

Adventure World magazine

FALL 2025



Fjording New Adventures

A Winter Trip to the Land of the Midnight Sun

ADVENTURE WORLD MAGAZINE

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Photo Courtesy of Hotel AAK

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Fjording New Adventures

A Winter Trip to the Land of the Midnight Sun

by Jenny Willden





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Have you ever dreamed of visiting Norway? For me, a Norwegian ski touring trip had long been on my wish list, but the logistics of coordinating such a trip in a new-to-me country is not my forte. So, I was thrilled to travel with Up Norway on a curated itinerary focused on authentic, sustainable adventures in the Land of the Midnight Sun.

Starting with a simple dream trip questionnaire, Up Norway's team plans and books all transportation, reservations, accommodations, and activities. My journey required multiple forms of transportation, including planes, ferries, boats, and automobiles—a planning nightmare for the uninitiated. Once on the trip, Up Norway's digital itinerary and travel guide loads on your smartphone, containing hidden gems, unique hotels, one-of-a-kind spas, and outdoor adventures I would've never discovered on my own.

From skiing the iconic Sunnmøre Alps to vibing in a floating fjord sauna, this itinerary checks all the boxes for a dreamy, bucket-list trip.



First Stop: Øye

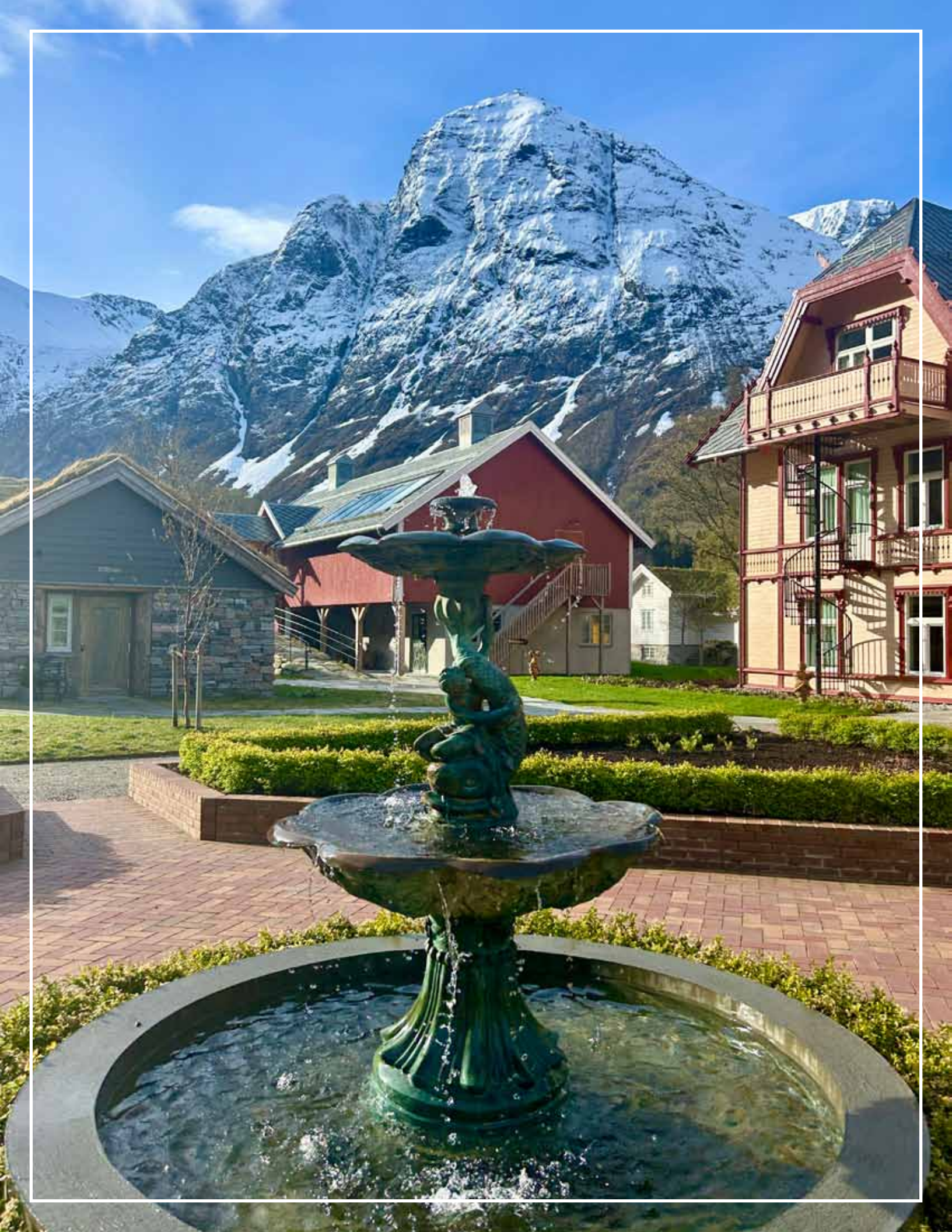
Where to Stay: Union Øye

This seriously secluded luxury hotel is located in the town of Øye, but calling Øye a town is somewhat of a stretch, as the population hovers around 25. This rural destination felt remote in all the right ways, and its historic mansion is tucked between two mountains—making it the perfect base camp for outdoor adventures.

Union Øye first opened in 1891, and while some guest rooms (like mine) were new, luxurious modern additions, others retained a timeless feel, outfitted with one-of-a-kind antique furniture and other architectural nods to the past. Both royalty and writers have rested their heads here, and sitting fireside in the grand library—with a drink in hand— (nearly) inspired me to write the next great American novel.

While you'll find plenty of character and charm, modern amenities are mostly a no. You won't find a fancy gym or a swimming pool. Instead, make the outdoors your playground. (That's why you came to Norway, right?) Hiking trails and kayaking are just steps from the hotel's front door!







Reaching the Sunnmøre Alps is a journey, requiring a flight to Oslo, a flight to Alesund, and driving a car onto a ferry and across multiple fjords—but the effort is worthwhile to reach Norway's famed fjord skiing at Hjørundfjord, one of the country's most majestic and secluded fjords.

Here, guides from Uteguiden loaded up our gear, and we set off by boat to the village of Trandal. After gearing up and adding skins to our skis, we climbed up scenic trails as a light snow began to fall. Thankfully, Uteguiden's team assesses the snow, weather, and avalanche conditions daily, selecting tours that are both safe and within the group's ability levels, making ours a perfect fit for a range of abilities. After reaching the top of our climb, we shed our skins and felt the rush as we skied down the freshly fallen snow, enjoying the unreal fjord and mountain vistas as the cloudy skies gave way to partial sunlight.



Apres-ski, we gathered for lunch at the family-run Christian Gaard Bygdetun, a fjord-facing restaurant with an Instagram-famous tree swing. Up Norway's expertise allowed us to discover this hidden gem, as you simply can't stumble upon this place. There are no road connections for access, and it's reachable only by boat, ferry, or on foot. The seasonal menu features hyper-local dishes, such as house-made venison burgers from the area's mountains, wild, locally caught salmon, and whatever berries are currently in season.

The floating sauna trend is booming in Norway, and this fjord boasts its own private, floating Finnish fjord sauna, owned and operated by hotel Union Øye. After skiing, we opted into this Norwegian cultural tradition, repeating rounds of sweating in the sauna contrasted with invigorating, icy dips in the fjord.

Kayak Majestic Hjørundfjord in Øye

When your legs need a break from the slopes, kayaking is the perfect substitute adventure. On our second day in Øye, Uteguiden's professional guides brought kayaks to Norangsfjorden in Øye for a relaxed morning paddle. I can confirm: taking in the grandeur of the mountains while watching thundering waterfalls cascade into the fjord is an epic, only-in-Norway experience. When you end your paddle back at the dock, you can thaw out with another floating sauna session. From Øye, we journeyed by car and ferry for three hours to Andalsnes for another day of ski touring.



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Second Stop: Åndalsnes

Where to Stay: Hotel Aak or Villa Romsdalen

From the town of Øye, we traveled about three hours via car and ferry to reach the town of Åndalsnes, our next ski touring stop. While here, choose between two distinctly different lodging options when staying in Åndalsnes. One is Hotel Aak, a seriously cozy, family-run mountain lodge situated at the foot of the spectacular Romsdalen Mountains. Here, delicious Nordic meals are served communally at a long wooden table alongside other adventurers. (Fun fact: This was the first tourist hotel in the Norwegian countryside when it was established in 1860.) You can rent all the equipment you need for ski touring here, and book ski tours led by the hotel's guides. It's the perfect countryside choice for an adventurous trip!

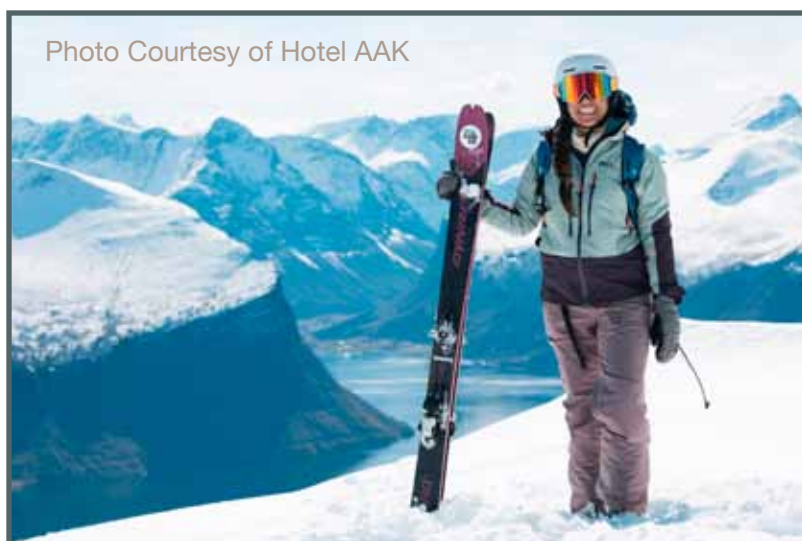
If you're traveling with a group or prefer somewhere in town where you can wander and shop, Villa Romsdalen is the place. This newly opened private villa was originally built in 1940, but underwent a recent renovation that beautifully transformed its five luxurious bedrooms and three bathrooms. I stayed here and enjoyed the vibe and the backyard sauna. You can also hire a chef to prepare meals instead of doing your own cooking!

Ski Touring in Åndalsnes

Skipping ski lifts and opting for a true backcountry ski touring experience is what a winter visit to Norway is all about. So, we worked with Hotel Aak's guide to explore the mountain of Romsdale - far from chairlifts, crowds, and expensive lift tickets. And it was easily the highlight of this adventurous trip!

We set off in the morning for Smørbottfjellet, one of the most popular ski touring mountains in the region, and trekked nearly five miles to reach 360-degree summit views. Locals seemed to view this as a casual hike, but as Americans with moderate ski experience, the 3,000-foot elevation gain felt like a rewarding challenge. Following the ski tracks of locals who've come before you made it nearly impossible to get lost, but I still recommend booking a local guide as part of an Up Norway itinerary, since they're experts in the area's terrain and avalanche risks.

We hiked far beyond the tree line to a mountain peak overlooking a snowy, wide-open bowl. As we neared the top, I wanted to give up as my lungs and legs nearly gave out, but the panoramic views of fjords, valleys, and dramatic mountains made continuing the climb worthwhile.





