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ean border. Fernando met me there and took me to a place to which he has private access. Our mule skinner had our docile, sure-footed mounts with good saddles all ready to depart when I arrived. The skinner had his own mount ready, too, along with a pack mule for carrying camping gear and food. Our final destination was a small river up toward the border with Chile. The trip took about 2½ hours. The stream is small in most places and usually clear. The average trout in the stream are around 13 to 15 inches but there are much larger ones in major pools below waterfalls. The fishing is mainly nymphing. The fish here are not as abundant as in Valle Hermoso, nor is the nutrition as rich, but the fishing is excellent all the same.

I was the only client so I had my own comfortable tent. The wrangler sets up camp and cooks. I confess that on one day we killed enough of the plentiful trout to have them for dinner. One morning a red fox was right inside our camp area looking for scraps. Another morning, Fernando pointed up to a condor that seemed extraordinarily low. "He's not low; we're at 6,500 feet," Fernando told me.

Fernando is an outstanding guide and excellent companion. His English is good and he has guided international fishermen who speak only English without problems. He is very well organized, always uses top-quality vehicles and knows everybody in the areas you visit. He can provide the flies you need, including both nymph and dry imitations of a mayfly found only in Mendoza and parts of neighboring provinces.

He prefers to work with one or two anglers. The price of his trips is \$450 per person per day, including lodging or camping, food, flies, soft drinks and transportation in his 4 x 4. Pack trips starting in Valle Hermoso may be extra. In order to make an early start on your first day of fishing, you may want to arrive a day early, or more if you want to spend time in the lovely town of Mendoza and tour the

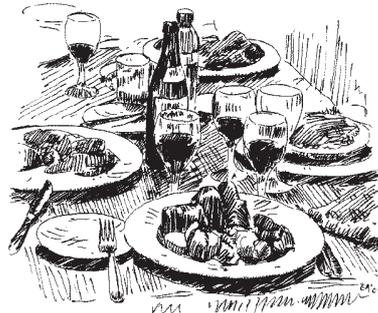
many top wineries in the area. Enjoy!
- Robert W. McMeekin.

DATELINE: SPAIN

FREE Fishing Report **First-Hand Report On** **A Pyrenees Trout Lodge**

(Editor Note: Our FREE Fishing Program that sends Online-Extra subscribers on fishing trips around the world just sent subscriber Skip Cox to the Spanish Pyrenees where he fished with Ivan Tarin of Salvelinus Lodge northeast of Zaragoza. Here is what he has to say about the experience. For more information on our FREE Fishing Program see box on page 6.)

As the latest recipient of a FREE fishing trip through this newsletter's FREE Fishing Program, I eagerly anticipated fly



fishing for trout with Salvelinus Lodge in the Pyrenees Mountains of Spain this past summer. However, I also wanted to add-on a bit of personal exploration into the history, scenery, culture and food of the area, so I flew from San Diego to Atlanta to Madrid (about 16 hours) a week before I was scheduled to fish. I then took a fast and comfortable train from Madrid to Pamplona, where I stored my fishing gear while I traveled around northern Spain.

After a week of sightseeing, I linked up with Ivan Tarin in Pamplona. He is owner and head guide of Salvelinus Lodge, which has two bases of operation - the main Lodge in Santa Cilia, 1½ hours east of Pamplona; and a satellite opera-

tion in Aren, approximately two hours farther east. The main Salvelinus Lodge can accommodate six rods and four non-fishing guests. It's located beside the Aragon River in the former winery and residences of the Monastery of St. Cilia. It has three floors and five bedrooms, each with a double bed or two twin beds; three bathrooms with sink, toilet, bidet, tub and shower; 24 hour self-service bar; TV; Internet service; dining room; kitchen; boot room; and a small fly shop. The furnishings are basic but comfortable and clean. Everything worked. One other couple and I were the only guests in the lodge that week.

