



# BC West Trip Planner

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## **Welcome!**

BC West is a remote fly fishing lodge located on the lower Dean River at the end of the Dean Channel, tucked in the shadow of Kimsquit Peak and within earshot of the Dean River canyon. We chase the hottest fish around - steelhead of superstar status and chinooks that will make you think twice about testing your arbor knot. We consider being located on Dean to be a real privilege, and we work hard to ensure that our operation does this river justice. The purpose of this trip planner is to give you all the information that you will need to plan a successful trip to BC West. We hope that we've answered all of your questions in this guide, but if you have any questions that we didn't answer, or if we can help in any way, please don't hesitate to get in touch by calling us at 1-800-344-3628 or emailing us at [info@deneki.com](mailto:info@deneki.com).

Thank you and welcome to BC West!



## **Our Location**

We're located just up from the mouth of the Dean, roughly 135 miles NNE from the north end of Vancouver Island and near the end of the Dean Channel which brings saltwater more than 90 miles inland from the open ocean. The Dean is accessible only by boat, float plane or helicopter. The surroundings are classic wild coastal BC – majestic mountains, big trees, beautiful glaciers, bald eagles, grizzly bears and of course incredibly beautiful rivers!

## **Travel Logistics**

Guests travel to BC West via Vancouver and Bella Coola, BC. Many major airlines serve Vancouver, and guests from the Pacific Northwest may also choose to drive to Vancouver. From Vancouver, guests fly on Pacific Coastal Airlines <http://www.pacific-coastal.com/>, 1-800-663-2872 to Bella Coola. Flight times vary from week to week; contact us at [info@deneki.com](mailto:info@deneki.com) or call 1-800-344-3628 for more information on specific flights to book with Pacific Coastal Airlines. Guests are responsible for booking and paying their travel to and from Bella Coola. Our anglers will typically spend the night in Bella Coola prior to their trip into the Dean. Overnight accommodations in Vancouver or Bella Coola are not included in the trip price, however we are happy to help advise with these arrangements.

The final leg of travel is a charter flight from Bella Coola to the mouth of the Dean. The price of this charter flight is included in the cost of the trip. We utilize two aircraft for this final leg - a Eurocopter A Star helicopter, and a Cessna 185 on floats. The pilots for both aircraft are extremely skilled and have extensive experience flying in the area surrounding the Dean River.

The flight from Bella Coola to the Dean goes essentially straight through the mountains on a clear weather day. On days with a lower ceiling, the flights will follow the ocean channel. To say the scenery between Bella Coola and the Dean is spectacular is putting it mildly!

On your arrival to our lodge, guests and luggage are loaded onto trucks for the very short drive from the airstrip to the lodge. Guests unpack, have a quick meal, and attend a safety and tactical orientation meeting with the guides. Anglers generally have the opportunity to get a few hours of fishing in on the arrival day.



## **Our Facility**

Our facility is nestled in the woods of the Dean River delta. Stunning views of Kimsquit peak are had right from our courtyard, and accessing the Dean itself requires just a 10-minute walk through the trees.

## **Guest Cabins**

Guests stay in comfortable rustic cabins with running water, comfortable beds and woodstove heat. Several of our cabins house two anglers, and one cabin provides lodging for four anglers—perfect for a group of four that would like to ‘stick together’ during the week.

## **Main Lodge**

The main lodge building includes our kitchen, dining room and housing for our management. The dining room has loads of natural light, and is the spot for breakfast and our main mid-day meal.

## **Clubhouse**

Our clubhouse is a separate large cabin with a casual seating and is our main indoor lounge area at the lodge. Comfortable couches, a wood stove, fishing pictures and a fly tying area all greet guests upon entry into the clubhouse. In addition, our light evening meal is served in the clubhouse. It’s a room with character like no other, and the site of many a fish tale.

## **Shower House / Drying Room**

Our combination shower house/drying room provides comfortable central shower facilities and a heated room to ensure that waders and raingear are dry the morning following a hard rain or a wade that got just a little too deep.

## **Our Grounds**

Our lodge is tucked into the woods, so our grounds are made up of the native forest of coastal BC. Neat landscaping and paths connect our group of buildings, and a footpath allows a beautiful, peaceful 10-minute walk to the river.

