

# TALAHEIM LODGE

WESTERN ALASKA



*The Fly Shop*

TACKLE & OUTFITTING GUIDE

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### **A Few Notes From Mark Miller At Talaheim Lodge**

A little about Alaskan Weather...Expect anything. June and July are our summer months. The weather can be very warm...in the 70's - 80's F. In the mornings expect cool weather in the 50's...however, warming up rapidly in clear skies. In June and July we can get rain depending on what the jet stream is up to. Prepare for both rain and clear warm weather. In June and July, even if it is raining, temperatures don't fall below the mid 50's. Alaska's daylight hours in June and July are long...20 hours. By the 10th of August our fall starts arriving. We are losing daylight and with this loss, our temperatures drop. If our August nights are clear, temperatures in the early morning can be in the 30's, however, warming up to the low 70's. August and September can be rainy. Temperatures can be in the 40's all day in rain, but are usually warmer, particularly in August.

#### **Bugs:**

What would fishing in Alaska be without bugs. The mosquito's arrive in mid-June and thrive through most of July, except in very warm weather. Most of our fishing is done in open areas, so if the weather is warm, we won't have any bugs. Every year is different, some light bug years, some heavy bug years. Bring a can of bug dope along with a head net if you don't like flying insects. Cabela's sells a wonderful bug pull-over and head gear all in one. By August our mosquitoes are gone, and then come our no-see-ums.

#### **Clothes:**

Dress is always casual. You need three complete changes of clothing, daily changes of socks and underwear. Bring comfortable camp shoes. For the helicopter fishing, waders are a must. I prefer Gortex lightweight waders with extra wading shoes. Gortex is light weight and packs well. Separate wading shoes are great. All wading shoes must have rubber bottoms, as Alaska has made felt-bottomed shoes illegal to wear anywhere in the state...NO CLEATS PLEASE, unless they can be quickly removed for helicopter and airplane travel, then reinstalled. Top raingear, warm hat, light gloves, one pair of long johns, sweater, light outer coat (Gortex raingear will do for a coat). Dress in layers. As the day warms up, you can take layers off.

#### **Miscellaneous Equipment:**

Lip balm, sunscreen, polarized sunglasses, camera, day pack (to carry camera, rain gear, or fishing extras).

They have a sauna and hot tub, so you might want a bathing suit.

Pack in duffel type soft bags...no hard suitcases. Duffel bags stuff into small airplane baggage compartments much better than hard bags. There is a 50-pound luggage weight limit, plus you may also have a 20-pound carry-on. Anything more than 70-pounds must be left at the lodge's air charter service in Anchorage where it can be reclaimed on your day of departure from the lodge.



They have white and red wine and keg beer available at the lodge served just before and during dinners. Please feel free to bring hard liquors and mixers from Anchorage. If you drink five or six beers each day, you might bring a case for yourself.

### **Fishing Equipment:**

Most fly fishermen bring two rods....#5 or #6 for trout, char, and grayling, and a #6/7 or #8 for salmon. If you are coming for king salmon in June, you will need a #10 stiff rod, otherwise, all the other salmon....silvers and reds, just require a #6, #7, or #8 rod. Bring sink tip and floating lines for both rods. We don't need full sink lines. 150 yards or more of backing is needed. Most of our trout fishing is done with floating lines....we occasionally use split shots to get down a few feet when we are switching from floating flies to sinking flies. Silver salmon take on the surface, so bring some floating line for your salmon rod.

### **Flies:**

Pacific salmon are not feeding once they hit freshwater. We catch them on attractor patterns. Coho flies tied on #2 streamer hooks vary in color. We cast flies tied with lots of tinsel with colors of green, red, orange, and black work great. King and silver salmon love large egg patterns....like super large glo bugs. Add some white marabou on the head. Our silver salmon take to the surface. Any large floating popper works great.

The rainbow trout will strike on the surface, especially for large patterns. Mouse patterns work the best, but large floating muddlers, humpies, or just about anything large works. Grayling take small black gnats, mosquitoes, or again, anything small that floats. Patterns that catch trout in the States work here, but remember, matching the hatch usually means egg patterns or flesh flies. Our silver salmon take large floating mice or Pink Pollywogs.

