friends and their families. Around our table, you might find seasoned guides, knowledgeable fly shop owners and outfitters, award-winning photographers and sprinkled in, a local artist or two, many of whose work graces our walls. Whatever the mix, it's always a lively and interesting bunch of folks and the list is growing by the year.

On one occasion, when our menu included southern steamed shrimp and cheese grits, sometimes called "breakfast shrimp" in our neck of the woods (but I can assure you it makes a mighty tasty dish for dinner guests as well) there were ten of us. Not to sound like a snob, but all of them were well-educated, charmingly articulate and seasoned travelers. As always, the conversation that swirls around our table is upbeat, and, if you're not reading between the lines too intently, for the most part it's







positive unless we start openly discussing the local conservation disasters waiting to happen. When the discourse starts to get a little depressing – threatening to spoil our enjoyment of a key lime pie, for instance – someone always has the good sense to change the subject. And to my amazement, the conversation is usually steered right back to fly fishing. Yes! It’s no wonder I feel so at ease with my friends and new acquaintances around the dinner table.

Someone might go all “cultural anthropologist” on us, talking about some obscure religious festival in Papua New Guinea that uses wild sago in some of their traditional recipes, a great source of carbohydrate by the way, and from across the table another will chime in, “I wonder what they fish for in Papua New Guinea?” Before you can say “waging ritual warfare” five times, a guest will whip out his or her smartphone like an old west gun-

slinger, Google it, and we’re off and running. Dang, sometimes I just love the times we live in.

In one such conversation, Ed Anderson, a local artist, was describing his family’s lodge in Idaho, one that happens to be in proximity to Boise. What was I thinking? I started describing the number of beautiful women in Boise. Well, when I was a young man, I spent quite a bit of time there, and to be honest, the number of beautiful women who lived there always dumbfounded me. Then, before I fell headlong into chauvinist territory or got kicked under the table, the conversation mercifully turned to rivers in Idaho, which naturally led to the infamous Ed Abbey and his lifelong fight to keep all the rivers in the west free of hydro-electric dams. Thank God, fly fishing saved the day again.

The mention of Ed Abbey naturally led us to the Glen Canyon Dam and Abbey’s dream of blowing it up. It’s times like these you





secretly hope Big Brother or the NSA is not listening in on the cell phones tucked safely away in our pockets. Here was the perfect opportunity to discuss the new conservation movie DamNation, the award-winning documentary that helped bring about a sea change in our national psyche, from awe and pride in what were once viewed as engineering marvels, to the awareness that the life and health of our free-flowing rivers is key to the return of the salmon and steelhead runs in the northwest to their former glory.

At this juncture, Steve Bailey, a local guide and musician, chimed in “Speaking of steelhead, I broke one of my favorite fly rods a few months ago. I sent it back to the manufacturer, and they wouldn’t fix it under the lifetime warranty program.” The manufacturer wanted three hundred dollars to repair Steve’s rod. What’s that about? Of course, the answer came from the other end of the table where my fishing buddy and long-time friend, Norm Zeigler was seated. Remember my recent fishing trip to Sanibel where I discovered my treasured Tibors had been purloined? Norm, who owns the local fly shop on Sanibel, was listening to all of this and getting slightly agitated by Steve’s sad tale. “Steve,” Norm began, “I’ll handle your issue with the manufacturer and get the rod repaired for the traditional fifty-dollar service fee.” From that point, the conversation was about any and everything that had to do with fly fishing.

It turns out that the majority of the high-end fly rod companies are no longer providing unlimited lifetime warranties. In

retrospect, the whole lifetime warranty program has always seemed too good to be true. Of course, the rod manufacturer uses the lifetime warranty program to sell more high-end rods. It’s always been difficult to convince a fly fisherman to fork out six or seven hundred dollars for a new rod. It’s a different story when the fisherman thinks he will have this rod for the rest of his life, or at the very least, as long as the company is still in business.

It’s a paradox and a lesson worth learning – the more expensive the rod is, the easier it is to break. Why? Here’s the low-down. The high-end rods are lighter, more powerful and traditionally all tip-flex rods, which makes them easier to damage. The less expensive rods are usually heavier and made from a looser weave of graphite that requires more epoxy, the action tends to be more mid-flex or full-flex, and they are not as prone to damage. It’s not that the mid-flex or full flex rods are not as powerful as the high-end tip-flex rods to cast or fish – it’s just that they require a little experience to throw. Essentially, the action of the rod is just slower, and the fisherman has to compensate for the action by slowing down. It’s a dirty little secret that most fisherman that have been fly fishing for a long time traditionally come full circle and prefer the slower rods.

The important thing is not to get caught up in all the tech-talk. Quite frankly, I can’t remember the last time I visited a lodge where ninety-nine percent of the fly rods were not high-end tip-flex rods – except for the occasional classic bamboo. Which, by the way, are now marketed as tip-flex high-speed bamboo rods. There’s a riddle in there somewhere as well as a conundrum. It’s all relevant I guess – what the



marketers are trying to get across is that while it's still a slow rod, slow is relative. Compared to a thirty-year-old bamboo fly rod, it's a wicked rod on the water. Just remember that the next rod you buy, and happen to break, might not be covered under the traditional unlimited warranty program. Here are some nasty closing scenarios – the next time you nick that rod with a weighted fly or happen to – Ouch! – accidentally close the car door on your fly rod, or worse yet feed your fly rod to the ceiling fan, it might cost you two or three hundred dollars to get it repaired, and notice I didn't say replaced. Caveat emptor, know the warranty and know the risks.

In the final analysis, the best way to protect your gear is to purchase a personal articles policy from your insurance agent. If they don't happen to have a PAP, then contact State Farm Insurance. They have a wonderful policy, for less than the cost of one repair job, you can have all your gear covered, and at least with State Farm they don't have a deductible. At the very least, consider travel insurance. 

*Jim Stearns*



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*A Spey-Fishing Primer*  
*Installment No.4*

*Presenting the*  
WET FLY

Story & Photography  
by Jeff Bright





**I**n talk of spey fishing, or fly fishing with a double-handed rod, much of the focus is trained on casting.

True, the cast is essential to delivering the fly across a broad reach of water to a suspected lie, but the real heart of the matter — what determines to a large part whether or not the fish in that lie is compelled to take the fly — is what happens after the cast. Within the growing sphere of spey fishing there are line nerds and there are casting geeks, there are fussy fly tiers and all manner of gearheads with staggering specialized knowledge. But all hardcore salmon and steelhead anglers obsess large over one critical element of the game — presenting the fly.

### BE THE FLY

Because the majority of fly fishing for anadromous fish involves sinking the fly at least a few inches below the river's surface, much of what happens in wet fly presentation, and ultimately fish reaction, is hidden to the angler's eye. For that reason, unproven and unprovable theories abound, and will continue to abound.





This dissertation will offer no relief. Sadly — or not, depending on your disposition — I can only relay the general observations I have accrued in nearly two decades of devotion to chasing sea-run fish with a swinging fly. Why a spawning-run steelhead, Atlantic salmon, sea trout or Pacific salmon takes a fly when not actively feeding will forever remain a mystery. And it's this mystery that, for some, keeps us coming back to the river, keeps us casting, and keeps us postulating on why a particular presentation technique might or might not work in any particular circumstance.

In short, because of the behind-the-looking-glass nature of wet fly presentation, we are left with one overarching Zen puzzle standing in as the principle of guidance. That is “to best fish the fly, be the fly.” In other words, manipulate the cast, the rod and the line to swim the fly as if it were an extension of your self, behaving with a specific, strategic and seductive intent. Merge your concentration into the action of the fly, and the fly to the river's myriad and variable currents, and, if the fish are there, be confident you will catch them.

Rather than make this an academic exercise examining a system of ideas concerning concentration, I'll attempt to take a more practical tack: To reach this admittedly vague existential state — to be the fly — like on any path to “oneness,” or enlightenment, you'll need a notion of what your — and the fly's — behavior might look like in that state.

## PREDATOR AND PREY

So, you've waded in, you've made a workable cast. If you do nothing but follow along with your rod tip as the line arcs across the currents, as the line tightens from the current's push, the river will activate the fly and under the best of circumstances, that might be enough. If there is an aggressive, unwary fish close by and your fly enters its “zone,” you might very well get yanked. At its root, swinging flies for predatory fish couldn't be easier. Throw it out there. Let it swing. Hang on.

Often, the tyro succeeds because he or she is *not thinking* about what's happening below the surface, i.e., not getting in the way, not over thinking, not moving the fly around when they shouldn't. They're simply listening to the guide or ghillie and letting the river and fish supply the magic.

For sure, we could say this is a form of Zen mastery, or performance concentration, even if a completely naive form. But, over the time, this strategy loses its luster and effectiveness. More often than not, at least one factor comes into play that makes the game a little more complicated — the fish may be holding deeper than a casual presentation can reach; the fish may not be especially aggressive or unwary; the currents may not activate the fly in a way that capture the fish's attention or invoke it to take the fly. Thoughtless fly swinging can be relaxing and occasionally productive, but if you stick with it — if you make spey fishing a long term habit and want to optimize your chances on marginal days — if the tug is your drug —



you'll eventually find yourself pondering cause-and-effect. The law of averages will take over. You'll have blank days. You'll realize luck is a part of the equation, but that luck can also be the residue of design. You'll want to be self-determinate; for better or worse, it's human nature to meddle in the magic.

So, how do you know what you want the fly to do? If you could be the fly, how would you behave?

First, consider the nature of the beast. To survive the rigors of young life in the river, steelhead and salmon juveniles must become proficient predators. If they don't develop a robust chase-and-capture skill set, they won't grow large enough to smolt and eventually compete in the even more dangerous fish-eat-fish world of the open ocean. Like the ordinary house cat, the average salmonid may look placid as it gently fins in the tail of a pool, expending as little energy as possible, but lurking inside that streamlined chimera is a cold-blooded killer, poised to strike with vicious intent in the turn of a second. It's been repeated ad nauseam: a salmon or steelhead returning to the river to spawn is not actively feeding, as a resident river trout would. However, anecdotal evidence suggests they will feed opportunistically — I've seen it with me own eyes — and I believe it's fair to contend they cannot afford at anytime in the span of their life to relax or suppress their predatory urges. The evolution of their species simply will not allow it.

Why do they take your fanciful fly that resembles nothing living in the ocean or the river? The evolution of their species







cast and presentation would be the downstream swing. To execute this presentation, the angler casts downstream roughly 40–50 degrees from perpendicular, or square, to the current. Manipulation, or mending, of the fly line can then be used to 1) alter the speed of the fly swing, 2) to vary the depth of the fly and 3) to effect changes in orientation of the fly in the currents. Typically, an upstream line mend is executed immediately after the fly lands to slow the swing and allow the fly to sink. Then the line and fly are followed through the swing by the rod tip until the fly is hanging down directly below, parallel to the bank. Alternately, the line can be mended downstream to speed the swing of the fly and/or present the fly more broadside to the fish, if desired.

