



IN THIS ISSUE:

- HOLIDAYS IN THE TROPICS – COUPLES AND FAMILY REPORTS
- MORE EARLY SEASON NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCES
- KAMCHATKA – AIR ACCESS SIMPLIFIED
- FLY FISHING PHOTOGRAPHY 1A: CAPTURING FLY FISHING SCENICS – PART 2
- JANUARY MEMORY PHOTO

We are in the eighth year of publishing our monthly newsletter with updates on great fly fishing venues, trip reports 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 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.

HOLIDAYS IN THE TROPICS – COUPLES AND FAMILY REPORTS

Winter family holidays in the tropics with fly rod pursuits as the centerpiece of our activities – this was a familiar refrain for our family 20+ years ago. So many memories of great times together.....I get nostalgic hearing of the experiences and viewing the photos of Jeanne, Pete, Matthew, and Eric Tymstra. Last year, the Tymstras were in Belize; this year at Ascension Bay. Both of these destinations occupied many, many weeks of our family times together in the 80's and early 90's with memories we still discuss today.

The Tymstras had high praise for the experience provided by the new operation on Ascension Bay, Grand Slam Fly Fishing Lodge, that has been put together by the salt water fly fishing legend (and old friend), Bobby Settles. Of course, since it is located in rural Mexico, everything is not 100% perfect, but the overall experience was very positive and one they would recommend.

Some photos from their trip (l to r): Matthew with bone, Eric working a fish in the shallows, Eric with bone, meeting up together after a morning's fish for lunch in the skiffs, Father Pete with fish on.



New Years Eve at the lodge, Matthew with two barracuda from the reef (the reef provided an alternative spinning experience for grouper, snappers, cuda, etc), Pete with golden-hued Jack, and in this part of Mexico, Mayan ruins are never far away.



The holiday period may not provide the most ideal fishing conditions in the tropics, but the weather is always much better than the USA. Lizzie and Jay Sternberg took their fly fishing holidays in Belize on Ambergris Cay. Theirs was a “couple’s holiday” with four days of scheduled fly fishing, beach combing, water activities, and generally becoming “tropical vegetables.”

For headquarters, they used Ambergris top combo fly fishing – eco tour lodge, El Pescador. Some limited bonefishing experience was all they had possessed prior to the trip, but did enjoy “hunting” for tarpon. From Lizzie: “.....we went back out for tarpon on the flats. We didn’t catch any tarpon but had a blast trying!! What a fun hunt it is.” The tarpon did manage to avoid making a Sternberg family photo, but several bonefish helped fill the void.



They did put together a comprehensive report on their experiences on Ambergris and El Pescador. If you have any interest in this area or El Pescador, I would recommend reading it. Just hit reply and request a copy via e-mail and we’ll forward it on.

MORE EARLY SEASON NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCES



As this newsletter is being written, we are entering into New Zealand’s summer period. For most anglers, this is the prime time to visit the land of the Kiwi. However, there are many who annually make their pilgrimage in the early season, before the crowds arrive. One of those is Ruhan Neething and his report and photos capture the reasons why October can be just fine for a New Zealand adventure. Ruhan annually fishes with one of New Zealand’s finest independent guides, Scott Murray, who for years was the head guide at Lake Rotoroa Lodge on the South Island: “Over the last few years, I have been trying to get to Scotty as early in the season as possible because, even though the weather can play up a bit, the potential is off the charts in terms of numbers as well as sizes of fish caught. This year was a numbers year for us, not that the sizes were at all bad!

Same as last year, I was his first client again. For me part of the excitement is that even he does not know what will happen and how the rivers will look. So it is almost like fishing new water every day for both of us. This year we hit the rivers running (literally). The first day saw us better his best day ever on a local river, we ended up with 31 fish for the day. And our last day, Scotty rated as one of his best fishing days in 20 years of guiding on a pretty tough river that is known for low numbers. In between these two days is a blur of wild brown after wild brown. I think it is fair to say that I pigged out and definitely caught my share and probably a few other people’s as well. Even though the really big fish (10 pounds plus) eluded us, we still managed a respectable average of between 5 and 6 pounds, nothing to scoff at!!

For the first time, I invited a friend to join me and he LOVED it. So much so that he will be back next year, another convert to how amazing NZ can be in October.”



KAMCHATKA – AIR ACCESS SIMPLIFIED

For the last few years, those wishing to fish the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia had a great deal of travel headaches associated with the trip. For the upcoming season, the old non-stop flight between Anchorage and Petropavlovsk, the capital city of Kamchatka, has been restored.

FLY FISHING PHOTOGRAPHY 1A: CAPTURING FLY FISHING SCENICS – PART 2

One of the great joys of our fly fishing passion is that it takes us to the most beautiful, pristine environments on earth. Capturing photos that display the beauty of these places and the joy of being there with a fly rod in hand is a challenge. There are two key elements involved in a fly fishing scenic photo.

1. a scene that is worthy of remembering.
2. a fly fisher has to be part of that scene or all you have is a pretty landscape or waterscape photo.

Below are examples. On the left is a pretty stream meandering through a meadow – a nice landscape photo, but not a fly fishing scenic.....nothing there to tie it to fly fishing like the photo to the right of it (the larger version of this photo shows the rod, reel, and line clearly). Another great example is the NZ photo above by Ruhan Neething (and his photo was shot without the benefit of sunlight!). Below right are two photos of permit flats in Belize shot by William Owens – one is just pretty water and the other is a permit flat! Of course, best if there is some action in the angler's body, but often just the angler standing in the water changing flies with the rod tucked under his arm can accomplish what is needed if the setting is special enough.



(Note: Part 1 of Capturing Fly Fishing Scenic's was in the May, '11 issue)

JANUARY MEMORY PHOTO

Annie Kubicka checks in with this beautiful steelhead taken on the Olympic Peninsula. Annie took two fish over 32" this week. Not only is this a great fish, but the photo itself would get very high marks for the positioning of the fish, the hold, angler expression, etc. Truly a remarkable photo to start off 2012 in our memory column.

PHOTO CREDITS: Ascension Bay – the Tymstra family; tarpon on flat – Adam Martin; New Zealand - Ruhan Neething; FF Photo 1A permit flats – William Owens.

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

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