

Don't Be That Guy



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

Most of us involved in hunting or fishing have hired a guide at one time or another. Using a guide is especially important when you hunt or fish in an unfamiliar area. In some states or countries, if you are not a resident, a guide is required by law.

I took many of those do-it-yourself type hunts in my lifetime and have pretty much resolved that any future hunts outside of our home state, Colorado, I take will be guided. It is nice to let someone else do the heavy work, and who knows the country and game we will be hunting in. Having a guide maximizes my chances of being successful and allows me more time to sit back and enjoy the trip.

In the past, I spent many years guiding backcountry fishing trips in the Florida Keys and the saltwater areas of the Everglades. I used a flats boat and specialized in light-tackle angling. During those years, I met many people from all walks of life, most were fantastic people. However, there was always "that guy."

Comments made by the client, before embarking on the trip, let me know what kind of a day I was going to have. When someone stared up at the flag waving in the wind, while still standing on the dock, and says, "I sure hope I don't get seasick out there today," always let me know I would be back in early with a sick client. When you are convincing yourself



Your guide may not be perfect, but in most cases, they have your best interests in mind, and things usually work out favorably. (Courtesy photo)

that you will be sick later, it is an open invitation for seasickness and a long day for the client and the guide.

Another time, I was fishing a first-time tarpon angler, who I will call Ralph. The tide was heading out at a swift pace, and we had anchored up in a basin at the bottom of a flat. As the flat emptied of the tidal water, the tarpon would push into the basin where we would be ready to ambush them with our lures. I had fished this spot dozens of times this same way and caught many tarpon here.

As the tarpon worked their way from the shallow water to the deep hole we were in, some fish could be seen "rolling" on the flat. Ralph took notice and asked why I did not move over there. I explained the reason why we were staying put, but Ralph would have none of it. He insisted that fish are, where they are, and I needed to move over there immediately, or this trip was over. Needless to say, the trip was over.

Such people are certainly not limited to fishing trips, they go hunting too. Alejandro Trigo, of TGB Safaris in Argentina, told me, "You can always spot the person you are going to have trouble with, the moment they enter camp. Even before the introductions, they will start off with some sort of complaint about this or that, usually something not even in your control, and it spreads from there."

A common complaint I hear from guides is when a hunter has a problem, or something in camp has upset him, but he keeps it to himself, rather than tell someone about it, thereby offering them an opportunity to fix the problem. Doyle Worthington, of J&D Outfitters offered, "If something is not right, you need to let us know right away, so we can fix it. We can't fix it if we don't know about it, or we hear about it months later. We want you to have a great time and let us know immediately if something is wrong."

Tanner Creel of Cross Mountain Outfitters tells me that he hates people who guide the guide. A client that has never been here before, or never hunted elk before, will tell me I am doing it wrong. He saw, on a hunting show, where you set up a different way," said Creel.

He continued, "The most important thing to remember is to not guide the guide. The guide does this hunting year-round and knows the animals and terrain of the area you are hunting. Let him do his job because it is just as important to the guide that you succeed as it is to you."

I understand the anxiety and excitement that a person feels when on a hunt, and if I ever lost that excitement, I know it is time for me to find something else to do, like golf or bowling. As long as hunting gets me excited, I will stay with it. But there are some people who give up very quickly.

Doyle Worthington also told me, "I love it when a client has

not seen anything, 30 minutes into a hunt, and he asks if I have ever seen any good elk or deer in this area. I feel like telling him, beats me, I have never been here before."

Worthington continued, "Sometimes I hear a client tell me they brought this cheaper ammunition to sight in with, and the more expensive stuff to hunt with. Obviously, they won't both shoot in the same place. Remember that most camps have a wound policy in place. You should be sure of all your equipment, long before you arrive in camp. Practice shooting your rifle or bow as much as possible and try to duplicate field conditions. You won't be able to shoot your elk from a bench. You spent thousands of dollars for the hunt, don't worry about a few bucks' worth of ammunition."

Perhaps I understand better what a guide hates to hear from a client, after all those years of carrying folks fishing. I am a little sensitive to it. Remember that you are paying the guide for his expertise and knowledge of the area. While you may not agree with every decision or move you make in the field, look at the trip in the big picture. I bet you will find that your guide might have made a mistake or two, but overall, your guide worked very hard to insure you have a fun, safe, ethical, and terrific trip.

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Time to think spring!

Isn't it strange to try to think spring when we're all enjoying one of the most beautiful times of the year? If you're still not quite ready to give up digging in the dirt for the season, why not plant a few spring blooming bulbs. Remember that horrid case of cabin fever that you probably experienced last February or March? Now think of the smile that will be on your face when you see that first little green shoot pop up through the snow. Or better yet, picture a blanket of spring color as your landscape comes to life with the excitement of spring-flowering bulbs.

Planting now, or within the next few weeks, will give the bulbs a chance to develop roots, but not top growth. Your



Gardening From A to Z

By Linda Corwine McIntosh

little bulb will sleep comfortably under a blanket of snow just waiting for spring and their wake up call.

I think it's fun to plant a few bulbs here and there in a flowerbed to brighten up the area or draw attention to it.

However, many people plant bulbs in masses for a dramatic welcoming of spring and they really do make quite a spring show! I like to plant a few bulbs in the landscape where I can see them when I look out my kitchen or living room window. You may even want to plant some where they can be enjoyed by people passing by.

When buying bulbs, look for good quality bulbs that are firm and free of defects, mold or signs of green growth. Larger bulbs will produce larger flowers, but this may not always be better. A smaller tulip bulb will multiply more rapidly than a larger bulb, so it all depends on what you're wanting out of your bulb.

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It's hard to think about the cold long days of winter when it's so gorgeous out, but buying bulbs now and "forcing" them will make winter bloom. (Courtesy photo/Linda Corwine McIntosh)

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