The downstream swing is suitable to most all flow configurations, but is particularly applicable to faster flows with varying currents. It is also a tool for dangling a fly for as long as possible in a suspected lie, a common strategy when confronted with cold water. In general, to keep the fly swinging at slow, steady pace, the faster the water, the greater the downstream angle required in the cast.

I want to emphasize here that, in spite of its universal and historical ubiquity, the traditional downstream swing does have situational drawbacks: It typically presents the fly to the fish “tail first,” or at a very shallow angle, thus minimizing the fly’s profile appearance to the fish — and possibly minimizing the attracting qualities of a large silhouette fly; and, in some instanc-

simply will not allow them to ignore it.

Translating this assumption to angling terms: There is always a way to trigger the strike response in a predatory sea-run fish. Or at least we can feel fairly justified in believing this to be the case.

Again, think of the house cat. Even the most reticent tom will eventually respond to a ball of string if the string is presented in a manner provocative enough to trigger the response. With this in mind, the angler’s objective is to convince the fish that the fly swimming toward them is an object of interest — something to eat, a territorial threat, or simply a curiosity too intriguing to ignore — and then take it away.

Be the fly. Be the prey. Poke the fish. Then run away.


This is essentially the potent magic inherent in the time honored wet fly presentation known as the downstream swing — as well as its related tactics such as the slightly more nuanced greased line swing, and the trout nymph’s Leisenring lift. Once the predator’s interest is aroused, it’s often the appearance of flight in the prey that moves the fish to act.

Armed with this perspective, the angler pursuing sea-run fish can approach any river for any salmonid species and formulate an approach for nearly any situation.

## TRIED AND TRUE

If one could tally all the casts in the long history of salmon and steelhead angling, no doubt the most commonly executed



A fly fisherman is wading in a river, casting a line. The river is clear, showing rocks and green algae. The fisherman is wearing a dark jacket and a hat. The background shows a rocky bank with some vegetation.

es, it may also allow the fish *too much* time to inspect the fly and ultimately ignore the fly as it passes by. When the water is at a salmonid-favorable temperature, generally 48–55 degrees F, or if the fish have seen many flies, the element of surprise should never be underestimated. And neither should fly speed. In summer, Atlantic salmon and coho salmon in particular may respond more positively to flies traveling at speeds faster than those the traditional downstream swing will produce. When pursuing those species in favorable conditions, a cast square to the current and a subsequent downstream mend will substantially increase fly speed and may move an otherwise disinterested fish.

### DOWNSTREAM AND DEEP

While the downstream, wet fly swing is straightforward in its application with a floating line, gaining depth — with either a sinking tip or heavily weighted fly — can be more involved, especially in moderate to fast flows. To achieve a deep presentation with the downstream swing, the angler can employ a number of tactics, separately or sequentially in combination for full effect:

- 1) Aerial-mend. As the cast is in the air, before it lands on the water, reach upstream with the rod to place the line well upstream of the fly. With a long double-hand rod, this can be particularly effective.

- 2) Back-mend. Immediately after the cast lands, lift and assertively place the line as far upstream from the fly as pos-





sible without pulling the fly from the water. The goal is to orient the line parallel to the current and straight to the fly.

3) Step, slack-mend and feed. With the rod tip still high after the back mend, step downstream one to several steps and simultaneously lower the rod tip to introduce slack into the line and allow the fly and/or sink tip to drop in the water column. For added depth, as you come to a stop, feed more line into the drift. This multi-faceted step takes practice to execute smoothly and may not always be done safely, depending on wading conditions, but if done properly can sink a fly deep without using an overly heavy, and difficult to cast, sinking tip.

4) Extend toward the target. As you come to a stop and just as the line begins to tighten, point and extend your rod toward the fly. When the line does come tight and begins to swing, it will be at its maximum depth. Often the take will come just as the fly comes under tension and begins to swim across the current, away from the fish.

5) Lead the fly home. If a fish doesn't take early in the swing, lead the fly slightly — follow the swing with the rod tip oriented just slightly toward the near bank from the fly. This will keep tension on the fly at a minimum and prevent it from rising in the water column.

The goal of the deep downstream swing is to orient the fly tail-to-the-fish and maintain depth, while slowly searching likely looking water through the arc of the swing. Speed of the swing can be manipulated by how much the fly is led. Introducing a

downstream mend after the fly begins to swing can increase the “flight speed” of the fly and potentially trigger a strike. But, overall, the common objective of this presentation is a deep, slow swing — the staple of winter steelhead fishing and spring salmon fishing, both instances where cold water can make the fish's reaction sluggish. The method can also be successfully applied — with a jigged fly for added provocation — to Argentine sea trout fishing when strong light has the fish skittish and holding deep.

Though the downstream swing can be adapted to fit most any spey fishing application, there are other presentation tactics that can be employed to further exploit the predator-prey principle.

## SIDEWAYS TO A SALMON

Published in 1935, under the nom de plume Jock Scott, *Greased Line Fishing for Salmon* portrayed the angling methods of A.H.E. Wood, a legendary and highly systematic angler who frequented the Cairnton water of Scotland's famous River Dee. Among Wood's floating line (in his time a silk line greased to float) methods, highlighted is an approach to low water wet fly fishing that has in the intervening years come to be known synonymously with the book's title.

Wood had many floating/greased line techniques, but what we now call a “greased line” presentation is something very specific. The method involves fishing a sparsely dressed wet fly



— or a dry fly, though, because it supports my earlier premise, I will confine this segment to the wet fly — with a floating line in a cast that is roughly square or slightly upstream, and, through active line mending, maintains the fly in a natural, drag-free drift until the fly comes under tension and begins to swing. Key to the method is that the fly is presented sideways to a salmon, rather than tail first, as would be the case in the traditional downstream swing.

The greased line presentation works best in long, flat riffles and smooth, laminar tailouts where currents are fairly consistent across the river's breadth. I've had the opportunity to use the method a number of times and, executed as described, it works remarkably well. In my experience, again, the take comes as the fly comes under tension and begins to swim cross stream, out of its free-drifting track, as if it has become suddenly aware of a dangerous situation ahead.

### DEEP IN THE GREASE

Wood's methods were concerned with fishing within a few inches of the surface. And since those methods involved a line that was greased to float, modern greased line fishing has almost exclusively been linked to fishing with a floating line. But in certain situations where a deeply sunk wet fly is required, the same approach can be used with sinking tips and weighted flies — with a few important modifications.

A typical challenge to spey fishers in winter and early







spring steelhead fishing is presenting the fly deep — say 6–8 feet — in a manner enticing enough to provoke a strike. In this scenario, the water is likely cold — 33–40 degrees F — the fish may be lethargic, or they may have been fished over previously with conventional tackle. In other words, their interest level in playing our little game may be on the wane. The problem here is twofold: We need to sink the fly deeper than we would in an average 4- to 6-foot steelhead run, and we need to maximize the attraction potential of the fly.

Over the past couple of decades, developments in fly design and tackle — particularly Skagit lines (or shooting heads) and high-density, fast-sinking tips have given the spey fisher means to approach these sorts of challenges — what once were strictly the province of conventional tackle anglers — with a reasonable amount of confidence.

Of course, the deep downstream swing tactics mentioned earlier can be used with success in this instance, but the presentation techniques that follow, derived from surface water greased line fishing, are designed to fully maximize the potency of today's large-silhouette, intruder-style flies. And, as with the floating, greased line method, the deep-sunk presentation works well only when applied to certain water types, particularly pool configurations similar to the one described in the following example.

## **SIDEWAYS TO A STEELHEAD**

It's February. You're on a coastal river in the Pacific North-

west. Your rod is 13–14 feet in length, casting a Skagit-style shooting head weighing 550–650 grains. To the front of the Skagit head you have 12.5–15 feet of T14 or T17 (tungsten impregnated sinking line at 14 or 17 grains per foot), or maybe you're old school and prefer LC13 (lead core sinking line at 13 grains per foot). To the front of the sinking tip is three feet of abrasion resistant 15-pound monofilament leader. At the business end of the leader is a fly measuring roughly 3.5–4 inches and constructed of materials that breath, pulse and flash in the soft currents at your feet. The fly has metal eyes to keep it sinking at near the same rate as the sinking tip.

You've come to a likely pool. It's a deep hole against a steep bank. There is a faster primary current against the far bank and a softer insider current closer to you and a distinct seam between the two flows. You know if the pool is holding fish, they're likely to be under the seam, just off the primary current.

In the heart of the run, where the current begins to draw more steadily, you cast square to the current or slightly upstream. The fly lands in the seam at the very edge of the faster water. Immediately you raise the rod and assertively reach upstream to place the back two-thirds of the Skagit head upstream of the fly, careful not to pull the fly to the surface. You maintain the rod in a high position, suspending the running line and back end of the Skagit head off the water. The fast sinking tip dives for the bottom, pulling the fly along with it. As a result of your line mend and the faster surface currents, the Skagit head has





now formed a wedge shape, pointing downstream in the seam.

As the wedge travels down the seam, the sink tip digs in and drags the fly deeper, swimming at a three-quarter view, head-first toward the suspected lie. To give the sinking tip more time to do its work and gain more depth, you take two long steps downstream, all the while keeping the rod high, managing light tension on the Skagit head's traveling wedge. After two steps, you stop and lower the rod at a rate approximately matching the current speed to follow the drift of the head, tip and fly downstream. As you lower the rod and extend toward a point roughly 45 degrees downstream from perpendicular to the flow, the back of the Skagit head comes under tension and the wedge begins to open up.

Now the sink tip and fly have reached maximum depth. It has fluttered seductively from a three-quarter view to full profile — sideways to a steelhead. There it is now, suspended in the seam, about two feet off the stones, working its magic, unsuspectingly lolling in the current, slipping downstream, shape-shifting as it does.

And the predator takes notice. Its metabolism is low. The water is not much above freezing. Its reactions are slow. Still, it can't help but notice the curious looking and very careless creature advancing toward it. The urge to pounce starts to stir.

Just past 45 degrees, the fly becomes fully activated under tension. While there is still a slight bend in the Skagit head — it has gone from a “J” to a soft “L” — you begin to lead the fly toward the bank below you.




Suddenly, before it reaches the predator, the undulating, intruding fly jumps to attention and flees toward the safety of shallower water at the river's edge...

As you lead the fly, you pull slightly toward shore to speed the swing. You are the fly, bringing it to life...

The predator can no longer abide. The impulse to attack, or at least investigate, can no longer be suppressed. The switch flips...

