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We are in the tenth year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on the great flyfishing 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.

THE "PART REPORT" – AN AMAZING NEW ZEALAND TRIP



(Once again, we are proud to bring to our newsletter the "Part Report." This comes from John Part, a twice a year visitor to New Zealand for the past 15 years. John is an outstanding trout angler who has a passion for stalking brown trout in New Zealand. He fishes with arguably the best overall Kiwi guide who, during all that time together on the water, has become a very close friend. Along the way, John has caught a lot of 10+ pound browns and going into this just completed trip, was at 46 double digit fish. Obviously, being so close to an iconic number like "fifty", reaching that number was a focus of this particular trip. This report was written while he was in NZ, nearing the end of his recent October trip.)

Yes, this has been a trip to make up for missing my session last April due to family health issues. It has been dominated by high wind, some high water, and quite a few sunny days (not that usual in October in New Zealand). Luckily, years ago, I learned to punch a reasonable line into the wind. This has stood me in good stead this trip, as the wind and high water combination seem to have kept others off the high country big fish rivers.

I arrived for this trip with 46 double-digit brown trout for the team of my favorite (and only) NZ guide and myself. It has always been a "team affair" as enjoying success in NZ is due in large part to having the right guide. In the first three days, he took me to places where we caught a double digit fish each day. We sat on 49 for a number of days, and even lost a certain ten+ fish (would have been #50!) in a very difficult river. Yesterday we had one more chance before the forecast storms returned and my trip finished. We decided (rather my guide decided) to return to the high country in spite of the strong wind, and to cut a long story short, we got 5 double-digit browns, plus one 9 pounder and 4 eight pounders before collapsing on the bank, tired and happy.



I am sending photos of the best three. The largest would have been a real 'crocodile', but a tough winter had left him out of condition at 12 1/4 pounds (top left). The hen fish, much smaller but in magnificent condition, was only 3/4 pound less at 11 1/2 (at right). The third photo-fish (below) came from a small side river at 10 1/2 pounds.

It was an amazing day. For once the bigger fish were out, and taking well. But who cares? We've had enough frustrating days over the last fifteen years we have fished together to have earned this sort of day.



There was some stress involved in getting the 50 mark behind us. Now I can get back to enjoying the overall experience of searching out and stalking the “regular trophy browns” of NZ, fish that average 3.5 – 4 pounds. Indeed, today we had a quiet four hours on a local river, and thoroughly enjoyed sight casting to and catching 10 browns to 4 1/2 pounds.

Horrible weather is forecast for my last day tomorrow. I'm hoping to get back again at the end of the season if family circumstances allow. On my next trip, we'll just go back to our normal fishing pattern of picking up 'hogs' if and when they come along.

I just enjoy a few days each trip on waters where hogs are likely to lurk! Catching one is another matter!

Additional notes: Mr. Part's pursuit of trophy browns is not for everyone, but it does point out the exceptional NZ fishery, a place where almost all the trophy fish are taken stalking sighted individual fish. Not only is John an outstanding angler, he only fishes during the early and late season. October and April (fall and spring) have more changeable weather conditions, but the rivers and streams in NZ are much less pressured and the big fish are more relaxed. To see other reports from John, just ask.

ICELAND – A COUPLES TRIP

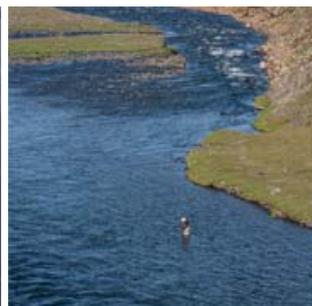
“Absolutely a great time.....a good couples trip,” were Don Olen's comments capturing the essence of their recent trip to Iceland. Don is the fly fisher and he spent four days fishing on the trip. His wife, Cheryl, is an outstanding outdoor and fly fishing photographer. After the fishing portion of their trip, they visited many of the spectacular scenic spots in Iceland, accompanied by a photographer guide for that portion of the trip.