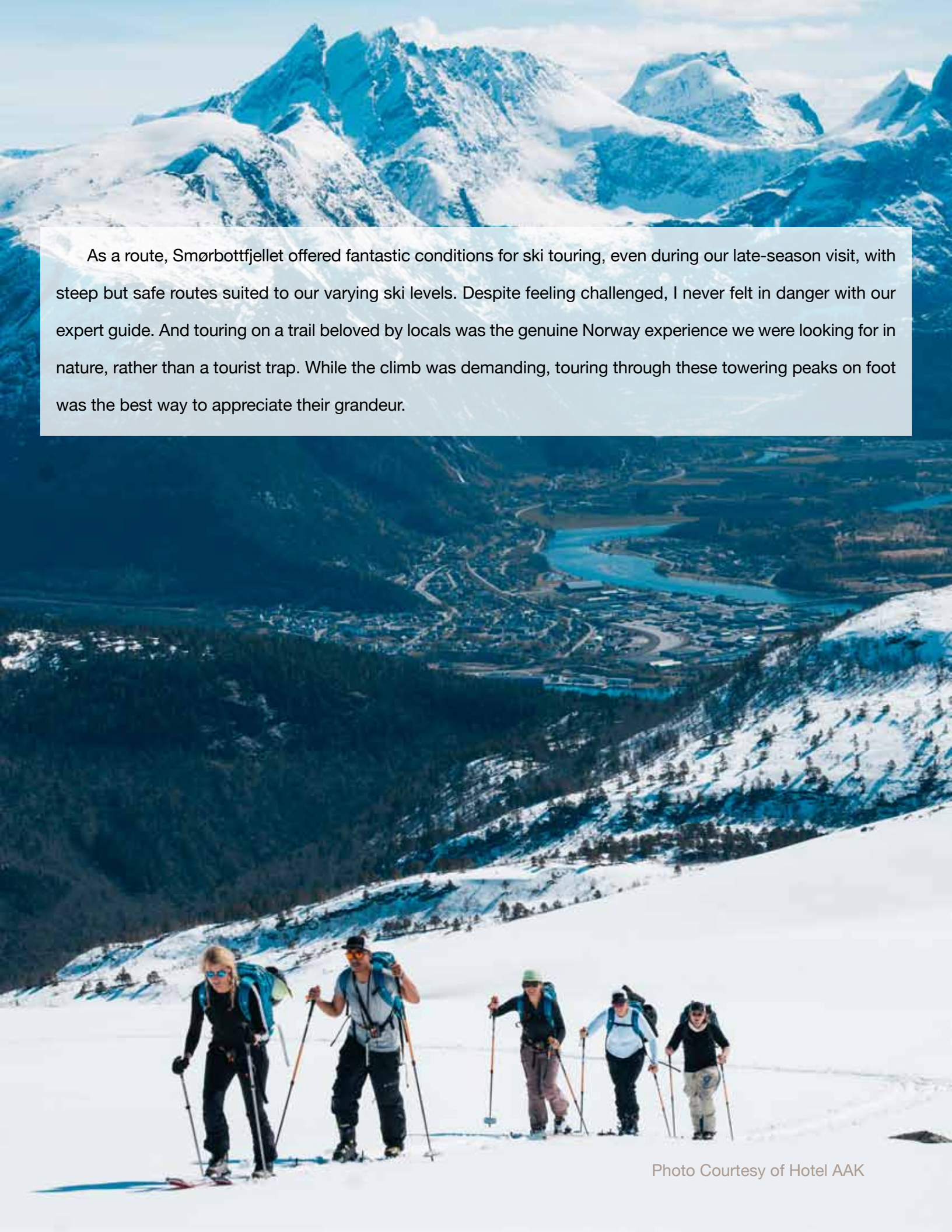
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As a route, Smørbottfjellet offered fantastic conditions for ski touring, even during our late-season visit, with steep but safe routes suited to our varying ski levels. Despite feeling challenged, I never felt in danger with our expert guide. And touring on a trail beloved by locals was the genuine Norway experience we were looking for in nature, rather than a tourist trap. While the climb was demanding, touring through these towering peaks on foot was the best way to appreciate their grandeur.



Photo Courtesy of Hotel AAK

Ride Romsdalsgondolen

Simply driving through the country offers unreal vistas, but a bird's-eye view is the only way to fully comprehend this Scandinavian wonderland's majestic peaks and deep fjords. While staying in the Romsdalen region, take a break from outdoor recreation on a Romsdalsgondolen ride from Åndalsnes town center to the summit of the Nesaksla, located 2,322 feet above sea level.

The seven-minute ride provides a unique perspective of the area's mountainous terrain, showcasing lush valleys, the green Rauma River, and peaks such as Mt. Romsdalshorn and Mt. Vengetindene. While at the top, you can wander along the gravel paths to different viewpoints, or step inside for a meal or snack at Eggen, the mountaintop Nordic restaurant.

Stop Three: Alesund

Where to Stay: Hotel Brosundet

From Andalsnes, we drove 1.5 hours to Alesund, one of the most beautiful cities in Norway. While I loved exploring the region's small, outdoorsy towns, a night or two in the city of Alesund is a worthwhile diversion before flying back to Oslo. This charming Western port city is renowned for its Art Nouveau architecture and is situated across several islands. It's the cultural center of the Sunnmøre region and is called 'The Venice of the North' due to canals flowing through the town center.



Photo by Marte Garmann Hotel Brosundet

After a week of adventures, Hotel Brosundet was the perfect place to unwind, and I loved my room's canal-facing balcony. This charming hotel is lauded for its interior design, but its Sundet Gym and Bath was my favorite feature. This hidden wellness oasis features an authentic outdoor Nordic sauna, dockside bathtubs, and wild swimming plunges from the floating dock.

Reserving a time slot gave us a private hour of outdoor contrast soaking. We started by warming up bubble bath-filled tubs, followed by a sweat session in the sauna, and ended with an (optional) plunge into the chilly canal, exploring the extremes of Norway's love for hot and cold, contrasting with breathtaking waterfront views.

Strolling and Dining Out in Alesund

To find the best city view, you're going to have to work for it. Walk to Byparken

Town Park and climb up 418 steps to the top of the Mount Aksla viewpoint, where you can see spectacular views of Alesund's canal, the surrounding islands, and the majestic Sunnmøre Alps! Be aware: We walked from the top down, but going from the bottom up is an intense climb!

When night fell, we walked around the city center, stopping for dinner at Sjøbua, a lauded seafood restaurant situated in the fish packing district along the Brosundet canal. The restaurant was a trip favorite for its focus on fresh, local Nordic fare, and I loved that Up Norway's team had a pulse on the best eats in Alesund. The vibe felt relaxed and down-to-earth, while the cuisine exuded high-end sophistication. (Tablesides caviar bumps anyone?) It's a must-visit when in Alesund!



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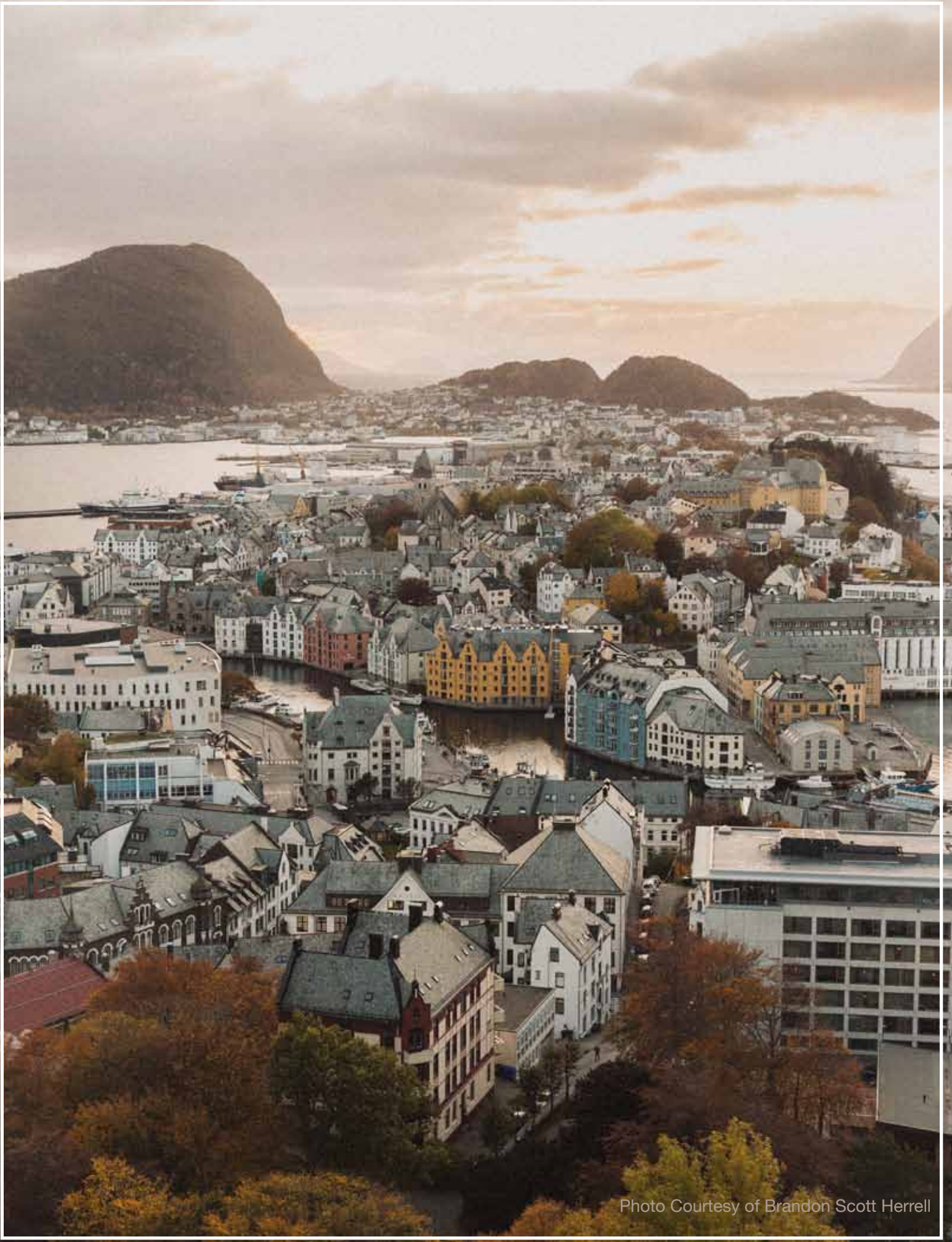


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Getting There

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) is the national airline of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and it is the most convenient travel option for flying to Norway from the United States. Fly to Oslo and once there, take a connecting flight to Alesund to easily access the areas on this itinerary. (If you're an aviation nerd with a long layover in Oslo, the SAS Museum is a worthwhile stop.)

If you can swing the added cost, SAS Business class lie-flat bed seats are a worthwhile upgrade. It includes a glass of champagne, a three-course gourmet meal, an amenity kit, and lounge access at the airport. If you're looking for a more affordable seat class that's a step up from economy, try SAS Plus, a premium economy option that includes a larger seat with more recline and leg room, an amenity kit, free WiFi, and access to the SAS airport lounge - a rare perk for a premium economy ticket. SAS Plus felt like a huge upgrade from economy and is a great option if you want to get some shut-eye on the flight.

My Norway adventure was amazing and I find myself already looking forward to my next visit to the land of the midnight sun. **AW**





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Learning to Fly

by Izzy Farrar

From Skeptic to Sky Bound: How I Fell in Love with Flying

When my parents first suggested that I consider becoming a commercial pilot, I was skeptical to say the least. Flying didn't particularly intrigue me at the time as I had other interests and passions. But now, I can say wholeheartedly, I've absolutely fallen in love with aviation, and I can't imagine pursuing any other career.

An Unconventional Start

I began working toward my Private Pilot License the summer before my senior year of high school, taking a slightly unorthodox approach. I have a couple pilots in my family, and my grandfather actually let me and my brother use his aircraft, a 1947 Aeronca Champion to get our PPL.

For non-pilots that might not mean much, but most student pilots start in a Cessna 172 or Piper Archer which are nosewheel planes with full instrument panels. The Champ, on the other hand, is an 80 year old tailwheel aircraft with very basic instruments. It had little more than an altimeter, airspeed indicator, and tachometer. But what the Champ lacked in technology, it made up for in the practical lessons I learned. Flying without many instruments forced me to fly by sight and feel, to become part of the airplane and to use other references such as looking out the window at the horizon. The Champ also sharpened my stick-and-rudder skills and helped me truly understand what it feels like to fly.



The Heel Brake Hurdle

There are a lot of advantages to learning in a tailwheel aircraft, however, the Champ's vintage design also came with a challenge - heel brakes. Not just any heel brakes, but possibly the worst heel brakes ever designed on the planet. During my early lessons, I could not physically reach the rudder pedals and the brakes at the same time, or press the brakes hard enough to completely stop the plane. My instructor had to help me brake the plane from the back



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seat. When it came time for my first solo, this was a big problem as I would not have anyone else in the plane during that flight.

To solve my inability to solo in the Champ I graduated up to a Citabria, a slightly more modern tailwheel plane that is a descendant of the Champ. The Citabria is equipped with better brakes, has a few more instruments and is rated for basic aerobatic maneuvers. That upgrade changed everything. While the Champ was fun, the Citabria was exciting. It was a faster, more responsive airplane and gave me my first taste of the thrill that would become one of my passions in flying.

First Solo Flight

After getting comfortable flying and landing in the Citabria, it was time for my first solo flight. I was a little nervous but mostly excited. Before soloing, I had to be evaluated by a different instructor to ensure I was ready. We flew a few laps, she hopped out, signed me off and it was time to go.

Taking off alone for the first time was exhilarating - I was truly flying solo. Because the Citabria has tandem seating (one seat in front of the other), I could almost pretend my instructor was still behind me, no empty seat beside me to look over at and remind me I was alone. I flew a few laps in the pattern and landed as the sun was setting, completely in awe of what I had just done.

