

SOUL FLY LODGE

BERRY ISLANDS, BAHAMAS



The Fly Shop

TACKLE & OUTFITTING GUIDE

GPS Coordinates: 25°75'64.69"N | 77°85'14.85"W

WWW.THEFLYSHOP.COM



Trip Questionnaire: If you have not sent us your completed questionnaire, please click on the link below. This will take you to an electronic questionnaire form that we ask you to complete and submit to The Fly Shop. Please be sure to click the “Submit” button at the end of the form. The information provided will help us -- and the outfitter best coordinate your trip. Thank you! Click [HERE](#)

Getting to Soul Fly Lodge

Now that you're booked, it's time to reserve your flights to Great Harbour Cay. Booking flights is the responsibility of each guest but we're here for you and happy to help. The newly rebuilt Great Harbour Cay Airport is only 120 miles East of Miami. Great Harbour Cay (GHC) is an official port of entry and can accommodate private aircraft both large and small. Soul Fly Lodge will provide your transfer to and from the airport.

LeAir - Nassau to Great Harbour Cay (20 min flight):

Suggested to arrive in Nassau at least 2 to 3 hours prior to LeAir flight departure time. LeAir typically flies twice a day to Great Harbour Cay. You'll clear customs & immigration in Nassau.

Departure Location: Lynden Pindling International Airport, Windsor Field Road, Nassau, Bahamas

Tropic Ocean Air – Ft Lauderdale to Great Harbour Cay (1 hour flight):

Comfortable flight, a more expensive option than LeAir but gets you to GHC faster and more easily. You'll clear customs & immigration right on GHC.

Departure Location: Fort Lauderdale International Airport, Sheltair Terminal, 1050 Lee Wagener Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

Makers Air – Ft Lauderdale to Great Harbour Cay (1 hour flight):

Comfortable flight, a more expensive option than LeAir but gets you to GHC faster and more easily. You'll clear customs & immigration right on GHC.

Departure Location: Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, 2331 Northwest 55th Court, Hangar 19, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309



Contact Information

Should any problems occur during your travel, including significant flight delays please be sure to have the following emergency contact information with you. Please feel free to contact the lodge or The Fly Shop® directly.

Soul Fly Lodge

Lodge Email & Kitri Schaefer | soulflylodge@gmail.com

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US Sales & Service | +1 (603) 969-3050

Bahamas Landline | +1 (207) 630-6211

The Fly Shop®

(800) 669-3474 | (530) 222-3555 | travel@theflyshop.com

Emergency Assistance

In case of emergencies involving the death, injury, welfare, or arrest of an American citizen in The Bahamas or the Turks and Caicos Islands, please call (242) 328-3496 or 242-311-1181x9 during business hours, and 242-357-7004 at all other times. (Please note that the Duty Officer who answers this number will not be able to assist with visa or routine passport matters.)

General Travel Information

Passport & Visas:

A passport is required for all travelers, and must be valid for six months beyond the arrival date. A visa is not required for U.S or U.K. passengers. Residents of other countries should contact the Bahamian embassy in their country for travel requirements.

You will complete an immigration card upon arrival. It will be checked at your first point of entry and a copy will be given to you. Please be careful not to lose this copy as it must be returned to Immigration upon your departure.

General Information

Communications:

Wireless internet will keep you as connected to the outside world as you wish. Cell service is available across the majority of the island (check with your provider: typically, an international pass costs about \$10/day). A landline telephone is also available.

Currency:

The Bahamian Dollar and the US Dollar are interchangeable in the Bahamas. There's no need to exchange currency for your trip, US Dollars will suffice.

Guide Gratuities:

We recommend tipping at the end of each day so that the tip is directly connected to the hard work that your guide just put in. We rotate guides each day so it's possible that you won't fish with that



guide a second time. We recommend a standard of \$100 - \$120 per day, per boat. If your guide did a phenomenal job, worked exceptionally hard or connected you with a memorable fish it's absolutely reasonable to tip more than the recommended amount.

Lodge Staff Gratuities:

We recommend settling up on your Chef & House Staff tip at the end of your stay. \$20 - \$30 per person per night is the average tip that we recommend. This tip should be given to managers to disperse to the staff appropriately. The chef, wait staff, kitchen help, maintenance staff, etc. will all get a cut of this tip.

