

Backpacking / Flyfishing Trip

I guess once or twice I've backpacked just to backpack but for sure now I have to have a reason. Either I'm going flyfishing or hunting. Backpacking I get back where there's less people and more game and bigger fish. That's my motivation.

Granted there's something about being back in the wilderness.

You're by yourself or with a friend or two. You're camping in awesome country and cooking dinner over a fire. What's cooler than that, things are simple. You don't worry about your 401K, size of your house etc. Your main worry is staying alive, warm, dry and eating a nice meal. Sure, you can get by eating a can of Beanie Weenies but cooking up a good meal makes you feel like a king.



You may have to slow down a second and let your kid teach you how to enjoy the small things in life... like the pretty flowers.

Only Once the Deer Has Left You

Every time, no matter the season nor hour of the day, three miles in and three hundred feet up the trail to Stewart Falls the quaking aspens shiver apart, with its lone flat-topped unexplained boulder holding court amid the yellows and the purples of every warming month's bloom, and you scale it each time, let the others climb ten minutes ahead, loud and irreverent, until the bend silences the moment, and the years focus in on your certainty that the deer will finally know you, will come to you black-nosed and blacker-eyed, will lean in against your dangling leg, both of you twitchy with the effort and the fear and the knowing, both man and creature knowing, that within that mountain lea was ever the swirling certainty that paths always cross if you'll only keep moving because the arc of the Universe bends everything, even Time and its wandering souls, into points where everything expected occurs at last, only once and forever, and the silence is a shroud, and to tell it to the others is to make the impossible truly impossible for them, so you keep it to yourself, you and the fawn below. And Jacob's Meadow is more open to the sky than before, the boulder warm within itself, warm with your body's imprint, even in the deer's cool, slow-receding shadow.

~Nate Jacob, Star Poet

and ate Mountain House meals. I love their Beef Stroganoff. It is gourmet. And then for dessert their Raspberry Crisp dessert.

Normally at night I get a little cool because I pack in a light sleeping bag but this year was warm. I didn't even wear the bottom of my base layer at night.

I wish I would have gone about two weeks earlier because the river was low and hurt the fishing somewhat. I didn't do as good as normal. I hung one nice 19" cutthroat but he snapped off fast. Then netted a decent 14-15" cutthroat and lost a semi-decent bull trout, probably 17-18". That was the biggest hit. I mainly used black wooly buggers or elk hair caddis flies but I did best using a dropper nymph off of an elk hair caddis.

It was a relaxing trip. The first morning I hit my favorite hole that is close to where I camp and then headed downstream a few miles and fished all day. Katy and I have been walking an hour daily but due to the smoke we haven't walked in whatever it's been? Three weeks? So whatever the reason, I was a little tired so I headed back to camp a little earlier than normal.

In the meantime while I was setting up the first day and three guys and two of their kids walked into the clearing I was camped in. It was 4 miles down to the next spot where you could throw up a tent so I told them to camp where I was, it's a big area.

Turned up that they were a good group of guys. They were Travis and his son Summit, Kyle and his son Wyatt and Tommy. Summit and Wyatt were 9 and 6 years old and lived up the camp. I was gimping around and they were running around barefoot!

The morning I'd left I stopped by my daughters house. She was my best backpacking buddy before she got married and now has



Red the dog, me, Wild Man Wyatt (Notice he is barefooted), Kyle, Travis, Tommy and who knows where Summit is in the pile? Photo by Kyle.

a 2 yr. old and a 7-month old. I told her how I missed her going backpacking with me. She said well, me and Raquel can go with you soon, she's almost 3-yrs. old.



Summit and Wyatt holding one of their trophy trout! Photo by Kyle.

a picture this evening of him holding what has to be a 24-inch bull trout. It's as big as he is.

Travis showed me a wild video one night. That day he'd teeled in a 10-12-inch cutthroat. As he got in ready to be netted a huge bull trout came darting in and out like a shark. He looked 30-inches long. Wild video.

I had one unique deal when I was hiking in. I was on a tight trail and looked up and two cow elk were running straight at me at about 40 mph, not 20 yards away. I waved my arms and they finally flared up the mountains. Obviously a pack of wolves was right behind them.

Well, it soon came time to break camp, pack up and head out. It'd been a fun trip. Hopefully I can squeeze in one more backpacking trip somewhere before I start scouting for elk.

~by Tom Claycomb.
Tom is a local outdoor writer with columns in newspapers in Idaho, Nevada, Colorado and Louisiana. He also writes for numerous magazines and websites. He conducts outdoor seminars from Texas to Alaska. He is on Pro-staff with numerous companies and tests and develops outdoor gear.

Big Kids, Small Kids, Short and Tall

Halloween night will soon be here—
When children dress as things they fear.
When Ghosts, Goblins and Witches fare,
Will run around in the cool night air.

From house to house this spooky night—
Collecting candy in bags held tight.
Little kids, big kids, short and tall,
Old kids, young kids, adults and all.
Squeals of laughter on this autumn night—
Goblins every where, what a sight!
Carved lit pumpkins call out to come—
To the houses dressed up in eerie fun.
These Haunted Houses are gone at dawn—
It's creepy fun that doesn't last long.

Halloween fun lasts for just one day—
When the sun goes down goblins play,
The front doors open, and voices meet—
In a loud serenade-yelling TRICK OR TREAT!
~Andrea Pierce, Resident



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