

This week's dream: In Brazil, the fishing trip of a lifetime

A lodge in northern Brazil is offering fishing enthusiasts an adventure “as rare as it is unforgettable,” said Charles Gaines in *Garden & Gun*. The Agua Boa Amazon Lodge, located just north of the equator in one of the Amazon Basin’s last tracts of uncut rain forest, sits 50 miles from the nearest village—a settlement of Yanomami Indians—and “the word ‘remote’ doesn’t begin to cover it.” Last year, I flew there in a bush plane with friends and family, and as we looked down at the uninterrupted jungle, “none of us could doubt that it would be an adventure.” The lodge’s red-roofed bungalows and blue swimming pool appeared below like a mirage, and we were no less dazzled when a young couple greeted us carrying trays of cold caipirinhas, Brazil’s national cocktail and its answer to mojitos.

The lodge fishes 60 miles of the Agua Boa River, dividing that into six “beats,” each with its own guide. The system ensures that guests never fish the same beat twice. “But



The author and a guide on the Agua Boa River

because the river is so incredibly complex, endlessly shaping itself into great serpentine coils, forming little backwater lagoons and lakes, I could have fished the same beat all week.” Our group caught a dozen of the Amazon’s 3,000 species, including—no kidding—nearly a thousand gorgeous pea-

cock bass. In places, we could spot one or two of the feisty, colorful creatures from our skiffs and cast on sight: It was the kind of riveting, catch-and-release fishing that’s “impossible not to holler over.”

The thing is, I would have been happy had we not fished at all. “Each day here was an incomparable river-borne wildlife safari.” Over the course of a week, we saw caimans, otters, pink river dolphins, tapirs, marsh deer, capybaras, howler and capuchin monkeys, one foul-smelling mata-mata turtle, and a rainbow of birdlife in the rain forest surrounding the lodge. This is untouched rain forest, and “it is so majestically pristine and throbbing with primordial fecundity that simply passing through it on the river tends to produce in an observer the sort of mildly stunned, reverential awe engendered by the interiors of great cathedrals.”

The Agua Boa Amazon Lodge (aguaboaamazonlodge.com) offers weeklong fishing trips from \$6,150 a person.

Hotel of the week



The serpent's coils

Quetzalcóatl's Nest

Mexico City

Would you sleep inside a giant feathered serpent? asked Brooke Porter Katz in *ArchitecturalDigest.com*. Named after an Aztec creator deity, Nido de Quetzalcóatl is an “otherworldly, twisting, turning” structure located on Mexico City’s outskirts. Built in 1998 by architect Javier Senosiain, the “awe-inspiring” building sits in a private park amid gardens and ponds. It houses 10 apartments, and one of them is for rent through Airbnb. The five-bedroom, four-bathroom space is somewhat bare, “but what it lacks in flash it makes up for in the sheer feeling of wonder you’ll feel just being inside.” airbnb.com; rentals start at \$206

Getting the flavor of...

A New Mexico geological gem

Jemez Springs is a historical hot spot—and not just because it sits beside a dormant volcano, said Claudia Carbone in *The Denver Post*. Poke at the sleepy surface of this village in the mountains of northern New Mexico, and it “explodes in vivid Technicolor,” revealing waterfalls, hot springs, ancient ruins, and layers of rich culture. As late as the 13th century, some 30,000 Puebloans lived in nearby Valles Caldera, a volcanic valley whose surrounding Jemez Mountains harbor the country’s largest concentration of ancestral ruins. You can visit the modern Jemez Pueblo or the remains of the church that 1620s missionaries ordered built in Jemez Springs. You can also enjoy a long soak at the Jemez Springs Bath House, located near where a geyser exploded in 1860, creating the hot spring pool around which the town was built. Following my own bath, attendants “wrapped me like a burrito” in a herb-infused hot towel and I lay still until I was jelly.

The women of Jamestown

No wonder the new exhibition at Virginia’s Jamestown Settlement is titled “Tenacity,” said James Lee in *The Washington Post*. The artifacts on display tell the stories of the first women to live in colonial Virginia—all of whom fought desperately for survival, whether they were English, African, or Native American. Anne Burras was left the lone woman among 200 settlers not long after her 1608 arrival. She married two months later, miscarried after receiving a whipping, survived an attack by Native Americans, and eventually bore four daughters. I read dozens of such stories between displays of artifacts such as a “ducking chair,” a hateful device used to waterboard women who chattered too much. More heartening were the stories of Cockacoeske, leader of the Pamunkey, and Elizabeth Key, a mixed-race woman who sued for her freedom. As a gallery wall panel implores, “Remember the names of these women and speak them.”

Last-minute travel deals

Luxury for less

Through March, 18 Joie de Vivre boutique hotels—including New York’s Park South Hotel and Northern California’s Carmel Valley Ranch—are offering up to 25 percent off stays of two nights or more. Book by Jan. 31; use promo code GIFT. jdvhotels.com

From Hungary to Holland

Book by Jan. 31 to save \$800 on a 16-day river cruise from Budapest to Amsterdam. Tour Vienna, Bratislava, and Cologne and enjoy other sights along the Danube and Rhine for as little as \$4,489, including the round-trip flight. gate1travel.com

Winter magic in Manhattan

New York City is luring visitors with three midwinter specials. From Jan. 21 through Feb. 10, two-for-one pricing is available on many Broadway shows and other attractions, while hundreds of restaurants will offer \$42 prix fixe dinners. nycgo.com