Laundry:

Laundry service is not available. They do have a clothesline available if you choose to wash and rinse your fishing clothes.

Fishing Licenses:

Fishing licenses are included in your package and will be issued on site upon arrival.

Clothing & Sun Protection:

Soul Fly Lodge may be the most informal place on the planet. Comfortable, casual wear is accepted and encouraged. Flip-flops, sandals, shorts, T-shirts...casual is king. Expect air temperatures in the mid-80s during the days and high 60s to low 70s in the evening and early mornings. We recommend long-sleeved shirts and long pants while on the flats. Apply a waterproof sunblock of at least 30 SPF to all exposed skin including your ears and lips each morning. Re-apply occasionally throughout the day, and consider wearing a wide-brimmed hat and/or Buff. After applying sunscreen, scrub your hands with a scoop of sand and water as bonefish can smell lotion on your fly resulting in refusals. Applying sunscreen with the back of your hands minimizes transferring sunscreen to your fly and leader.

Although casual tropical attire will generally work great during your time on the water, there are three fishing specific items that are critical for each angler to bring: a raincoat, for boat spray or the occasional cloudburst, polarized sunglasses to help you see the fish, and flats boots for wading. Since the flats that we wade vary greatly in their composition (hard sand, soft sand, grass, coral) we do not recommend wading sandals; boots are greatly preferred. Even on sunny days we suggest including a rain jacket in your boat bag. Boat spray can occur at any time and a cloudburst can form when least expected.

Personal Gear

You'll need an assortment of personal gear for your days on the flats, and a boat bag to keep them in.

Boat Bags:

Your boat bag will contain all your gear for the day in the boat and in transfer to and from the dock.

Anglers often prefer some organizing dividers inside, and quick access pouches on the outside. It needs to be large enough to hold your rain jacket, fly boxes, sunscreen, extra leaders and tippet, camera/phone, and back up glasses and fly lines. Fishpond, Umpqua, Patagonia and Simms offer quality boat bags.

**Wading Pack:**

You may be wading for hours and the boat will be just a spec on the horizon. Be sure to bring a wading pack to carry your flies, leaders, tippet, clippers, a water bottle, snack bars, etc. The design is your choice, with sling, fanny and backpack the most common. Fishpond, Umpqua, Patagonia and Simms offer proven models in these designs.

Tools:

Pliers, hemostats, leader snips, hook sharpener, release tool.

Rain Gear:

Lightweight and breathable is the best rain gear for warm climates. Be sure to bring your rain gear with you on the boat every day, no matter how clear it looks. Squalls pop up quickly and the boat ride can be wet.

Sunglasses:

Polarized glasses with amber or copper lenses are the most popular for flats fishing, and having an extra pair in your boat bag is a darn good idea.

Bonefish Tackle

Lodge Equipment:

A limited supply of rods, reels, flats boots, etc. are available at the lodge. To reserve equipment, please note that on your online questionnaire so the lodge will know what you are expecting to borrow.

Fly Rods:

We strongly suggest 9', 4 piece travel rods in 7, 8 and 9 weights. Fast action rods that generate high line speed are the most popular, and rods that have been especially designed for the rigors of saltwater fly-fishing are the best choice. In that category, we like the Sage, Scott, and Winston rods. Traveling with a spare rod is always a good idea.

Fly Reels:

Reels designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. Features to look for are smooth drags, sufficient backing capacity, and a machined, anodized aluminum, one-piece frame. Large arbor reels are a great choice, quickly retrieving line and backing. Proven saltwater reels are manufactured by Hardy, Hatch, Abel and Galvan.

Fly Lines:

A weight forward floating line designed for the tropics is extremely important. Scientific Anglers and Rio both make excellent saltwater fly lines. These lines are specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing and have a specifically designed core that provides the proper stiffness to allow excellent shooting while resisting tangles, even in tropical heat. They are extremely accurate lines, and the running portion is a large diameter and floats on top of the water, making it a pleasure for wade fishing. Traveling with a back-up fly line is strongly suggested. It weighs almost nothing, takes up little space in your luggage, and won't spoil before your next trip.



