



Tarpon on, Belize flat



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THE BELIZE MOTHERSHIP TRIP – AN OVERVIEW



Belize offers a variety of fishing environments and species. Beginning with the second largest barrier reef in the world, there are tarpon, bonefish, and permit flats, jungle rivers, and miles of mangrove edges. To those familiar with the Belize mothership approach, there is no better way to cover the options than living on the protected waters inside the Belize barrier reef. What brings our regulars back each year, in spite of the sometimes fickle tropical weather, are these aspects:

- A comfortable, bug free (with rare exception), air conditioned living environment with home-cooked meals prepared around the fishing hours.
- Control of the schedule – fish basically whatever hours you want. Start early and fish late.
- Privacy – no one to answer to or dress for. Separation from the rest of the world.
- Native captains and guides who love to be on the water and who pursue the sight fishing opportunities with passion.
- A spectacular shallow water and reef marine environment – it's just a great place to be.
- While this is primarily a fishing adventure, other activities like visiting cays, snorkeling and scuba diving can be incorporated.
- Belize is one of the strongest shallow water flats fisheries on earth, and on the days when you “hit it right,” it is unforgettable, whether it's tarpon, permit, bonefish, snook, or the multitude of other species ranging from cobia to jacks, cuda, etc.

VARIETY TRIP REPORT

This is a trip report for a group of five friends taking their first mothership trip. For most newcomers, the preferred approach is what is referred to as the “standard variety trip.” This involves anchoring in three or four different places during the week (conditions always dictate the anchorages), and pursuing everything from tarpon to bonefish to reef fish. This particular group had only one angler who had any extensive salt water fly fishing experience. Two of them had never fly fished before and would hook their first fish ever on flies during this trip. They were equipped with both spinning and fly gear and used both depending on the species and situation. The group from left to right: Ulf Hillgren, Rob Pizzie, John Landis, Mike Cirello, and Marty Mikelsons.



They fished the flats for bonefish, permit and tarpon; the mangroves edges for baby tarpon and snook; and the reef for barracuda and whatever else they could find. Their “catch list” included what Belize is famous for in its shallow inshore waters – large tarpon, baby tarpon, bonefish, permit, snook, barracuda, jacks, snappers, and a few very strange reef fish.

Some comments on the overall experience – from Marty: “Guides were remarkable. Worked very hard for long hours and were mostly patient with my casting skills (or lack thereof).”

From Rob on the comfort level of the *Rising Tide*: “Very comfortable. Food excellent. Crew very helpful and a lot of fun.”

They did capture an outstanding collection of photos. For the complete photo essay report on their trip with numbers, click here and give it a few seconds http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/Belize_variety.pdf

Below, L to R: tarpon in air, searching tarpon flat, Marty’s 75+ pound fish finally to the boat after dark, John with baby tarpon, checking the boga for baby T weight



Below, L to R: Mike caught the first permit he ever saw, lobster with garlic butter, Ulf with jack, Rob with bone



OPTIONS FOR PURSUING PERMIT



The permit remains the premier prize in the realm of fly fishing. Exciting to stalk and often frustrating to get to eat, the permit is found in the greatest numbers in a fifty mile stretch of flats inside the Belize barrier reef off the central coast of this small Central American country. This stretch of flats begins about 15 miles southeast of Belize City and extends southward. Most experienced permit anglers agree that this area offers the greatest number of shots at this challenging target.

Using a floating base of operations like a mothership gives you the best opportunity to fish all these flats. There are different approaches that can be used.

- **“THE” PERMIT TRIP** – this is the fully dedicated permit trip committed to going south for the full stretch of the best permit waters. Can use Belize City or Dangriga as the jump off point.
- **THE “ALMOST” DEDICATED PERMIT TRIP** – this trip is focused on the permit flats that extend to about 20 to 25 miles south of Belize City. The “almost” designation applies because, if the permit are not cooperating, you’re close enough to the variety waters to the north that you can abort and head north.
- **THE “HALF WAY” TRIP** - this trip begins with the intent of splitting the trip between the permit waters to the south and the variety waters to the north. How many days are spent pursuing each dimension depend on results and conditions.

For a report on actual trips providing examples of the different versions of permit trips, click on this link and give it a few seconds to load http://www.flyfishingadventures.org/Newsletter/Belize_options.pdf

2013 RESERVATIONS AND PRICING

Pictured are the *Meca* (at right) and the *Rising Tide* anchored together. The *Meca* sleeps up to four and the *Rising Tide* up to six. Groups of 8 or 10 use both boats and, either anchor together for the entire trip, or split apart and go different directions for part of the time. Details on both boats are on the website www.flyfishbelize.com



All of our clients from the current season are given first rights on the same or similar dates for the next year. We are in the process of getting the dates for our clients from this year finalized in order to determine what dates may be open for 2013. As soon as our current clients rebookings are on the calendar, we'll go to our waitlist for newcomers. Since each boat only does three trips a month, there are several months where open space can become scarce quickly.

Pricing listed is per person and includes airport transfers (20 minutes after you land in Belize City, you're on the boat), meals, guides (2 anglers per guide unless arrangements are made for extra skiffs), and accommodations. Pricing listed is for the standard trip which is 7 nights – longer trips can be scheduled, but they need to be on the calendar early.

<u>Rising Tide</u>	<u>Meca</u>
Party of two - \$4,300	\$3,450
Party of four - \$3,250	\$2,600
Five or six - \$3,100	
Extra guide/skiff - \$1,600	\$1,600

Either phone or drop us an e-mail if you have questions or would like more information about any of our destinations.

An enthusiastic traveling fly fisherman,
Don Muelrath
Fly Fishing Adventures
www.flyfishingadventures.org

888-347-4896
flyfish@napanet.net