

Chilean Patagonia! – Report on a fishing trip by Jamie Schroder

Flight track for arrival in Santiago, Chile:



What a fabulous adventure to anticipate and plan for. Destination - **Cinco Rios Lodge**. To quote their website: “Located in the heart of Chilean Patagonia near the quaint town of Coyhaique, Chile, Cinco Rios Lodge invites you to an unforgettable stay in an awe-inspiring corner of the world. Built on the banks of the Rio Simpson, the spectacular views of the majestic Patagonian Andes from the lodge astounds our guests”.



From the airport pick-up in Balmaceda (~2 hr. flight south from Santiago int'l) to the welcome, to the meals and accommodations – I was impressed from the very start. The six rooms are well appointed with comfy beds and plenty of room for two guests. The meals are great and they have 3 chefs to accommodate maximum 12 guests and go above and beyond for dinners. Several of us took photos of starters, mains, and desserts because they looked beautiful even before we got to taste them and they did not disappoint. They even made artistic colorful chocolate bon bons with different fruit flavors!



And the fishing.....where do I start?
Depending upon the wind, water levels,
and temperatures the guides decide if it
will be a river, lake, wade or float day.



The anglers may have a day with combination river & lake or it might be a perfect day to do a wade on several areas of nearby Simpson or Huemueles rivers. We often had to gain access through private ranch land and the guides paid the owners and off we went. Before even casting a line the countryside with rolling hills and meadows with sheep, cattle and horses was the perfect setting to know you're truly on vacation. On the day that I fished Lago Azul (yes Blue Lake) I could hardly believe that I was there casting into turquoise water! And it was fabulous to see the browns check out the surface fly and either shy away or take the fly and the fight was on.



This day I was lucky to hit the riffles where a glacial stream came into Lago Azul and there were several hungry browns that took everything I offered.

The fish are stealthy and it was not unusual for most of my group to catch 0-10 fish per day. Those who have been there multiple times were catching in the 12-20 numbers daily. Some fished exclusively streamers on sinking lines the whole week and so long as they hit the bank with every cast, they were successful in getting the big browns ~20".



Lunch on a gravel bar with a fishy looking bank in the background.

For the rest we alternated between hoppers, cicada type patterns, and smaller parachute adam's dries. Rainbows seemed to prefer the middle of the streams while the browns hung in the shadows near the edges.

<https://www.cincorioslodge.com/cincorios-lodge>
<https://www.instagram.com/cincorioslodge/>

-Jamie Schroder, January, 2023

The days were long and it wasn't unusual to leave the lodge with the guide around 8:45-9am and not return until almost 8 pm. Some locations are a 90 minute drive from the lodge so you factor that in to the day on the water and it makes for full days especially for the guides. Each day as we pulled in to the lodge, we were greeted by lodge staff that came to take our dry bags, waders and boots and any gear we may have taken for the day on the water and they immediately asked what drink we'd like. Did I mention that wine and spirits flow easily there?



This was one of my all-time favorite vacations and I can't wait to return to Cinco Rios!

The owners also have Estancia del Zorro Lodge which was the original lodge and is somewhat more rustic I'm told than Cinco Rios.