Flats Boots & Socks:

There are daily opportunities to get out of the boat and wade the flats. If you prefer wading, your guide can have you on foot most of the day. This means that you'll need a reliable pair of flats boots for both foot protection and comfort. Quality boots that fit well are important, and proven models are made by Simms. Simms lightweight neoprene socks will add an additional layer of protection, absorbing the friction from sand that gets inside your boots.

Leaders & Tippet:

We typically fish 9' - 12' tapered saltwater leaders made from clear monofilament or fluorocarbon, with 12 - 20 lb. test the most popular choices. 12lb. leaders are common, but there are situations where you want to go heavier, 16lb. or 20lb, making the release quick and easy.

Both nylon and fluorocarbon leaders are popular among bonefish aficionados, with each having their specific properties. Nylon sinks slower than fluorocarbon and could be a good choice for presenting to fish in extremely shallow water. Fluorocarbon is less visible and more abrasion resistant, possibly the best as your last few feet of tippet.

Bonefish Flies:

Experienced anglers typically agree that having the right fly can make the difference between a good trip and a great one. Having a broad selection of bonefish flies will help to ensure that you have a successful trip. An important aspect of fly selection is sinking rate. When tying or purchasing bonefish flies, vary the sink rate of your flies by including some with no eyes, bead chain eyes, and lead barbell eyes. This allows you to fish different depths of water and to fish tailing fish and cruising fish.

As a general rule, use light colored flies on a sand bottom, and dark colored flies on turtle grass or rubble bottoms. On the flats, high visibility can turn any creature into prey. Most prey on bonefish flats are well camouflaged. Try smaller flies for fish that are spooky or tailing on shallow flats in calm weather conditions. On deeper flats, or in windy conditions, larger flies work well, especially on fish that are cruising fast. Larger flies should typically be cast further away from bonefish.

Year after year the Gotcha has proven to be a "go to" fly, spawning a number of effective variations including the Beck's Sili Legs. Spawning and Mantis shrimp patterns are important flies, and it seems like every guide and angler has their favorite patterns.

Bring your favorite Gotchas, spawning shrimp and crab patterns, in white, pink, pearl, brown, and tan in sizes 2, 4 and 6. Include weighted flies for fishing the deeper edges and high tides, and unweighted flies for fish in skinny water.

With these thoughts in mind, we have prepared a list of flies with which we have found success.

Bonefish Flies:

- Gotcha - #2- 6
- Bonefish Clouser - #4 & 6; tan/white & chartreuse/white
- E.P. Spawning Shrimp - #4; bead chain & lead eyes, tan & translucent
- Squimp - #2, 6
- Miheves Flats Fly - #6
- Beck's Silli-Legs - #6; tan



- Bonefish Junk - #2-6
- Spawning Mantis - #2-6

Tarpon Tackle

Although bonefish are what most fly fishers are chasing in the Bahamas, tarpon are sometimes available. Tarpon in the Bahamas are most often seen in and around creeks, freshwater springs and blue holes. Most tarpon in the Bahamas range in size between 30 - 60 pounds. Big tarpon, up to and over 100 pounds, are sometimes sighted in the late spring and summer. If you own a 10, 11 or 12 weight rod, bring it.

Fly Rods:

Fast action 9', 4 piece travel rods in 10, 11, & 12 weights are standard. The Sage, Scott, and Winston rods are excellent choices.

Fly Reels:

A heavy-duty saltwater reel is a must here. Look for a reel with a smooth drag, plenty of backing capacity, and a sturdy one-piece, machined, aluminum anodized frame. Models to consider are built by Hardy, Abel, Hatch and Galvan.

Fly Lines:

Ninety percent of tarpon fishing is done with a weight forward floating line and the [Scientific Anglers Amplitude Textured Tarpon Taper](#) is one of the best. A good second choice in a tarpon line is a full sinking intermediate line, and we fish the S.A. Sonar in this situation.

Leaders:

Leaders for tarpon can be simple, or complex. The knots used in building class tippet tarpon leaders take some practice to learn, and it can be very rewarding to acquire those skills. We often build a simple tarpon leader with 8 foot of 40# fluorocarbon followed by 2 feet of 60#, 80#, or 100# bite tippet. You can also purchase hand-tied tarpon leaders for your trip.