Trout and salmon like egg sucking leeches... tied black and blue with egg heads of orange. I tie most of my leech patters from bunny strips. Bunny strips can imitate leeches or minnows (zonkers). Tie bunny strips into flesh flies...white or tan in color to imitate rotten salmon flesh (in late July and August). Any type of salmon egg fly works great tied on # 6 egg hook. "Egg pink" works the best. Other fly patterns that work great are Muddlers, Dali Lamas, Polar Shrimp, Humpies, Black Gnats, and floating mouse patterns. I have flies available for sale at cost at the lodge. We have vises and all the materials available at the lodge for your use.

### **Conclusion:**

Don't bring anything you don't need to the lodge. Space is limited on small airplanes. If you have a trip planned after your fishing trip, leave it with your hotel or at the air carrier building that flies you to our lodge. Pack light....about 50 pounds per person, plus a 20-pound carry-on. We have spinning gear at the lodge if you have anyone in your group that is new at fly fishing. We carry extra fly rods in case yours breaks. Our fish are not educated and will take many different flies.

A few problems we've had with arriving anglers: People tend to bring way too much gear to the lodge. Each angler should only have one medium sized duffel bag plus a carry-on. You might want to change underclothing everyday, but a fishing shirt and pants can go a few days. Around the lodge light tennis shoes replace waders. Everything must be flown in via bush aircraft. Soft duffel bags pack best, but don't bring large "super" duffels that resemble "body bags". Each aircraft has limited capacity. If you must, pack in two smaller bags rather than one large one. Your hotel or the flying



service we use will store anything you don't need on your fishing trip. Rod tubes over six feet long don't like to fit in small planes.

### **Talaheim Lodge Specialized Supplement Gear List**

Anglers headed to Talaheim Lodge to fly fish for rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, Arctic grayling, or five different species of salmon, will find the gear and techniques similar to that used for these species elsewhere in Alaska. As always, there is no substitute for quality equipment, the value of which is immediately apparent upon hooking into your first wild Alaskan rainbow trout!

Talaheim Lodge has a stock of spare rods and reels and waders and wading boots for client use, for those who prefer not to travel with their own gear. Of course, you are welcome to bring all your own fishing and personal equipment with you to the camps.

#### **Single-Handed Fly Rods:**

Single-handed rods are the name of the game on the small streams and rivers fished by Talaheim Lodge. These streams are best fished with a nine-foot graphite rod that is designed to cast 5, 6, or 7 weight fly lines. All fishermen should have two rods available for the trip, each rigged with different flies and fly line according to the guide's suggestions. This will help maximize your time on the water, negating the need to continually change out fly lines, and flies. Sage, Winston, Scott, and The Fly Shop's Signature Rods are all excellent choices.

#### **Single-Handed Fly Reels:**

Single-action fly reels with rim-control features are needed for these hot rainbow trout. Your reel should be equipped with a drag system that's smooth, and reliable. Extra spools rigged and ready to go with sinking tips or spare floating lines are optional. Ross, Galvan, Hatch, Hardy, and The Fly Shop's L2A reels will serve you well in Alaska and beyond.

#### **Single-Handed Fly Rod Lines:**

A floating line is going to be your most used tool at Talaheim Lodge. This allows for maximum flexibility with different fishing techniques. Anglers often go from throwing weighted streamers, to skipping mice across the surface, both of which can be accomplished with a large belly floating taper. Sink-tip fly lines are great for those fishing strictly streamers, allowing you to get right under drowned trees, log jams, though to be honest if you showed up with only floating lines, you'd be fine.

#### **Fly Line Suggestions:**

Make a note to bring bright-colored fly lines, such as yellow, and chartreuse. This allows constant tracking of your fly's whereabouts, and the ability to avoid submerged snags that are more than willing to take your flies. For a floating line, we recommend Rio and Scientific Anglers, as they both produce lines that have extended and bulked-up forward tapers perfect for turning over the larger flies used. The Scientific Anglers 12' sink tip, type 3 sink rate, is an ideal choice, both for the sculpin-hunting-rainbows, and the silver salmon which ascend the rivers in the late summer.