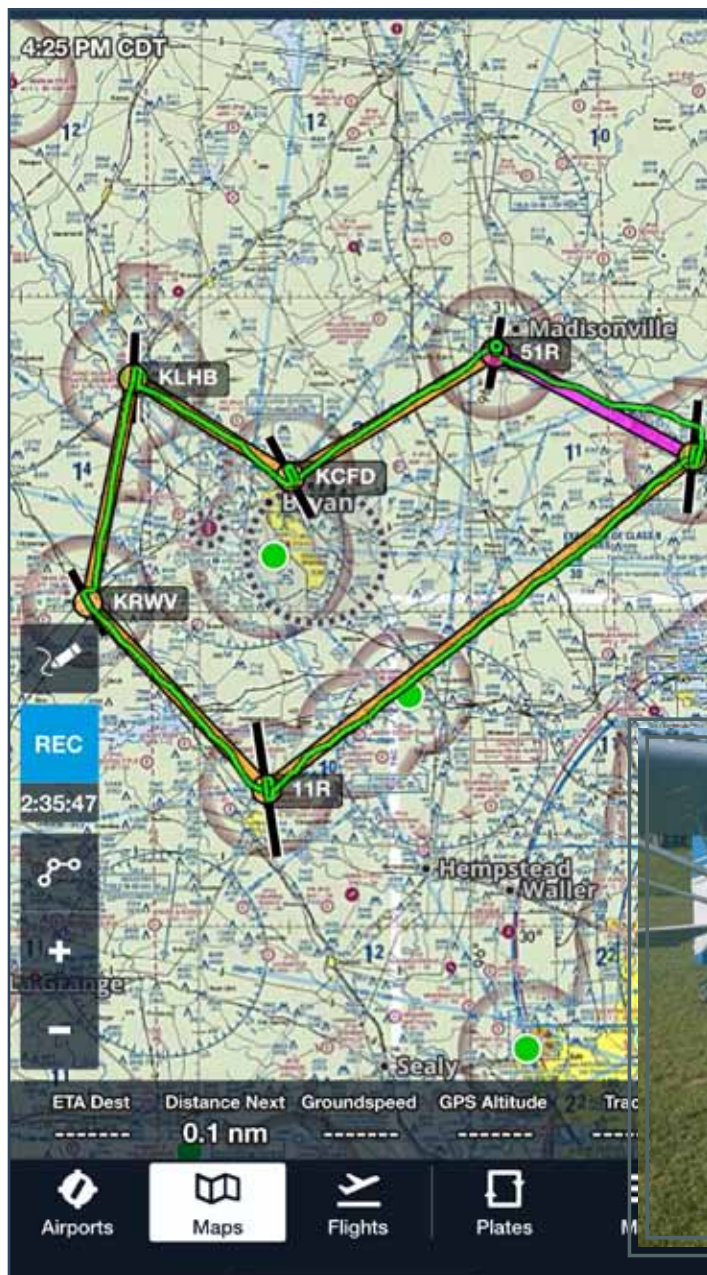
A lot of people come to my flight school, Lazy 8, for tail wheel instruction and to get their tailwheel endorsement. I was the first person at Lazy 8 to solo in a tail dragger while getting their private pilot license, which was pretty awesome.

Cross Country and Spins

With my first solo flight behind me, I moved on to my cross



country flights and other training milestones. Flying solo beyond my home airport was a huge step, since I didn't have my instructor in the plane to help in case something went wrong. I also got to experience a different kind of "instrument" training, since the Citabria didn't have the standard full instrument panel either. I had to rely on unconventional methods like using the turn-and-slip indicator for attitude or listening to the engine for pitch to augment the lack of full instruments during my simulated instrument requirement flights.



My favorite part of training, hands down, was learning spins. While not required for a Private Pilot License, my instructor decided that since we were in an aerobatic plane we might as well learn spins. Interesting side note, Citabria is actually "airbatic" spelled backwards, reflecting the planes acrobatic capabilities. Anyways back to spins. Entering a spin involves intentionally stalling the plane and smashing the right or left rudder pedal which causes the plane to dive while in a rotation toward the ground. It sounds terrifying, but I loved it so much we started incorporating spins into almost every lesson.

The Check Ride Challenge

After months of hard work, it was finally time for my check ride. I was fortunate that the examiner was Wanda Collins, the owner of my flight school and someone I had flown with before. This familiarity helped ease some of the tension that comes with a check ride. I passed the oral exam, but a string of bad weather delayed the flight portion of the check ride for over a month. When I finally got to fly, nerves gave way to confidence and I passed - I was officially a private pilot!



Entering the World of Aerobatics

After earning my license, I decided to continue to explore the world of aerobatics. Fortunately, Wanda, the owner of Lazy 8 Flight School is an aerobatic pilot and she was forming a team. I was invited to be part of the team and I jumped at the opportunity to become a member. As a reward for my first solo flight, my instructor had taken me on an aerobatic flight in the Citabria, showing me many of the maneuvers and I was instantly hooked.

To take the next step, I began training in a Super Decathlon - a more powerful, fully aerobatic capable aircraft. It's a thrilling machine with lots of power that is able to fly inverted and pull +6 and -5 Gs. I've been learning loops, spins, slow rolls, and even the half Cuban. The experience is pure adrenaline, and I'm working toward my first aerobatic competition. My dream is to master aerobatics and to one day fly in airshows.

What's Next

Looking ahead, I'm about to begin instrument training as a freshman at Oklahoma State University in the aerospace professional pilot program. I'm excited to transition from tailwheel planes and steam gauges to tripod gear and glass cockpits - it will be a steep learning curve, but I always love a good challenge. I will say that as amazing as the advanced avionics are these days, I will always be a tailwheel pilot at heart and imagine I will fly taildraggers for the rest of my life. I am so grateful for Lazy 8 Flight School and my instructor Luke for teaching me how to be a safe, capable tailwheel pilot.





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A New Perspective

Before becoming a pilot, I had flown a few times with my grandfather and, of course, taken commercial flights. I never found flying particularly awe-inspiring, actually it felt routine - just another way to get to a destination. Now, that has changed entirely.

Sitting in the cockpit and feeling the rumble of the engine as I head down the runway in anticipation of leaving the ground behind is exhilarating. Having my hand on the stick with the freedom to decide what kind of flight this will be, a nice relaxing cruise or one filled with spins and rolls - I can't imagine doing anything else. From takeoff to landing and everything in between, I love being in the sky. Flying has become my passion, my purpose and my future.

For more adventures follow me on Instagram @izzy.g.farrar **AW**



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20 Must Have Pilot Items

by Troy Farrar

From experienced professional pilot to new private pilot, here is the essential gear that are must have items for every pilot. This top of the line gear will insure you are efficient, organized, safe and completely equipped for all of your flying adventures. Pack your flight bag with this essential gear and know you have everything you need to complete your next mission.

David Clark DC One-X

The David Clark DC One-X are the ultimate pilot's headset that are packed full of useful features. The light weight 12.3 ounce headset has soft foam & leatherette over-the-ear seals combined with a low profile vented Outlast fabric head pad that absorbs excess heat making them super comfortable even on long flights. David Clark uses Hybrid Electronic Noise Cancellation to effectively capture and cancel ambient noise across a broad frequency range combined with Environmental Noise Cancellation to enhance your voice's clarity for the listener by filtering out background noise. Bluetooth wireless technology provides seamless integration with cell phones, tablets or other smart devices and Digital Signal Processing ensures high-fidelity audio during communications and while listening to music. Audio mute reduces auxiliary audio volume when receiving or transmitting to help prevent missed communications but note that cell phone communications will not mute. The headset features a stereo/mono switch and a full-flex reversible boom with an integrated electret microphone with enhanced noise cancelling for crystal clear communications. The in line, backlit control module will run for up to 50 hours on 2 AA batteries, has touch key user interface controls and a handy mounting clip. The control module has a fail-safe operation that ensures full communication is available in the event of battery loss. The collapsible headset has a five-year warranty and will fold up for compact storage in the included storage bag. Whether you are a professional pilot or a brand new private pilot, the David Clark DC One-X headset combines comfort with state of the art technology to provide the perfect headset for all of your upcoming adventures.

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Sportys PJ2+ Radio has can trace it's roots back to the PJ2, an industry gold standard aviation radio. The PJ2+ includes some awesome additions such as a large high contrast back lit screen and the super handy standard GA headsets jacks. In an emergency where you lose your radio, simply unplug your headset from the panel, plug into your Sportys PJ2+ Radio and communications resume. This can all be done in a matter of seconds with no adapters or wires to fish out, just plug and play. Sporty's also features independent volume and squelch adjustments, a 3.5mm jack to accommodate wired earbuds or a computer headset, a large push to talk button and an easy to use oversized keypad. The radio has 6 watts of peak transmit power, a convenient flip flop button which allows you to switch between current and last frequency and the radio can be powered by 6 AA batteries or plugged in using the included USB-C cable for external power. The PJ2+ comes with a USB wall plug, a wrist lanyard, a belt clip, has a NOAA weather button, 20 preset memory channels and a 121.5 emergency frequency button. Sporty's has really set the mark with this easy to use back up radio with GA headsets jacks. For the ultimate back up radio look no further that the Sportys PJ2+ radio.

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Bad Elf Flex Mini

The Bad Elf Flex Mini insures you have the fastest, most precise Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) performance available for your flights. The majority of iPad devices are Wi-Fi only and do not have an internal GPS receiver. The iPads that are equipped with an internal GPS receiver work great when on the ground and within the range of cell phone towers, however, pilots quickly discover that these internal GPS devices are not always reliable when operated in a heavily shielded aircraft that is moving at high speeds and different altitudes. Bad Elf utilizes the latest multi-frequency GNSS technology (GPS, GLONASS, Galileo, and BeiDou) to provide highly accurate location information anywhere in the world even when there is no cellular service. The Flex Mini provides an amazing 1 meter SBAS accuracy, which is map grade positioning, with no ongoing subscription fees. The Mini communicates via Bluetooth to provide accurate real time GPS positioning to smartphones or tablets that are utilizing ForeFlight or other Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) apps. The Elf Mini is also handy for adventures on the ground and will help provide GPS coverage in the most challenging environments such as canyons or even under a tree canopy. The 3.5 x 1.8 x 1.3 inch Bad Elf Flex Mini weighs 5 ounces, has an IP67 waterproof rating and comes with a zippered hard shell protection case, a USB recharging cable and wrist lanyard. The suction cup mount is a great accessory and has a magnetized cup which firmly holds the Flex Mini in place and allows you to attach the device to your plane's cockpit glass. The Bad Elf Flex Mini is a must have device for all pilots and will provide high performance WAAS GPS reception to any iPad or iPhone regardless of available cellular coverage, speed, altitude or cockpit shielding/interference.

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Garmin inReach Mini 2

The Garmin inReach Mini 2 satellite communicator allows you to keep in touch when on your adventures without needing cell phone service. The Garmin uses global satellite coverage to communicate with family & friends, message another inReach user or contact the Garmin Emergency Response Coordination Center. With the inReach Mini 2, you can share your location, get weather forecasts, use Tracback routing to navigate back to your starting point and get a digital compass heading. The durable water and impact resistant Garmin is 4 inches x 2 inches, weighs 3.5 ounces, has a removable webbing loop and a slot for attaching a lanyard. The rechargeable internal lithium battery will stay charged for up to 1 year when powered off and provides up to 14 days use with a 10-minute tracking interval and up to 30 days use with a 30-minute tracking interval. Garmin offers flexible satellite subscription plans, unlimited cloud storage and trip planning when utilizing the Garmin Explore App. With the Garmin Explore App, the inReach Mini 2 can display automatic routing, satellite imagery, hydrographic features, national, state and local parks and much more. The most important feature is the ability to send an interactive SOS signal to the Garmin Emergency Response Coordination Center which also provides your exact location. The Garmin inReach Mini 2 is a must have piece of safety equipment for all outings and the perfect safety device for your next flight.

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Flight Outfitters Aviator Backpack

The Flight Outfitters Aviator Backpack is a full sized, rugged backpack that has everything a pilot could dream of for their flight bag. The backpack starts with large padded carry handle, padded adjustable shoulder straps with a sternum strap, a padded back panel and a slide through sleeve for rolling luggage. The pack features a sleek satin and fleece interior combined with a heavy-duty denier external material with metal zippers insuring this bag can handle the roughest environments for years without any problems. All interior sections feature a high visibility orange interior making it easy to see and retrieve stored gear. The back panel has a hidden zippered fleece lined pocket along with 3 elastic pockets on the exterior that can be used for a flashlight, fuel tester, radio or water bottle. The front has a quick access slash pocket and the front zippered compartment has tons of storage options consisting of 4 sleeve pockets, 4 elastic sleeve pockets, a zippered compartment, a keyring clip and a fleece lined tablet sleeve. The main compartment features a large zippered mesh pocket, 2 mesh sleeve pockets and a strap for your headset. The back zippered compartment has a zippered mesh pocket, 2 mesh sleeve pockets and a padded, fleece lined laptop pocket with a Velcro closure. The Flight Outfitters Aviator Backpack was made by pilots, for pilots and they really hit the mark - there are storage solutions galore for cables, batteries, phones, headsets, radios and just about anything else you need to take along. Grab a Flight Outfitters Aviator Backpack, fill it with your flight gear and know you have everything safe and secure for your next big adventure.

www.flightoutfitters.com



NEBO 10K Power Bank IC

The NEBO 10K Power Bank IC is an all in one rechargeable power bank. The power bank comes equipped with integrated micro-USB and USB-C charging cables, USB-A output port, USB-C bi directional port and includes a micro-USB to Lightning adapter providing power for just about any device you can imagine. The integrated cables and Lightning adapter stow away into the body of the power bank insuring you have them at the ready when needed. The 10,000mAh (37 watt-hour) lithium ion battery can charge 2 devices at the same time and will quickly recharge your phone up to 2 times. About the size and weight of your cell phone, NEBO includes a LED battery indicator and a 2 year warranty. Losing power to a device while flying is a problem, but don't worry, the NEBO 10K Power Bank IC has you covered and will quickly have your devices charged up and running again.