Tarpon Flies:

In general, tarpon flies for the Bahamas should be tied on 1/0 through 3/0 size hooks. Slight variations in shape and color can be all that is needed to entice tarpon into striking.

Tarpon Flies:

- Tarpon Rabbit Toad - #1/0; purple/black, tan, chartreuse
- Cockroach - #1/0 & #4/0
- Bigeye Tarpon - #3/0; orange/grizzly, sand devil, yellow
- Black Death - #3/0
- Tarpon Toad - #2/0; yellow, chartreuse, red/black



Permit Tackle

The Berry Islands is a legitimate permit fishery. Permit in the Bahamas range in size from 3 - 30 pounds. Most often you will sight permit in deeper water (4 to 6 feet), along the edge flats or at the top of a high tide change.

Fly Rods:

We suggest 9', 4 piece travel rods in 9 or 10 weights. Rods built by Sage, Scott, and Winston are excellent options.

Fly Reels:

Fly reels specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. Features to look for in reels are smooth drags, plenty of backing capacity, and a sturdy, machined, aluminum, one-piece anodized frame. Reels to consider include those built by Nautilus, Abel, Galvan, and Hatch.

Lines:

The Scientific Anglers and Rio saltwater floating lines are a couple of our favorite permit lines. They cast permit crab and shrimp flies with ease, and both are very accurate.

Leaders:

Fluorocarbon leaders are your best choice for permit as they are virtually invisible in water, and highly abrasion resistant. Fluorocarbon 9' leaders and tippet in 16 & 20 lb. test are standard.

Permit Flies:

There are a lot of permit flies marketed these days, and here are a few of them that have hooked permit.

- Squimp - #2; tan
- Raghead Crab – #2; tan, olive
- Contraband Crab #2, 4; olive, tan
- Casa Blanca Raghead Crab – #2; tan, white
- Avalon Permit – #2
- Puglisi's Spawning Shrimp – #4; tan, translucent
- Puglisi's Bead Chain Spawning Shrimp – #4; tan

Barracuda & Jacks

Barracuda in the Bahamas get big, and they are very aggressive. They attack a fly at an unbelievable rate of speed, and often skyrocket into the air when hooked. When hooked, few fish can match a 'cudas initial run for speed and sheer violence...hold on!

Jacks are very fast, pull like a freight train, and will destroy both surface poppers and streamers. Watching them blow up on your popper while you strip it as fast as you can is a sight to remember. Endurance is their strong point, and no jack gives up without a fight that you will remember.

**Fly Rods:**

Flies for these fish are often large streamers and poppers, so 9', 4 piece travel rod in 9 or 10 weights are good choices. Your permit rod is also a barracuda rod.

Fly Reels:

Fly reels specifically designed for saltwater fly fishing are important. The same reel that you brought for permit, your 9 or 10 weight will perform well for barracuda fishing.

Leaders:

Leaders for barracuda and jacks can be simple. We often build a leader with 8 foot of 40# fluorocarbon for jacks, and add a bite tippet of 40 lb. Rio Powerflex Wire Bite Tippet or [Scientific Anglers Wire Tippet](#) for barracuda.

Flies for Barracuda & Jacks:

- In-Shore Popper – #3/0; chartreuse
- Tandem Cuda Fly - #2/0
- Cuda Killer – #4/0

Bonefish Behavior

Feeding:

Bonefish feed on the bottom, and through the water column. While feeding on very shallow flats their wavering tails are often visible out of the water. In deeper water their tails are not visible but the fish can still be seen. While bonefish are feeding, the condition of the surface of the water affects their feeling of security. Bonefish are more nervous in calm water. Conditions determine how best to present the fly. On most days there is a slight chop or ripple on the surface and the fly must be presented three to five feet in front of them. On very still days the fly should be cast further from the fish and stripped back into his area of awareness.

