

BUDGE'S WILDERNESS LODGE

PACKING LISTS FOR FISHING & HORSEBACK RIDING ADVENTURES

CLOTHING

Summer in the Colorado high country is extremely variable. Early morning temperatures can easily dip below freezing while afternoons can bring out t-shirts and sunburns. For that reason, we recommend packing a versatile layering system.

For base layers, we recommend lightweight, synthetic or merino wool materials. Mid-layers should include items like a fleece jacket and a puffy jacket. These two-mid layers can be worn alone or together to match conditions. While "ultralight" style hiking pants are good for fishing and hiking generally, some guests have preferred a mid-weight hiking pant on these trips for better comfort when sitting on a horse. For outerwear, bring high quality, breathable rain gear – both a jacket and pants.

Don't forget the small items– socks, gloves, underwear and hats. Pack high quality merino wool or merino-synthetic blend socks. This goes for your underwear as well. Cotton has no place in the backcountry. Cotton absorbs moisture and loses all of its insulating properties when wet.

Clothing Checklist

- Durable Synthetic Hiking Pants
- Short and Long Sleeve Shirts: Synthetic or Merino Wool
- Vest: Fleece or Puffy
- Fleece Jacket: Full zip or Pull-Over
- Lightweight Puffy Jacket: Down or Synthetic Fill
- Rain Jacket and Pants: Waterproof and Breathable, Gore-Tex or Equivalent
- Socks and Underwear: Merino Wool or Merino-Synthetic Blend
- Camp Clothes: It's nice to change into your favorite sweatshirt or a comfy pair of jeans after fishing
- Hats: Bring a ball cap or brimmed hat, plus a warm beanie
- Buff or Neck Gaiter: The sun is intense at this altitude!

FOOTWEAR AND WADING

Hiking Boots

Bring a sturdy pair of hiking shoes. Lightweight hikers or trail runners will work fine, but our preference is a hiking boot that comes above the ankle for extra stability in uneven terrain. Don't wait until your trip to try them out! This could result in some pain if your boots don't fit well or if they give you blisters. Make a point to test them out before your trip.

Wading Boots

Wading boots and waders are NOT included on fishing trips. Anglers may bring their own, or we have rentals available. Most anglers choose to wet wade during the summer months. We recommend a lightweight wading boot like the Orvis Ultralight or Orvis Approach Shoe. These should fit comfortably with a pair of neoprene wet wading socks. For the best fit, visit your nearest Orvis retailer.

Waders

Although we spend much of the summer wet wading, bringing a quality pair of lightweight waders is a good idea. They can add comfort when we have cool, rainy days. Do not bring bulky boot-foot waders. These are difficult to pack into the backcountry. Instead, bring a pair of breathable stockingfoot waders that are compatible with your wading boots. Waders are not included on fishing trips. Anglers may bring their own, or we have rentals available:

Wader and Boot Rentals:

Waders: \$48 per day

Wading Boots: \$32 per day

Neoprene Wet Wading Socks: \$15 per day

(Men's and Women's Sizes Available)

Most anglers prefer to horseback ride in hiking boots and then change into wading boots when we reach our destination. Some anglers prefer to keep things simple, riding out and back for the day in their wading boots. Pros: less time changing and more time fishing. Cons: riding back to the lodge with wet feet. There's no right or wrong. Whether you wear hiking boots or wading boots on the horse is entirely up to you.

Back at camp, it's nice to change into a comfortable shoes. Popular options include Crocs or old sneakers. Sandals are good too – as long as you don't mind dirt on your feet, walking between your cabin and the main lodge. You might also consider bringing slippers for wearing in your cabin and the lodge.

Footwear Checklist

- Hiking Boots
- Breathable Stocking-Foot Waders
- Wet Wading Socks
- Lightweight Wading Boots
- Camp Shoes
- Slippers

FISHING GEAR

We provide fly rod, reel, flies and tackle on fully guided trips. All anglers may bring their own wading boots and waders, or we have rentals available (see above).