www.nebo.acgbrands.com



Flight Outfitters Lift Pro 2.0 Flight Bag

The Flight Outfitters Lift Pro 2.0 Flight Bag is a compact flight bag packed full of useful features. The 2.0 features a large padded carry handle, a removable padded shoulder strap and 4 elastic pockets on the exterior that can be used for a flashlight, fuel tester, radio or water bottle. The Lift Pro has storage galore starting with a zippered back pocket that has an external sleeve, an internal zippered pocket, 2 elastic pockets and a fleece lined tablet pocket. The zippered front pocket has an easy access external slash pocket, an internal zippered pocket, 2 elastic pockets, 2 additional pockets, a pen pocket, a keyring clip and a fleece lined tablet pocket. The padded main compartment has a quick release strap for headset storage and 2 additional elastic pockets. All interior sections feature a high visibility orange interior making it easy to see and retrieve stored gear. The flight bag has a heavy duty denier external material, sleek satin interior and durable metal zippers and shoulder strap attachments which all translate into a long lasting workhorse that can endure rough environments. The Flight Outfitters Lift Pro 2.0 Flight Bag is small and compact making it easy to store, while providing tons of useful storage options for all of your flight equipment.

www.flightoutfitters.com



RAM Composite Yoke Clamp Base with Ball

The RAM Composite Yoke Clamp Base with Ball is a must have accessory for the RAM Quick-Grip XL Phone Mount. The Yoke Clamp provides a clamp on ball so you can secure your phone to the planes yoke, support tubing or glare shield if you do not want to use the suction cup. The clamp comes with a flat clamp hardware adapter allowing the clamp to be attached to just about any shaped .625 - 1.25 inch tubing. The RAM Composite Yoke Clamp Base with Ball is a durable and functional option that is backed by RAM's lifetime warranty.

www.rammount.com



RAM X-Grip Mount with Yoke Clamp Base for 9"-11" Tablets

The RAM X-Grip Mount with yoke clamp base for 9-11 inch tablets securely keeps vital information at your fingertips. The mount will attach to .625 - 1.25 inch tubing including the planes yoke, support tubing or glare shield providing lots of options for mounting positions. The X-Grip mount features 4 spring loaded grip knobs that make loading a snap combined with 4 additional adjustable grip knobs to insure your tablet stays in place even in turbulent conditions. The mount has infinite display positions including landscape or portrait and can be tilted to your desired viewing angle. Ram includes a double socket arm, a round adapter base, a marine-grade aluminum universal X-Grip clamping cradle and a lifetime warranty. The mount works with tablets up to 10.25 inches by 6.25 inches and will hold 2 pound tablets under normal use and 1 pound tablets under heavy stressed situations. Ram mounts look great, work flawlessly and are built to last. For one of the best tablet mounts on the planet, look no further than the RAM X-Grip Mount with yoke clamp base for 9-11 inch tablets.

www.rammount.com



RAM Quick-Grip XL Phone Mount with Twist-Lock Suction Cup

The RAM Quick-Grip XL Phone Mount with Twist-Lock Suction Cup will keep your phone in place throughout just about any kind of flight environment. The RAM phone mount features 4 adjustable side keepers combined with 2 upper posts and 2 lower posts that insure your phone stays put. To load simply pull the spring-loaded quick grip upper posts away from the mount, slide your phone into the mount and release. The composite mount comes with two composite B size diamond ball bases, a powder coated marine grade aluminum medium double socket arm and a super strong RAM Twist-Lock Suction Cup base that works on both windshields and nonporous surfaces. The mount can be used in a horizontal or vertical position and has a height range of 5.75 - 7.25 inches and a width range of 2.625 - 3.625 inches. Back by a lifetime warranty, the RAM Quick-Grip XL Phone Mount with Twist-Lock Suction Cup is a great looking, super functional mount that will become your favorite traveling companion.

www.rammount.com



Flight Gear Slimline Rotating Kneeboard

The Flight Gear Slimline Rotating iPad Kneeboard is a minimalist dream. The simple mounting surface securely holds 9-11 inch iPads using elastic bands and padded clips without the clutter of extra pockets or covers and the elastic knee straps adjust for a perfect fit for any size leg. The 8.25" x 5.75" x 0.5" kneeboard will work with most cases, keeping the power port available and featuring a rotating mechanism that allows you to switch from landscape to portrait orientation in seconds. For a simple, uncluttered kneeboard, look no further than the Flight Gear Slimline Rotating iPad Kneeboard.

www.sportys.com





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Battle Board Kneeboard - Smartphone Edition

The Battle Board Kneeboard - Smartphone Edition keeps your phone secure and in arms reach during long or short trips. The kneeboard has a breathable mesh padded back that is comfortable even on long flights. An adjustable elastic strap secures the kneeboard with a metal G-hook that they laser-cut from recycled 81mm mortar ammo cans. The kneeboard features a grippy non-slip surface combined with 4 flat-braided elastic corner straps that insure your phone stays in place even through steep angles or in the roughest conditions. The 500d cordura nylon kneeboard is available in 14 colors and includes an elastic band for securing excess strap material, a mesh storage pocket and several elastic loops for storing other equipment such as pens or pencils. The US made kneeboard folds to protect your phone when not in use. The Battle Board Kneeboard - Smartphone Edition is a durable and comfortable kneeboard that will provide you with years of comfortable service.

www.battleboard.us



ASA IFR Kneeboard

The ASA IFR Kneeboard features an elastic lag strap, a pencil holder, a strong metal clip for holding paper and a hole for hanging on the wall. The kneeboard also has useful IFR information such as weather and flight planning resources, flight plan equipment qualifiers and lost comm information tooled right onto the brushed aluminum board. You will not find a better built kneeboard on the planet, so grab an ASA IFR Kneeboard for all of your note taking needs.

<https://asa2fly.com/>



Flying Eyes Luzon

The Flying Eyes Luzon are square frame styled, light weight sun glasses. Create your perfect pair by choosing from 5 different frame colors and 16 different lens tints. The non-polarized, tinted polycarbonate lenses are perfect for aviators and Flying Eyes can even install clear prescription lenses with a magnetic clip on sunglass option. The Luzon feature smooth molded nose pads which prevent pressure points on your nose and thin temples that wrap around your head (not your ears) which do not create any pressure from aviator headsets. The sun glasses come with a magnetic hard case, a microfiber soft bag / cleaning cloth and a sticker. Grab a pair of Flying Eyes Luzon and have comfortable, clear viewing on all of your future flights.

www.flyingeyesoptics.com



Flying Eyes Cooper Narrow

The Flying Eyes Cooper Narrow are classic aviator styled sunglasses with some hidden features. The ultra-thin temples wrap around your head (not your ears) and do not create pressure when wearing aviator headsets or helmets while the smooth molded nose pads keep the glasses in place and prevent pressure points on your nose. Choose from 3 different frame fronts and 16 different lens tints as you create a pair that fits your personality. The Shatterproof polycarbonate lenses block 100% UVA/B light and the Cooper is also available in prescription lenses. The sun glasses come with a zippered hard case, a microfiber soft bag / cleaning cloth and a sticker. The Flying Eyes Cooper Narrow will keep you covered on all of your upcoming adventures.

www.flyingeyesoptics.com



Coast FL 13 R

The Coast FL13R Headlamp gives a pilot everything they need in a backup emergency light. The USB rechargeable LED headlamp features high white, low white, solid red and flashing red output and a simple push of a button cycles through the modes. Slip the elastic banded headlamp on and keep your hands free for flying the plane. The FL13R has Chip on Board (C.O.B.) technology that casts a wide beam which is useful for up-close work and the hinged light head can be moved up, down or straight ahead to provide light exactly where it is needed. The clean LED light provides 85 or 270 lumens of white light and will last up to 10 hours on a single charge. The Coast headlamp is IP54 rated against splashing water or rain and comes with a lifetime warranty.

www.coastportland.com



Fisher Clutch Space Pen

The Fisher Clutch Space Pen combines rugged durability with sleek style. The Clutch was designed for use in the oil field and is guaranteed to work in even the harshest conditions. Believe it or not this pen will work at any angle including upside down, underwater, on wet paper, through grease and in freezing cold or sizzling hot conditions. The Clutch uses pressurized replaceable cartridges that will last 3 times longer than regular pens to provide this amazing performance. The black anodized aluminum pen features a sturdy pocket clip and hexagonal finger grips that help you maintain control especially when wearing heavy gloves. Fisher Space Pens have been on every NASA crewed space flight since 1968 and the Clutch will insure you have a reliable pen on all of your flights.

www.spacepen.com



Rite in the Rain Mechanical Clicker Pencil

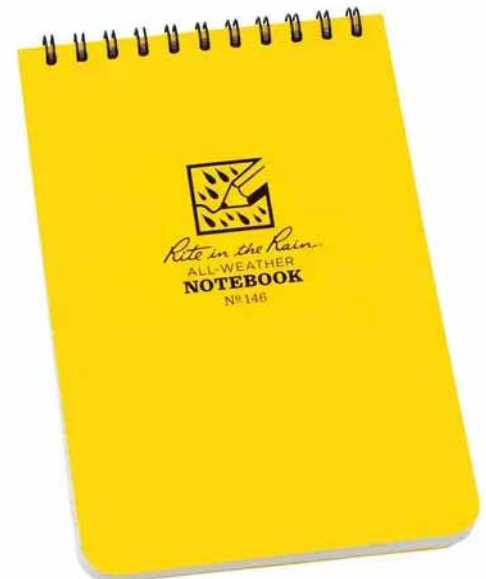
The Rite in the Rain Mechanical Clicker Pencil is a great addition to any pilot's kit. The 1.3 mm pencil features a durable ABS body with an extended knurled metal grip and one handed, click to use operation making it easy to use even when wearing gloves. The pencil has a clean eraser, a pocket clip and is available in 5 colors. The Rite in the Rain Mechanical Clicker Pencil is the perfect companion to the Rite in the Rain Top Spiral Notebook. www.riteintherain.com



Rite in the Rain Top Spiral Notebook

The Rite in the Rain Top Spiral Notebook is useful for adventures inside and outside of the cockpit. The 3 x 5 inch, 50 sheet top spiral notebook features tough polydura covers, wire binding and 20 pound Rite in the Rain paper. The notebook also has a handy measurement conversion chart printed inside the front cover. But the star of the show is the all weather paper which can be used in wet environments making it functional in just about any situation. Get a Rite in the Rain Top Spiral Notebook and know you are covered for any situation.

www.riteintherain.com



AL MAR Rescue Assist

The AL MAR Rescue Assist is the perfect knife for emergency situations. The 8.5 inch lock blade knife is packed full of useful features such as a carbide glass breaker, a built in O2 tank wrench and a separate folding safety seat belt blade. The spring assisted open combined with a flipper tab and thumb stud make 1 handed deployment easy in any conditions. The Rescue Assist has a 3.5 inch D2 blunt tipped combination serrated and smooth blade with a matte black titanium finish. The high visibility safety orange G10 handle has a deep grooved textured handle assuring a good grip even in wet conditions. Weighing in at 5.1 ounces the durable Rescue Assist has a closed length of 5 inches. The AL MAR Rescue Assist was designed for paramedics, firefighters, law enforcement, operators and everyday Joes who need a tool that can get the job done in just about any emergency.

www.almarknives.com **AW**





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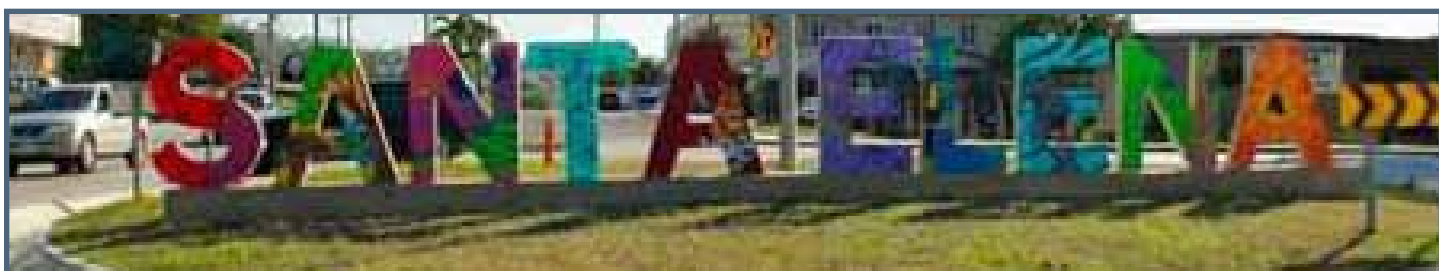
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by Troy Farrar

Belize has a wide variety of exciting activities for visitors and is close to the US, making it a quick and easy trip. Early into our research on Belize, we got excited about the potential and decided to see what adventures we could find during our 10-day trip. Bordered by Mexico, Guatemala and the Caribbean, the culture in Belize is diverse. This resulted in a diverse culinary scene influenced by Caribbean, Mexican, African, Spanish, and Mayan cultures which produced some amazing food. Belize is definitely a foodie's paradise. We arrived in Belize City after a short two and a half hour flight from Houston and rented a car so we could drive to Santa Elena which is a mountain region just south of the Guatemala border.



