

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARRIVE

As you approach Budge's Wilderness Lodge, you may see some of our horses grazing in the meadows. As you enter the lodge grounds, the first thing you'll see is our horse corral. Go around the corral and past the barns. Then, you'll drive across Wagonwheel Creek. After fording the creek, the first building you come to is the main lodge. Take a right and drive around the deck. Feel free to park anywhere around the main lodge. One of our crewmembers will greet you.

We'll start by showing you around the lodge. Next, we'll show you to your cabin. If you're staying at the main lodge, this will be your home for the duration of the trip. Feel free to unpack and make yourself at home.

If you're striking out for a wilderness camp, this will be your home for the night, and you'll depart for your camp the next morning. Feel free to get organized and our crew will take your duffel bags that will be packed onto our packhorses or mules the next day. If you have questions about what should go on the mules or what should go on your personal horse, see our packing list for instructions. Or just ask!

After you've settled in to your cabin, make yourself at home. The rest of your arrival day is completely up to you. Relax in your cabin. Come on down to the main lodge and grab a cup of coffee. Feel free to take up a chair out on the deck and enjoy the view. Either way, welcome home! Feel free to take a nap or go for a hike. If you brought your own fly fishing gear, take a walk down the river and do some fishing before dinner.

Again, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask!

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR STAY

Lodge Based Trips

Guests staying with us at the main lodge can expect breakfast to be served around 7am. This may vary, depending on the weather or our fishing destination for the day. After dinner each evening, we will confirm breakfast time for the following day. After breakfast, we'll lay out a table of lunch items where guests can pack their own sack lunch for the day.

After breakfast, we'll gather lunches and fishing gear, and meet at the hitching rail where your saddled horse will be waiting. The first morning will take more time to get moving, because we'll need to adjust stirrups for each guest. Then, we'll load up any gear and hit the trail.

Depending on our destination or the wishes of each group, you may be out in the wilderness for several hours or all day. Fishing groups can expect horseback rides from 45 minutes up to two hours (one way). When anglers reach their destination, your guide or wrangler will tie up the horses. From here, we will fish on foot. We recommend carrying your lunch, water and rain gear with you, as we may fish a ways from the horses. See our packing list for more recommendations.

At the end of your fishing day or horseback riding day, you'll ride back to the main lodge in time for dinner. Our crew will have appetizers waiting. Dinner is usually served around 7 p.m. As soon as you're back from the day's adventure, feel free to relax on the deck and enjoy some appetizers. Alcohol is not included but you are welcome to bring your own. After dinner, stay and hang out as long as you like. Or head back to your own cabin for some peace and quiet.

On the final morning of your trip, come down to the lodge for breakfast. Next you can finish packing and load the vehicle for the drive home. Before you depart, take a moment to soak in the view, take a few photos, and of course say goodbye! We will certainly miss you and hope to see you again at Budge's Wilderness Lodge!

Wilderness Camp Trips

After your first night in the cabin, you'll come down to the main lodge for breakfast. At breakfast, you'll find a table of lunch fixings laid out. Pack yourself a lunch for the day.

After breakfast, we will meet at the hitching rail, where your horse will be saddled and ready for you. You'll want to put your lunch, rain gear, water bottle, sunscreen and any other essential items in the saddlebags on your personal horse. Anything that gets loaded onto our packhorses or mules will not be accessible during the ride to camp.

We will adjust your stirrups for the ride. Then, we will load up and hit the trail. Horseback rides to our wilderness camps can be anywhere from two to four hours long. If your legs or your rear end get sore along the way, just tell your wrangler. It can feel nice to get off and walk your horse for a ways. Or, we can take breaks along the way.

When we reach your wilderness camp, we'll unload the mules and you can begin settling in. This is a great time to have a snack or eat lunch. Then, you can spend the rest of the afternoon fishing or just relaxing – it's entirely up to you. Each evening, we'll have a hot dinner for you at camp. And each morning of your stay, you can expect a hot breakfast and plenty of lunch items to pack your own lunch for the day. After breakfast, you'll head out to fish or explore the area on foot.

On your last day in camp, our pack team will arrive with the packhorses and mules sometime between mid to late morning. They will also bring a saddle horse for your ride back to the main lodge. Remember to keep your rain gear, water bottle and lunch in the saddlebags on your horse. When we've loaded up, we will hit the trail and begin our trip back.

When we arrive at the main lodge, our pack team will unload. You can begin loading your vehicle for the drive home. Before you depart, take a moment to enjoy the view, take a few last photos, and say goodbye! Sadly, all great adventures must come to an end. We will miss you and hope to see you again at Budge's Wilderness Lodge!

CATCH AND RELEASE POLICY

We ask that all guests staying at the lodge practice catch and release fishing. This helps maintain the quality of the fishery for everyone. We also ask that guests staying in remote camps practice catch and release, returning cutthroat, rainbow, and lake trout immediately. If guests staying in wilderness camps wish to keep a fish or two to cook over the campfire, we ask that you only keep brook trout under 10" and in strict accordance with Colorado Parks & Wildlife bag and possession limits. Not only are brook trout the best eating fish in these waters, but high populations of small brookies compete with native cutthroat trout. Removing a limited number of smaller brook trout is the best way to help manage these waters while enjoying a wild-caught harvest.

Fish Handling Tips

We ask our guests to use single barbless hooks only. Land fish using a net with a rubber basket to prevent injury. Avoid beaching fish on rocks, sand or dirt. Hold the net in the water while carefully removing the hook with a set of forceps or needle-nose pliers. If you'd like to snap a picture, continue holding the net in the water until you're ready. Then cradle the fish under the belly and lift it over the net. Never put your fingers in the gills of a trout. After you've taken a picture, lower the fish into the water and point it upstream. There's no need to rock it back and forth, as a trout's gills are designed for water to move one direction. Cradle the fish until it swims away under its own power. Our native Colorado River Cutthroat trout are a treasure. Take a moment to admire their beauty and treat them with respect as you carefully release them. Thank you!

