

# Las Buitreras season summary 2020

[Solid Adventures](#)

The 2020 season at Las Buitreras has come to an end. As most of you probably know we had to close the lodge mid March already due to the COVID-19 virus that has swept through nations and is currently holding the whole world hostage. As unfortunate as this may be, especially for all of you that were not able to make your trip, this was a decision taken by governments all over the world with all of our best interests in mind. We are now hoping that the world gets back on its feet as soon as possible so that all of us will be able to enjoy the good things in life again. One of them being chasing big sea-run browns in Las Buitreras.

Moving on, here is a brief summary of this year's shortened season and some of the highlights. It's amazing how quick the season passed and it's still hard to believe we have to wait another 8 months until we are back on the water in southern Patagonia, chasing silver bullets. Until then we'll be confined to watching photos and daydreaming.



As any angler that has ever fished in southern Patagonia knows, predicting the weather is more or less impossible. You simply bring as much clothing as you can carry in your bag and take it as it comes. Although the month of January is no different, the chances of experiencing warm summer days, t-shirt fishing, and low water levels is always more likely during this month than say in March. This season however, January had plenty of rain in store for us and we were lucky to start the season off with great water levels that lasted all of January. The number of fish in the river was consistently high with new runs of fish pushing up regularly. The average size of the fish landed stayed above 10 lbs all through the month. Thanks to the favorable conditions, fish were biting during all hours of the day. Still, that last light and especially the famous "magic hour" seemed to be worth paying a little extra attention to. Fish in this river really gets pissed off by those Sunray's and attack them with everything they got, resulting in violent takes and explosions of water. We had many instances of guests coming back to the lodge after landing a trophy fish on a sunray on their last cast of the day!





Since we spend a lot of time fishing this river with small, size 8-10 nymphs and similar flies, losing fish is not uncommon. This year however we lost quite a few fish due to hooks opening and even breaking. At some stage we worried it was our own supply of flies that had been tied on a

badge of bad hooks but luckily that wasn't the case.

*With this in mind we can't stress enough the importance of bringing flies that are tied on proper hooks. [Flies tied with patagonian sea-run browns in mind](#). Regular trout flies are great for smaller resident browns but they don't cut it for the sea-runs down here. Trust us when we say that you don't want to be the person that travels across the globe, all the way down to southern Patagonia in search of that trophy fish and finally hooking up, only to lose it due to a weak hook.*

Both weather and river conditions remained consistent as we entered February with rather cold temperatures and good water levels. However, about a week or so into February summer finally decided to arrive with full force. All of a sudden we were leaving the fleece jackets in the lodge and smearing our faces with sun lotion before every session. Along with the warmer weather we also experienced a river that dropped quickly. With low and clear water it was finally time for the traditional summer tactics, using long leaders, even smaller flies, and an overall stealthy approach. Although these conditions can sometimes be a little tricky as they require anglers to cast and wade more carefully, fishing remained really good. The smaller flies accompanied by long leaders worked perfectly, at least in terms of hooking fish. Landing them was, and always is, another story however and the smaller hooks unfortunately meant an increased amount of lost fish. As thrilling as a violent take and the initial run can be, as heartbreaking, if not more, it is to see a proper 15 lbs fish go straight up in the air, land in an explosion of water, followed by a slack line.



And while we are on the topic of losing fish: one story that stands out from this season was when our german friend Peter hooked an absolute beast of a fish during an afternoon session in Zone 1. Fishing a size 10 Copper John in C-pool the water suddenly exploded! Seconds later Peters reel was missing a good 60 meters of backing and the fish was still running. When it hit the pool below, a pool called Shelf, the fish finally turned and started swimming upstreams. The fight lasted somewhere between 15 to 20 minutes and saw the fish all the way into the bank several times, but still always half a meter out of reach of the net. Witnessing this spectacle was Peter's fishing partner Willi and our guide Lawson. Everyone who's ever been guided by Lawson know's the difference between his reactions to an OK sized fish and a BIG fish. A fish below 10 lbs may if you're lucky bring about a "good job buddy" once the fish has been landed. A 15 lbs plus fish on the other hand will have him on his toes during the whole fight, constantly repeating the words " it's a good fish this is! It's a good one"! This time however Lawson's face was pale white. Rumours has it he forgot to breath for a full minute after

seeing the fish the first time but that's yet to be confirmed. What we do know however is that at some stage around the 20 minute mark of the fight, after several rounds of Peter running back and forth between C-pool and Shelf, the fish was about to be landed, or so we thought, when right in front of the net the fly popped out and the fish was gone. What happened after that is again unclear but from what we heard Peter actually broke out laughing, super excited about the fight and the experience. Lawson on the other hand couldn't speak for a good 10 minutes. Coming back to the lodge that evening he finally opened up saying he has never been so close to net a 30 lbs fish in this river. A heartbreaking loss indeed but it's also super encouraging to know that those fish are out there and at any given moment it might be your fly that gets hit by a monster.



Lawson trying to keep his emotions in check



What could have been if that hook didn't come lose



Peter and Willi got over losing that fish pretty quickly

By the end of February we finally had a new push of water, seeing the



river rise to around level zero again. From here on we kept getting smaller pushes of water through to the end of the season keeping the water level rather consistent. Along with the small pushes of water we were also seeing new fish entering the system on a regular basis. Early March we had several runs of smaller fish in the 4-10 lbs size moving up the system, mixing it up with some of the big guys that had entered the river weeks or even months earlier. These big runs of fresh fish usually occur from March and onwards, during the so-called late season which runs from March to late April. This is usually a really good time for anyone chasing big numbers of fish. Unfortunately we were never allowed to capitalize on all the fish in the river this season as we had to close the lodge March 14.



The most successful flies during this season were nymphs in size 8 and 10. One fly in particular that stands out year after year is our all-time favourite [Copper John](#). Anyone that carried a few different sizes and colours of this pattern in their box, topped off with a couple [leeches](#) and [sunray shadows](#) for the magic hour were good to go.

During the few periods of high and coloured water we were mainly fishing flies such as the Yellow Yummy, Green Lantern or bigger bead head woolly buggers and nymphs. Apart from one or two days here and there when we fished sink 2 tips after experiencing a quick rise of the water level, it was all floating and intermediate lines on the menu. Bring a floating belly with interchangeable tips such as the [Rio Versitip Short](#) or similar and you will always be able to fish this river no matter what it throws at you.

Another stand out moment this season was when we spotted and photographed a Puma by the river. It was resting in the high grass just above the Kitchen pool and paid us no attention whatsoever.



As always, we want to extend our sincere gratitude to all of the guests that came down and visited us this season. This season we were fortunate enough to have plenty of old friends visit us as well as making new acquaintances. We are truly lucky and beyond privileged to be able to share this place with so many amazing people from all over the world.

A special thank you to our staff and guides who keeps spoiling us both on and off the water, year after year. You are truly amazing and we can't thank you enough for the quality of service you provide.

Looking ahead at the 2021 season in Patagonia we have lots of interesting news to look forward to. Among other things we will open two new programs. One is a new Add On program called Zone Zero that will

be offered to our Las Buitreras guests exclusively. This program will accommodate maximum three anglers at a time and will be a chance to extend your trip to Las Buitreras by 4 days. You will find info about Zone Zero at the bottom of the Las Buitreras destination page. Glencross is a new brown trout program and will be offered as both a full week or half week program. You will find Glencross in the main destination menu on our website.

With that we want to thank all of you reading this and hope you stay safe and healthy.

See you on the water.