SANTA ELENA

Bluff Restaurant

The Bluff was my favorite restaurant on the entire trip and gave us an introduction to the amazing food in Belize. The Bluff is owned by a local Belizean whose family has been involved in cattle ranching amongst other ventures for over 50 years. We had Carne Asada Steak and Pasta a Modo Mio and it was wonderful. The chef, Adiel Garcia started cooking when he was 15 years old and has been a chef for 16 years. There is a great view and the owner, Cort, is usually there and can share both his family history and the history of the area which are both worth hearing. If you go to Santa Elena, don't miss a delicious meal from The Bluff. www.thebluffbelize.com



Xunantunich Mayan Ruins

The Xunantunich Mayan Ruins are magnificent. You start the journey by crossing the river on a hand drawn ferry which was fun. Then a short hike brings you to the Xunantunich Mayan Ruins. Xunantunich which means Maiden of the Rock or Stone Woman, is a classic Maya archaeological zone that dates from 200-900. Xunantunich is situated on a high ridge overlooking the Mopan River, this strategic location allowed for the control of trade along the river and through the adjoining valley. There are several structures to visit and the views are phenomenal. You can hire a guide if you are interested in the historic information or take a self-guided and wander around the site by yourself.



Butts Up Cave Tubing

Butts Up Tubing offers an amazing cave tour that is a must do activity while in Belize. The guides will get you outfitted with a helmet and tube and then you are off for a short hike to the starting point. You will tube through some amazing caverns that are beautiful on this peaceful river adventure. Finally, you breakout of the cavern and tube down the river through the jungle back to the headquarters. Keep watch as you may see monkeys along the river. The Butts Up Tubing tour was fantastic and will be one of the highlights of your trip.
www.cave-tubing.com



Belize Express to Caye Caulker

After Our adventures in the mountains, we drove back to Belize City and caught the Belize Express water ferry to Caye Caulker. The ferry is a scenic and enjoyable way to visit the islands and took around one hour to travel to Caye Caulker from the mainland.





CAYE CAULKER

Caye Caulker is a small, relaxed island off the coast of Belize, known for its laid-back atmosphere. You can snorkeling, fish or swim and most people get around by either walking, biking or taking golf cart taxis. The island is popular with backpackers and tourists seeking a less developed, more affordable Caribbean experience.



Pelican Sunset Bar

The Pelican Sunset Bar is the perfect place to grab dinner and watch the sunset - it is actually one of the best places to watch a sunset on Caye Caulker. Debbie, the expat owner is super friendly and has made the pelican popular with locals, expats and tourist, which says a lot about this restaurant. But beyond the hospitality, the delicious food is what keeps the seats full at the Pelican. They buy fresh fish and lobster every day and the food is out of this world. Don't miss the pelican Sunset Bar while you are in Caye Caulker.

Caye Caulker Jet Ski

Rent a jet ski from Caye Caulker Jet Ski and have fun exploring the ocean around Caye Caulker. Their rides are new, well maintained and really really fast! We had a blast jumping wakes and ripping around the bay on the jet skis. Renting a pair from Caye Caulker Jet Ski is a great way to start the day with a little adventure.

501-633-6082



Black Hawk Tours

The Black Hawk Tours snorkeling trip was one of our favorite activities and I highly suggest taking the full day tour. We went to 4 different snorkeling sights including a ship wreck, shark & ray alley and the Hol Chan Marine Reserve. We were lucky enough to come across a manatee and were able to snorkel with the gentle giant for around 10 minutes. We also saw sea turtles, barracuda, eagle rays, lobsters, a loggerhead turtle and tons of reef fish just to mention a few of our encounters. At shark & ray alley we were swimming with 20 plus nurse sharks which was amazing. The guides provide lunch and at the end of the tour you get to feed the jumping tarpon by hand which is exhilarating. Black Hawk Tours does a great job, and the snorkel tour will introduce you to some amazing sea life. www.blackhawktourz.com



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The Split

The Split is a canal that divides south and north Caye Caulker which has become a popular place to hang out. You can sun bathe, snorkel, swim or visit one of the local bars or restaurants located at the split. There is no beach at the Split, but there are docks for hanging out and easy access to the water.

Belize Express to San Pedro

After some great adventures in Caye Caulker, we caught the Belize Express water ferry to San Pedro on Ambergris Caye. The ferry from Caye Caulker to San Pedro takes one and a half hours.





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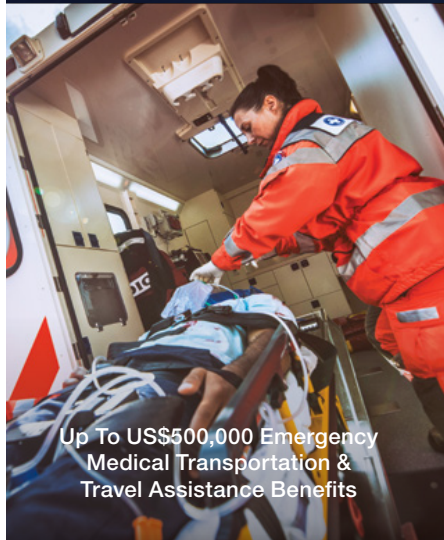
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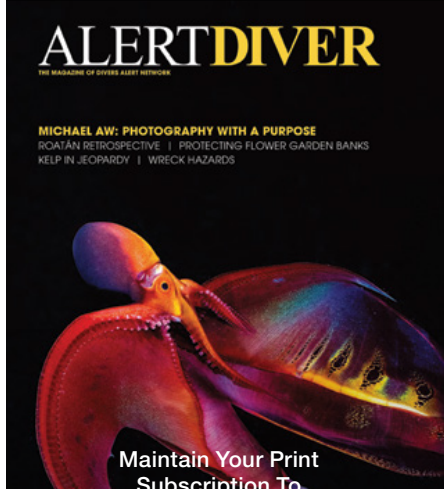
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SAN PEDRO

Ambergris Caye

Ambergris Caye is the largest island in Belize, known for its beaches, scuba diving, fishing and close proximity to the Belize Barrier Reef which is the second largest barrier reef in the world. San Pedro is the main town and is a very popular tourist destination. The island has a relaxed, laid-back atmosphere and is larger and more developed than Caye Caulker.

Rocks Golf Carts

Once you get to San Pedro, you will want to rent a golf cart to travel around the island during your stay. I suggest Rocks Golf Carts as their carts are modern, clean and run great. We had 4 people which filled our golf cart so they met us at the ferry terminal with a second cart and drove our luggage to our condo. They did the same thing when we departed which gives you a glimpse into their exceptional personal service. For a great ride, rent from Rocks Golf Carts while in San Pedro.

www.rocksgolfcartsbelize.com



Opus Ocean Grill

Opus Ocean Grill is a scenic open aired restaurant that is both poolside and oceanside – mere steps from the beach. We had delicious shrimp, a great salad, crispy fries and fresh grilled veggies at our first meal. Days later, after our night fishing trip, we brought the fresh fish to Opus Ocean Grill and they cooked us an amazing platter with grilled, fried and blackened fish. The Opus Ocean Grill is the perfect place to enjoy a great breeze from the ocean while having a delicious meal.

www.facebook.com/p/Opus-Ocean-Grille-Belize-61575011600714/

Elite Adventures

Elite Adventures is a great dive shop for your Belizean adventures. Elite Adventures is run by a husband and wife team of expats, Joan & Spencer, who love sharing the underwater world of Belize with fellow divers. Their pre-dive and post-dive briefing / protocols were the most thorough and safest I have ever experienced which is not always the case. The Belize Barrier Reef is less than 20 minutes away, which makes for a short boat ride before your dive. The Elite Adventures shop is actually so close to the reef that they return to shore between dives, which is nice if you have a tendency to get sea sick. We saw grouper, barracuda, sting rays, reef sharks, sea turtles, nurse sharks, parrot fish, queen angels, lobsters and tons of reef fish on our dives. The currents were mild and the water was clear making for a nice morning of diving. Elite Adventures offers dive classes, dive trips, snorkel trips, fishing trips and private charters and I guarantee you will enjoy any tour you book with Elite Adventures. www.eliteadventuresbelize.com



Portofino Beach Resort

The Portofino Beach Resort is an upscale restaurant with amazing food and amazing views. We pulled into the parking lot and then walked along a boardwalk that flowed through trees and was lined with tiki torches – it felt like we were on Survivor and headed to tribal council. When we emerged, we were at a beautiful 2 story thatched palapa that is Portofino. The top floor looks out onto the ocean which provides a nice breeze and feels like you are about to dine with Robinson Crusoe in his tree house. We had snapper amandine, warm spinach salad, steak au poivre and anglio e olio pasta and everything was fantastic. After the meal, walk out onto the incredibly long dock and enjoy the sound of the waves in the moonlight. The Portofino Beach Resort was a great meal with amazing surroundings. www.portofinobelize.com

Belize Candace

Fish & Reef Tours – Reef Fishing

Belize Candace Fish & Reef Tours full day of fishing was by far our favorite activity while in Belize. We decided to reef fish and man did we have fun. The four of us caught over 60 fish (most of which we released) including a ton of mutton snapper and 2 nurse sharks. After fishing we went snorkeling for lobster and ended up with 4 lobsters. Our guides took us to a private beach where they barbequed the fish and lobsters for a delicious lunch. We had so much fun that we booked a night fishing trip as well.

www.belizecandacefishandreeftours.bz



Secret Beach

Secret Beach is on the leeward side of the island which protects it from the seaweed that can plague the windward side at times. There are a few restaurants and bars as well as kayak and jet ski rental vendors. The water is shallow for quite a ways and the waves are small, making Secret Beach ideal for families.

Caramba

Caramba is a family owned restaurant in the heart of San Pedro that is known for authentic flavors and sourcing fresh ingredients from the Caribbean waters. This is obvious when you arrive as there are ice tables with fresh lobsters and fish outside where you can choose your meal and they will wisk it away and return with a delicious meal. The food is fantastic and the atmosphere is nice making Caramba a popular spot, so make a reservation to insure you get to try some of the amazing recipes they have been serving for over 20 years. www.carambarestaurant.bz



Belize Candace

Fish & Reef Tours – Night Fishing

We started in late afternoon and got to watch the sunset while out on the water which was beautiful. We did not catch as many fish as we did on the reef, but we caught a bigger variety and some much bigger fish. We caught a reef shark, horse eyed jack, crevalle jack, yellow tailed snapper and even a moray eel. It was nice and cool and we had more than enough for an amazing meal even after releasing the majority of what we caught. Belize Candace Fish & Reef Tours took us on 2 amazing fishing trips that were the highlight of the trip. www.belizecandacefishandreeftours.bz





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Estel's Dine by The Sea

Estel's Dine by The Sea has the correct name because it is right by the sea. You can dine in the main restaurant or in one of the thatched booths that are right on the beach. Estel's has a menu as we had a veggie omelet, a chicken burrito, a chicken quesadilla and a fry jack and everything was tasty. Estel's Dine by The Sea where the ocean breeze is nice, the view is nicer and the food is nicest!

www.facebook.com/estelsdinebythese



Maya Air to Belize City

Maya Air is a great way to get back to Belize City for your flight home. The flight last around 10 minutes and provides a beautiful view of the ocean and country side of Belize before depositing you at the airport to catch a flight back to the states. You can also catch the water ferry, but from San Pedro to Belize City takes one and a half hours and then you will need to take a 30-minute taxi from the ferry dock to the airport.

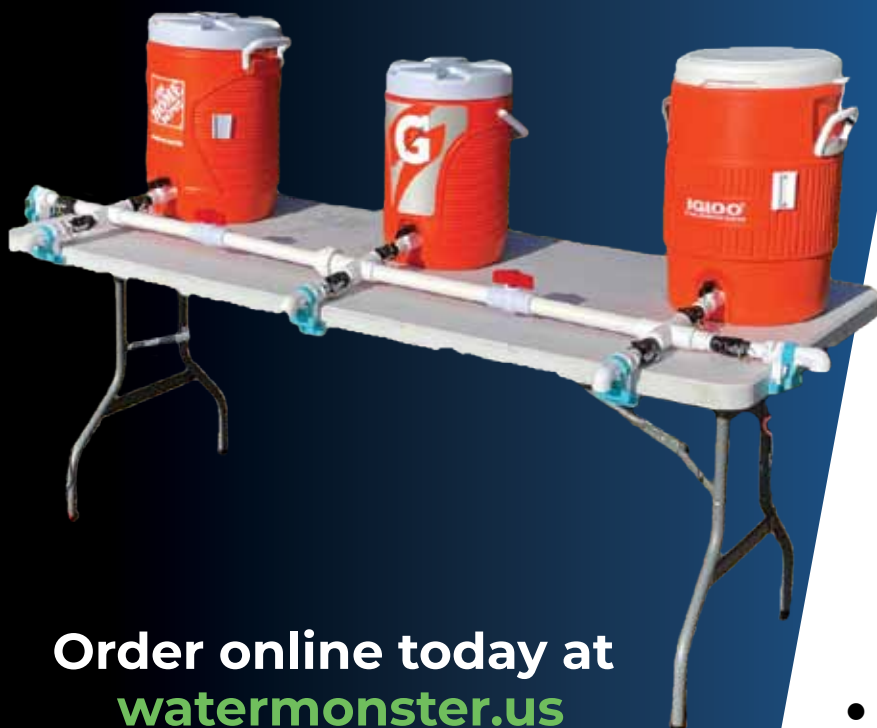
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The verdict on Belize is in and we give it an overwhelming thumbs up! We highly recommend visiting the mountains, Caye Caulker and Ambergris Caye on your trip as they all have unique experiences to offer visitors. There is a diverse list of amazing adventures, fantastic food, friendly people and plenty of beautiful sunsets waiting for you in Belize. **AW**



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Fender x Teufel ROCKSTER GO 2

The Fender x Teufel ROCKSTER GO 2 is a combined effort between Teufel, a German audio company, and Fender, the legendary US based guitar and amp maker. The first thing that we noticed was this Bluetooth speaker is really loud, blowing away all comparably sized speakers.