Mudding:

During the warmer months very large schools of bonefish will often back off the shoreline into about 5 to 10 feet of cooler water. As they grub for food, they stir up the bottom creating a visible cloud of mud, referred to as “milk”. This cloud of mud moves as the bonefish move and makes these bones feel quite secure because they are not visible to predators. Often the angler can catch one fish after another without spooking the school. It is generally not a common practice to fish muds because the desired challenge of sight fishing is eliminated. However, guides will fish muds with you at your request, and this can be good for beginners to feel the first lightning-fast tug of a bonefish.

Traveling:

Traveling bonefish are intent on changing location, but are very aware of their surroundings and not necessarily interested in feeding. When casting to traveling bonefish place your offering well ahead of the fish and let it settle. Your guide will tell you when the fish is in range and when to strip.

Tarpon & Permit

Tarpon are not always present, but we certainly come across them. They range in size from 30 to 200 lbs. Tarpon are the largest, strongest, and most acrobatic of flats fish. Even juvenile fish will put your



angling skills to the test and strain your tackle. We highly recommend having a rod set up for tarpon each day as the moment of opportunity does not last long.

We also see permit on occasion. They are by far the most difficult, picky and frustrating fish you will encounter on the flats. Permit are very finicky about what they eat. They will often charge your fly, only to stop at the last moment and refuse it. When you are presenting the fly, focus first and foremost on landing your fly near the fish and getting the slack out of your line. Your guide will help you “read the fish” by watching its behavior and will instruct you on you fly manipulation in regards to the fish.

Technique:

On the flats, your guide will be standing on the poling platform and poling the boat while scanning for fish. You will be standing on the front deck of the boat with your rod in one hand and your fly in the other.

When you are not fishing from the boat, you will be wading the flats. When wading, walk slowly and stop often to look for fish. If you see the fish moving in a specific direction, move quietly into position so you will be able to present the fly in front the fish. You usually have more time than you think to make a precise presentation.

Bonefish are almost always moving, and movement is often the first sign of fish. Scan the water slowly from side to side, within the range that you can cast. The guide will be looking further out, responsible for finding fish at a distance and poling the boat into good casting position. Look for the flash of an exposed tail, nervous water, a wave or wake on top of the water, or the shadow of a cruising fish. When casting to a fish that is moving towards you, land the fly in front of the fish, let it sink while the fish moves towards it, and begin stripping when the fish is close to the fly.

Typically, the guide will see the fish before you, and will put the boat in position for your cast. You will hear him direct you to the fish by saying something like “10 o’clock, 40 feet, going left”. Point your rod where you think he is directing you, and he will often help by saying, “more left” or “more right”, and tell you when to cast.

If you do not see the fish, do not cast until your guide asks you to. He will put the boat in position for the cast, tell you how far to cast and in which direction, and when to cast. Follow his directions in when to begin stripping your fly.

After you cast, let the fly sink to the bottom and make your first strips long and slow to get the fishes attention. Now you are going to “read the fish” by observing its behavior. If it moves quickly to your fly and stops, it probably ate your fly. Make a long strip to set the hook. If there is no resistance, stop, let the fly sink, and begin stripping again. If you do feel resistance, **pull on your line to set the hook without lifting your rod**, and prepare to “clear your line” as the fish runs. The first run often takes all the line quickly off the deck, and it is important that you guide the line off the deck and onto the reel. Your drag has been preset, so hold your rod tip high and enjoy the run! Occasionally the fish will turn and run towards you. If you can’t strip fast enough to keep a tight line, push your rod tip into the water and the drag of the fish pulling the line through the water will keep tension on the hook. Bonefish have tough mouths and having sharp hooks is important. Check your hook point regularly by pulling it across your thumb nail. If it digs into your nail, it’s sharp. If it drags across your nail without sticking, it’s time to sharpen the point.

Be certain to pinch down the barbs on your hooks. This makes it easier to release fish with minimal handling, and also minimizes the risk of injury to yourself and others.

YOU & YOUR GUIDE ARE A TEAM

Please introduce yourself and get to know your guide. Discuss which species you want to fish, how you want to fish (wading or from the boat), your abilities and fishing experience.