Then, there it is. The line tightens. Adrenaline rushes, and for a brief but immeasurably thrilling moment you are fully connected to the energy of the ages and the burning fire of all things wild.

There are infinite variations on these themes and applied maneuvers — as many as there are shifting currents in all the great rivers in the far corners of the earth. The preceding assumptions and illustrations are merely doors to open the thoughts of the willing to the ever fascinating and debatable realm of wet fly presentation for sea-run fish. It has kept those of us so inclined captivated since the early days of fly fishing. If we can keep salmon, steelhead, sea trout and char returning to their rivers in reasonable numbers — if we can learn to live with them instead of against them — we'll have the good fortune to continue to be captivated by this wholly enjoyable and enriching mystery.

Go forth and swing. You are now the fly. 







**Isaias Miciu Nicolaevici**

PHOTOGRAPHY



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by Jim Stenson  
Photography Courtesy of Salvelinus Lodge



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Today, when we purchase even small appliances, we find ourselves being offered insurance coverage. In most cases, it is merely an upsell—one more place for a merchandiser or retailer to make additional profit in a tight, profit-thin economy. More power to them, but it usually makes sound financial sense to say, “No, thank you.”

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PHOTOGRAPHS



by Mark Lance  
Photography by Mark Lance

SHOOT LIKE A PRO



**I find that photography not only enriches the adventure travel experience, but also keeps the adventure “alive” long after I have returned home.**

Because digital cameras have become ubiquitous, it might be said that it is a greater challenge to create photographs that stand out in a sea of snapshots. In fact, the opposite is true. Back in the days of film and contact sheets, you could always spot the pros. One roll shot by a professional would contain multiple images of the same subject, whereas amateurs typically shot a single frame and moved on to the next subject. Today, when the cost of taking an image is virtually zero, all of us are capable of getting that award-winning shot and bringing home portfolios that will captivate your audience.

When I am lucky enough to catch one, I am guilty of showing off a big fish photo or two for months or years after a fly-fishing trip. But, coming home with more than the standard “grip and grin” shots (you know the ones I’m talking about) is far more rewarding. Photography is so accessible these days that even the camera-phobic fisherman will be hard pressed not to bring home a gallery of compelling photographs to remember the adventure. It’s really not that difficult, with a point





and shoot camera, to bring home truly professional quality images. The secret is shoot, shoot, and shoot again.

Now that the 2015 season is in full swing, perhaps you have already returned from a wonderful fly-fishing travel adventure to Argentina or the Bahamas. Once you've downloaded your photos, I'll bet you'll discover that you've returned home with some stunning visual memories. However, what about those great shots you missed? Let's think about some of the subjects you might have framed in your viewfinder. Or, maybe you are in the midst of planning that upcoming trip-of-a-lifetime and you want to make sure you come home with great photos to document the journey. With a little creativity and practice, anyone can capture beautiful images they would be proud to frame and hang on the wall.

Here are a few ideas of subject matter to help you get past the standard "guy with his fish" photo collection.

## **FISH TALES**

Sure, those clichéd photos of your fishing buddies are inevitable—someone has to come home with the bragging rights. But when it comes to photography, let's think creatively, beyond the mere snapshot. Here are some important tips. When you're ready to take that shot, keep your fish in or near the water. Place the camera as low to the waterline as you safely can. Handle the fish gently and get it back into the water quickly. To add interest to your "fish" pictures, make the fish the main attraction

in a series of photos. Remember, don't take just a single shot. Zoom in on the catch, capturing water dripping from the fish as it is lifted inches from the water's surface. Show the fly in the fish's jaw to remind you of the patterns you fished. You might even consider a waterproof camera or underwater housing to get a shot of the fish in its natural environment. Use a macro

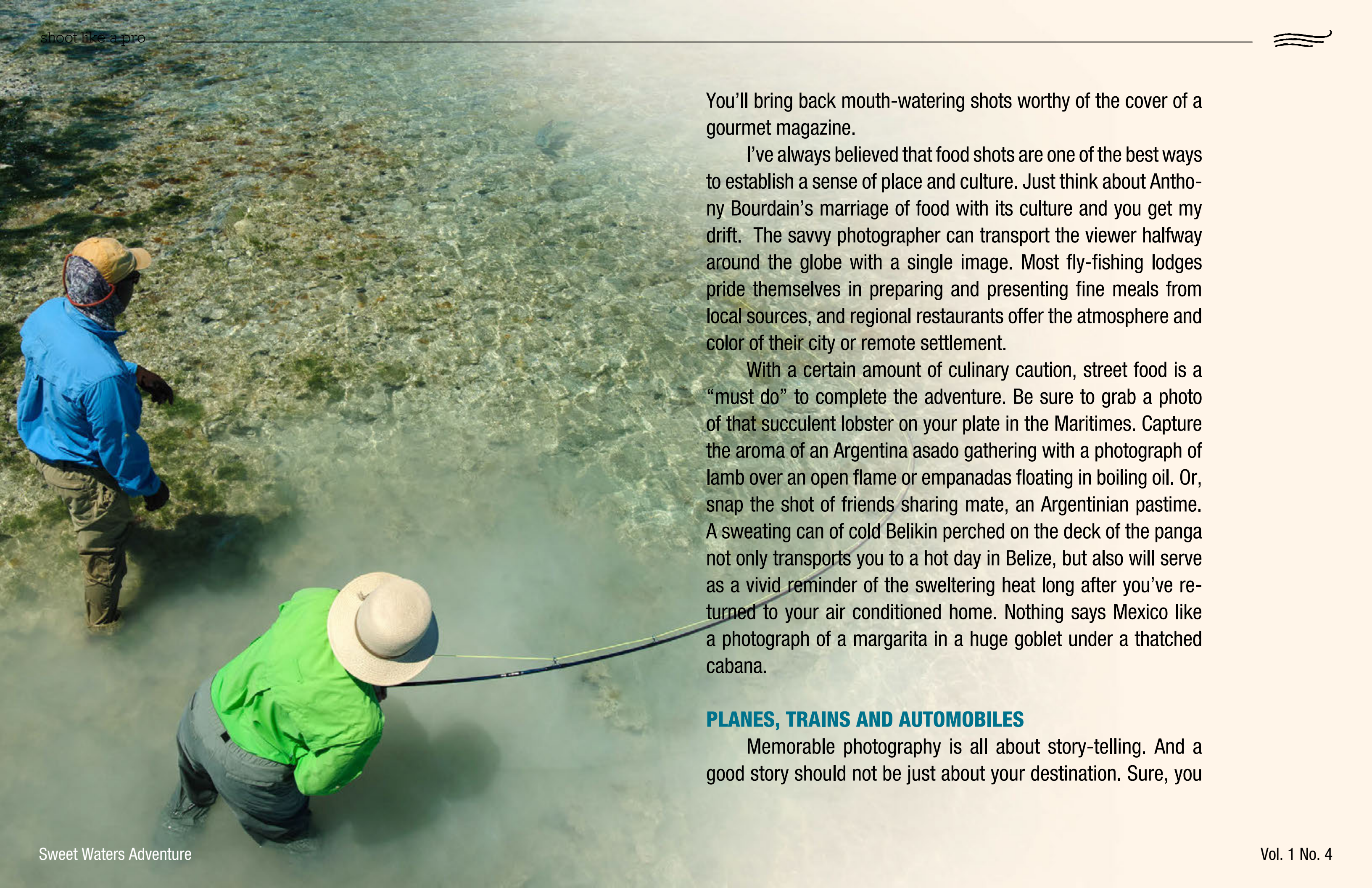
*To add interest to your fish pictures, make the fish the main attraction in a series of photos.*

lens or the macro setting on your digital camera to get in close. Highlight the colorful spots on a dolly varden, or the giant scales of a tarpon. Fish are living, swimming art. Get that shot, or better yet, multiple shots, and quickly return the fish to the water.

## **EATS AND LIBATION**

A guy has to eat. Food in far off lands is a delicious reminder that you are not in Kansas any more. Food and libation is one of the best ways to identify a country or region, and is a great reason to travel in itself. It's long been believed that food photography (a legitimate professional specialty) is very difficult. It's not true. Food doesn't move, talk back, or fail to smile. Use the same tips I mentioned above for food shots that will bring back the aromas and tastes of a foreign land. Shoot low, use your macro feature and let the camera's shallow depth of field do its magic for you.



A high-angle photograph of two people fly fishing in a shallow, clear river. The person on the left is wearing a blue jacket and a yellow cap, standing and watching. The person on the right is wearing a bright green jacket and a wide-brimmed hat, bent over and casting a fly fishing rod. The water is very clear, revealing the rocky and mossy riverbed. The background shows more of the river and some distant trees.

You'll bring back mouth-watering shots worthy of the cover of a gourmet magazine.

I've always believed that food shots are one of the best ways to establish a sense of place and culture. Just think about Anthony Bourdain's marriage of food with its culture and you get my drift. The savvy photographer can transport the viewer halfway around the globe with a single image. Most fly-fishing lodges pride themselves in preparing and presenting fine meals from local sources, and regional restaurants offer the atmosphere and color of their city or remote settlement.

With a certain amount of culinary caution, street food is a "must do" to complete the adventure. Be sure to grab a photo of that succulent lobster on your plate in the Maritimes. Capture the aroma of an Argentina asado gathering with a photograph of lamb over an open flame or empanadas floating in boiling oil. Or, snap the shot of friends sharing mate, an Argentinian pastime. A sweating can of cold Belikin perched on the deck of the panga not only transports you to a hot day in Belize, but also will serve as a vivid reminder of the sweltering heat long after you've returned to your air conditioned home. Nothing says Mexico like a photograph of a margarita in a huge goblet under a thatched cabana.

## PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

Memorable photography is all about story-telling. And a good story should not be just about your destination. Sure, you





could wait to get there before you pull your camera out of its bag – but what a shame. There is adventure in the journey as well, and these memories should be a big part of the narrative once you are home. For example, your mode of transportation often becomes the center of amazement, laughter and yes, even terror as the adventure unfolds. Unforgettable moments deserve to be preserved. And what better way than in a compelling photograph? After all, isn't that why you travel in the first place – to experience unforgettable moments? Be creative to capture the awe of riding in a tooth-rattling, narrow gauge rail car perched precariously above a raging torrent. And when you're skimming a hundred feet above the Alaskan tundra in a 1940's vintage de Havilland Beaver float plane, in addition to those great interior shots, point your camera downward to capture the exhilaration of the flight. Now you're on terra firma again. Be a photojour-

nalist. Don't pass up a photo of the adrenaline rush of racing through Buenos Aires in a taxi stuffed to the gills with fishing gear and travel companions. Photograph the solitude of hiking quietly alongside a sure-footed llama through spectacular mountainous terrain. You may not want to look down from your dizzying height, but it sure would make a great shot. And when you do compose that image, put something in the foreground for perspective.

