

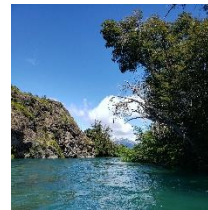
# Fly Fishing Patagonia - January 2020

By: Tom H. Logan

Most fly fishers I know have a “bucket list” of places where they dream of fishing. I suspect Patagonia may be on your list, and you really should give serious consideration to going. I did this past January with six of my fly fishing buddies and it was an experience of a life time!



Las Pitras Lodge at Epuyen, Argentina hosted our trip of seven nights lodging and six days of outstanding fly fishing. The trip was as enjoyable as you can imagine and more. We were in the east slopes of the Andes and fished beautiful rivers that flowed through chains of natural mountain lakes. Every cast was against a backdrop of snow-capped and glacial peaks with the blue-green waters we fished at their base. January is early summer in the southern hemisphere; the air was crisp, clear and the only sounds we heard were the breeze and singing birds. It was as though we had found ourselves somewhere pristine, and it was.



Salmonids naturalized the cold waters of Patagonia during the late 1800s. We caught mostly Rainbows with browns and brook trout in abundance. All fishing was “catch and release” by law. This suited me fine, as I subscribe to Fly Fishers International’s philosophy regarding “safe handling” and release of every fish so that it may rise again to



another fly, natural or otherwise. I don’t count the fish I catch, but I can tell you that we all caught an abundance of nice fish each day. Most of the rainbows we caught were in the 18-20 inch size class, and they were not the exception. I told Fabian Philipp, owner of the lodge, one day that virtually every fish I caught that day would have been the fish most talked about of evening on my trips to mountain streams in Wyoming every summer.



We fished mostly 5 weight rods and streamers on sinking lines or dry flies on floating. I fished mostly dry flies from variations on the Western Coachman in size 10 down to size 14 parachute Adams on 5X tippets. We fished the upper

end of Lago Cholila one afternoon with the breeze blowing out of the mountains and down the Rio Carrileufu into the lake and blowing hoppers out of the marsh to each side of the river mouth. Big rainbows were taking the hoppers and they did so all afternoon. That was a special day, but every day was.





Naturally, I took several fly rods, plenty of flies and other fishing gear, but I also took along a good pair of binoculars and a field guide to “Birds of Southern South America. I knew I’d be seeing species of birds I’d not yet seen, and this proved to be true. Some of us on the trip, being of biological persuasion, identified as many plants as we could, watched European hairs and mink every day along the roads and waters edges and I confirmed at least 14 new life birds. They include southern lapwings, buff-necked ibis, Chilean flamingos, austral parakeets, black-necked swans and one Megellanic woodpecker.



Our guides were Fabian Philipp who also owns Las Pitras Lodge, Oscar, Alfredo and Patricio, and these Argentinians each and collectively added to the trip as much as the fine fellows that went with me to fish Patagonia. We fished and laughed a lot together. We enjoyed fine shore lunches each day and learned a lot from our hosts about the people and cultures of Argentina. It was more than a good trip...it was a life experience.



I would be remiss not to also say something of Las Pitras Lodge. Fabian and his staff and the hospitality they extend all of us could not have been better. The Lodge is new, our rooms were very clean, roomy and well decorated. The overall atmosphere of the Lodge was very warm and comfortable as we began each day and then came together each evening to dine, discuss the fish we caught, those we lost and the flies that seemed best of the day. And...yes there was gourmet food each night complimented with nothing less than the finest red wines of Argentine from the Mendoza Province. We could not have been treated better from fist light until the last story each evening.



You really should include Patagonia as a fly fishing destination on your bucket list if you haven’t already done so. Set a goal, a date and make it happen. I could not recommend Las Pitras Lodge more highly. You can find more information regarding the Lodge and fly fishing in Patagonia at [www.laspitraslodge.com](http://www.laspitraslodge.com). You also may contact Fabian Philipp at [hosterialaspitras@gmail.com](mailto:hosterialaspitras@gmail.com) or feel free to contact me at [tomlogan@comcast.net](mailto:tomlogan@comcast.net) any time.



Meanwhile...fish often and stay healthy, my friends. Tom