#### **Rainbow Trout Flies (June & July):**

Fly selections for the rainbow trout remain fairly consistent throughout the summer. Early in the season, mouse patterns and streamers are the bugs of choice. Throwing them basically onto the bank, anglers strip mice, leeches, sculpins, and other streamers in front of, though, and behind



downed trees, and submerged logs. These small stream rainbows are not your typical riffle-dwelling, dry-fly-eating, spooky fish. They reside in and behind submerged “wood”, they don't eat dries (with the exception of a skated mouse), and are by no means leader shy. These trout have rarely seen flies before, and will crush a sculpin with a twine leader if given the chance. Bring on the OX!! Also, most fish are hanging behind spawning king and chum salmon, so while they will of course respond well to egg patterns, they'll hit large flies almost as well. Arctic grayling and Dolly Varden compete with the rainbow trout in these streams; each are gung-ho to grab a streamer and are crazy about salmon eggs – July and August are definitely the time of year for those who predicate the success of their trip on sheer numbers of fish!

### **Fly Selections for Trout, Dolly Varden, & Grayling**

- Sheila Sculpin #4
- Egg Sucking Rag Sculpin #4
- Silvey's Sculpin, tan/black/olive #4
- Clousers #6
- Conehead Woolly Buggers. black/olive #4
- Woolhead Sculpins, black/olive #4
- Egg Sucking Bunny Leech, black/purple #4
- Dali Lama, olive/white #2
- King Smolt #2
- Articulated Flesh #6-8
- Mercer's Skin n' Bones #6
- Mr. Hankey (mouse) #4
- Surreal Eggs #12
- Sparkle Eggs #10

### **Late Season Rainbow Trout Flies (August & early September):**

Once the heaviest runs of spawning Pacific salmon are over, trout will slowly slide back into bank-side cover. Streamers and mouse patterns will once again be thrown to the “wood”, swung under (and over) downed trees and through log jams for what are usually the largest and most impressive bows of the season. Along with the chance for a trout of a lifetime, there are silver salmon keggings up in some of the larger pools, and the sea run Dolly Varden are in full and spectacular spawning dress. Bank-side foliage is beginning to change colors, days are getting shorter and crisper – this is a gorgeous time of the year to experience Alaska, and is probably the most popular with guests.

### **Fly selections for late season trout (Mid-August - September):**

Identical to the selection listed for earlier season, with the following additions for silver salmon:

- Egg Sucking Bunny Leech, purple #4
- Foam Top Pink Pollywog #2

### **Statewide:**

Anglers are reminded that footgear with absorbent felt or other fibrous material on the soles are prohibited while sport fishing in the fresh waters of Alaska.



***\*Please do not wear felt soled wading boots in Alaska this summer\****

**Wi-Fi:**

As with most Alaska lodges, Talaheim Lodge has Wi-Fi available for clients who would like to bring their own Wi-Fi-enabled electronic devices. It is satellite-based and not completely predictable – some days it works better than others – but generally speaking it is more than adequate to send and receive emails. There is not adequate bandwidth to support sending images or for streaming videos.

**Rental Gear:**

The lodge has wading boots and waders for rent for \$50 for the week. Size 13 wading boots and down they have lots of pairs. Over size 13 they recommend you bring your own wading boots.

They have loaner fishing rods and reels (and flies) for free...if you break one of their loaner rods you owe the lodge \$50 to pay for the repair/shipping fees.

**Gratuities:**

Gratuities are a personal decision based on services rendered. Normally, guides and staff are tipped upon departure, in accordance with their individual effort and service. In most cases, we like to leave a gratuity with the camp owner or lodge manager. A good rule of thumb for figuring an amount to leave is 10-15 percent of the package cost, in cash only, please. If you have any questions concerning gratuities, please feel free to call or ask the lodge owner for guidelines.

**Contact Numbers:**

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