The awesome sound is driven by an integrated class-D amplifier paired with 2 aluminum full-range drivers and a passive bass radiator. The speaker boasts an amazing 28 hours of battery life and has an IP67 dust and waterproof rating that is good for up to thirty minutes in three feet of water. There are big white control buttons on

top that are easy to see in low light environments and battery status LED lights are located on the back. The ROCKSTER GO 2 has wireless pairing combined with Dynamore technology that allows you to pair anywhere from 2 – 100 speakers and provides stereo sound. The light weight durable speaker has a USB-C sound card, USB-C fast charging and 1/4 inch threading that is compatible with GoPro mounts. The speaker comes with a USB-C charging cable, a carrying strap and a Fender guitar pick. The Fender x Teufel ROCKSTER GO 2 is ready to sling the jams at your next outing and is built to last in even the roughest environments.

<https://us.teufelaudio.com>



Landers 7.5" Fishing Pliers

Landers 7.5 inch Fishing Pliers are perfect for removing hooks or rigging up your next lure. The pliers are built to last featuring an anodized aluminum frame, coated stainless steel jaws and replaceable tungsten carbide line cutters. Landers includes a lanyard and a nylon or rubberized sheath with a rotating belt clip. The heavy-duty Landers 7.5 inch Fishing Pliers are built to take the abuse felt by long days of saltwater fishing.

www.landershopping.com



St Croix Triumph

The St Croix Triumph spinning travel rod is a must have companion

for all of your upcoming adventures. The Triumph is made from premium quality SCII carbon with two coats of Flex-Coat slow cure finish for a durable long-lasting finish. The rod features Sea Guide Atlas Performance slim aluminum-oxide guides with black frames combined with a Sea Guide XDPS reel seat with eco-friendly sandblasted hoods to keep your rod securely in place. A classic premium-grade cork handle insures you will keep your grip even during the toughest fight. The Triumph is durable enough for any adventure, has enough power to land the big boys and is sensitive enough for the most discerning angler. The four-piece Triumph travel rod comes in 6 different size & weight combinations and is backed by a 5 year warranty. Be sure to add the St Croix Triumph to your stable before that next big fishing trip.

www.stcroixrods.com





Arcade Atlas Belt

The Arcade Atlas Belt is a great upgrade for your next outing. The elastic webbing belt features a low profile contoured micro-adjustable plastic buckle. The light weight belt is machine washable and dryable, and the plastic buckle eliminates the need to remove when passing through security at the airport. The buckle holds the belt securely in place, has a dual push to release mechanism and there is an elastic loop to hold any excess belt material. Available in 16 colors, the Arcade Atlas belt is ready for your next adventure.

www.arcadebelts.com

Cotton Cordell Pencil Poppers

The Cotton Cordell Pencil Popper is a great topwater bait for big game fish. The lure is packed with features that attract fish starting with added weight in tail section which forces the Popper to sit tail-down providing a hard to resist bobbing target. Jerking the Pencil Popper produces a side to side motion that mimics an injured-minnow combined with a sound that will help induce strikes. Available in 8 colors and 3 sizes, the Lure was designed to deliver super-long, accurate casts, and features durable rust resistant hooks. The Cotton Cordell Pencil Popper has been in fisherman's tackle boxes for a long time because of the results the lure produces.

www.lurenet.com/cotton-cordell-pencil-popper



Landers 13.5" Blue Hook Removers

The Landers 13.5 inch Blue Hook Removers are the perfect way to remove a hook from a large game fish while keeping your hands safely away from their mouth. The Hook Remover has an ergonomic handle and features an anodized aluminum frame combined with a stainless-steel hook and spring mechanism that insure they will last a long time. Built to withstand the punishing environment of a fishing boat, the Landers 13.5 inch Blue Hook Removers are a must have addition for all fisherman.

www.landersonfishing.com

PRODUCT REVIEWS

FALL 2025



Clarkspoon Spoon Squid

The Clarkspoon Spoon Squids are perfect for trolling or casting and come in 3 different sizes and 5 different colors. These chrome plated lures are built to last, featuring a stainless-steel ball bearing swivel with an extra strong welded ring and a durable saltwater hook. The diamond shaped lures produce a life like reflection and motion that is sure to attract game fish. Add the Clarkspoon Spoon Squid to your setup and expect positive results.

www.clarkspoon.com

Landers LIL NIPS

Landers LIL NIPS are heavy duty professional guide braded line nippers. The durable LIL NIPS are made from aircraft grade aluminum combined with a stainless-steel spring and screw and a replaceable carbide cutter. The nippers come with a 27" retractable clip on lanyard to prevent accidentally losing them overboard. Light weight, compact, tough as nails and super cool looking, Landers LIL NIPS will provide years of service in the toughest conditions.

www.landersisting.com



Blisslets Nausea & Anxiety Relief Bracelets

Blisslets Nausea & Anxiety Relief Bracelets are a must have item if you tend to get sea sick and plan to be out on the water. The pair of stretchy quick drying elastic bracelets are easy to put on and contain a small acupressure button that applies pressure to your wrists. Available in 4 sizes, Blisslets can be used before or after nausea starts and also work for morning sickness. Blisslets come in a variety of styles and worked flawlessly for our family during our trip.

www.blisslets.com

Para Kito Bundle (1 Wristband + 1 Clip with 2 Refills)

The Para Kito Bundle is the perfect way to start your insect protection. Slip on the adjustable neoprene wristband for upper body protection combined with a clip attached to your shoe for lower extremity protection. Both the wristband and clip are waterproof and utilize a blend of 7 natural essential oils to provide up to 15 days protection per refill. The bundle comes with 2 repellent refills and extras refills can be purchased.

www.us.parakito.com





START OFF YOUR RIDE WITHOUT A SWEAT.
FOR FEET'S SAKE, MEET THE PEET ORIGINAL DRYER.

- DRIES ONE PAIR OF CYCLING SHOES OVERNIGHT (12 HOURS).
- ELIMINATES THE ENVIRONMENT BACTERIA THRIVES IN.
- PREVENTS ODORS BY ELIMINATING EXCESS MOISTURE.
- EXTENDS THE LIFE OF YOUR GEAR.



VISIT PEETDRYER.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION.

PRODUCT REVIEWS

FALL 2025



Para Kito Insect Repellent Spray

Para Kito Insect Repellent Spray uses natural essential oils, almond oil & vitamin E to provide a water and sweat resistant repellant that lasts up to 8 hours. The mist on spray is safe for all ages including babies and will keep you protected during just about any activity.
www.us.parakito.com

Para Kito Mosquito Repellent Kids Wristband with 2 refills

The Para Kito kid's wristbands can be worn on the wrist or ankle to provide 15 days of protection from insects. Para Kito is DEET free and uses a blend of 7 natural essential oils to repel insects. The kid's wristbands are adjustable, waterproof and come in a variety of designs.
www.us.parakito.com



Para Kito Mosquito Repellent Roll On

Para Kito Mosquito Repellent Roll On uses natural essential oils to provide 5 hours of protection. The roll on is safe for babies and makes application to the face or neck easy without the risk of getting the repellant in your eyes. Para Kito Mosquito Repellent Roll On is a perfect addition to your biting insect protection plan.
www.us.parakito.com

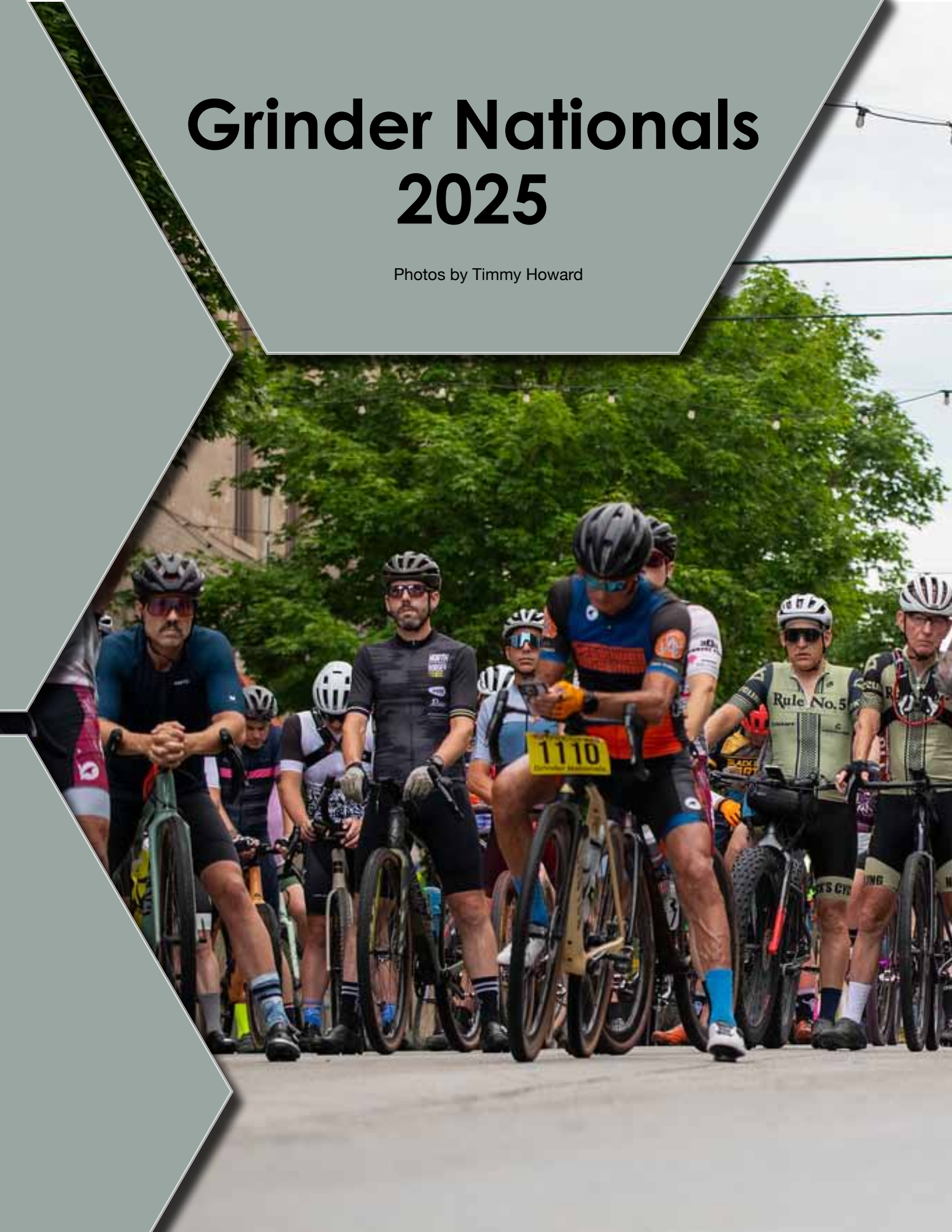
Para Kito Mosquito Repellent Sport Band with 2 refills

The Para Sports Band can be worn on the wrist or ankle and each refill provides 15 days of protection from insects. Para Kito is DEET free and uses a blend of 7 natural essential oils to repel insects. The neoprene Sportsbands are adjustable, waterproof and feature reflective safety stripes and an emergency identification tag.
www.us.parakito.com **AW**



Grinder Nationals 2025

Photos by Timmy Howard









The 2025 US Endurance Gravel
Grinder Nationals was held in Putnam
County Indiana. The race started and finished in
Greencastle but riders spent the majority of their time
on the scenic gravel roads throughout the county. The
competitors traversed several historic covered bridges,
saw beautiful valleys and were challenged by a few
epic climbs. When the dust settled, there was
a new batch of national champions to
be celebrated! **AW**