### STUFF

Anglers are notorious collectors of stuff: rods, reels, flies, and gadgets. I'll admit I am a real sucker for the "gear" shot. Have your camera ready when your guide is rifling through his fly box. There is a treasure trove of colorful information in that little box. Not to mention that flies are amazingly beautiful. To



me, fly-fishing gear is artistic. For example, note the texture of a fine Portuguese cork grip; the delicate wraps that hold guides to graphite or bamboo; the clean, repetitive, geometric shapes that make up a fly reel; the wonderfully parabolic shape of a fly rod bent under the weight of your catch; the graceful lines of a drift boat. There is a great photo hiding amongst all that stuff. And once again, take advantage of the macro capability that is a standard feature on digital cameras today.

### CULTURE AND PLACE

You travel far and wide to catch fish, but you'll miss the point if you don't absorb a little culture along the way to share with your family and friends on your return. Add a memorable dimension to your travel photography by capturing a sense of place. Snap a quick shot of the one-room airport when you get off the plane on Andros. A photo of the crab shack or a pile of spent conch shells at the boat launch spells Bahamas. Get a shot of that dirt runway cut through the palmetto in Belize. Bring home a photo of the native totems in British Columbia. Street art in Bariloche will brighten up any photo album or self-published book. A photograph of a 1950's Chevy speaks to Cuba or Uruguay, but nothing says "Havana" like an old lady on a doorstep smoking a fat Chohiba. Get the shot. Now back to that macro feature – photographs of passport stamps, roadway signs or menus written in the local language, or font, capture a strong sense of place and make great visual transitions when you're arranging your photo essay.







## LOCAL PEOPLE

Some of the most rewarding and dramatic travel photographs are those of people. Warm up to the subject of a potential shot with respect and a little conversation. Politely ask permission to snap a photograph, and if possible, do so in their native tongue. Once you've taken that first shot, take the time to share it with your subject. Almost everyone loves to see himself or herself on the camera back, and it often leads to better rapport and even greater shots.

Get that shot of your guide resting on his push pole or the local fly shop guy sporting a unique look. Your chef or waiter will love to have their photo taken holding a plate of scrumptious food. Taxi drivers are usually very friendly, and every one of these guys has a wild story written all over his face. Capture it. When you're not taking close-ups, look for backgrounds with a strong sense of locale. Place your subject in one half of the frame, leaving space to include the surrounding background, and the subject doesn't always have to be positioned in the center. Be creative. This technique will help you capture a com-

PELLING environmental portrait. Get a shot of your fishing buddy casting out tight loops with Volcano Lanin in the background. Grab an unposed shot of angling companions stringing up rods, wiggling into their waders, or lacing up their boots. Photographs of travel companions and locals at your destination are a big part of the travel experience.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Don't leave home without a decent digital camera. Sure, it can be a relatively inexpensive point-and-shoot, but the best camera is always the one you have with you. Great photography is less about the equipment and much more about the "eye." Travel safely, fish hard and take lots of photographs. You will be rewarded many times over the years when you revisit images you've created. My friend and fellow photographer Valentine Atkinson says, "When the fish are rising, pick up a fly rod. When the light is good, pick up a camera." Those words will serve the traveling angler/photographer well. Travel on. Shoot often.





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and Jeff Bright

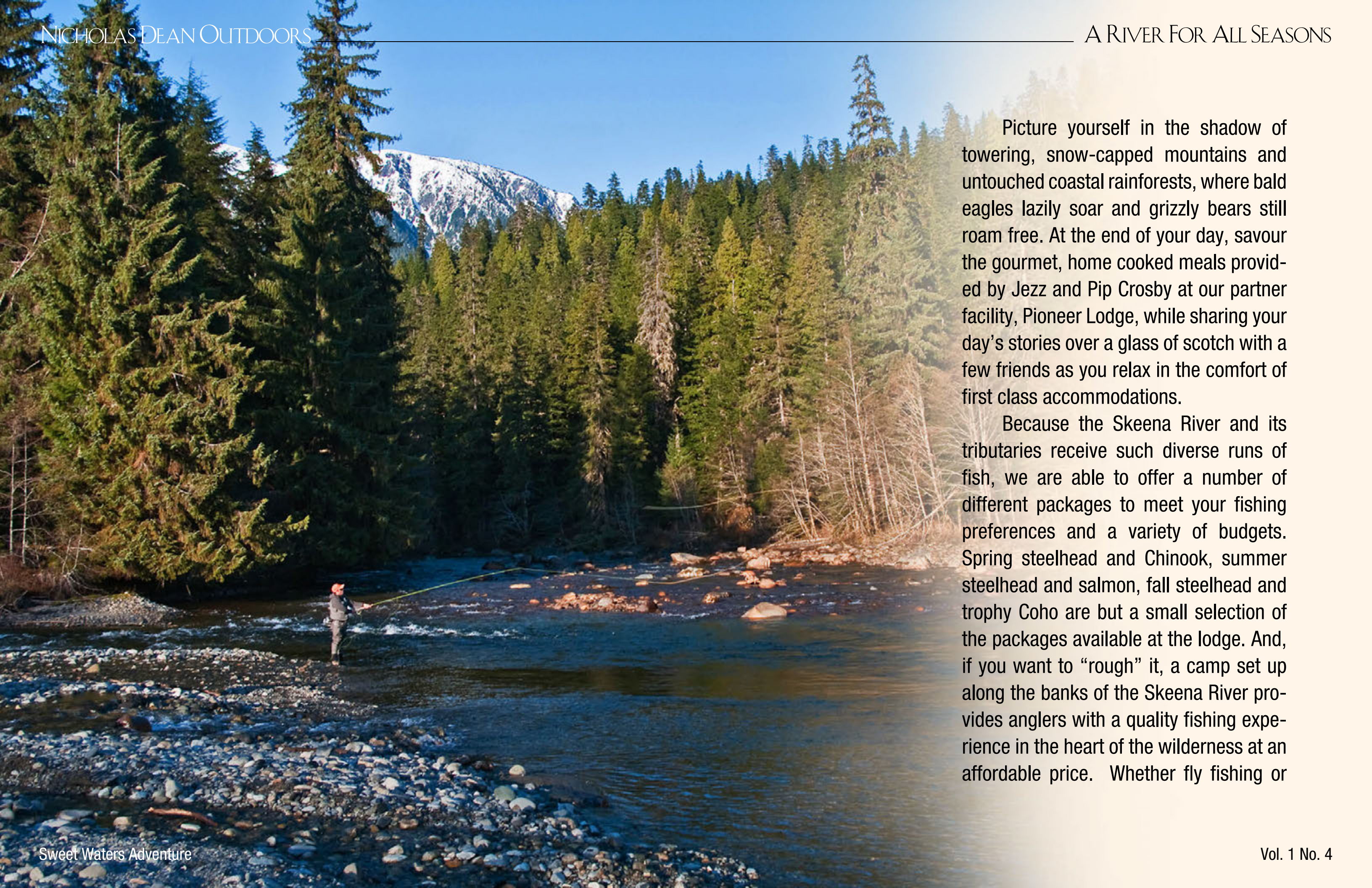




At Nicholas Dean you'll have access to over 50 of the best rivers and lakes in the Lower Skeena region of British Columbia. For more than 15 years, our commitment to the smallest details that make up the whole outdoor experience has become legendary.

Imagine yourself airing out a long cast with your spey rod on one of the Kalum River's best runs for trophy steelhead, or skating a dry fly across the tailout of a boulder-studded pool on the Copper River, known for its aggressive steelhead. You can also tackle the giant Chinook of the Skeena River, fish of over 60 lbs. that can melt a reel with line spooling runs, or sight fish for acrobatic Coho as they take your fly in a large arching swirl.





Picture yourself in the shadow of towering, snow-capped mountains and untouched coastal rainforests, where bald eagles lazily soar and grizzly bears still roam free. At the end of your day, savour the gourmet, home cooked meals provided by Jezz and Pip Crosby at our partner facility, Pioneer Lodge, while sharing your day's stories over a glass of scotch with a few friends as you relax in the comfort of first class accommodations.

Because the Skeena River and its tributaries receive such diverse runs of fish, we are able to offer a number of different packages to meet your fishing preferences and a variety of budgets. Spring steelhead and Chinook, summer steelhead and salmon, fall steelhead and trophy Coho are but a small selection of the packages available at the lodge. And, if you want to “rough” it, a camp set up along the banks of the Skeena River provides anglers with a quality fishing experience in the heart of the wilderness at an affordable price. Whether fly fishing or



conventional fishing is your preferred method, trust us to put together a truly unique outdoor adventure.

And, when you and your significant other are ready for some non-fishing activities, you'll discover ample recreational challenges – from white water rafting on the Copper River to hiking the coastal BC mountains, sea kayaking, wildlife viewing, helicopter tours or exciting mountain biking.


### **FLY FISHING**

At Nicholas Dean Lodge, you can fly fish a different river or location every day, even if you come out multiple times in one year. Our knowledgeable guides can ensure the experience is different each time you go out, whether you're fishing the Skeena River, its tributaries, Nass tributaries, or remote coastal rivers for steelhead and Pacific salmon. Located in Northwest British Columbia's coastal rainforest, we offer our guests one of the longest fishing seasons of any lodge in North America.

This is one of the world's most beautiful locations, with rugged mountains climbing more than 10,000 feet straight out of the ocean, snow-capped peaks, towering cedar trees that are hundreds of years old, and dense rainforest, some of the last rainforest in North America, teeming with wildlife from bald eagles to the rare Kermode or Spirit Bear.






A fly fisherman in a river, casting a line. The fisherman is wearing a grey shirt and waders, standing in shallow water. The line is arched high in the air, creating a large loop. The water is clear, showing rocks and some greenery on the banks.

With the wild salmon and steelhead population we also offer a diverse range of species to target, each one requiring a different presentation, style and strategy. Depending on the time of year, you decide the adventure you want based on the species you're targeting. Nicholas Dean Lodge offers exclusive custom fly fishing adventures for steelhead on wet or dry flies, Coho salmon in fresh water or saltwater estuaries, Chinook and Sockeye in fresh water, trout and char, and pink or chum salmon.

We have highly qualified fly fishing guides and the most

knowledgeable fly fishing service available in the area. Our policy is one guide for two clients, and we find destinations where you may not see another angler or person all day on the river. Your guides provide the tackle you need throughout the day, and the lodge can provide fly fishing equipment such as spey rods and single-handed fly rods.

Once you've experienced your own fly fishing adventure at Nicholas Dean Lodge, you'll know why we're as passionate as we are about the Lower Skeena region. 





