Guests who are not embarking on a guided fly fishing trip and wish to fish on their own, may bring their own fishing gear. Or, we have rentals available. A Fly rod and reel rental is \$78 per day.

Fishing gear is largely a matter of personal preference, but here are some of our recommendations.

Fly Rods and Reels

We like to have a couple different fly rods on hand: a 3-weight for dry flies and delicate presentations. A 4-weight for heavier dries and hoppers. And a 5-weight for throwing bigger flies, hopper-dropper rigs, or fighting wind.

The River here ranges from about 20-feet to 50-feet wide. Even at its widest points, expect willows, brush, overhanging trees, or a combination of these. The standard 9-foot fly rod is a great choice. But shorter rods sometimes have an advantage on the river in these tight quarters. But when the wind kicks up, those 9-footers take the advantage. If you only bring one rod, you can't go wrong with a 9-foot 5-weight. If you have questions, please let us know and we can explain the options.

Fly Lines

A weight-forward floating fly line to match your fly rod will cover almost any scenario. On your light-line rods, consider a fly line that's tapered specifically for dry flies and delicate presentations. If you know you'll be fishing the high alpine lakes, you may want to bring an extra spool with a sink-tip or full-intermediate line. Especially if you'll be fishing for lake trout, getting down deeper can be a big advantage. If you're not sure which locations you'll be fishing, please let us know.

Landing Net

We strongly encourage all anglers to bring a landing net with a rubber basket. This helps safely land and return fish to the water. For more information, please see our catch and release policy and some fish handling tips on the fishing page of our website.

Leader and Tippet

Most of our standard leader and tippet setups include 7.5-foot tapered nylon leaders ranging from 4x-6x, depending on the water and the flies we're fishing. Bring along spools of matching nylon tippet, which allow you to vary the length of the leader for each situation. If you know you'll be fishing high alpine lakes, bring heavier leaders and tippet in the 2x-3x range for bigger streamers and especially lake trout fishing.

Flies

Fly selection in the high country tends to be simple. Bring a smattering of your favorite caddis and mayfly patterns, both dry flies and nymphs. Hatches like Blue Winged Olives that are limited to spring and fall at lower elevations will happen up here all summer long. Also bring plenty of terrestrial patterns like hoppers, beetles and ants. Finally, don't forget to bring a few of your favorite streamers. Swinging small streamer on the river can be very effective. In the high alpine lakes, streamers of all sizes can grab attention.

Fishing Packs

Popular options include a backpack with an attaching chest pack, or a roomy sling or lumbar pack. Consider the fact you may walk quite a ways from the horses while you fish. So your fishing pack (whether that's a sling, lumbar pack or backpack) should have enough room to carry water, sack lunch and rain gear.

Guests fishing out of a remote wilderness camp will be fishing entirely on foot. In these situations, it's even more important to have a pack that's large enough to carry your lunch and all the day's essentials. You may return to the tent for lunch. But it's not uncommon to be fishing a mile or more from the tent on any given day. Having all those items with you is important.

Fishing Checklist:

- Rods
- Reels with Fly Lines & Extra Spools if Needed
- Landing Net
- Fishing Pack
- Tippet
- Leaders
- Flies
- Weights
- Indicators
- Floatant/Dry Shake
- Forceps/Pliers
- Nippers
- Colorado Fishing License

PERSONAL ITEMS

Water Bottle

We ask that everyone bring at least one re-usable water bottle. In an effort to reduce the amount of waste that we haul out of the backcountry, and in an effort to eliminate single-use plastics, we do not provide bottled water. Tap water at the lodge and in the cabins is purified for drinking. We recommend bringing at least one 1-liter Nalgene style bottle.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses are essential. This is important both for the intense high-altitude sun and for safety while fishing. We recommend a high quality polarized lens. Many anglers choose to bring two options, one for bright conditions and one for cloudy conditions.