The two guides I fished with were Ivan (who speaks adequate English) and Zach, an American who has been in Spain for seven years. Ana Garcia, a delightfully energetic pixy of a woman, is the cook, housekeeper and *majordomo*. Laundry service is available daily.

The Santa Celia and the Aren locations combined offer access to 1,500 miles of wild trout streams and rivers, plus more than 180 lakes. The Salvelinus guides are, frankly, paranoid about protecting favorite spots. I was sworn to secrecy about the names of the streams and rivers we fished, and they take pains to hide the purpose of the vans they use for transport. Their precautions must work: I didn't see another fly fisher the entire trip.

Don't even think about arranging a self-guided trip to fish in Spain. Fishing is controlled here by a nightmare of restrictions and regulations. Each day and each fishing water required myriad different licenses. Ivan gave me a fistful of licenses every day.

A day at Salvelinus starts with made-to-order breakfast at 8 a.m. You leave the lodge at 9 a.m. and drive for anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours to reach your fishing destination. Two hours is the time required to reach Aren, where you typically fish for the day then spend the night. When you fish a high mountain stream, you may hike for 30 minutes to an hour or more before you begin

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fishing. You fish until about 2 p.m., then it's lunch time. Lunch is what you have asked Ana to fix for you that particular day, plus fruit, bread and cheese. Then, it's siesta time. What a treat!

You start the afternoon's fishing around 4 p.m. and fish until 7 p.m. or later. Back at the lodge, you have time for a quick shower and drinks in the bar before the evening meal

around 9 p.m. The wine and food were plentiful and great.

On my first day of fishing, Ivan and I drove for about 20 minutes to one of the many tributaries of the Aragon River. Each canyon in the area seems to have a stream with wild trout in it. There were trout rising when we arrived, but they stopped shortly after we got there. The river was about 30 yards across at its wid-

est with shallows between the pools. The fish were spooky. I tried a Parachute Adams, then a Chernobyl Ant, then other dry flies in the 14 to 16 size range. Ivan must have changed my fly 20 times that morning.

I had never seen a "striped trout" before. It is the Mediterranean variant subspecies of the brown trout (*Salmo trutta*). It has a light-green back with three or four dark vertical bands that

□ Close-Up: Rocky Mountain West

All About Fishing Utah's Green River Below Flaming Gorge

By Honor Roll Subscriber Bob Peters

(Editor Note: Honor Roll subscriber Bob Peters checked in this month with a really useful assessment of one of his favorite Western fishing holes, namely the Green River below Flaming Gorge Reservoir on the Wyoming border in Utah. Our hat's off to Bob Peters. See Box on page 2 for more information on our Honor Roll Program.)

■ Do you like casting dry flies to rising trout on a crystal-clear stream flanked by towering rock walls? If so, you may want to visit the reliable and productive tailwater fishery on the Green River below Flaming Gorge Reservoir in northeastern Utah. I make this pilgrimage from my home in Jackson, Wyoming, every April.

Flaming Gorge dam was built in 1958, transforming the wildly fluctuating flows of the Green River into a tailwater trout factory that stretches for some 30 miles. The classic runs, riffles and swirling eddies provide excellent habitat for amazing numbers of brown, rainbow and cutthroat trout.

The fishable water is divided into three "sections" called A, B and C. There's a good map of the sections at www.flyanglersonline.com/features/greatrivers/green/greenmap.php. The A section, probably the most popular because it boasts the highest number of fish per mile and the prettiest scenery, runs seven river miles from just below the dam to an area known as Little Hole. Rainbows measuring 12 to 16 inches predominate in the first half of this section with more browns below.

B section, which runs eight miles from Little Hole to Browns Park, is a bit wider and slower, with browns 15 to 18 inches common and 20-plus-inch fish always a possibility. This section usually has fewer fishermen and includes lots of water where you can stalk rising fish. Just be aware that a usually-dry tributary called Red Creek can turn the lower B section the color of a clay pot. Walk-in fishermen don't have to worry about Red Creek as the walking trails end before the creek enters the river. Local guides know what Red Creek is doing and plan floats ac-

cordingly. Do-it-yourself floaters will want to check with a local fly shop (many of which also arrange trailer shuttles) and adjust their plans if the creek is running red.

