

THE FISHING

We limit our guests to six rods per week, which means that our attention is extremely personalized.

We are fully committed to giving each and every guest a unique and truly memorable fishing experience.

Bella Sofia is the only fishing lodge in the area that can provide, on average, more than 10 km of river water per guest, becoming the most exclusive fishery in all of South America.

In addition, the Gallegos Chico river, which flows from Chile to the ranch, offers unbeatable brown trout, dry fly-fishing experience.

Fishing for seatrout is known for being demanding and for requiring a highly technical skill level, Rio Gallegos is not the exception. It will require the use of two-handed rods between 12 to 15 feet long, in order to cast and properly control floating, intermediate and slow sinking lines.

On occasion, fast sink leaders or tips might be required. Single and switch rods will be used to fish dry flies or skaters, and sometimes when the wind drops in the evenings.

The fishing beats are varied in the more than 65 km of river.

Classic, big and deep pools become the focus during low water conditions.

The long and fast runs are very productive during the period in which the migratory fish enter the system, searching for their favourite parts of the river.

Large rocks and high bank structures tend to hold fish, and it is where most of the pools lie.

The riverbank is very accessible, with roads that lead to a few meters away from the water, making it easy to access with our 4x4 trucks.

Wading is generally very shallow with an average of 40-45cm depth; however, in some of the most famous pools we made a bit deeper, not only to reach the other bank, but also to get the correct angle when drifting a fly.

During the fishing in Bella Sofia Lodge, we target magnificent seatrout but very often we have tremendous action with resident brown trout that can easily reach 8 pounds, a superb fish considering its natural habitat.

In fact, some of our guests dedicate some sessions going after these beauties using small switch rods or small double handed rods.

Gallegos Chico deserves some special words.

It is a small Spring Creek which starts at the Chilean border on our superior source and drops on the main Rio Gallegos.

Filled with good size brown trout this jewel offers our guest a unique sight fishing dry fly experience. Presenting big dries with a 4 or 5 wt. rod this fishing makes for great takes and fantastic fights in an impressive piece of water.

The average size of the resident brown is 3 pounds with some occasional 6- and 7-pound browns.

The Staff are led by our host and mentor of this new era at Bella Sofia Lodge, Guy Soubra, who has been working and running some of the most fantastic fishing and hunting lodges in Argentina for more than a decade.

All our guides have been fishing and guiding for many years indifferent rivers along Patagonia and have been chasing seatrout most of their careers. Experts on casting techniques with single and double handed rods will help our guests to find, hook and enjoy the fishing on this beautiful fishery.

TACKLE

Rods

Gallegos river is a big, wide river with a lot of structures, big rocks, deep channels, perfect runs and beautiful deep in-curve pools where the migratory fish like to stay during the summer.

In order to fish it well and control the drift, we suggest bringing at least two different double handed rods and two single hand rods.

The longer rods will give us the chance to cover the widest pools and control the heaviest lines during the period of high water. We recommend bringing one rod 14-15 ft long for 30-40 grams/450-650 grain lines.

One smaller double handed rod would be ideal for the evenings when the wind drops and for those days when casting really small rubber leg nymphs over very calm water or smaller pockets is required.

Sometimes when the water drops and the wind is not strong, we can use single handed rods and floating lines with small salmon flies or skaters. One single handed rod between 9-10 ft 7 or 8wt would be sufficient for fishing situations that demand delicacy or control.

Part of the program in Bella Sofia Lodge would be the chance to fish one of the most prolific spring creeks of all Patagonia, the unique and magnificent Gallegos Chico.

With 4-5 wt. rods and floating line our guest would be in the presence of a world class brown trout fishery. Most of the time it is sight fishing with medium to big dry fly patterns.

Lines

Gallegos river is a fantastic slow-flow river to fish with flies and plenty of room to practice both overhead and Spey casting techniques. Our professional guides are willing to help all our angels to improve both techniques.

We prefer and suggest bringing short belly lines or short shooting heads in order to strip and work with the flies in different ways.

Changing the speeds of the strip, the angles and the depth of our presentations is one of the most important parts of seatrout fishing in Gallegos.

Most of the time we prefer to fish with floating lines or slow sink tips. One of our favourite combinations is a floating line with clear polyleader or tip with a 2-2.5 meters long tippet. Especially when we fish heavy rubber leg nymphs or small streamers.

