ROXTONS
FIELD SPORTS

Hannah Treliving reports from Argentina, January 2014

This was my first trip to see how the programme works down on the Rio Grande in Tierra del Fuego, that most southern point of Argentina. I met up with two great clients the night before in Buenos Aires and we went out for the obligatory steak, Malbec and Tango show which is definitely part of the experience and should not be shunned.



We took the later of the two daily flights from Buenos Aires to Rio Grande and were met by the guides at the airport and driven to Estancia Maria Behety, one of the two lodges we represent on The Rio Grande, the river famed for the size of its sea-run trout.





The transfer is short and the scenery breath-taking, the skies and plains vast. And then there is the river, meandering through at pace - quite an imposing sight for a novice fisher! We stopped off to witness a large shearing operation on the estancia where the guys are hard at work shearing an impressive 1,400 sheep a day. All things work to a different scale down there.



We were all welcomed warmly by Mariana, the wonderful lodge hostess who told us to treat it like home - a dangerous remark given the size of the well-stocked bar. As with every first night in a mixed lodge, the evening was spent learning more about my fellow guests and discussing the sport which had congregated us all there. Having only spent three days with a double-handed rod, I had little to add to the fishing chat around the

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table but the excitement for the week ahead was almost tangible.

The fishing commenced the next day (Sunday) with a prompt start at 8am. The beat rotation was on the wall in the warm wader room, I was teamed up with Patrick the Swede and we had Mighuel guiding us for the day… oh the trepidation! By 10:30am I had a very fresh 5lber on the end of my line and the Orange Taxi was my fly of choice for the week, a promising start.

It was back to the lodge for a delicious lunch and some more Malbec, and then it was siesta time. We met at 5pm to start the afternoon/evening fishing and it was a long shift until dusk. The wind died down with the sun, and I landed a 6½ lber before we turned for home. Nocturnal fishing was new to me and we returned to the lodge with smiles on our faces and a beer from the cool box in hand. Drinks and supper were served and we all discussed our varying days on the river.

Day 2 brought a change of guide and beats. In the morning we fished beat 27, or 'Nick's corner', a stunning stretch with a steep bank on one side. The sun was out, eagles circled overhead and there was much movement in the water but all I managed to catch was a 4lb hen, very fresh though. It was only day 2 and I had lost perspective, disappointed by the size of my latest catch so I returned it to the water and pinched myself. 4lb would be deemed impressive almost anywhere else in the world but they don't even bother to reach for the scales here!



Day 3 and I was no longer referring to my flies in terms of colour and we tried a nice nymph. The wind was up and I fished down from an overhanging cliff into a popular pool below. An hour later I had landed a beautifully fresh 10lber, the triumph of my three days on the Rio Grande.

The guides joined us all for celebrations in the evening and I dragged my heels to the airport the following morning to board a flight to El Calafate, and vowed to stay the entire week next time. My fellow rods did well for a relatively early week in the season, landing mighty 16, 17, 19 and 20lbers.



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Laguna Verde

In the startlingly bleak Patagonian outback in the province of Santa Cruz lies a special lodge perched above Lago Strobel - also know as Jurassic Lake - which teems with monster rainbows. The season runs from November to April and getting there is an adventure in itself but I was met at the airport by one of the guides, Christian, and the transfer went by quicker than expected.

Estancia Laguna Verde is owned by Roberto Alba and his son, Luciano, and the lodge sleeps up to 10 anglers. They are simply wonderful hosts; the Argentinian food and wine is second to none and the lake and river fishing offered is a supreme treat for the adventurous angler.

The lake's crystal clear waters make sight fishing easy, but I had the Patagonian wind to contend with. I had just one day there to see their operations so first we headed - on trucks and quad bikes - to a productive pool in one of the small rivers feeding the lake. We caught two superb trout within 15 minutes on a floating line, seriously exciting as they both weighed in at the 10lb mark and fought hard.

Most of the fishing takes place on the lake as the lodge has access to 10km of its shoreline. There are numerous bays that are picked according to the wind conditions, most notably the illustrious Monster Bay, a name which reflects the size of the rainbows regularly caught here.

Lunch was whipped up by the fantastic guides on the shores of the lake - yet another highlight.

Laguna Verde is the perfect 'add-on' for a trip to Tierra del Fuego for 4 days or a week, so please contact us should you be interested in hearing more.



Estancia Laguna Verde



Lago Strobel or Jurassic Lake



A Jurassic rainbow

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Guayascate Lodge, Cordoba

Cordoba

From the Patagonia wildlands of the south I headed back to Buenos Aires and flew on to Cordoba, the region famed for its dove shooting. I visited two outfitters, David Denies and H & H Outfitters, and enjoyed several days visiting their splendid lodges in the region and seeing how their programmes function.

I was intrigued to see what the shooting was like and why some clients choose to return year after year. You can shoot in Argentina all year and the birds fly all day long, but the joy of the place is found in the flexibility - you can shoot when and where you want. I chose to take it quite easy in comparison to my fellow guns but you never shoot the same spot twice.

After a superb breakfast, you are taken out to the shooting fields, assigned a bird boy and a hide and can shoot to your heart's content until lunchtime. Lunch is either served in the field or back at the lodge, and then the shooting continues until dusk.

I must highlight that there is plenty for the non-shooting guest here and the hospitality knows no bounds; riding, polo, yoga, spa treatments, cooking lessons, walking…

Argentina really is a sportsman's paradise; a large country with so much to see and do and I would highly recommend it to a single rod or gun, a couple or a group. The hospitality is supreme, with the food and wine living up to its fine repute. If you would like to hear more about the various lodges we offer then please contact either Charlie White (fishing), Adam Bromfield (worldwide shooting) or myself.

Hannah Treliving
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