C section runs 17 miles from Browns Park to the Utah/Colorado state line. This is beautiful water but it has fewer fish. I've never floated all the way to the end of the C section, but I understand it can yield some very big fish when the conditions are right.

Overall, this river is a bug-producing machine with massive populations of scuds and midges. The trout feed almost constantly, and nymph fishing is productive year-round. Progressing through the summer and fall, there are hatches of small stoneflies, caddis, PMDs, cicadas and hoppers. The cicada hatch, which occurs anytime between the middle of May and the end of June, is a local favorite. Cicadas are about the size of your thumb and fly like an overloaded bomber crashing into the surface of the river. Three different species of cicadas live in the area, and the fishing can be phenomenal.

The first big dry fly hatch each year, however, is the bluewing olive (BWO) mayfly hatch on the A and B sections. It usually occurs from late March into early May. If you hit it right, you can have literally hundreds of rising fish around you.

This past April, I did two days of wadefishing on my own and one day floating with a guide. Timing is important. The weather in April in the Rocky Mountains is very unpredictable. Any given day can be sunny and 70 degrees, or it can produce a blizzard. Or both.

On-your-own wade fishing can be very productive. Access is along excellent trails on the northeast side of the river from the dam past Little Hole almost to Red Creek with good fishing available virtually the entire length. A strong wader with a staff can usually wade across (more for a change of scenery than more fish) at a ford about fifty yards upstream from the first boat ramp at Little Hole. But this is a deceptively powerful river and you should be very careful. The stream flows can vary considerably, especially

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circle its body, which makes for good camouflage especially over a rocky bottom. Both Ivan and Zach had told me that the striped trout were very fast strikers, difficult to hook and could grow up to eight pounds in these waters. I don't know about the eight pounds, but the "fast" part was certainly true. After multiple strikes, I finally managed to hook a striped trout of about three inches which

sailed past my right ear when I struck too hard.

That afternoon it started to rain. The weather can change very quickly in the Pyrenees. Ivan changed to a dry attractor pattern with a size 16 nymph dropper about 18 inches below it, and he fished utilizing what he called a "High Sticking" technique. This involved making a short cast right to the bank, then holding the rod tip up

to eliminate drag. He would let the current drift the fly down and pick it up and do it again. He also showed me how to use a "bow-and-arrow" cast to get through the limbs, brush and tight places. I got about 10 strikes but was too slow to react. No fish landed for the day.

Salvelinus also offers fishing in high mountain meadow spring creeks for wild brown trout. My second day,

when the dam is producing power. I highly recommend checking with one of the shops for predicted water releases so you don't wade across only to find that you can't get back.

My first day this past April, I hiked downstream from Little Hole to Grasshopper Island and started fishing around 10:30 a.m. While waiting for the first BWOs to appear, I fished a dry-and-dropper combination with a size 12 or 14 Parachute Adams just buoyant enough to float a size 18 or 20 beadhead pheasant tail or zebra midge about three feet below. That combination worked well enough for me to hook several nice browns.

By 1 p.m. BWOs were appearing, so I changed over to a local favorite, a quill-bodied Parachute Adams dry (size 18 or 20) with a brown Antron tail and a small white poly yarn post. You can usually spot a surface-feeding fish and maneuver into position for a good cast. When there is a wind rippling the surface, I try to drop my fly two or three feet behind a larger Parachute Adams indicator fly, which gives a rough idea where the "target" fly is. This allows me to set the hook on rises in the vicinity. That first afternoon never produced a big hatch, but I ended the day with two dozen trout, mostly browns, plus a couple of rainbows.

