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We are in the fifteenth 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.

A “WORLD CLASS” PATAGONIAN ANDES FLY FISHING EXPERIENCE – PHOTO ESSAY

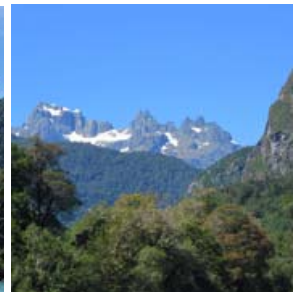
Since 2011, John Landis and Rob Pizzie have been regulars at a Patagonian lodge we are going to define as “World Class.” They have used Chilean Patagonia, combined with New Zealand visits, as the heart of their USA winter trips, escaping to the summer skies of the Southern Hemisphere. Following Rob’s initial trip, he was joined by his wife, Annette, on subsequent visits. John’s new bride, Dana, joined them on their recent trip.



As they always do, they returned home with an outstanding array of photos which capture the essence of the entire experience. Those photos, along with many of their comments, help define what makes this trip so special.

It begins with the general location. In the mid 90’s, my wife, Marte, and I began taking a wintertime trip to the Southern Hemisphere, spending most of our time in the Chilean Andes in the general vicinity of Coyhaique. Over a period of years, this popular area of Chile changed dramatically. Finally, it began to feel like we were fishing in Montana – the number of fly fishers had taken away the charm and isolation we pursued. This same evolution was also taking place in most of Patagonian Argentina. We moved north and did some exploring in the Fjords and the more isolated areas around Lago Yelcho and the mountains south of there. What we found was our version of Andean heaven and today hosts the lodge we are referring to.

Very important was this question to John about his recent trip, “During the course of your 11 days at Patagonia Base Camp, how many other anglers did you see?” Most important was his answer: “NONE.” There are few places remaining on the globe with great fishing that can generate that response.....this makes a destination very special before you begin considering other factors. (note: some clients report seeing a few fisherman during their stays, but “none” is not unusual).



This part of the Andes is truly spectacular with stunning vistas a part of every day (photos above). On the fishing options, Rob (on right in center photo above with nice brown) said, "I have now been to Patagonian Base Camp four times and I was still able to fish four long days on stretches of water I had never seen before! Coming back to PBC is like coming home. The guides are excellent providing whatever level of coaching you ask for."



Photos above: at left, Annette and Rob with Dana and John on the right; newcomer Dana works out a few issues with her cast, experiences an exciting set of rapids in a drift boat, and with an average rainbow, one of many rainbows and browns that she released.

That "level of coaching" Rob referred to combines with an exceptional fishery to challenge the veteran fly rodder or assist the "new and learning" angler. Dana was on her second fly fishing trip, the other being an Alaska fly-out adventure. As a newcomer to fly fishing, she captures the attraction of fly fishing, and with her first exposure to sight fishing, the thrill and challenge of hunting fish....."Chile was my first dry fly sight fishing experience. So for me it was the total opposite of Alaska. As Rob mentioned, the guides were exceptional in teaching the tactics to me as a newbie. I now understand the thrill of spotting a fish, learning how to present the fly to them, and then watching them come up and grab it. It was very interesting learning where the fish would be located.....in the scum line or hiding back along the rock wall or at the base of waterfall. This trip made me not only appreciate the beauty of Chile, but also the passion, skill and patience it takes to fly fish. One thing I do know is that it is way more than just about the fishing. It is about the experience of getting to the places you fish.....the like-minded guests you meet.....the hosts and guides....and sharing it all with good food, wine, and great people."



Photos above, l to r: One of Annette's favorite options is a day trip via horseback to some isolated waters; Annette with rainbow; there are two outpost camps with either a two or three day overnight float trip. Not really roughing it – center above, one of the outpost camps equipped with it's own hot tub; Dana and Annette relax on the deck of this outpost with a glass of wine after a rough day on the river.

In addition to the outpost overnight float trips, there is also private access to an estancia just across the border in Argentina. This location has its own fishing options including small spring creeks. On their last trip, they visited this estancia and combined both the Argentina and Chile sides of the border. Their most recent trip was a focus on the Chilean side only and included, per John's description, a trip with the owner/operator "to explore some new territory where we bushed-wacked for trout that had never been caught."



Photos above, l to r: John with a rainbow; owner and hands-on operators of the lodge, Marcel and Carolina; the lodge they built on the shores of the Palena River; the popular expression, “the devil is in the details,” is evident in every aspect of the lodge operation and is illustrated by the organization of the loaner wading boots. Rainbow sight stalked and taken in clear shallow waters.