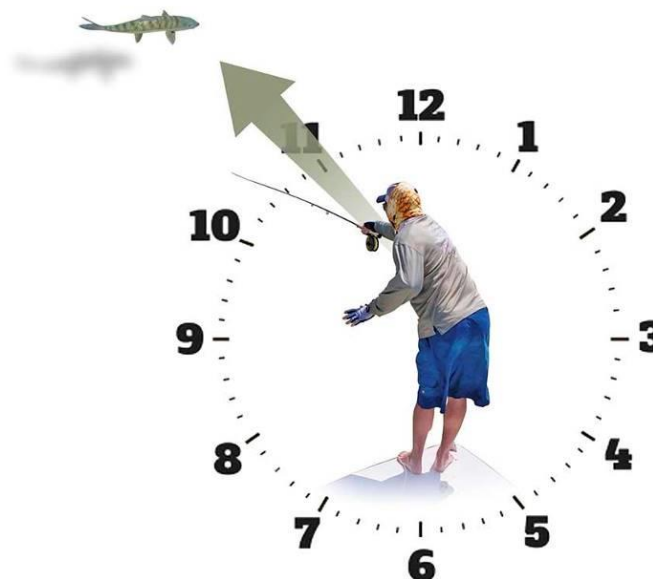
Encourage the guide to check your equipment, knots, leaders, tippet material, flies, rod and reel, etc.

On the flats, the guide will often spot fish before you. When this happens, your guide will refer the numbers on a clock to give you the fish's general direction. For example, the bow on the boat would represent 12:00 O'clock. Perpendicular to the boat off of your right is 3:00 O'clock; perpendicular to the boat off your left is 9:00 O'clock, etc. In addition to the direction, the guide will also refer to the distance and the direction that the fish is swimming. For example: "1:00 O'clock --- 50 feet, going left".

When you first step up on the casting platform, strip out some line and make a short cast as the guide watches. Ask the guide how far you just cast. Next, make a medium cast. Then, make a long cast. Make sure you are both agree in judging distance.

If your guide spots a fish and you do not see it, don't cast until you see that fish. Point your rod in front of you as if a pointer on a chalk board and have your guide direct your rod to where he sees the fish. Your guide might say, "2 o'clock, more right, keep going, stop!" That is where you should concentrate your vision and again do not cast until you see the fish, or your guide instructs you to do so.

Setting the hook in saltwater fishing is very different from what most of us have learned in freshwater. You want to learn and practice the "Strip" strike or set. This is done NOT by lifting the rod tip as in trout fishing, but by keeping your rod pointed at the fish and pulling on the line, or stripping. In this way, the hook is either buried in the fish with the static line driving the hook, or at least the fly will remain in front of the fish for another chance. Lifting the rod tip will likely pull the hook out of the mouth of the fish without a hookup and spook the fish from the area. Each species of fish has subtle variations of the strip set to maximize your hook up rate with each take.





Soul Fly Lodge Clothing & Equipment Checklist

- ___ Hat with bill and neck protection
- ___ Polarized sunglasses (2 pair)
- ___ Buff® neck gaiter
- ___ Long sleeve fishing shirts
- ___ Evening wear shirts
- ___ Raingear (lightweight for thunder showers or wet boat rides)
- ___ Wading pants
- ___ Sun gloves
- ___ Shorts & swimsuit
- ___ Wading socks (we recommend the Simms neoprene socks)
- ___ Wading shoes or booties (should have heavy sole for maximum protection)
- ___ Sandals or flip flops
- ___ Belt
- ___ Sunscreen SPF 30+ UVA/UVB
- ___ SPF Lip balm
- ___ Insect repellent (DEET as the active ingredient is best)
- ___ Line dressing & cleaner
- ___ Forceps, pliers, hook file, line clipper
- ___ Reel lube / oil
- ___ Zip-lock® bags and garbage bags
- ___ Small flashlight or headlamp
- ___ Roll of athletic tape or finger guards
- ___ Toiletries
- ___ Camera & Battery Charger & storage Cards
- ___ Smartphone | Tablet & charger
- ___ Small binoculars
- ___ Wading pack & boat bag
- ___ Airline tickets
- ___ Notebook & pen
- ___ Passport
- ___ 2 Copies of passport (packed separately in Zip-Lok baggies)
- ___ Book | magazines
- ___ Cash & credit cards
- ___ Emergency contact numbers
- ___ Prescription glasses
- ___ Pre-trip information
- ___ Aspirin & Prescription drugs