I spent my second day with guide Lyle Waldron, who was highly recommended by some friends. We floated the A section because Red Creek was in full flow and there appeared to be few other driftboats or wade fishermen around. During April, weekends can get pretty crowded. Lyle is a wizard with nymphing rigs and techniques, but I like to throw streamers from a driftboat. Streamers can be deadly along the Green, but not this morning. I landed three fish and missed a few. About 11:30, the first BWOs came wafting by and noses started breaking the surface. That afternoon there was very little wind, and I caught lots of trout, missed more and had a wonderful time. One of the browns taped over 20-inches. Lyle is a masterful guide, great conversationalist and a real pleasure on the water. His knowledge of the river and excellent rowing ability allowed me to make good floats over feeding fish.

Lyle told me of a "special" hatch a little later in the year. It sounded amazing if you happen to hit it right. I won't say any more about it, but if you like throwing big bugs to rising trout, you might want to call or e-mail him.

Lyle books through Flaming Gorge Lodge (435-889-3773; www.flaminggorgeresort.com). His personal e-mail address is: lylewaldron02@sprintpcs.com.

I spent my final day wadefishing on my own upstream from Little Hole. Some strong weather was moving in and it was not long before my indicator fly was getting drowned by waves. As dark clouds rolled in and the wind increased, however, BWOs started coming off the water in droves. Fish started rising in every little eddy. Casting meant flinging the line up in the air and hoping to see where the fly landed. Actually, it didn't matter where it hit because once my little Adams hit the water there was a fish to take it. I caught one fish after another for three hours as the wind whistled and the temperatures dropped. Miserable weather, but the fishing was on fire. By 3 p.m., the hatch (not the wind!) was slowing, so I made my way back to the car for the drive home through three separate raging snowstorms. That's springtime in the Rockies.

There are only a few options for accommodations in this area. I typically stay at Flaming Gorge Lodge which offers clean motel rooms (and a few condos), a nice restaurant, a well-stocked fly shop and extensive guide and boat shuttle service. My cost for two nights of lodging, two days of wade-fishing and one day of guided driftboat fishing was about \$700, plus guide tip. Red Canyon Lodge (435-889-3759; www.redcanyonlodge.com) is a few miles from the gorge in a very quiet and beautiful setting with a group of cabins and a fine restaurant. Trout Creek Outfitters (www.fishgreenriver.com) is a wonderful fly shop right on the corner of the road that leads to Little Hole. They offer some lodging options, excellent guides and a shuttle service. There are also established campgrounds and stream-side campsites on the B and C sections. While the area offers hiking, mountain biking and rafting (during the warmer months), this is primarily a serious angling destination.

The Green River at Flaming Gorge offers outstanding fishing for all ability levels. Outright beginners can go with a guide and catch a lot of trout while learning nymph and dry fly techniques that will serve them well on almost any trout stream. More experienced fishermen can usually catch plenty of trout while wade fishing this beautiful stream. It's well worth a visit. - Bob Peters.

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fishing with Zack, we drove about 30 minutes from the lodge up a winding road into the Pyrenees until the road ended. We then hiked about 200 yards to a small spring creek running through a meadow. The scenery was stunning with the green valley framed by the snow-capped Pyrenees. Just over the top of the mountains was France.

The spring creek was only 15 feet wide at its widest. I fished a 3-weight rod, 4-pound tippet and Chernobyl Ants. The technique was to slap the fly on the water along the edges of the grass banks with a "splat". Most strikes came on the first cast. I caught and released nine or 10 brown trout in

the six- to 12-inch range and missed many more.

While bad weather prevented me from trying the helicopter-assisted, high-mountain lake fishing for browns and brook trout, another angler and his non-fishing spouse did sample it while I was there. They said the scenery was truly spectacular and you could sight cast for larger browns and rainbows. Ivan said catching 20 to 30 browns from 18 to 24 inches and brookies from eight to 14 inches is not uncommon. The high mountain lakes require about a four-hour hike or a 10-minute ride by helicopter. The cost is 900 to 1,500 Euros for the helicopter, which can take up to three

anglers who split the cost.

