

NEWSLETTER #22 - MARCH 2004

If you have access to Microsoft Word, open the attachment above to see the information below in a more "reader friendly" format.

Leland Fly Fishing Travel Newsletter – March, '04

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- BUSH STREET SHOP DAY – THIS THURSDAY, 3/4
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This is the twenty-second edition of our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues and insights for our traveling fly fishers. We want to help you match the right location with your fly fishing goals and objectives and properly prepare you to fully enjoy the experience. We've been to most locations and pride ourselves on our ability to research new sites. 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.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A 2005 NEW ZEALAND TRIP

If you're considering New Zealand for an early '05 trip and want to go in the "prime time" month of February, here are some things to consider. Positives can be found for visiting New Zealand every month from October through April, but February offers the greatest opportunity for the ultimate combination of dry fly activity and stable weather patterns (this year excepted).

- There are many annual February NZ fly fishing travelers that booked up their space for next year when they left NZ this year. The best guides, lodges, stays, etc are all booked solid for the month of February very early (into March also in some places). If you want the best options available for a February trip, now is the time to set the wheels in motion. For instance, Leland's has 22 prime spots at Poronui Ranch spread over three February weeks and over half of them are already booked for '05. Some of our favorite guides are already over 50% booked for next February.
- If you want to use frequent flyer air miles to get your airline tickets with, you need to be booking the space on the first day that space is offered if your planning to go in Feb. They allow very limited space for free tickets. Many dates will be gone within the first few days after they make them available.

There are reasons that February in New Zealand is one of the world's great destinations for a fly fishing traveler and, each year, more and more people are finding out why this is true. New Zealand is also one of the great destinations for a traveling fly fisher to take a non-fishing spouse. There are many great options available when putting together a "couple's trip," combining it with world class fly fishing.

BUSH STREET SHOP DAY THIS THURSDAY

I'll be in the Bush Street shop this Thursday from 11:00am til 6:00pm (other times by appointment). There are two scheduled presentations at 12:30 and 5:00 on (what else?) New Zealand. Additionally, I'm available for individually scheduled appointments to review any of our world class fly fishing destinations – can have slide presentations with me if requested in advance. Also, shop managers Keith and Karl will be available all day for lessons on knot tying and reel rigging – everything from your backing to the fly.

LELAND BELIZE TRIP IN AUGUST – VAL ATKINSON ON BOARD

Valentine Atkinson has been my greatest inspiration and a mentor in my fly fishing photography endeavors. Most fly fishers are familiar (or at the very least, you've seen his books and photos) with Val Atkinson, the world's premier outdoor and fly fishing photographer. Leland has both the Meca and Seaduction (max 6 anglers) reserved for a flats fishing adventure in Belize from Aug 27 – Sept 3 hosted by SF shop manager,

Keith Westra. This trip has just added a special dimension with the addition of Val to the group. Two openings still remain – price is \$2400.

PRIME STEELHEAD SPACE – BABINE AND THE DEAN

Normally, the prime time space at the world class steelhead lodges on the Dean and Babine are long gone by this time of year. However, the tough fishing this past year may have shaken out some of the regulars who lock up this limited permitted space each year (for unknown reasons, many of the traditionally strong steelhead runs up and down the BC coast were off in '04). Available as of this writing:

Summer run at Blackwells on the lower Dean: July 16-23 (1 rod), August 6-13 (2 rods) and space still available for the early season combo steelhead and trout fly outs. \$4500pp

Babine Norlakes Lodge: 9/28-10/4 (3 rods) \$3800pp

Babine Steelhead Lodge: This lodge has been closely held in the past and not open to outside agents.

However, we have built a relationship that allows Leland's some great opportunities for our clients. 9/10-16 (4 spots), 10/9-15 the entire lodge is available for us.

OUR FIJI AND NEW ZEALAND COMBO TRIP REPORT

For the second consecutive year, my wife and I combined a tropical week with our New Zealand trip. This year's trip to Fiji was a great experience (as opposed to our stop in French Polynesia last year) and we've already booked a repeat of our '04 itinerary for '05. We stayed at a wonderful resort on an out-island with a price that made this quality stay a great value. Believe it was the first time in my traveling life that I never set an alarm for an entire week! If you'd like a complete report on our Fiji stop, drop me a note and I'll send it.

Two and a half weeks in New Zealand – my wife, Marte, accompanied me for the first week and then she flew home leaving me to some hard core fishing. The first week, we traveled together and I only fished three days, one of which was my best ever NZ day with nine fish and a total weight of 51.5 pounds of brown trout released – all caught sight fishing to individual fish. Good stuff. Also had other good days and some tough days. Weather can make a day very difficult and this years weather was unseasonable for a typical NZ February. That's why it's necessary to schedule enough fishing time (even at a great fly fishing destination) so that you can "hit it right" and have some of those forever memorable days – things just don't work perfectly every day. Details available with photos this Thursday at the Bush Street shop or by privately scheduled presentations.

Summary: Of all the trips we taken in our lifetime, Marte and I agree that our two weeks together in Fiji and NZ was our "best ever." As I mentioned earlier, we've already decided on a repeat of this agenda for next year.

TRIP REPORTS: PATAGONIA, COSTA RICA, AND BELIZE

Some abbreviated trip reports from Leland clients on recent adventures – fortunately, all good stuff.

- Costa Rica, Crocodile Bay: Dr. John Weaver called their stay a "great place for an all around week of varied R & R – accommodations, food, and staff are excellent." Fished three days and also did nature tours (the Osa Peninsula has one of the great tropical rain forests), bird watching and botanical garden tour. On one day of sailfishing released three sails – also got big rooster fish and jacks on other days.
- Patagonia: Greg Snyder and three fly fishing friends and Mr/Mrs Dick Morrison visited our favorite areas in Patagonia on different agendas (the Morrison's included a jaunt across the Argentine border to do some Estancia fishing). All reports were positive. Greg reports " Words can't describe what a wonderful time we had..." All four in the group took the biggest fish of their fly fishing careers on the trip. Our Patagonia trips are assembled with varied fishing options, comfortable accommodations, great food, gracious hosts, spectacular scenery and non-fishing possibilities
- Belize mothership trips: several good reports on Jan and Feb trips in spite of a few cold fronts. Marc Dollarhite and Patrick March were on the Meca for 10 days. Marc got his first permit and stated "The crew was great and the food awesome. We look forward to next year....." From a very experienced salt water fly fisher, Brian Hastings, on his first trip (excerpted from his report on Dan

Blanton's message board) – “Charles Westby was an amazing guide, the best I have ever had. Food was great and getting a 3 session, 12+ hour fishing day made the liveaboard a fantastic option.” From Gary and Terry Butts – “Overall, we rate the trip a great success.....I was surprised by the number of tarpon.”

LELAND-FRONTIERS AGENT AGREEMENT

In addition to the many great destinations that we represent, Leland Fly Fishing Adventures also has an agreement with Frontiers to represent all their properties (many of which we already book independently). If you are considering any of the destinations that Frontiers offers, please give us a call as it's virtually the same process as booking through Frontiers, and we need the “bonus points.” And, we may have some personal experiences that can add to your knowledge and preparations.

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

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