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# *Spain's Magnificent Pyrenees*

Experience the unspoiled nature of Spain's Pyrenees, where crystal clear waters teem with wild trout. The Lodge is right in the middle of Aragón's Western Pyrenees, considered one of Western Europe's most pristine locales. You'll have access to more than 60 rivers—over 2,400 km of wilderness to roam—and 180 lakes all within easy driving distance of our two lodges.



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**SALVELINUS**  
FISHING ADVENTURES

Email Jim Stenson for more details at:

[jim@sweetwatersadventure.com](mailto:jim@sweetwatersadventure.com)



# *Land of the Living Giants*

Estancia Laguna Verde's guests fish this dream-like river with its crystal clear waters and amazing runs of huge trout in three different sections. It offers fishermen the chance to experience wild Patagonia at its best, surrounded by beautiful untouched landscapes and the opportunity to battle against huge and strong fish, enjoying also the comfort of its exclusive lodge, one and only in all Strobel area.



ESTANCIA  
LAGUNA VERDE  
L O D G E



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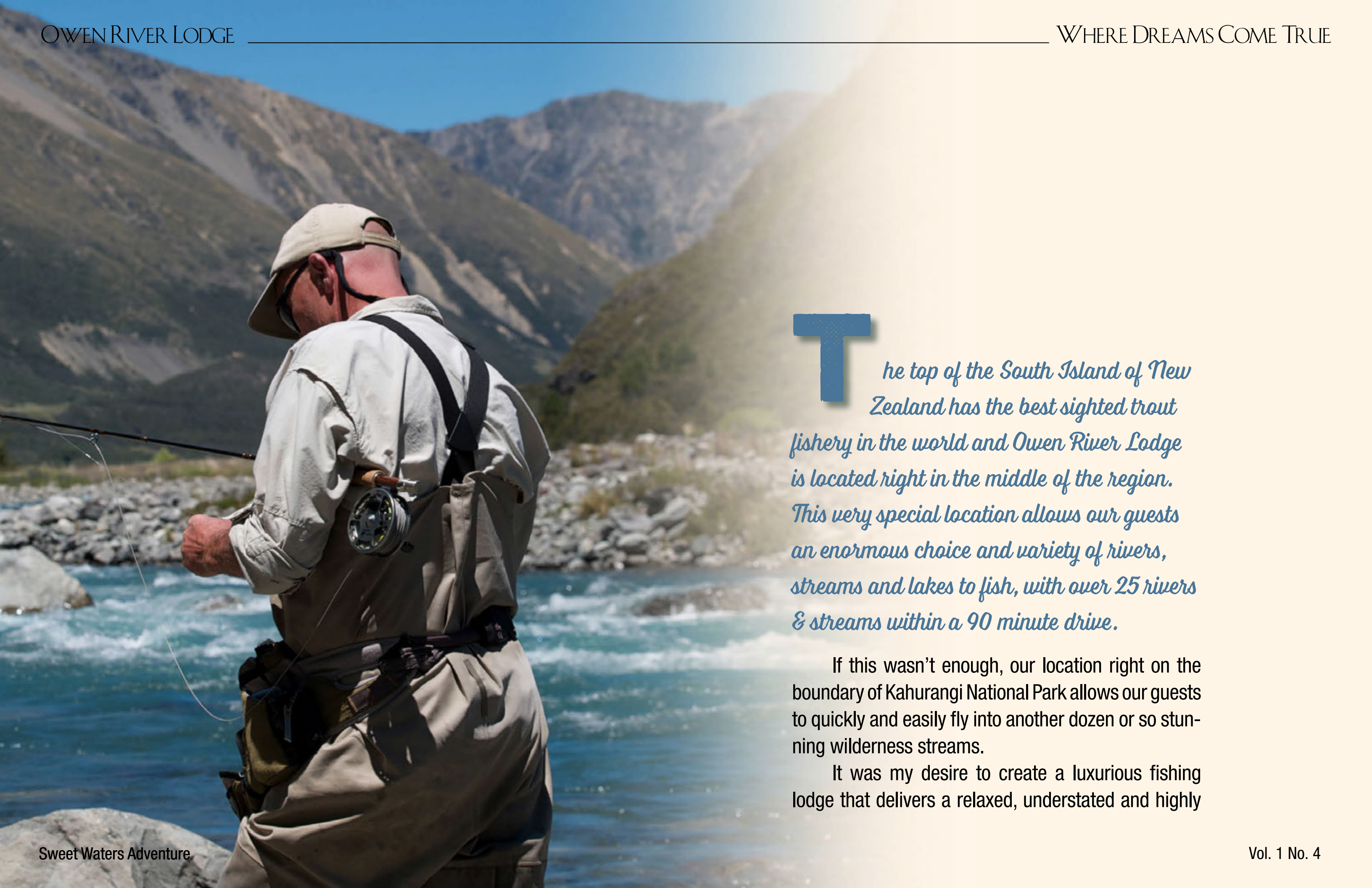


OWEN RIVER LODGE

WHERE  
DREAMS  
COME  
TRUE

Photography provided by Owen River Lodge



A man in a tan shirt and cap is fishing in a river. He is wearing a tan shirt, a tan cap, and a fishing reel. The background shows a river with white water rapids and mountains in the distance. The sky is blue and clear.

**T**he top of the South Island of New Zealand has the best sighted trout fishery in the world and Owen River Lodge is located right in the middle of the region. This very special location allows our guests an enormous choice and variety of rivers, streams and lakes to fish, with over 25 rivers & streams within a 90 minute drive.

If this wasn't enough, our location right on the boundary of Kahurangi National Park allows our guests to quickly and easily fly into another dozen or so stunning wilderness streams.

It was my desire to create a luxurious fishing lodge that delivers a relaxed, understated and highly



professional level of service in stylish surrounds, serving wonderful food to travelling anglers and non anglers alike.

Owen River Lodge has developed one of New Zealand's most experienced guiding teams. All our friendly fishing guides are local kiwis, all of whom are members of the New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association. With their assistance a day on the river is full of action, excitement and generally much laughter!

Our elegantly designed guest accommodation cottage suites are full of sunlight, and offer stunning views of the river, the Owen Ranges and Kahurangi National Park.

What makes Owen River Lodge so special? Well, in order to be the best a combination of many parts needs to come together—we have warm luxurious accommodations, the most experienced team of professional fishing guides ever assembled in

*Our friendly fishing guides ensure that a day on the river is full of action, excitement, and generally much laughter.*

New Zealand, a friendly motivated team of staff members to care for our guests, talented and innovative chefs, modern well maintained facilities, a huge selection of Simms & Sage loan gear for our guests to use, easy access to the greatest sighted trout fishery in the world and understated, unpretentious friendly service.

Our aim is to spoil our guests rotten, allowing them to unwind, relax and enjoy the stunning countryside the lodge is located in and, of course, to indulge in our world class trout fishery.











The views from the Lodge and guest cottage suites are breath-taking, with sensational vistas to Kahurangi National Park and the Owen River. The lodge sits on the bank of the Owen River and with almost a kilometre of river frontage; it is an ideal locale for a quick practise before you venture out with your fishing guide or for that quiet after-dinner cast during the evening rise.

### *Fishing*

The famous American author/angler Zane Grey described New Zealand as an “Angler’s Eldorado.” He was right on the mark—especially when you look at the trout fishery. Over the years, New Zealand has developed a reputation for having the best sighted river fishing for trout in the world.

You may have heard New Zealand’s rivers described as being “Gin Clear”—well it’s true! Imagine stalking a 10lb brown trout in water, so clear, that water that looks 12 inches deep is actually up to your waist!

Owen River Lodge is located near Murchison, in the Nelson Lakes area of the South Island (the top of the South Island). While mountains and forests abound, the area enjoys a remarkably mild climate.

The lodge is centrally located, with easy access to the Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast Fisheries. Thus you can enjoy fly fishing on numerous blue-ribbon streams and rivers, with over 30 waters accessible by road (most within 1 hours drive) and countless others by helicopter.

The fishing in this region is done by walking and wading










up stream and fishing for sighted brown trout. The South Island of New Zealand is world renowned as a “sighted” brown trout fishery, with the average trout size ranging from 3lb to 6lb (there’s nothing average about that!). This means, for the majority of the rivers, the angler must see the fish, before the fish sees you. Hunting or stalking our brown trout requires the angler to use a dull colored fly line, long leaders & fine tippet. Unlike lake fishing, the majority of the casting you will do will be medium

to short distances—accuracy being much more important than the ability to cast the complete fly line. Generally anglers use a 5 or 6 weight rod, 9 to 10 feet in length.

The region has a huge variety of rivers to choose from, small intimate rivers like the Owen River, to iconic freestone rivers such as the Wairau. Each season, our fishery has granted many an angler’s dream of landing a 10 pounder. 









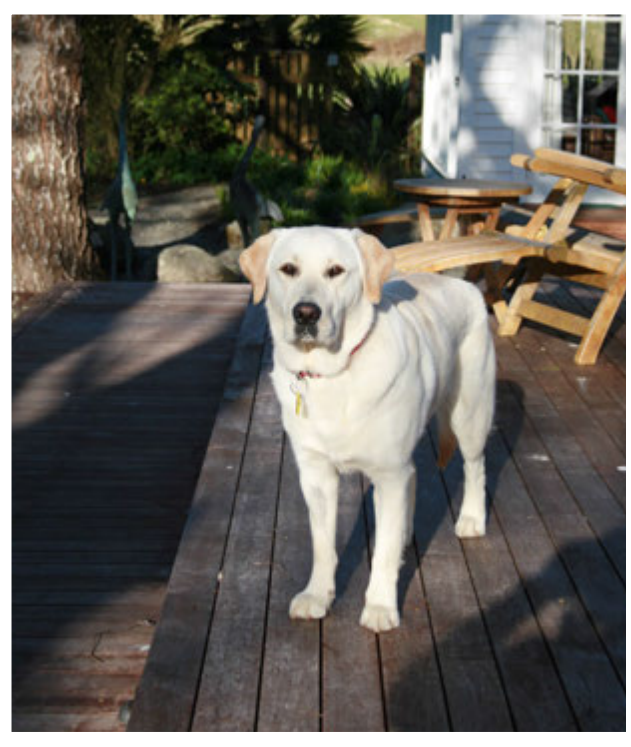
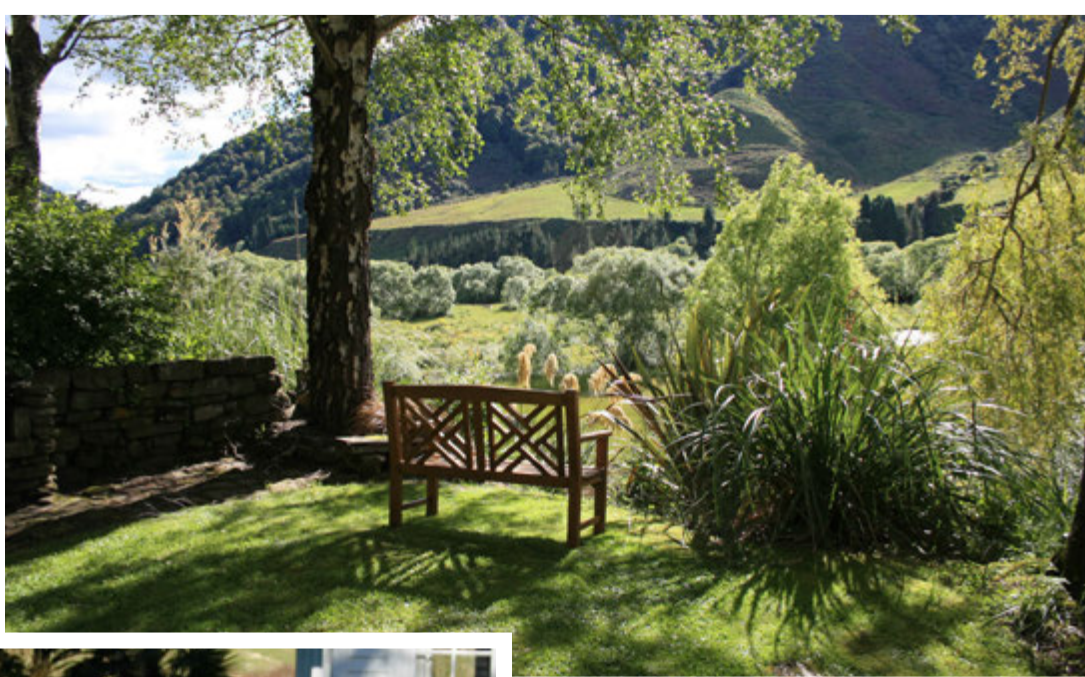
