On my third day, Ivan and I fished the Aren River area for striped, brown and rainbow trout. This absolutely beautiful river is about 30 to 60 feet wide, with pools about four feet deep. I used an eight-foot 5-weight rod that Ivan loaned me, as my 10-foot 6-weight was too long for the limbs and trees overhanging the river. I got a few strikes but did not hook a fish. That afternoon, we tried several other rivers, all to no avail.

That evening we drove the short distance to Aren, where I was introduced to Juan Antonio Pascual Annella, the proprietor of both the Hotel and Restaurante Casa Domenc where we spent the night and dined extravagantly. This was my most memorable dining experience in Spain; words fail to describe how good it was.

On my fourth day, Zach and I went high-mountain stream fishing for brook trout, hiking an hour up into the mountains, which were beautiful with glacier-scarred sheer cliffs and rocky outcroppings, snow still on the shady side of the peaks and cattle grazing in the high-mountain meadows. We fished pocket pools with a 4-weight rod and Chernobyl Ants, Elk Hair Caddis, Parachute Adams and various other dry flies in sizes 14 to 18. I caught and released six brookies from six to eight inches. On a good day in the high mountain streams, it is apparently not uncommon to catch and release 10 to 20 brookies a day.

On my last day, we drove about 20 minutes from the main lodge to another of the rivers in the valley. No action. Switching to the dry attractor fly with the nymph dropper, I landed two brownies around 10 inches.

Overall, I did not have what I would call successful fishing, but I have never fished with more knowledgeable, hard-working and enthusiastic guides than Ivan and Zach. Their knowledge of the water, fishing techniques, choice of flies, interest and effort were excellent, as were their facilities, equipment, transporta-

□ *Want To Go Fishing Free?*

All About Our Free-Fishing Program

■ *The Angling Report* has always valued feedback from its subscribers. And the reasons are clear. For one thing, *Angling Report* subscribers are some of the world's most experienced fishermen. Hence their judgments about places are broad-based and sound. On top of that, most subscribers' insights on trips have a refreshingly candid air about them. That's because they are written from a point of view that no other publication embodies – namely, the paying client's point of view.

So, here's the deal. We have begun to encourage lodge owners, guides and others to offer us FREE visits to their facilities with the understanding we will turn these invitations over to *Angling Report* subscribers who convince us they are capable of writing useful and accurate reports on what they experience. At this point, more than 30 subscribers have been invited on FREE fishing trips here in the US or to places outside the country such as Argentina, Christmas Island, Brazil and Mexico. The total value of all that travel is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. And the good news is, more and more outfitters are offering

us FREE trips in return for reviews.

If you want to get in on this opportunity, all you have to do is upgrade your subscription to Online Extra. The cost is only \$2 a month for a service that includes: unlimited access to our custom-searchable, 5,000-page database of subscriber reports and previously published articles; early-bird electronic delivery of your newsletter each month; and access to periodic news bulletins of importance to anglers who travel. At least one of those bulletins each month will describe a FREE FISHING OPPORTUNITY, and it will invite you to tell us why we should select you to take advantage of it.

Sound like fun? Well, what are you waiting for? Sign up right now for Online Extra and get on the list of people invited to go fishing free. The easiest way to sign up is to go to our web site, www.anglingreport.com and click on "Upgrade to Online Extra." Or, you can call us at 800-272-5656. Just be sure, when you sign up, you send us an e-mail address that you check often. Also, be sure your spam filter is set low enough to let our bulletins get through. Enjoy!
– Don Causey, Editor/Publisher.

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tion and food. Upon my return, I talked to two *Angling Report* subscribers, Jere Ferguson and Harde Swanepoel, who had fished Salvelinus. Both told me they had excellent fishing and plan to go back. That's fishing!