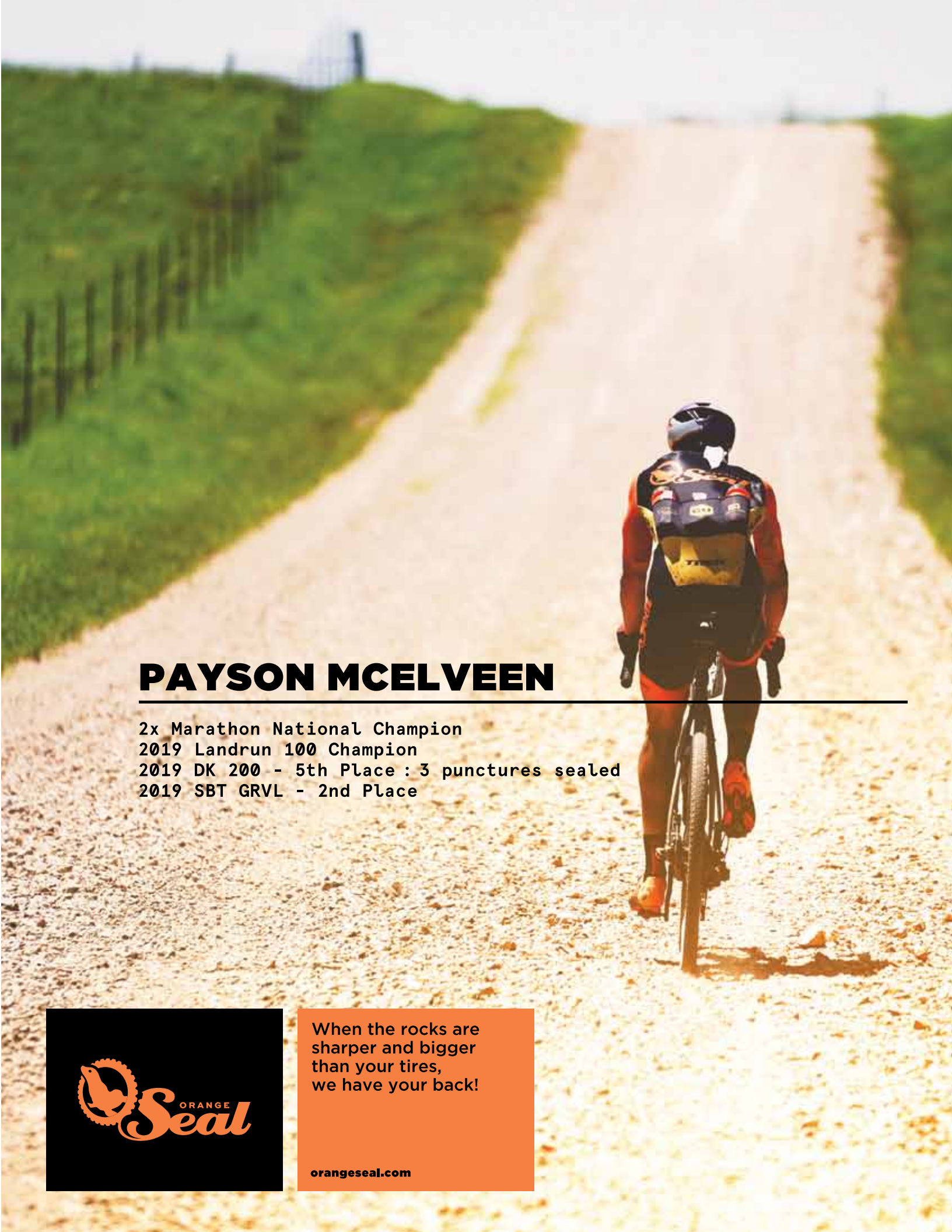
Gross things in your mouth on race day:
dust, gnats, gels, sweaty sunscreen

Don't add instant coffee to the list!



Gourmet coffee.
Wherever the race director takes you.
chafedandcranky.com



A cyclist wearing a red and black jersey and a helmet is riding away from the camera on a wide, light-colored gravel path. The path is flanked by green grassy hills. The cyclist's shadow is cast on the path ahead of them.

PAYSON MCELVEEN

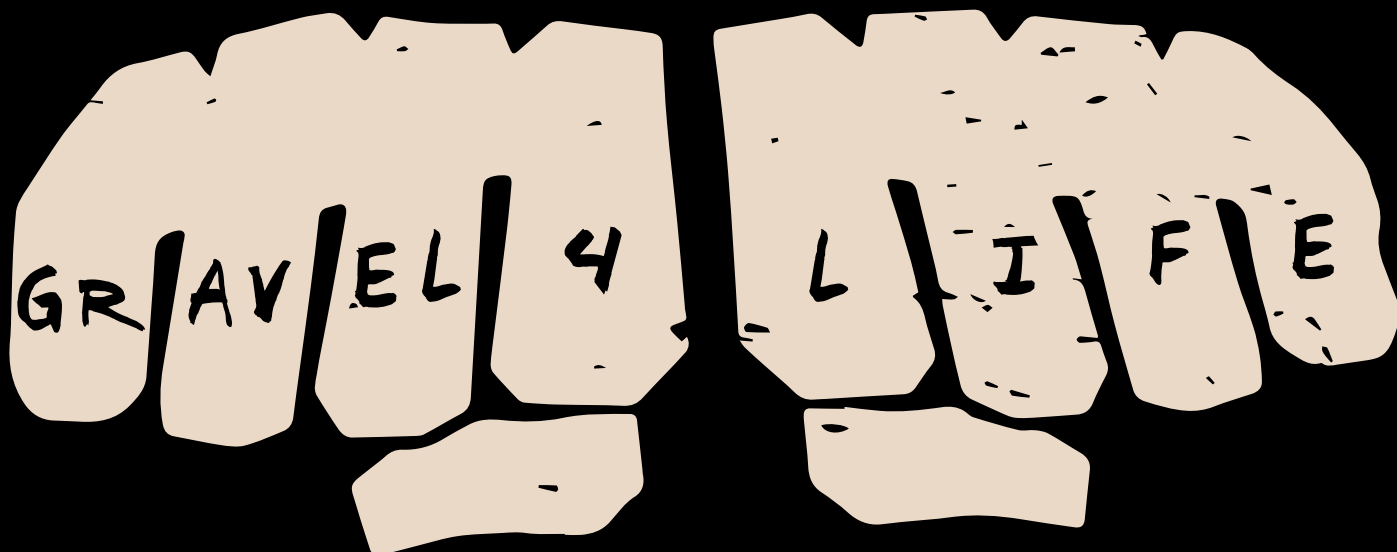
2x Marathon National Champion
2019 Landrun 100 Champion
2019 DK 200 - 5th Place : 3 punctures sealed
2019 SBT GRVL - 2nd Place



When the rocks are
sharper and bigger
than your tires,
we have your back!

orangeseal.com





GrinderNationals.com
2026



Everything You Need to know About Shotgun Chokes

by Philip Acton and Troy Farrar



The majority shotgun shooters cannot accurately explain how a choke works or even what a choke does. An even larger majority have never patterned their shotguns or tested the point of impact and the point of convergence. I know it is starting to sound a bit too scientific, but stay with me because this is important stuff. After reading this article you will have a solid understanding of all these terms and know how perform these crucial tests. You are probably thinking, OK if I read this, I will understand all of that stuff – but why do I care? Because this is the only way to determine the effective shooting range of your shotgun, choke, and shell combination – and yes if you change one of these variables you will need to pattern your shotgun again. Once you learn your shotguns effective shooting range, you can stop taking shots that are out of range and watch your shooting percentage improve significantly. Let's start with the shotgun barrel.



What are the parts of a shotgun barrel?

A shotgun barrel is basically a big pipe with a hole in it that is called the bore (purple). The end where the shell goes in is called the chamber (gold), the hole of the chamber is bigger than the bore and the transition area between the chamber and the bore is called the forcing cone (copper). The choke of the barrel (red) is located at the other end of the barrel. The transition area between the choke and the bore is called the tapered or the conical part (teal) of the choke; this area provides us with the transition geometry between the shotgun choke and the bore of the shotgun. The tighter or smaller you make the choke hole, the tighter the pattern at yardage.

How does a shotgun barrel work?

There are two forces that effect the pattern, the mechanical properties while the shot column is in the barrel and the dynamic forces of nature that affect the shot column after it exits the barrel. When the shot column meets up with the choke it forces the column to squeeze tighter together; these forces are called radial forces. Once the shot column is out of the barrel, wind resistance and gravity act on the column. When the wind comes into contact with the outside pellets of the shot column it induces spinning and they start to flare off. The tighter the choke the heavier the radial forces, which results in the pellets being squeezed together so the pattern holds tighter over a longer distance. Conversely, less restrictive chokes hold the pellets more loosely resulting in the pattern opening up faster over a shorter distance.

What do shotgun chokes do?

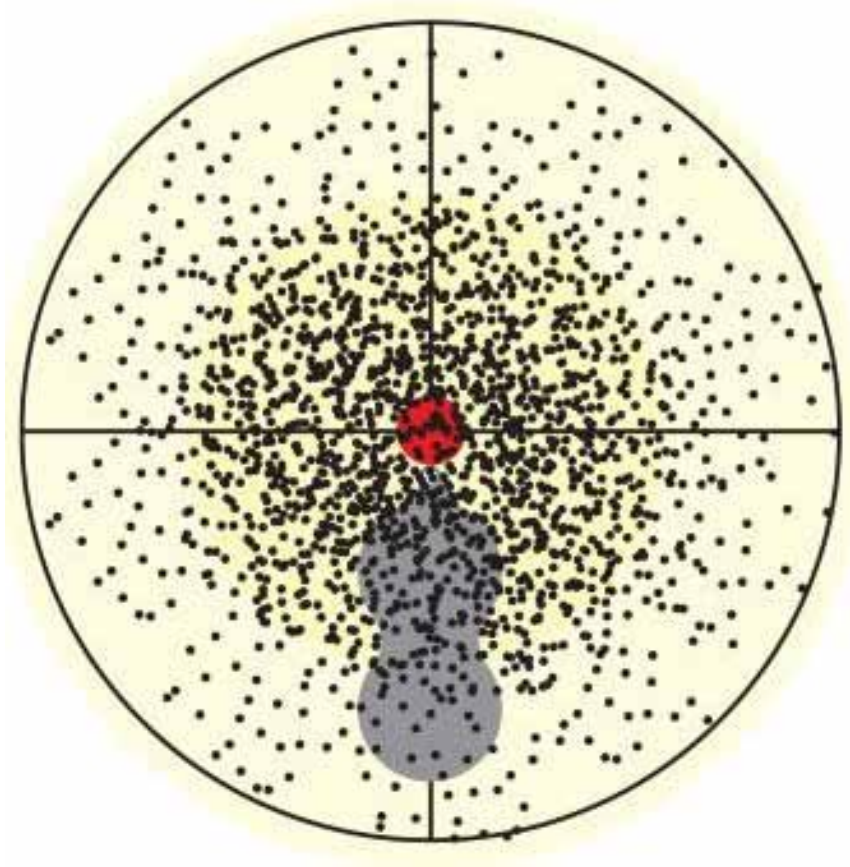
Shotgun chokes were designed to control pattern diameter at given yardage. Extended chokes perform better than flush chokes due to their additional length. Extended chokes have more length to gradually taper down from the bore of the barrel to the constriction of the choke causing less pellet deformation which produces a better pattern.

Here is a quick reference chart:

SHOTGUN CHOKE	YARDAGE	SHOTGUN CHOKE RESTRICTION Diameter difference between bore and shotgun choke
CYLINDER	< 20	0
SKEET	22.5	.005 OF AN INCH
IMPROVED CYLINDER	25	.010
LIGHT MODIFIED	30	.015
MODIFIED	32.5	.020
IMPROVED MODIFIED	35	.025
LIGHT FULL	37.5	.030
FULL	40 OR MORE	.035
EXTRA FULL	40 OR MORE	.040

What is a pattern?

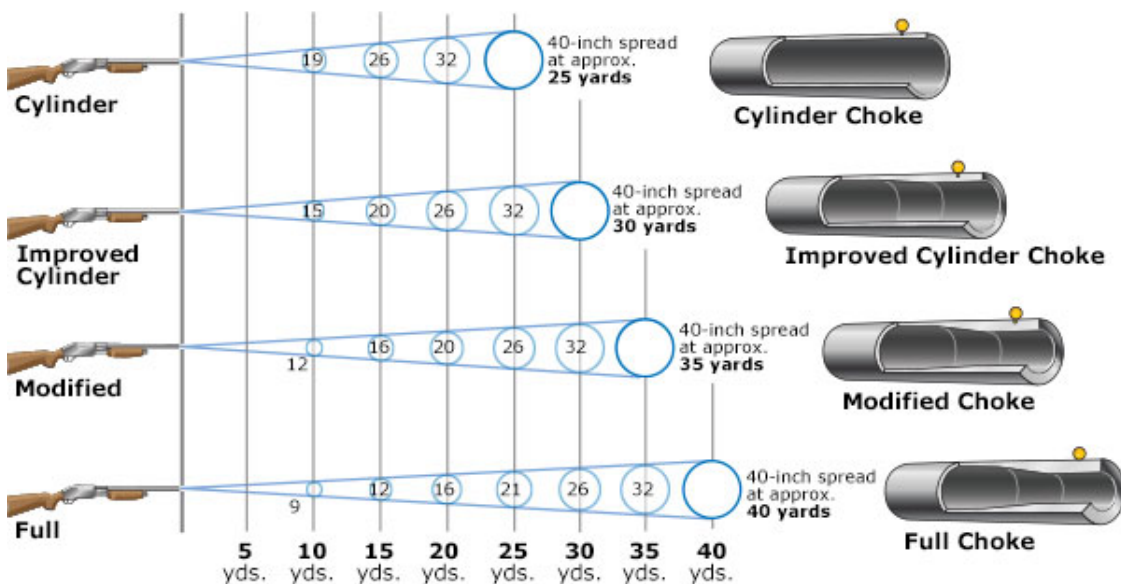
A pattern is the grouping of the pellets at a given yardage. The grouping is called a pattern and is measured by a circle diameter. The pattern has to have a certain number of pellets in a given area (called distribution) for it to be labeled an efficient pattern. Steel shot has a tighter pattern than lead shot so you should step down one choke size for steel shot.