Photos above, l to r: watching the rise; rainbow in waiting; Andes beetle – a full meal by itself; Annette and Dana and an empty wine bottle.....John commented: “fly fishing, at the highest level, requires alcohol be enjoyed.”

HOLIDAY FAMILY ADVENTURES WITH FISHING OPTIONS

Many families like to travel together over the holiday period. Our skies in the USA are often grey and contain wet stuff. Going south, there is more warmth, sunshine, and higher water temps. And, there are many places where a family vacation can include some exciting fly fishing options; also, the opportunity to get youngsters exposed to and involved with fishing.



Before we begin a discussion of family oriented destinations with fishing options during the holiday period, it should be noted that the top operations book up very early for the late Dec – early Jan period. Many resorts and lodges have holiday surcharges with an add-on to their regular prices for visiting during that “high demand” timeframe.

CROCODILE BAY IN COSTA RICA: Costa Rica is the most “wholesome” and safe country in Central America. Crocodile Bay is a quality operation on the Pacific coast with a vast array of things to do for the entire family, both fishing and eco-tour activities. For fishing, there is the inshore fishery inside the bay and the offshore fishing for billfish. Roosterfish (at right) on the shorelines and mouth of the bay are a prime attraction. The staff is friendly and helpful. Their rainy season ends in early to mid-December and summer begins. For accommodations, they have comfortable lodge rooms, or for a family that wants to stay together, three bedroom homes. Ask if you’d like to see the report on our trip to Croco Bay.



BELIZE – MANY OPTIONS: In Belize, all options begin with the water and the second largest barrier reef on the globe. There are 100’s of cayes inside the protection of the Belize reef. Many of these islands have family oriented, island resorts where flats fishing is available. The activities are based around the water – sea kayaks, snorkeling, scuba, swimming, fishing, sunbathing, etc. However, inland there are eco-tour, rainforest lodges with a focus on nature oriented activity. You can combine a trip with four days on the ocean and four days at an inland rainforest lodge (longer if you have the time). At left is pictured one of the beachfront bungalows at Hatchet Caye, a destination that our family

has enjoyed. Our whole clan (11 of us) spent a week there a summer ago (report available). And, there is chartering the Rising Tide (which is a wonderful, private, tropical family get-away), but there is only one of those. www.flyfishbelize.com



If you have more time.....SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

NEW ZEALAND, TAHITI, FIJI: New Zealand has the sort of options that can make for a wonderful family holiday adventure with world class fly fishing.

Family itineraries can combine a variety of activities in the pristine environment that is uniquely NZ. With the right guides, it is also a great place to introduce first timers to fly fishing. The guide is the key to making this work. If you have enough time, you can combine NZ with Australia, Fiji, or Tahiti. If you'd like to see examples of family trip reports, just ask. At right above, youngster casts to large brown in Fiordland while guide coaches.

CHILE – ARGENTINA: There are also varied opportunities in Patagonia for family fun. The holiday period is a little early for the best fly fishing, but some decent opportunities are present. Family oriented estancia's provide many different activities in a top drawer environment.

WHAT WE DO AT FLY FISHING ADVENTURES

This is a new link with a description of who we are and what we do.....also, listing the destinations around the world that we can provide reliable information regarding the experience and how to prepare to visit:

[Fly Fishing Adventures - About What We Do](#)

APRIL MEMORY PHOTOS - THE WAHOO, THE TIGER SHARK, AND THE KAYAK

Our recent trip to the Ningaloo Reef and the Northwest Cape in the isolated NW corner of Australia produced several exciting moments and a few shark encounters that were memorable (see the report from our Feb-Mar trip that was sent last month - [Ningaloo - NZ photo essay](#)). The Ningaloo is more renowned for its blue water fishery, turtle nesting, and visiting whale sharks and humpback whales with cubs than it is for its flats fishing.....I hope it stays that way!

While staying at a very comfortable beachfront resort in Exmouth, we met one of the employees, Tristan Jahme. Tristan knew we were out fishing and each day, when we arrived back, he would ask how the day went. We began swapping fishing stories and he related this dramatic adventure he had recently encountered.

He selected a calm day to take his kayak outside the Ningaloo Reef. The blue waters drop off severely and he was fishing in about 200 feet of water, just outside the reef. He was fishing alone with a "Go Pro" camera strapped to his forehead. He hooked a large wahoo which began towing his kayak around. As he got the wahoo near the kayak, a large tiger shark was attracted to the commotion.

Tristan relates the story: "The tigershark wanted the wahoo from me, but luckily never got it! My kayak is 4.75m long (approximately 15 feet) and this tiger seemed bigger than my kayak. If it wasn't longer then it certainly wasn't far off."

PHOTO CREDITS: banner – John Landis; Patagonia – Annette, Rob, Dana, and John.

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