The cost of this trip, if I had not been invited to fish FREE, is 500 Euros a day (\$717 at this writing), minimum two days; and 333 Euros a day (\$478) for a non-fishing companion. Salvelinus also offers a Seven Day Fishing Package for 3,300 Euros (\$4,733), with non-fishing companions

costing 2,200 Euros (\$3,156).

Would I recommend this trip to a friend? To a European, absolutely. To someone who resides in the Western Hemisphere? Yes, but only if you are already going to Europe anyway and you want the unique experience of fishing there. If your only interest is the number and size of the fish, this is not your trip. There are closer destinations where the dollar goes farther and the fish are bigger and more plentiful. However, you would miss the haunting history and beauty of the

Pyrenees, the magnificent architecture, culture, food, wine and the friendly and beautiful people of Spain. What a great trip! – Skip Cox. (Postscript: You can reach Salvelinus Lodge by going to the company's web site at: www.salvelinus.com. The phone number, dialed from the US, is: 011-34-696-164810. For more information on striped trout, go to: www.international.inra.fr/press/conserving_native_trout_in_alpine_rivers. Or you can google: "Mediterranean genotype trout".)

Briefly Noted

Things To Do... Places To Go... New Developments

■ In last month's issue (see page 10) we warned you that customs officials in **Mexico** are occasionally enforcing an obscure rule listed on the back of the Tourist Card (a.k.a Migratory Tourist Form or FMT) which every visitor to Mexico must fill out. It specifies clearly that visitors may bring in only four rods and reels without charge.

Last month, we told you a subscriber who wished to remain anonymous had been stopped in Cancun and forced to pay an extra fee because he had more than the allowed number of rods and reels. Well, a subscriber from Montana has now told us he was stopped recently at another airport on the other side of the country. "This past June, I was charged \$30 upon arriving at the Cabo San Jose airport," he writes. "I had eight or nine fly reels with me. They scanned all arriving luggage, saw my reels and had me open my luggage. We went into a back room where the officer clipped my \$30 to a form. They didn't check my Abel Expedition Rod Carrier, which probably would have doubled the fee. Another guy in our group brought in a dozen reels and had no problem...."

The bottom line here is, this rule is obviously being enforced, albeit only occasionally and selectively. It's

just one more thing to be aware of if you are headed South of the Border for a fishing getaway. If you get stopped and you are told to pay, our advice is to do just that, as the requirement is spelled out on the tourist card. Longer term, we think agents, outfitters and others with business in Mexico should try to take some kind of action against this rule. How about creating a system that allows you to register rods and reels on arrival? You would



have to pay only if you don't leave with all of them. Anyone agree?

□

■ Now here's an interesting new wrinkle in fly fishing. It's a Fly Fishing Trail in western **North Carolina** (www.flyfishingtrail.com). Modeled after the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in Alabama, the heart and soul of the Fly Fishing Trail is a map with GPS coordinates and driving directions to

15 different fishing spots on quality trout streams and concentrations of smaller waters. Among the featured waters are Fowler, Greens, Panther-town, Savannah, Scott, and Tanasee creeks; Caney Fork, Horsepasture, Chattooga and Whitewater rivers; and five separate sections of the Tuckasegee River. The fishing spots are categorized by the type of fishing – that is, whether the fishing is for wild or hatchery trout and what species predominate. It's important to note that these are all public waters and none are restricted to fly fishing only, though some are limited to artificial lures only. Some are pure catch-and-release while others have delayed harvest regulations that restrict when fish can be kept.

We followed up with Alex Bell, a retired high school principal and sports coach, now fishing guide (www.abfish.org) who helped identify and categorize the fishing spots on the Fly Fishing Trail. Bell guides regularly on most of these waters and recommends timing a trip for either spring or fall when the fishing is better and tourist traffic in the area drops.

If you want to fish with Bell, he charges \$150 for a half day. That's for one person. If two anglers are along, the price rises to \$225. Full-day trips are \$200 for one person; \$300 for