Effect of Choke on Shot String at Various Distances

Circles represent the diameter of a lead shot string (in inches) as distance (in yards) increases.

Bore narrowing is exaggerated for clarity.



Why Pattern a Shotgun?

Have you ever noticed there were always a couple of shooters in the field that almost never miss a bird. If you watch, you will notice that these shooters pick their shots instead of blasting at every bird in the field. They only shoot at birds that are within range of whatever gun, choke and shell combination they are using. They only shoot at birds within a 70% + pattern density. Because different guns pattern differently, even with the same load and choke, the only way to know for certain how a choke tube and load combination will perform downrange is to pattern-test it on paper. Once you pattern a shotgun, you can determine the effective distance (70% + pattern density) that you can consistently hit a bird.



How To Pattern a Shotgun

Use a paper target that measures 4 feet square (red resin flooring paper works great because it is inexpensive and shows the pellet holes perfectly when viewed from the back). Mark the target center to use as an aiming point and use a padded shooting bench when patterning. Use the same shells and choke that you will use when hunting. Shoot a minimum of 3 targets at each distance with each shell or choke that is being tested. Draw a 30-inch circle around the densest portion of the pattern on each target. Count the pellets inside of the circle and divide this number by the total number of shot contained in the shell and you will have your percentage. After you have finished look carefully at each pattern for holes that are big enough to let your intended target slip through. You want a dense enough pattern (70% +) to ensure multiple hits.

Number of Pellets Per Weight of Shot in Ounces

Shot Size	1/4	1/2	11/16	3/4	7/8	1
9	146	292	402	439	512	585
8½	124	249	342	373	435	497
8	102	205	282	307	359	410
7½	87	175	241	262	306	350
6	56	112	155	169	197	225
5	42	85	117	127	149	170
4	33	67	93	101	118	135
2	22	43	60	65	76	87
BB	12	25	34	37	44	50



Don't "wing it".

When it comes to wing shooting, there is no reason to "wing it"! The Briley Helix Hunter line of chokes produce maximum downrange payload resulting in effective shots and killer results.

Our Helix Hunter line of chokes are available in short, mid, long-range, and our new Helix Hunter Xtreme Turkey, making your choke selection easier than ever in the field or the blind.

The added structure to the design accommodates lead and non-toxic shot. These chokes are made for the well-rounded hunter.

The Helix Hunter is available in 12 and 20 gauge for many shotgun models.

Get yours today at Briley.com or give us a call at 1-800-331-5718
Briley Manufacturing 1230 Lumpkin Rd., Houston TX, 77043



BRILEY

A Legacy of Shooting Innovation

To determine the maximum effective range of a choke/load combination, start by shooting targets at 20 yards and then back off from the pattern board in 5 yard increments, shooting patterns at each distance. When the percentage of shot inside the 30-inch circle drops below 70%, you have exceeded the maximum range for that particular combination.

Pattern Test #1

We tested the Briley Titanium Chokes with 2 different shotgun shells in a Beretta Silver Pigeon over and under shotgun. The test results showed that the Rio shells performed better than the Monarch shells in our gun with these chokes, which magnifies the importance of patterning your shotgun and testing various shotgun shells to determine maximum performance.



	20 Yards		30 Yards		35 Yards		40 Yards		45 Yards	
#1 Bottom Barrel	402/437	91%	273/437	62%	236/437	54%	170/437	38%	159/437	37%
Top Barrel	418/437	96%	347/437	79%	295/437	68%	268/437	61%	160/437	37%
#2 Bottom Barrel	388/394	98%	298/394	76%	245/394	62%	175/394	44%	157/394	40%
Top Barrel	382/394	97%	375/394	95%	317/394	80%	265/394	67%	184/394	47%

#1 Briley Titanium Choke / Bottom Barrel Improved Cylinder / Top Barrel Modified Monarch 12 Gauge / 2 ¾ / 1350 FPS / 1 ¼ ounce / 7 ½ shot

#2 Briley Titanium Choke / Bottom Barrel Improved Cylinder / Top Barrel Modified Rio 12 Gauge / 2 ¾ / 1280 FPS / 1 1/8 ounce / 7 ½ shot

Results: The Titanium Chokes produced a consistent, repeatable pattern at all distances tested and would be effective from 20-40 yards. Both shells performed well, however, the Rio provided a higher percentage of shot inside the 30-inch parameter at all distances. The Rio shells also took a slight lead in the effective maximum distance.

Pattern Test #2

We also tested the Briley Helix Hunter Chokes with 2 different shotgun shells in a Beretta Silver Pigeon over and under shotgun. The test results confirmed that the Rio shells performed better than the Monarch shells in our gun with these chokes.



	20 Yards	30 Yards	35 Yards	40 Yards	45 Yards
#1 Bottom Barrel	398/437 91%	332/437 76%	303/437 69%	202/437 46%	194/437 44%
Top Barrel	437/437 100%	393/437 90%	326/437 75%	321/437 73%	223/437 51%
#2 Bottom Barrel	394/394 100%	328/394 83%	312/394 79%	264/394 67%	178/394 45%
Top Barrel	394/394 100%	374/394 95%	329/394 84%	295/394 75%	209/394 53%
#1	Briley Helix Hunter Choke / Bottom Barrel Medium / Top Barrel Long Range Monarch 12 Gauge / 2 ¾ / 1350 FPS / 1 ¼ ounce / 7 ½ shot				
#2	Briley Titanium Choke Bottom Barrel Medium / Top Barrel Long Range Rio 12 Gauge / 2 ¾ / 1280 FPS / 1 1/8 ounce / 7 ½ shot				

Results: The Helix Hunter Chokes produced a consistent, repeatable pattern at all distances and would be effective from 20-40 yards. Both shells performed well, however, the Rio provided a higher percentage of shot inside the 30-inch parameter at all distances.

Conclusion

Pattern testing is crucial and should be done for each shotgun, each choke and each different shell you use. Anytime you change one of these 3 variables, you should pattern test the gun with the new variables. As you develop a testing database, it will be easy to determine which combination provides the best results as well as the effective range limits for each gun, choke and shell combination. Armed with this information and a lot of practice, you can become an efficient shooter who knows his gun's limitations. Utilizing the 70% guideline will make you a more successful shooter with a higher percentage of hits – you may even become one of those guys in the field that seems to never miss. **AW**

Buk Ops CYCLOPTIC Handheld Primetime Viewer

The Buk Ops CYCLOPTIC Handheld Primetime Viewer will expand your viewing times in both predawn and dusk low light conditions. Perfect for wildlife viewing, pre-hunt scouting and confirmation during hunting season. Buk Ops utilizes Primetime Color Vision which is a light and color-enhancing technology that allows hunters to see low light details in vivid color. The handheld weather resistant viewer has a 25mm objective lens, manual focus and a 1.39 inch HD color viewfinder. Use the 1-5X zoom to get a closer look at your quarry and the 4K video recorder to preserve the images you view in the field. The CYCLOPTIC runs on 2 CR123 lithium batteries and has a Micro SD slot for storage so you can save those awesome images of the wildlife you view. Don't miss that trophy buck because it was too dark to determine what was in the field. Grab your Buk Ops CYCLOPTIC Handheld Primetime Viewer and confirm your quarry in high-resolution color. www.bukops.com



Briley Titanium Choke

The Briley Titanium Choke is considered the ultimate target choke for clay target shooters. Available from cylinder to extra full, the chokes are clearly marked with a color band that is engraved with the choke size. The lightweight titanium chokes reduce muzzle weight and are easy to clean because carbon and wad plastic do not stick to titanium like conventional steel chokes. The extended chokes feature a highly polished interior combined with a perfect internal geometry that produces very consistent patterns while minimizing fliers. The Briley Titanium chokes are not recommended for steel shot. The Briley Titanium Choke is a lightweight, easy to clean performer that will help insure your clay shooting game reaches it's maximum potential.

www.briley.com



GUN REVIEWS

FALL 2025

Briley Helix Hunter

The Briley Helix Hunter was developed to simplify choke selection for hunters while providing a technologically advanced non-toxic hunting choke. Briley combined their expertise in clay target shooting with knowledge from waterfowl hunting to produce the ultimate hunting choke. The Briley Helix Hunter was based on one of their most popular sporting chokes, the Briley Helix choke. However, the Helix Hunter chokes have a thicker wall allowing them to be used with non-toxic shot such as steel or tungsten. The Helix Hunter is available in 3 sizes, 1 for close range which is equivalent to a Skeet choke (up to 25 yards), 2 for mid-range which is equivalent to a Light Modified choke (25-45 yards) and 3 for long-range which is equivalent to a Light Full choke (45+ shots) and each choke has a dot machined into the head that represents the choke size. The extended chokes have a long parallel section which provides great shot stabilization, maximum downrange payload and a high pattern density. Made from aircraft quality 17-4 stainless steel the chokes feature helical porting which produces ideal pellet distribution and provides recoil reduction, something we all appreciate during those long days in the field. The Briley US made chokes work with both lead and non-toxic shot and feature a tough, low glare QPQ finish that makes cleaning a snap. For the ultimate hunting choke, look no further than the Briley Helix Hunter.

www.briley.com



Briley Speed Wrench

The Briley Speed Wrench fits all factory styled 4 slot chokes. This sturdy light weight wrench features aluminum fingers that accurately align the wrench inside the tube and hold the teeth in place during use. The crank handle quickly spins tubes in or out of the barrel making choke tube changes a snap.

www.briley.com



Shotgun & Choke Cleaning

Slip 2000 Choke Tube Cleaner

Slip 2000 Choke Tube Cleaner is the first step in cleaning both chokes and shotgun barrels. The non-flammable, solvent-free cleaner softens carbon and plastic wad fouling from choke tubes and barrels. Just drop your chokes into the cleaner, let them soak for 15 minutes and be amazed at how easy the carbon and plastic wad fouling is removed. Slip 2000 Choke Tube Cleaner is recommended by more manufacturers than any other choke tube cleaner in the shotgun industry and is available in 7, 15 and 32 ounce containers. www.slip2000.com



Briley Turbo Choke Tube Cleaner

The Briley Turbo Choke Tube Cleaner is a quick and simple tool that will help you efficiently clean your chokes. Simply insert the replaceable wire brush into the choke and turn to clean the choke. The US made Turbo Choke Tube Cleaner is available in 20 and 12 gauge. www.briley.com



Briley Choke Brush

The Briley Choke Brush is a handy tool for cleaning your chokes. The sturdy 9 inch brush features an easy to clean plastic handle that is marked with the gauge and a plastic tip cover to protect your choke. Available in 12, 20, 28 and .410 gauges. www.briley.com



Briley Chamber Brush

The Briley Chamber Brush is an efficient tool for cleaning your shotgun chamber. The sturdy 11 inch brush features an easy to clean plastic handle that is marked with the gauge and a plastic tip cover to protect your chamber. Available in 12, 20, 28 and .410 gauges. www.briley.com



GUN REVIEWS

FALL 2025

Slip 2000 Foaming Bore Cleaner

Slip 2000 Foaming Bore Cleaner is a quick and effective way to clean your guns bore. Simply spray the water-based cleaner into your bore and wait 15 minutes while the cleaner breaks down any powder residue, carbon buildup or wad fouling. The formula is based on Slip 2000's 725 gun cleaner and comes in a pressurized 12oz can.

www.slip2000.com



Slip 2000 Gun Lube

Slip 2000 Gun Lube is a high-performance metal treatment that will protect your firearm and keep it running smoothly. The synthetic lubricant penetrates and loosens plastic wad fouling as well as carbon, copper and lead buildup making cleaning a snap. The non-toxic, biodegradable gun lube is safe for use on metal, wood, plastic and gun coatings. Available in 7 different sizes and application configurations, the gun lube functions in temps from -85°F to 1250°F and will not burn off, freeze or gum up. Slip 2000 Gun Lube is a reliable way to protect your firearms in any environment.

www.slip2000.com

Slip 2000 Choke Tube Grease

Slip 2000 Choke Tube Grease is the first step in choke tube and barrel protection. The synthetic grease is specially formulated to prevent choke tubes from getting stuck or seizing in the barrel. Slip 2000 Choke Tube Grease provides protection in high temperature, heavy use environments and makes removing powder residue, plastic wad fouling, and carbon buildup easy. The choke tube grease comes in an easy to apply 12cc syringe.

www.slip2000.com **AW**