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# *Where Dreams Come True*

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**OWEN RIVER LODGE**

**SOUTH ISLAND. NEW ZEALAND**



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*No more. No less.*

Along the western slope of the Colorado Rockies sits this National-Park sized working-ranch wonderland. Fly-fishing for 5 kinds of trout with outstanding guides. Wing shooting for upland game and hard-flying birds on thousands of acres of pristine coverts. Farm-to-table local contemporary western cuisine, western elegant accommodations, impeccable service, epic scenery. And always exactly as wild as you want.



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**EXACTLY AS WILD AS YOU WANT.™**

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CRYSTAL CREEK LODGE

# AN INSPIRED ADVENTURE

Photography by Brian Grossenbacher





**O**ur mission statement is: “Hosts of the Alaskan Experience.” We and the staff are grateful to you, our guest, for supporting the life we love through your being our guest at Crystal Creek Lodge. We pledge to demonstrate that gratitude by sharing with you an inspired fishing adventure at one of the most magnificent places on earth. —Dan Michels

Crystal Creek Lodge is located five miles East of King Salmon, Alaska. This world-class Bristol Bay fishing lodge is an award-winning Lodge, consistently demonstrating its exceptional fishing, facilities and commitment to excellence in service. The guided field program at Crystal Creek Lodge is about variety. Our guests fish for Rainbow Trout, char, grayling and salmon. They will either fish the Naknek River, which runs past our front door, or fly out in a sea plane to visit hundreds of miles of surrounding area rivers and streams. We also feature bird hunting





and a wide variety of adventure and nature related activities. Welcome to the land of dreams: the Katmai region of the Bristol Bay area and the greatest freshwater river and stream fishing in Alaska, if not the entire earth. Perhaps we should say: welcome to the land of reality.

Bristol Bay rivers have the largest Pacific Salmon runs on earth. The rivers and streams of Katmai are infused with wild Alaska Rainbow Trout and grow some of the largest Trout on earth. The Naknek River, home water of the lodge, grows trout upwards of 30 inches. Arctic Char and grayling also inhabit these waters in prolific numbers, and the combination of salmon, trout and char make for a fishery of intense productivity and diversity. Since 1988, Crystal Creek Lodge has fulfilled countless dreams in its history, yet the concept is constantly tested and crafted by Dan Michels and his staff of dedicated men and women, people who share the vision of consistently delivering the finest Alaskan luxury fishing vacation possible. Our mission statement is: "Hosts of the Alaskan Experience." Time afield is precious and essential to the spirit. A vacation is about rejuvenation. You might as well have the best.

### Dining and Food Service

A chefs' kitchen is adjacent to a dining room that overlooks the Naknek River. The kitchen is open to guests and you are welcome to watch Chef de Cuisine Brian Sexton & his staff and converse with them as they prepare your meals and serve the table.











## Fishing

The Rainbow Trout of Alaska are fish of legend. The Naknek River and streams of the surrounding Katmai National Park region offer some of the finest Rainbow Trout fishing in the world. Crystal Creek Lodge is on the Naknek River and very close to other famous rivers and streams of Katmai. Accordingly, many of Crystal Creek Lodges' guests love the pursuit of Rainbow Trout and much of the time do so while walk-wade fly-fishing. Most rivers and streams fished are clear-flowing and gravel-bottomed, and are of a size easily wadeable.

Widely represented through the Bristol Bay region, the chars have proven a beloved quarry of Crystal Creek anglers. Dolly Varden char and Arctic Char are common in the sub-arctic waters accessible from the lodge, and CCL anglers routinely find them in remarkable number. 100-fish days are not uncommon on some of our preferred streams, and anglers can catch dozens of char in the 18-28 inch range during a single day of fishing. But char afford our guests much more than simply a high-volume angling opportunity; they are emblematic of the far north, and a defining piece of the Alaska fishing experience.









Within the treasure trove of species that define the Alaskan fishery, the Chinook Salmon or King as they are known in Alaska, is the crown jewel. These majestic fish, returning each year to the heart of their spawning grounds in the Bristol Bay region, cruise the deep channels of the Naknek and Nushagak Rivers as a hidden ransom of silver. In fact, the King Salmon run on the Nushagak, a major river only 35 miles west of Crystal Creek Lodge, is host to the largest wild King Salmon run remaining in the world, with an annual average of 100,000 fish in that river alone.

### Wingshooting

All waterfowl and upland hunts are conducted or supervised by Dan Michels, an Orvis Endorsed Wingshooting Guide. Hunting guides at Crystal Creek Lodge have substantial bird hunt guiding and dog handling experience. Crystal Creek Lodge offers the class act of guided Alaskan upland bird hunts. We have been guiding upland hunts since 1993 and have given extraordinary consideration toward the development of the hunting program. Hunters are provided with carefully researched, productive covers, experienced and competent guides, carefully trained pointing dogs of exceptional breeding, quality double guns and all other appropriate hunting equipment.

We rotate hunters on several shooting areas—some are freshwater ponds, some are saltwater estuaries—resting these areas between hunts. New birds migrate into these ponds each day. Birds in Alaska have yet to be hunted in early September and are not decoy shy. Limits are generous.







Ptarmigan hunting season begins in southwest Alaska on August 10 of each year and goes through the end of the Crystal Creek Lodge season. All birds are wild. Seeing and flushing bird numbers into the hundreds is not unusual on any given day in the field. The local upland hunting range includes numerous covers within the normal area of flight operations. Covers and birds exist in sufficient quantities that we are able to offer all of our upland hunters at least one opportunity to be the first guns on one section of cover. We seldom visit covers more than twice per season and give the covers sufficient rest between visits.

Alaskan upland hunts are conducted by one guide directing a maximum of two hunters. The country is big and the vistas extraordinary. Pointing dogs steady to wing and shot locate and hold game. We recommend that you bring your favorite double gun; otherwise a 12 or 20 gauge double gun can be provided. Appropriate ammunition is provided as are blaze orange strap vests. You must provide waterproof upland hunting boots.

The terrain shown is typical cover. While the overall terrain is relatively flat the ground is uneven and 1-3 miles of walking is typical during the course of a hunt. Participating hunters should be in good physical condition.

### Family Adventure

Design an adventure itinerary based at Crystal Creek Lodge to trek across the sky of Southwest Alaska. See a region that is wild, dramatic and incredibly diverse. You'll be hundreds of miles from the thousands of tourists mobbing the popular cruise







ship ports or highway-accessible regions of the State. The best part is you might be the only visitor of the day to some of the more exotic places we visit.

A combination of specialists from our guide team will host your day-to-day adventures. Dan Michels and Alex Oberholtzer, owners, pilots and guides, personally conduct many of the adventure activities. Flights to the destinations are between 30 to 90 minutes away from the lodge. The flights themselves will be filled with aerial points of interest and the day will be planned to encompass 2-4 stops at ground points of interest. Ample time

on the ground will be available take advantage of interpretive possibilities relating to history, geography and wildlife abound.

Pick either a four or seven-day package at Crystal Creek Lodge, then consider the activity and destination possibilities listed on the Adventures menu. Our guided fishing resources are substantial and fishing can be mixed into the itinerary as desired. Adventures can be incorporated into a fishing vacation, fishing can be incorporated into an adventure vacation or an adventure vacation can be designed of it's own accord. Heather Oberholtzer and Dan Michels will personally work with you by









phone to explain the best options for the time in season and desired interests: A custom-designed, sample itinerary will be submitted by email for your approval.

### Bear Viewing

The nearby Katmai National Park and Preserve is world famous for its population of Brown Bears. Literally thousands live there. It is very common to see bears each day as we fly between the lodge and field destinations. It is also very easy to find and safely watch them on the ground as they fish, graze and interact with each other.

Katmai has been a bear sanctuary for decades, and as result the bears are accustomed to and not threatened by a human presence. A day of bear viewing is a memorable experience and is often the highlight of a vacation at Crystal Creek Lodge.

The bears move constantly to take advantage of concentrated food sources. Accordingly, we have several great bear viewing areas within the Park and nearby Alaska Peninsula Wildlife Refuge where bears congregate to feed. We can provide a great bear watching trip anytime during the season. The famous Brooks River in Katmai Park is a 15 minute flight from the lodge. Brooks is the easiest place in the world to see bears: just step off the plane, walk about a mile along an easy, graded path then watch up to 30 bears from the safety of an elevated viewing platform. There is excellent fishing for Rainbow Trout and Sockeye Salmon in the Brooks River for those who'd like to fish for part of the day.








