



Chip Fudge (below right with rainbow) and Chris Degner (left with Kunza) visited the Kamchatka Peninsula in eastern Russia in August. As this group often does, they added a week's cultural and historical experience touring the Ukraine and Yalta in the Crimea. More on the touring element below, but starting off with the fly fishing adventure, here are comments on some of the most memorable moments.

From Chip: "Memorable moments included getting a double hook up with Chris with giant rainbows - 28 inches. Also, catching a Kunza, a prehistoric looking Arctic Char (also known as the Siberian White Spotted Char). 33" for me and 35" for Chris."

From Chris: "First and foremost, the thrill of monster Rainbows on a mouse. Everything from a gentle sip off the surface to a full launch out of the water landing on top of your floating mouse."



Both commented on the memory of the remoteness of a Kamchatka experience.
 Chip: "Simultaneously, getting a large rainbow (24") under a volcano that was smoking and having a Mig26 fly over to create a sonic boom. That was the only motorized sound we heard all week."
 Chris: "The remoteness, quiet except for nature...never saw sign of another person."

Left to right below beginning top left: Chip with 'bow, guide with Kunza, friendly(?) visitor, Chris with 'bow, to the net, rainbow double, Chris with Dolly Varden, Chip with Kunza.



There are three basic approaches to fishing the wilds of Kamchatka: using a stationary lodge, a true wilderness float/camping trip, and, on the "roughing it" scale, the middle of the road version, a float trip with permanent camps for your overnights. Chip and Chris opted for the middle of the road version. The itinerary was floating

and fishing 6 – 7 miles of the Zhupanova River each day and overnighing in permanent camps with wood framed huts and flush toilets.

L to R below beginning top left: Floating the Supernova, loading the Russian copter in Petropavlovsk, shoreside lunch, two man huts, misty morning, Chip pouring a vodka toast.



Chip and Chris comments on food, guides, etc:

Chris: “The huts had plywood bunks and foam pad. Actually, fairly comfortable. The mosquitoes were vicious making it almost impossible to sit outside at night. The camps and personel were excellent and things ran smoothly. The guides and staff were a pleasure to be with.

Chip: “Accommodations were fair on the water, very nice at the guest house before and after the trip. The food was better than I had expected and good for the remoteness.”

L to R below: breakfast before heading to the river, chow, furry visitor, and Chip displaying Russian vodka.



Chip on the touring: “We visited the Ukraine, Moscow, and Yalta in the Crimea. It was outstanding! We saw where Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt divided up Europe after WW2, saw their private homes which were Romanov Russian Imperial residences during the Yalta Conference. Historically significant. Three days on the Black sea. Incredible. We had a private driver and guide who was a history professor from the university there.”



Above, L to R: Stalin's desk, wine tasting in a modern winery with history – bottled wine from the early 1900's and as far back as 1773.

Below, L to R: Russian architecture and Chip with a couple of Russian falcons.



KAMCHATKA OPTIONS AND PRICES

There are just a few stationary fishing lodges in Kamchatka. Most visitors use a float trip of some sort to explore their wilderness. All trips depart via helicopter from Petropavlovsk, the entry city for the Kamchatka Peninsula. If you want to really rough it, there are float trips where tents are put up each night for accommodations. One outfitter doesn't even decide which river they are going to float until they are ready to depart from Petropavlovsk via copter. This gives them the opportunity to gauge conditions and weather up to the last minute before deciding on a destination river. Variable weather is often a factor.

Pricing is going to be in the area of \$5,500 to \$6,500 per person for a week which includes almost everything after you arrive in Petropavlovsk

LOGISTICS

Up until a few years ago, there were weekly non-stop flights on a Russian airline from Anchorage to Petropavlovsk. That carrier cancelled that Anchorage connection making Moscow the entry point into Russia. However, there are strong indications that the Anchorage – Petropavlovsk route will be re-instituted for next year. Should this happen, the Kamchatka wilderness will be much easier to access from the USA.

Chris: "Truly a trip of a lifetime, both the touring/history/cultural aspects and the fishing."

PHOTO CREDITS: Chris Degner and Chip Fudge.

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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