

The FLY-OUT FISHING LODGE

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #119 —

You could call it a “fly-in, fly-out” fishing lodge, because before we could fly-out to fish, we had to fly-in. From our “jumping-off point” in Smithers, we flew for an hour or so in a chartered de Havilland Beaver float plane. It was a spectacular flight!

This lodge sits on a large lake deep in the mountains, at 4200 feet of elevation. It's near the headwaters of the Stikine River, which runs east, then north then west, sort of like a big irregular horseshoe – with one leg longer than the other. It finally departs Canada and flows into the Pacific Ocean near Wrangell, Alaska. Serious rainbow trout fishermen – and others not so serious – book week-long trips into remote “fly-out” lodges like this, with no roads that connect them to civilization, only the internet. Of

course they come for the fishing, but everyone gains a little weight, as one of the missions is gourmet meals.

We were really close to the continental

divide; the waters from the Firesteel River, located just 20 miles south, flow into the Findlay, which becomes the Peace River as it leaves Williston Lake, flowing into Alberta. The Peace turns to the north and joins the Slave, which flows into the Great Slave Lake in Northwest Territories. Coming out of the lake, it's called the Mackenzie, which flows on north into the Arctic Ocean.

The fishing experience was quite a bit different from the farm ponds of Missouri. Every morning after breakfast at the lodge, Brenda and I put on our waders, grabbed our fly



The lodge complex, from the air; this is the view we had every day as we returned from fishing.

rods and climbed into a small float plane that flew us out to the next, best fishing hole – located 10 to 30 minutes in one direction or another. We would land on a lake and fish the mouth of the entry or exit streams, or up or down the rivers – or all three. Some days the pilot also served as our guide; on other days a guide flew in with us and the plane went on to other duties.

It was common to see moose, caribou or mountain goats, as we flew through the valleys and mountain passes.

"Every morning we flew to a new fishing spot..."

The fishing ranged mostly from great to amazing – almost exclusively rainbow trout. We fished dry flies, nymphs and streamers with our five weight rods, which probably should have been four weights, and averaged 50-75 fish per day. This was definitely a fly-out fishing lodge worth flying back to.



Larry Potterfield

Spatsizi Lodge
Laslui Lake
Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness
Provincial Park
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The lodge from the dock. We ate our morning and evening meals here, and enjoyed a nice lounge area – inside and out.



Every morning we flew to a new fishing spot; that's the reason it's called a "Fly-out" fishing lodge.