



We are in the twenty-first year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on the great fly fishing venues, trip reports and insights for our traveling fly fishers. We've been to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new destinations. Whatever unbiased information on timing and locations we can provide comes at the same cost to you as booking direct – i.e., NO EXTRA COST.

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HUNTING TARPON, PERMIT, AND BONEFISH IN THE SIAN KA'AN

The ultimate "hunting" experience with a rod and reel is stalking and sight-casting to fish on the saltwater flats. The primary shallow water target species that make this challenge so exciting are bonefish, tarpon, permit, and snook. One of the top places on the globe for flats fishing is the Sian Ka'an Biosphere, located approximately 100 miles south of Cancun, Mexico. The biosphere is a shallow water environment that is home for permit, baby tarpon, snook, and bonefish as well as most of the saltwater flats species like barracuda, jacks, snappers, etc. This amazing marine eco-environment is a World Heritage Site and is a protected area that covers 2000 square miles of wetland, mangrove channels, coastline, including two massive bays, Ascension and Espiritu Santo Bay.



Last month, I was joined for a week on Espiritu Santo Bay by three guys (Jeff Reinke, Josh Luft-Glidden, Tim Quattlebaum) who previously had very limited exposure to saltwater fly fishing. They had never fished anywhere before with the opportunity to catch all the flats fish that make the Inshore Grand Slam: tarpon, bonefish, permit, and snook.

Tim (at left with a "baby" tarpon), was one of our newcomers to the Sian Ka'an and he captured the essence of the trip with these comments: "It was my first trip to Playa Blanca and Espiritu Santo Bay. I found it to be extremely beautiful, peaceful and the entire team at Playa Blanca were very helpful. The possibility of catching the variety of fish, permit, snook, tarpon and bonefish was a big plus for me and proved to be exactly what I had hoped it to be. I would also like to say being new to salt water flats, the fishing guides really tried to make me a better fisherman, which I appreciated, and have booked another trip next month back to Espiritu Santo Bay."

Collectively, all four of us released bonefish, baby tarpon, snook, and the most treasured fly rod species of them all, permit. In fact, our three newcomers (Jeff, Tim, and Josh) took 8 permit between them.

OPTIONS TO FISH ESPIRITU SANTO BAY: The newest lodge on the bay is Blacksmith who began operations this past summer. The original lodge to fish the bay is Playa Blanca, which remains one of the premier salt water flats fly fishing lodges. Espiritu Santo Bay Lodge was added about 6 years ago. Blacksmith has one significant advantage – it is located on the bay with its dock and skiffs accessible right in front of the lodge. The other two

lodges require a daily drive to get to the bay. Blacksmith's location allows for anglers to set their own fishing schedule which allows for a return to the lodge during hours you're not fishing. We are going to Blacksmith in November and have the week of March 21 – 28 reserved there. As of now, we still have 3 guides open for our March week.

Photos below, l to r: guide with nice permit; stalking from a poled skiff; snook release; Tim with one of his four permit, including his first ever.



Comments from Jeff: 'When I was told bonefish, tarpon, permit and snook are all real opportunities I was all in on this adventure. Since the only salt water flats fish I've ever caught were bonefish this was a great chance to add to my species list. I can now say I've caught on the fly all of them.' Jeff had a day where he released 3 permit and had a Grand Slam, all in the same day (bonefish, tarpon, and permit).

Photos below, l to r: Jeff's baby tarpon and one of his first permit; the three flies that took Jeff's Grand Slam – top to bottom, crab (permit), mangrove fly (tarpon), and shrimp imitation (bonefish); every day, following our fishing day, we met for drinks and hors d'oeuvres at this beach front table to warm up for dinner; Josh with one of his fish from his 15 bonefish day.



Photos below, l to r: other 'hunters' share the flats; Gordon McHaney, a Playa Blanca veteran, with a great permit that was taken with the "cast of the week," a 50 foot cast to this fish that was swimming directly away; Josh with a baby tarpon; releasing my 83rd permit, 17 from my goal of 100.



A "BEST DAY EVER" EXPERIENCE



On the last day of the trip to Espiritu Santo Bay referenced above, our group at the lodge had collectively the best single day of saltwater flats fishing that I've ever been a part of.....and I didn't even release one fish myself! In fact, personally, I had the slowest day of my week. Apparently, all the fish in the part of the bay where I was fishing hadn't heard this was supposed to be a "best day ever." Myself and another Playa Blanca veteran, Gordon McHaney, didn't hook a permit. The "best day" designation was earned by the other four anglers. Three of the four were the newcomers to these salt water flats

referenced in the story above (Jeff Reinke, Tim Quattlebaum, and Josh Luft – Glidden) and one veteran of over 100 trips to the Sian Ka’an, Joe Dudra (Joe with a nice permit at right). Tim and Joe each released three permit for the day! Josh had a 15 bonefish day. And Jeff was the super-star with three permit plus a Grand Slam!



Personally, I’ve been fortunate enough to have been part of many outstanding “catching days.” However, never have I been part of a single day with results like this. Even though I didn’t contribute a fish to the collective effort, it was a thrill for me just to be there to hear about it.