## **The Fishing Day**

Fishing days are long at BC West! We fish a two-shift day that maximizes fishing time during low-light hours and provides a nice break in the middle of the day. The day starts early. Our schedule is designed to have our guests on the water right around sunrise, so depending on the time of year breakfast starts between 5:00 am and 5:30 am. Guests enjoy coffee, pastries, fruit, light breakfast fare, and head on out to the river for the start of the day!

Our morning fishing shift runs from sunrise until roughly 11:30 am. After the morning shift, guests return to the lodge for our main meal, a delicious plated lunch in our main lodge building. The break between the fishing shifts lasts until about 4pm. Guests use this opportunity to relax after their meal, work on their gear and often, wisely, take a nap. At 4pm guests head back out onto the river for the evening fishing shift that runs until just before dusk.

After the evening fishing shift, guests return to the lodge for our evening meal served at 9:30pm, made up of heavy appetizers and served in our clubhouse. Guests relax in the late evening and head back to their cabins for some much-needed sleep at the end of a very long fishing day! During most weeks in our season, guests alternate days fishing below and above the Dean River canyon.

### **Fishing below the Canyon**

Guests fishing below the Dean River canyon are transported from run to run by jet boat. Fishing time is a mix of guided (guide standing near the guest as they fish through a run) and relatively unguided (guides can be within 1 ½ miles of guests on the river; communication via handheld radio). The river below the Canyon presents a mile and a half of big, beautiful, broad runs that provide an on-ramp for fish exiting the saltwater of the Dean Channel, headed for the spawning grounds of the upper Dean. Most fish in the lower Dean are passing through—they're within a tide or two of the salt, and are not yet truly 'holding'. The lower river provides a very unique angling opportunity, with potential for large pushes of fish coming in on each tide with the flow and character of typical steelhead holding water.

Just made a pass through a 200-yard run? No problem—fish it again! It's likely that you'll be showing your fly to new fish that have just moved in. We access the lower Dean using a custom 24-foot Dean River-style aluminum jet boat that has plenty of room for four guests plus guides, and does a great job accessing the sometimes shallow, rocky shoreline of the lower Dean. Depending on guest preference, one or two guides accompany four guests on the lower river.



### **Fishing above the Canyon**

Guests fishing above the canyon do so self-guided. This means there will be no guide accompanying you while you travel to, and fish the river above the canyon. At the beginning of the week, guests are given an orientation on the basic layout of the upper river. They are trained on the safe operation of our 4-wheelers, and then turned loose to fish the upper river on their own. Each guest is issued a 4-wheeler, which they will use to access the upper river via a network of trails. Once the guests reach the section of river that they have chosen to fish, they leave their 4-wheeler and fish the river on foot. In a couple locations on the upper river, there are small boats anglers may use to cross the river. The water above the canyon consists of a variety of runs that are relatively easy to read and quite accessible on foot.

Due to the unique nature of the travel via 4-wheeler, unassisted river crossings and unguided fishing, the upper Dean River is best enjoyed by anglers who are physically fit, adventurous and who are confident in their ability to successfully pursue anadromous fish unassisted. Please contact us for any clarification on this message.

### **Catch and Release**

BC West adheres to a strict catch and release policy for all species.

### **Gratuities**

Gratuities at BC West are collected once, at the end of your stay. This single gratuity will cover the entire team that works with you during your time with us, including guides and lodge staff. 'Day tipping' is not customary and is not encouraged. We are frequently asked questions regarding the 'correct' amount to tip. That is a very hard question to answer, but may be best addressed with the fact that tips for a full week stay have averaged 10% of the trip price. Follow your heart and tip in accordance with the level of service you feel you received.

### **Alcohol**

Beer and wine are included in our standard package at BC West. Red and white wine are served with meals. Beer, mixers and soft drinks are always available in the refrigerator in our clubhouse. Liquor is not provided. Guests are welcome to bring along any alcohol that they prefer.