## Hiking

Our roadless region of Alaska is filled with inspiring possibilities for the hiking enthusiast. We have innumerable locations to find breathtaking wilderness hikes, and the floatplane is just the ticket to get you deep into the wilderness for a day hike and back home again in time for a hot shower and delicious dinner. Imagine hiking a trail through a mountain pass used by Eskimos and Aleuts to portage and trade for thousands of years, then consider the same trail was used by Russian traders and explorers in the 1700s when the land was Russian America. How about hiking to the rim of a volcano that has been dormant for 30 years? We have a few hikes set up to seek objectives such as to view birds, bears, caribou, walrus, seals and other various wildlife, waterfalls, rock formations or just plain beautiful scenery vistas. Of course there are all kinds of places to hike into and find great fishing.

## National Parks

The 4,725,000 acre Katmai National Park and the 1,157,000 acre Becharof National Wildlife Refuge are both within sight of the lodge and the 4,000,000 acre Lake Clark National Park and the 4,100,000 acre Togiak National Wildlife Refuge are a short airplane ride away. Each offers a multitude of day trip possibilities. 







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# *Inspiring Adventures on Land or Water*

Since 1988, Crystal Creek Lodge has fulfilled countless dreams in its history, consistently delivering the finest

Alaskan luxury fishing and wing shooting vacations possible. See a region that is wild, dramatic and incredibly diverse. You'll be hundreds of miles from the thousands of tourists mobbing the popular cruise ship ports or highway-accessible regions of the State.



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# *Private Island Paradise, Deep Water Cay Style.*

**“PERFECT. AS CLOSE TO HEAVEN AS IS SAFE FOR SANITY!”**

*–Liam Neeson*

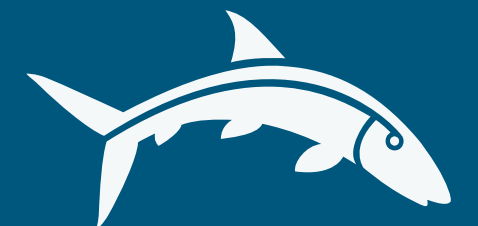
It doesn't get much better than this.  
Since 1958 anglers have come here for the  
legendary fishing on 250 square miles of  
bonefish and permit flats. Now DWC is much  
more. Excellent guides. Reef and offshore  
fishing. Lovely accommodations. Full scuba program.  
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service. Tranquility, privacy and plenty of fishing.  
Heavenly.



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**BONEFISH & TARPON  
TRUST**



**Deep Water Cay**  
BAHAMAS

Email Jim Stenson for more details at:  
[jim@sweetwatersadventure.com](mailto:jim@sweetwatersadventure.com)



TONGARIRO LODGE

*On the Banks of a  
Legend*

Photography provided by Tongariro Lodge





*Tongariro Lodge in New Zealand was established in 1982 by legendary angler and guide Tony Hayes and has earned an excellent reputation for gourmet dining, the finest accommodation, quality outdoor activities and the most experienced fly-fishing guides in New Zealand. In the early days Zane Grey made Tongariro famous and even the Queen Mother stalked its famous rivers.*

American Presidents such as Jimmy Carter found solitude besides it's tranquil waters, not to mention a few trout. Ernest Schwiebert, the traveling troubadour of Princeton University, considered Tony Hayes and his lodge Tongariro one of the greatest fly fishing lodges on the planet.





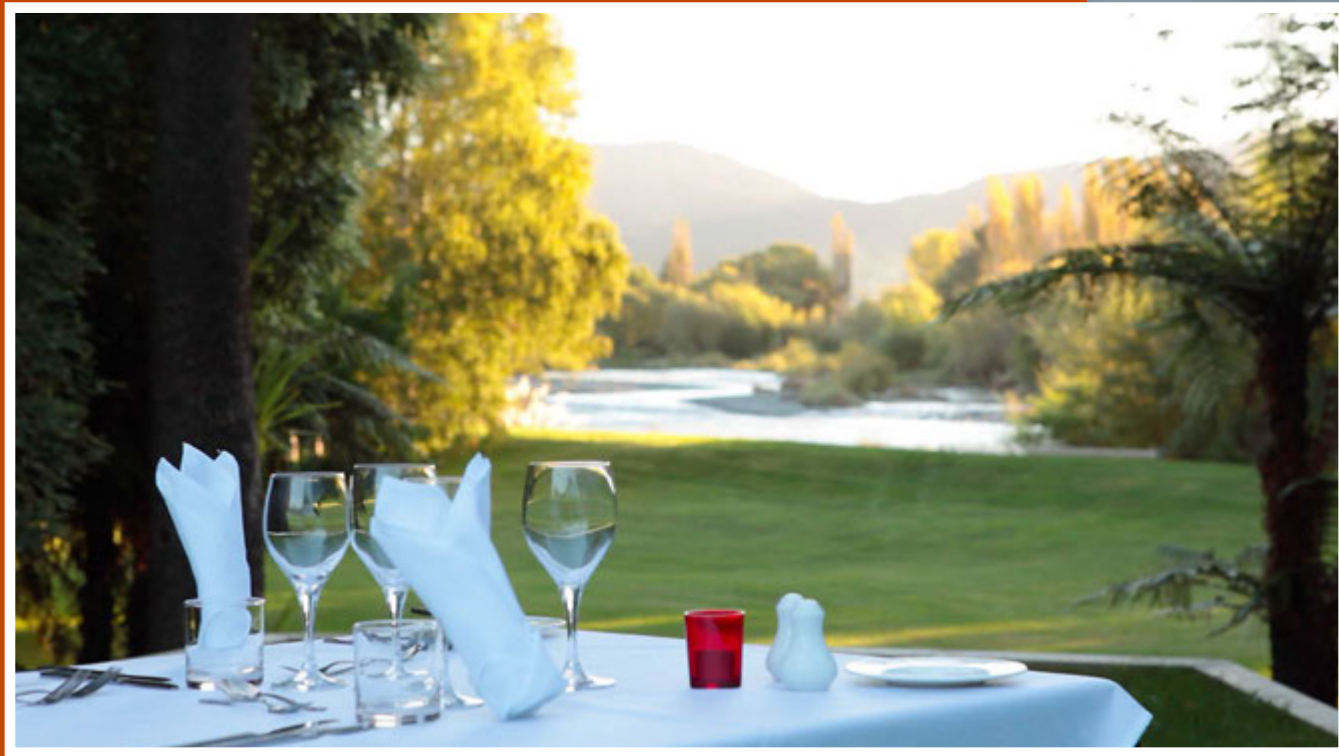
The Lodge is located in beautiful park-like grounds on the banks of the legendary Tongariro River on the southern shores of Lake Taupo at the foot of New Zealand's outdoor playground—the world heritage Tongariro National Park.

The heart of the lodge is the main building with its rustic lounges, comfortable sofas, open fires and trophies of the past adorning the walls. The true atmosphere of the Lodge is best experienced in front of an open fire over a four-course meal carefully prepared by our chefs and served in style by our friendly

staff in one of our two pleasant dining rooms. We also offer an all-weather tennis court and a secluded spa pool, heli-pad and free wireless internet.

Separate private chalets and villa guest accommodations are situated within the 22 acres of beautiful lodge grounds, allowing for intimate encounters with the outdoors for every guest. Tongariro Lodge is the ideal venue for fishermen, but also offers a wide range of other events for the family. There are three accommodation types available for guests, each with private





facilities and its own secluded sunny terrace with views of the Tongariro River or mountains. The incomparable Tongariro, yours to share and enjoy.

At Tongariro Lodge we believe the enjoyment of food and fine wine to be an integral part of your visit to the Taupo region. The dining experience captures the essence of the bold vibrant surroundings, serving the best of New Zealand game and traditional foods. Hearty breakfast and luncheon are provided at your leisure, while our special hamper lunches will set your day up for an uninterrupted adventure.





## FISHING

Tongariro Lodge's guiding operation is one of New Zealand's most experienced fly-fishing outfitters. The knowledge, experience and expertise of the lodge's guides is unequalled. Founded by legendary angler and guide Tony Hayes. In 1982 Tongariro Lodge Guides have catered for the world's who's who of fly-fishing. Our guides provide access to over 40 rivers and 3 Lakes. They offer the most diverse range of rainbow and brown trout fly fishing opportunities in New Zealand.

The name New Zealand raises the pulse of trout fishermen and women the world over, and wild rainbow and brown trout have thrived better in the Lake Taupo system than anywhere else in this country. Trophy trout over 10lbs are landed by Tongariro Lodge guests each year, with an overall average of around 4 lbs.

## HELI-FISHING

Tongariro Lodge guides are the most experienced heli-fishing operators in New Zealand. From October to April, guests enjoy this ultimate wilderness fly fishing experience from the Lodge. Tongariro Lodge has special access to large areas of private land that provides anglers with helicopter access to fourteen wilderness rivers, and includes up to 60 kilometres of trophy fly-fishing for brown and rainbows.













## RAFT FISHING

From December 1 until May 31 wilderness raft fishing on the upper Tongariro can be superb. The remote head waters of the Tongariro can only be accessed by raft and your white water rafting guide will row you and your fly-fishing guide down numerous rapids to access crystal clear pools and unspoiled runs. For anglers seeking uncrowded waters and large numbers of quality fish this can be trout heaven. From January to March, excellent raft fishing can also be had targeting large lake run browns and rainbows with big cicada imitation dry flies in the lower reaches from the lodge to the lake. Some of the biggest browns in New Zealand are taken in this section of the Tongariro each summer.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Our experienced rafting operator will personally row you down the majestic, boulder strewn headwaters of the mighty Tongariro River, which arguably provides the best white water rafting experience in New Zealand, with many exciting grade 3 rapids to enjoy. With your expert guide personally rowing, you will ensure the smoothest, driest (waders provided to keep you warm and dry) and safest trip possible, sit back, hold on and enjoy the magnificent scenery, that has not changed for hundreds of years. Stop and rest on a beautiful pool in the sun and enjoy a exquisite picnic lunch with a glass of one of New Zealand's finest wines.









This enclosed river valley and gorge is largely inaccessible except by raft and contains wonderful native beach forest, beautiful native ferns and flora, fantastic river views and pristine clear water. It is truly a nature lover's playground—spot large rainbow trout in the clear deep pools and if you are lucky see native birds, including the rare native wood pigeon and the most special bird of all, the rare Blue Duck.

A unique part of this trip will be a personal introduction to the blue duck programme by your experienced and knowledgeable guide (the owners of our rafting company are the founders of this programme). This conserva-

tion initiative has the goal of returning the rare native Blue Duck (Whio) to its traditional habitat along the Tongariro River. Blue Ducks are only found in the most pristine river environments and are very rare with an estimated number of only 3,000 birds in New Zealand. The Blue Duck has no close relatives anywhere in the world.

A large number of predators have been trapped already and the Blue Duck numbers in the upper-Tongariro have doubled in the last four years. This project has been awarded a Community Conservation Award by the New Zealand Department of Conservation. 