FERNIE BC TRIP REPORT – CUTTS AND BULL TROUT



Tucked into the scenic west slope of the Canadian Rockies, near the border with Alberta, is the small town of Fernie, British Columbia. In the winter, southern BC has several areas that become home to jet-set skiers from around the globe. In the summer and early fall, it transitions into a trout fisherman’s Rocky Mountain paradise with options ranging from drift boat fishing on the main stem of the Elk River and other larger rivers to “walk’n’wade” days on spectacular small streams and rivers. Dave Hamilton (at left with bull trout), Dave Firestone, and Cynthia Hegedus and Joe Rusconi recently spent almost a week in this spectacular area.

Many of the waters of southern BC are classified and protected which limits the number of anglers keeping fishing pressure to an acceptable level. These protections have stimulated a healthy population of surface oriented, native west-slope cutthroat as well as what might be the best remaining bull trout fishery on the globe (the bull trout average 25 inches). This is a good fishery for both kids and new comers to fly fishing as well as veterans looking for a challenging experience.



Comments from Dave H: “I thought the Fernie Wilderness Adventures people were terrific. The guides were excellent.....The fishing was quite varied, with some walk-and-wade fishing on both a small stream and a big river plus fine drift-boat fishing for cutthroats on the Elk River. The cabin (lodge in photo at right) where we stayed was very nice, especially because there were only the four of us occupying the entire cabin (which could easily accommodate 8-10 anglers without feeling crowded). Although it might be considered “rustic” by some standards, it had good lighting, hot showers, comfortable beds, and good wifi, and the food was terrific. The cabin staff were personable and took great care of us. In my opinion, it was an advantage to be outside Fernie in a beautiful area with all our meals provided. All in all I would give this outfit top marks and a strong recommendation.”

Photos below, l to r: Dave H with a bull trout and a cutt; a native cutt with the defining orange slash on its lower jaw; Dave F with a cutt and large bull trout.



Dave F was on his first fly fishing trip and was lucky enough to have the experience of fishing to and catching some large bull trout. His comments: “Fernie Wilderness Adventures took great care of us, fed us very well, and guided us on beautiful rivers with fish to match.....Dave H and I caught a number of large bull trout between us.

We didn't keep count, but the photos here were of the largest ones Dave and I landed. And I believe we each lost another big one -- I know I did. An amazing day of fishing!"

Photos below, l to r: Fishing approaches included using drift boats on the main Elk River and others plus some walk'n wading on some beautiful small streams and the spectacular freestone water, the Wigwam River – again, permitted waters to control the fishing pressure. Dave F with a nice fish.



FERNIE OPTIONS



For those used to fishing the crowded waters south of the border, the rivers and streams in the Fernie area are a treat with their restricted and permitted access. There are three primary ways to approach accommodations while fishing here:

1. If the budget can handle it, there is a new luxury lodge which offers an all-inclusive program including guides. It is located on a ranch on the banks of the Elk River with private access to a stretch of the Elk.
2. A more budget oriented, comfortable, rustic lodge tucked into the mountains. This is the lodge that is referenced in the story above where Dave, Dave, Joe, and Cynthia stayed.
3. There are several condo complexes in the area which cater to skiers in the winter. You can rent a ski-condo, including a kitchen if you want to prepare your own meals, or take your meals in Fernie where there are good restaurant options.

FAVORITE PATAGONIA LODGE – OPEN DATES

Tucked into the Chilean Andes in one of the most remote areas is the lodge we claim as “the finest in Patagonia.” There are many reasons to support the “finest” designation – among them great fishing and options which include an overnight float trip through on an Andes river and an outpost camp, outstanding ambiance and service, and a location where seeing other anglers is more of a surprise than the expected norm. They have very few open dates for the upcoming season – here they are:

7 nights / 6 days of fishing - Sunday to Sunday - including Palena overnight float - \$8,495 per angler:

- January 19 to January 26 - 1 spot
- January 19 to February 26 - 1 spots
- February 23 to March 2 - 1 spot
- March 7 to 14 - 2 spots
- March 14 to 21 - 4 spots
- March 16 to March 23 - 1 spot

They also have a few weeks open for two anglers on their 10 night and 11 night programs. If you'd like more info, just hit “reply” and ask.



SLIDE PRESENTATION IN NAPA – OCTOBER 30

Next Wednesday, we'll be presenting a slide presentation at Sweeney's Sport Shot in Napa, Calif at 7:30. The theme of the show is Stalking The World's Great Gamefish With A Fly Rod. If you're in the Napa Valley next Wednesday eve, come and join us.

WHAT WE DO AT FLY FISHING ADVENTURES

This is a link with a description of who we are and what we do.....also, it lists the destinations around the world where we can provide reliable information and help you prepare for your trip: [Fly Fishing Adventures - About What We Do](#)

OCTOBER MEMORY PHOTO



Dana and John Landis were in Alaska for the prime late season time when the largest rainbows are most available. In fact, they were there on the very last day of this season in Alaska and most of the lodges were closed so they had the waters pretty much to themselves – sort of like their own “private Alaska.” As an extra bonus, with the exception of one day, they had good weather. That’s Dana with a fabulous 29 ½ inch rainbow.

Photo credits: Sian Ka’an – Espiritu Santo Bay – Jeff Reinke, Tim Quattlebaum, Josh Luft-Glidden, Joe Dudra, Gordon McHaney; Fernie – Dave Hamilton, Dave Firestone, Mark Andersen; Patagonia – John Landis;

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