## Packing List

BC West is a remote location, shopping in Bella Coola is very limited. Use Vancouver as your last opportunity to purchase supplies of gear. We recommend soft sided water-repellant luggage and always have your rain gear near or at the top for easy access. Weather on the Dean is very unpredictable. No matter when you visit be prepared for highs in the 80s and lows in the 40s. July is typically the warmest month, with cooler temperatures in June and August. Always be prepared for rain and wind.

Baggage should try and be kept to one 50lb duffel plus your rods.

Camp clothing should be casual and comfortable. Remember to keep all important medications separate from your luggage. Because we are exposed to the elements even around camp, warmth and dryness should be considered in all clothing choices. We recommend layering your clothing for warmth and versatility.

### In-Camp Gear

✓

Jeans

Long-sleeved shirts

Sweater

Socks

Underwear

Casual shoes

Waterproof footwear

Light weight jacket

Rain coat and pants

Shoes for wet and dry weather

Toiletries

Shower sandals

Battery powered reading light

Books or games

Alarm clock

Head net

Bag for carrying your gear on boat—dry bags are best

Item

### On-River Gear

✓

Item

Fleece tops and bottoms to wear under waders

Polypropylene long underwear

Sweater

Vest or warm jacket to wear under rain gear or waders

Warm socks – several pairs

Warm, waterproof and lucky fishing hat

Warm fishing gloves

Rainwear - Gore-Tex and other breathable materials are best

Waders - Gore-Tex and other breathable materials are best

Wading Boots – felt or studded bottoms are fine

Polarized sun glasses

Camera

Film or memory cards and extra batteries

Sun block

Bug repellent



## **Tackle Recommendations**

### **Rods**

Anglers predominately fish two-handed rods. For king salmon 12 to 15 foot 9 or 10 weights rods are recommended. Steelhead rods are 8 or 9 weights, from 12 to 14 feet. Later in the season, some guests like to fish a dry line on a 7 or 8 weight rod. Single-handed rods are not uncommon and 10 to 12 weight rods for kings and 7 to 9 weight rods for steelhead have produced many fish over the years.

### **Reels**

Dean fish are known for blazing runs and incredible power. Sturdy, quality reels with strong disk drags are the rule here. Expect to see your backing during the week. Tie your knots well and wind on a lot of backing - we recommend at least 100 yards. Large arbor reels are very helpful when retrieving line after one of those legendary long Dean runs.

### **Lines**

Since we fish tips and relatively large flies most of the time for kings and steelhead, Skagit-style line systems are our recommendation and the choice of the vast majority of our guests. Any of a variety of modern popular floating lines may be used when fishing a dry line for steelhead. For king salmon, heavy tips are most effective given relatively high, fast water. 15 feet of T-14 is the 'go-to' tip, with lengths ranging from 10 to 20 feet. For steelhead, T-14 in lengths from 7 to 15 feet may be used, as well as standard 15-foot tips from type 3 to type 8.

### **Leaders**

For king salmon, a short straight length of 15 to 20 pound monofilament is the standard leader configuration at BC West. For steelhead, a straight leader or a leader terminating in 10 to 15 pound monofilament is most often used.

### **Flies**

Although most of our guests enjoying tying and/or selecting their own flies for their trip, we do have a limited selection of flies available for your use as well. Flies for king salmon include large profile articulated and strung flies in a variety of color combinations. Marabou, rabbit fur and hair can all create the large, lifelike silhouette that Dean kings prefer. Hooks range from size 2 to 1/0, and octopus-style hooks are particularly effective. Guests targeting steelhead fish a selection of larger strung or tube flies in colors like black and blue, purple, and any combination of orange, pink and white. Larger flies may be over 3" long. Popular patterns include variations of the Skagit Minnow and Temple Dog-style tube flies. To cover all possible conditions it's helpful to bring some smaller, more traditional patterns like the Dean River Lantern or the Green Butt Skunk in sizes from 2 to 6, as well as a selection of dry flies.





## Contact Information

Mailing Address:

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Anchorage, AK 99503

Reservations and information: 1-800-344-3628

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Anchorage office

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Lodge Manager

Kara Knight, [karak@deneki.com](mailto:karak@deneki.com)

BC West Lodge Phone (In Season Only): 250-830-2271

Pacific Coastal Airlines

<http://www.pacific-coastal.com/>

1-800-663-2872