Other Essentials

Next, don't forget to pack sunscreen, bug repellent and any medications that you require. At high altitudes, the sun is intense. Stay healthy during your stay by using sunscreen, wearing sun-protective clothing, and staying hydrated constantly.

Pack a travel toiletry kit with toothbrush, toothpaste, medications and any essentials. We have first aid kits at the lodge, and our guides and wranglers carry first aid kits. But it's not a bad idea to add a few Band-Aids, ibuprofen and similar items to your bathroom kit. You might also consider bringing a pack of wet-wipes. Our cabins do have cold running water. And there is a community bathhouse with showers and hot running water. But a quick wet wipe on your face and hands after a day on the trail can sure feel nice.

Pack a headlamp or flashlight. Our electricity runs on a generator. We typically run the generator in the mornings and again in the evenings until about 10 p.m. A headlamp is nice for those who like to stay up reading or for using the bathroom at night.

You may also want to bring a camera, spare batteries, and charging cords for your phone and other devices (outlets in the cabins are powered when the generator is running). Limited WiFi is available in the main lodge for smartphones only (please no laptops). We ask that guests limit their use of the WiFi for two reasons – one, you're here to enjoy the wilderness. Second, our remote satellite system has limited capacity and our staff needs it to get their work done. Feel free to check in with family and friends at home. Otherwise, unplug and enjoy your time away!

Finally, we recommend bringing cash to tip your guide, wrangler, and cook, as gratuities are customary.

Personal Items Checklist:

- Water bottles
- Headlamps
- Toiletries
- Medications
- Band-Aids, Ibuprofen, etc.
- Sunscreen
- Bug repellent
- Wet Wipes
- Camera
- Spare batteries
- Sunglasses
- Cash to tip the Cooks/Wranglers

PACKING FOR A REMOTE WILDERNESS CAMP

Soft-Sided Bags

If you'll be packing into a wilderness camp, please do your best to limit all clothing and gear to 50 pounds per person. We suggest packing your gear in two soft-sided water-resistant duffel bags. Please pack two small to medium-sized duffels rather than one large duffel, doing your best to distribute weight equally between the two. This will make it quicker and easy for our team of packers to load it up.

One important thing to note: once it's loaded onto our pack animals, anything that's in your duffel bags will not be accessible until we arrive at the wilderness camp. Therefore, your rain gear, water bottles and anything else that you'll need access to, should not be packed into those duffels. These items will go into the saddlebags on your horse where they will be accessible on the trail. Please bring these items in a separate bag.

Also, remember that any trip to a wilderness camp includes your first night at the main lodge. Other items you'll want to pack in that separate bag include your toiletries, and any clothes you intend to wear that first day on the trail.

Sleeping Bag

All guests heading to a wilderness camp must bring their own sleeping bag. Our guest cabins at the main lodge have linens, so you won't need your sleeping bag that first night. Therefore, your sleeping bag can be packed with your duffels going on the trip.

When packing a sleeping bag for a summer trip, we recommend a minimum temperature rating of 20 degrees. It can get surprisingly chilly here in the high country, even during the summer months. Lows can easily dip below freezing.

We also recommend sleeping bags that are compact and packable. Large base camp/car camping sleeping bags that are extremely bulky are difficult to pack.

Wilderness Camp Checklist:

- Compact Sleeping Bag with a minimum 20-degree rating
- Two Small to Medium-Sized Water-Resistant Duffels for All Gear
- Separate bag for the first night: toiletries, clothes for the next day, water bottle, rain gear, sunscreen, etc.

CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS

If you have questions or need help getting ready for your wilderness adventure, please don't hesitate to ask.

The Crew at Budge's Wilderness Lodge

Contact Us:

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Call or Text: (970) 536-1341

Lodge (satellite): (970) 422-1311 (Jul-Oct)