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# *The Legendary Tongariro River*

## NEW ZEALAND'S PLAYGROUND



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# Atlantic Salmon Federation

## Membership today means a chance for tomorrow



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**Wild Atlantic salmon** are a sentinel species that define the health of our river and marine ecosystems. **Join today** and help support the Atlantic Salmon Federation **conserve, protect and restore wild Atlantic salmon, the ocean and the rivers** on which their well-being depend.

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or contact Cindy at [membership@asf.ca](mailto:membership@asf.ca) / 1-800-565-5666

### Atlantic Salmon Federation's Upcoming Special Events:

ASF Events are a great opportunity to visit with friends, share fishing stories and support the work of the Atlantic Salmon Federation and ASF Affiliates.

**Chicago, IL** ~ Tuesday, September 23rd ~ The Racquet Club  
**Montreal, PQ** ~ Wednesday, September 24th ~ Le Windsor  
**Ottawa, ON** ~ Wednesday, October 8th ~ The Canadian Museum of History  
**St. John's, NL** ~ Thursday, October 23rd ~ The Capital Hotel  
**Saint John, NB** ~ Wednesday, October 29th ~ The Delta Brunswick  
**New York, NY** ~ Wednesday, November 12th ~ The Plaza

For more information or to secure seating, contact the Atlantic Salmon Federation  
1-800-565-5666/[events@asf.ca](mailto:events@asf.ca) visit [www.asf.ca](http://www.asf.ca) for regular updates

[www.asf.ca](http://www.asf.ca)





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*BRAY*  
SPORTSMAN'S DUFFEL

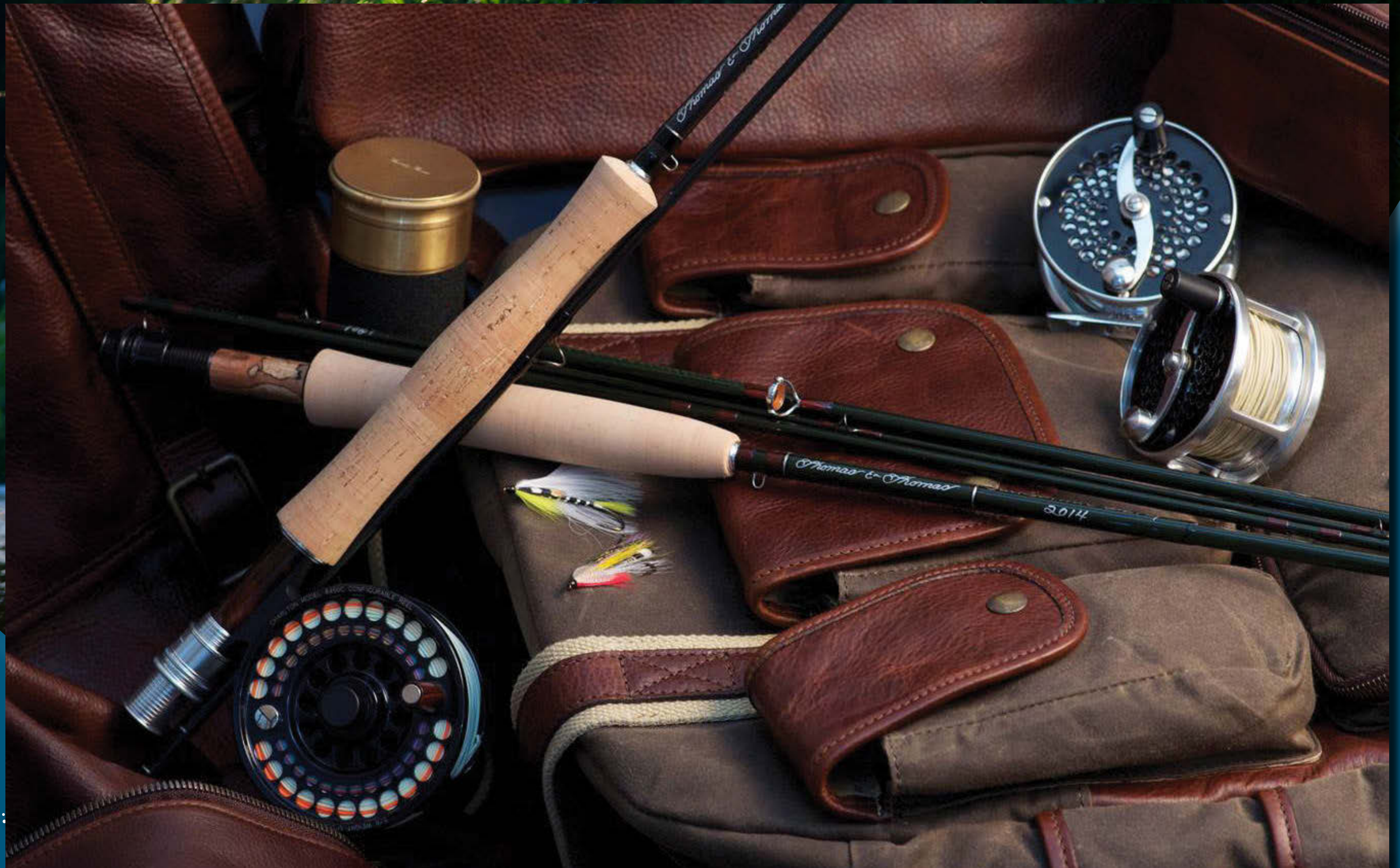


*RUNION*  
GUN CASE

*TAD COFFIN*  
EQUESTRIAN TOTE

*LEW*  
COMPONENT BAG





Where Life is an Adventure Not a Guided Tour





ACCESSORY  
CASE



*BENEDICT*  
WEEKEND BAG

(Football not available for purchase)

Where Life is an Adventure Not a Guided Tour







*CREWS*  
BACKPACK

Where Life is an Adventure Not a Chained Tour



*BENEDICT*  
WEEKEND BAG



Where Life is an Adventure Not a Guided Tour



*CLELAND  
XL DUFFEL*

*DONALD  
DOPP KIT*

*LASER COGNAC  
BELT*



*LEATHER  
FLASK*

*PETTY  
BOTTLE TOTE*

*LEATHER  
COASTERS*

*BURNETT  
CHAMPAGNE CARRIER*



MEEHAN  
BAR ROLL-UP

MEEHAN  
UTILITY BAG

PDT  
COCKTAIL BOOK

CAPPS  
LEATHER APRON

SINCE 1933

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PRO OUTFITTERS LODGE


PERFECT PLACE TO

# *Cast & Blast*

Photographs by Brian Grossenbacher  
and Pro Outfitters







*Rapids, pools, long riffles and short runs. Native cutthroat trout. Crisp bright mornings that dissolve into warm, lingering afternoons. Wild birds rising into a brilliant sky. Uncommon beauty and solitude found only in the natural world. Invest in what you value. Invest your vacation time with PRO Outfitters. PRO has been guiding passionate anglers and bird hunters for over 40 years. Our guides know where the fish and the birds are and love teaching you how to get them.*

PRO's North Fork Crossing sits on the bank of the North Fork of the Blackfoot River. We are the only full service fishing lodge in the famed Blackfoot Valley. Pro Outfitters has unique tent cabins were designed for the ultimate comforts of a full service lodge without losing the intimate connection to nature that camping can provide. Each canvas tent cabin comes equipped with heat, electricity, wood floors and a private bath house with all the amenities of home.










The Big Blackfoot River boasts large populations of native West Slope Cutthroat Trout through years of collaborative efforts toward restoration of the Blackfoot River as a fishery that keeps getting better and better. From the lodge you have access to several other rivers and unlimited walk and wade access to both private and public waters. If you want to test your skill on the mighty Missouri, it is only an hour away from the North Fork Crossing.

The Pro Outfitters Sharptail Lodge was built right in the middle of 150,000+ acres of private farm and ranchland that is home to some of the most prolific wild bird habitat in the USA. The lack of development and vast tracts of native grass provides perfect habitat for our native sharptail grouse. Starting September 1st, our guests start the season off chasing sharptail grouse and Hungarian partridge. In mid-October our pheasant season opens and our clients have a chance to harvest all three. To do this, we need: (1) a lot of land; (2) knowledgeable guides; and (3) Big Running Dogs! Check...Check...and...Check! 





*Pro Outfitters delivers native cutthroat trout,  
crisp bright mornings that dissolve into  
warm, lingering afternoons and wild birds  
rising into a brilliant sky.*





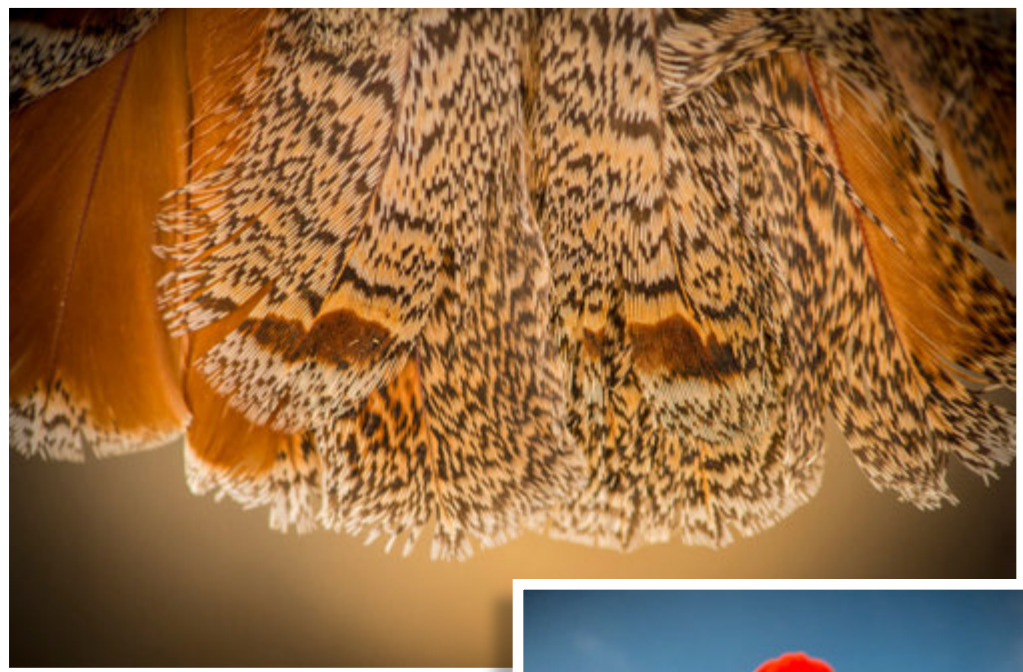






*We have been guiding passionate anglers  
and bird hunters for over 40 years.*





















*Sweet Waters*  
**ADVENTURE**  
*Where Life is an Adventure Not a Guided Tour*

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