In bullet point format are comments about their trip:

- their timing was early September, mid fall in Iceland
- weather was mid 50's.....didn't cooperate, wore raincoats more than not
- photographed glaciers, iceburgs, fjords.....and puffins
- all the lodges were high-end and required an invitation
- all the rivers/beats were privately owned and tightly controlled
- conditions were uncrowded
- fishing was good, but not great. July/August is best for Atlantics
- primary species was Atlantic Salmon, but also took Arctic Char
- the Atlantic fishery is tightly monitored – every fish is recorded

Photos: Atlantic Salmon, middle top row. Arctic Char on left, bottom row. Northern Lights – green.



ACCESS TO CUBA

Cuba is a popular topic of discussion as travelers now have legitimate paths to visit there and the USA inches toward normalization in relations. It is expected that the US travel ban to Cuba will be lifted sometime in the next 18 – 24 months. Even now, the finer hotels in Havana are booking full with the influx of USA citizens who have been waiting for many years to be able to enter Cuba.....and to sample its exceptional flats fishing. Soon, there will be a lot more than just classic old American cars on the streets of Havana.



For now, to travel legally to and within Cuba, a special “travel letter” must be obtained. These are generally easy to access and require a donation to an organization like “The Ocean Foundation.” There are also several other organizations where these letters can be obtained. We are taking an exploratory trip in December and will have a report upon return.

KAMCHATKA – A “SPLIT TRIP” REPORT



Jerry Saltzgeber (with rainbow) has been a valued contributor to our newsletter for years as he has traipsed around the globe with his fly rod. His most recent fifth trip to Russia (two previous to Kamchatka and two to the Ponoj River) in August was his third trip to the Kamchatka Peninsula. On his last trip, he did a combination two week trip – one week was spent doing a float trip on the Zhupanova combined with a second week at the Zendzur Lodge on the lower section of this same river. He loved the remoteness and the fishing and so returned to repeat the same trip this year.

This year’s trip was a “split trip” in a different way. He still split the trip between the float and lodge, two entirely different type experiences on the same river. However, it was also “split” in a different way created by weather and conditions. The upper river drift trip worked out fine – great conditions and fishing. However, as he approached the lodge, the weather gods must have decided there had been enough good fortune for him and down came buckets of rain. The river turned chocolate and was running high. The fish were scarce and no rainbows were taken the first two days.

Some bullet point comments from Jerry:

- species – all five types of Pacific salmon, Kunza, and the main reason Jerry goes, the trophy rainbows.
- on his float trip, lots of rainbows in the 25-30 inch range, largest was 31”.
- most of the large rainbows taken attacking mice patterns on the surface.
- saw 15 – 20 grizzly bears a day
- food was just OK.
- the largest Kunza taken was 37”
- great guides - one American at the lodge & one South American on the float - plus, very good Russians.
- on the way down the river, word reached them that at the lodge, two 33” and one 35” inch rainbows had been taken. They were looking forward to fishing the lodge water – then the rains came.

My personal experiences in fishing for trophy fish at “world class destinations” have proven that the fishing gods don’t always treat you right. In fact, whenever we experience exceptional fishing on a trip, I know that the fishing gods are already beginning to scheme how to get even with me.....and they always do! You may be fishing on waters that have been proven to produce the finest catches in the world, but the conditions have to be favorable, and that doesn’t always work out. The best way to play the odds is to have as many days as possible on those waters – that greatly increases your chances of hitting some of those days “just right!”



Photos: above, l to r: lower river lodge, company on the water, scenic Kamchatka and Russian copter.

Below, l to r: large Kunza, fish on, shore lunch on float trip.



NOVEMBER MEMORY PHOTO



If one wants to catch a giant brook trout on waters where they are most often available on a dry fly, where on the globe is the best place to be? The Minipi River in Labrador has held that standard since Lee Wulff first discovered this magnificent fishery in the 50's. It's been true for many, many years and it is still true today. That is where Shawn Wendell (left) found this trophy brookie, certainly worthy of the label "memory fish." This is a real wilderness adventure in the wilds of far northeast Canada.

PHOTO CREDITS: NZ – John Part; Iceland – Cheryl and Don Olen; Kamchatka – Jerry Saltzgaber

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