The classic double or triple density shooting heads are fantastic fish our pools. Some of our anglers also like to bring Skagit lines for those days when big flies are necessary, but it does not happen often during the season.

For single handed rods recommend bringing floating and intermediate lines. On the fantastic Gallegos Chico we only use floating lines with regular nylon leaders.

Leaders, Polyleaders and Tips

These are fantastic tools and great to present the flies on the perfect depth according to the water level.

We recommend bringing different lengths and sink rates from clear intermediate sink 7 or fast and super-fast sinking leaders.

For Skagit lines it is ideal to bring clear tips, sink 3, 6 and 8 as well as T8 and T11 for high coloured water and for some of the biggest and deepest pools of the river.

Flies

Without a doubt the most important part of the gear is the fly. In the years of fishing for seatrout, the world has presented many options and different patterns, so picking the right one is not an easy job.

If we talk about seatrout fishing in Argentina only one thing comes to mind: rubber legs!!!

And Rio Gallegos is no exception.

All kinds of rubber legs patterns from small nymphs to big leeches include rubber legs in one way or another.

Nymph size #6 to #10, and sometimes smaller, in both dark and light colours are very effective when the water is low or during sunny days. Dry flies and skaters can be used depending on the water conditions, as always, but also depends on the time in the season.

Fresh fish are more willing to move to dries than coloured ones, if that is your goal, the beginning of the season would be the ideal time to join us.

For Gallegos Chico the most effective flies are dries from size #6 to #12, such as Fat Albert, Chernobyl Ant, Stimulators, Beetles, and other terrestrials.

Mouse patterns have been used too, producing some of the most impressive takes we have seen.

Streamers are effective and can be presented in so many different ways that they quickly become the favourite patterns for some of the anglers and guides. Sunray shadows, yuk Buk, woolybuggers and some other classic trout and salmon patterns are very much appreciated during the fishing days.

Leeches are extremely important during the last couple of hours every day when the fish move down to the tails of the pool and become more aggressive. The leeches will do the job. Do not forget the patterns in black, chartreuse, orange and yellow – the last two in case there is some colour on the water. These should be carried in various sizes.

There is a simple, small but complete fly shop in case you need or forget anything. The most productive flies and lines for both rivers will be available at the lodge with reasonable prices.

Reels

It is crucial to have a reel with a very good drag, able to stop the fish when they run.

A large Arbor is preferred because sometimes the fish move fast towards the anglers, who must be ready to reel the line in quickly.

Waders/Clothing

The riverbed is made up of fine gravel and sand making it very easy to fish and wade. We suggest fishing from the shore without stepping in the river, especially when we first start fishing the pool in clear, low water conditions.

Breathable waders in combination with a suitable thermal underlayer is the best option.

Rubber-soled boots with studs are required due to the soft gravel shores and bottom. A wading-stick will be necessary for climbing some of the riverbanks or crossing the river in high water conditions.

Our guides are very well trained with lots of experience on the river and will always find the best and easiest way to reach the fishing beats.

Wading jackets are perfect to combine with breathable waders and give protection from the cold breeze, especially early or later in the season.

DO NOT FORGET

Evenings at the lodge are not formal, bring a couple of trousers and shirts, some long-sleeved shirts or fishing trousers.

A wading jacket is necessary to be sheltered from wind and rain.

Shoes to feel comfortable during dinners, which may be the same that you are traveling in

Base layers/underlayers, buff and hat or fishing cap are necessary.

A headlamp or head torch is very useful, especially at dusk the last few minutes when changing a fly.

Polarized sunglasses, sunscreen, hand cream and lip balm could be necessary during your stay, especially if the weather is sunny and dry.

Personal water bottle to refill

One backpack is necessary to bring the extra lines, camera and tippetts.

One or two of your favourite books to enjoy the afternoon siesta time at the lodge.

Fly tying materials will be available at the lodge, remember to bring your glasses if needed to try some of the classics seatrout patterns.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND BOARD BASIS

7:30 am Breakfast.

8:30 am Depart for the river

12:30 pm Back to the lodge for lunch and siesta

6:00 pm Return to the river to fish until evening

Fishing times might vary depending on the time of the year, offering at least 7-8 hours of fishing every day.

Board: Full board

Internet: Free Wi-Fi

Cash Accepted: US Dollars

Rooms: Four single rooms and one shared room available, 6 rods per week.

Power: 220 volts generated

Meals: 3 meals per day, including alcohol