

WHITETAILS VS MULE DEER

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HUNTING

OCTOBER 2013

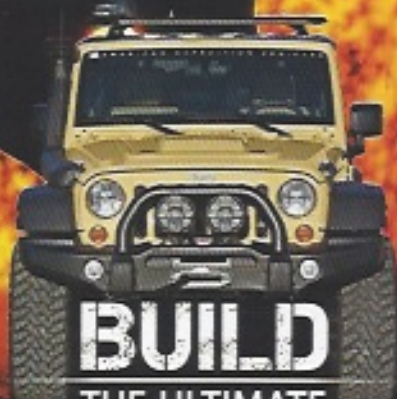
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HUNTING JEEP

LAS FLORES, ARGENTINA

AFTER TWO WEEKS, two stags, many flocks of ducks, intense predator hunts, and the fly-fishing of your dreams, I was pretty sure road tripping for 6,000 kilometers across Argentina and Patagonia with waterfowl guide, now buddy, Diego Munoz was the best trip of my life, despite crashing with friends, staying at \$15 hotels, tent camping, or simply driving all night. Munoz is a charming international man of mystery who has lived all over the world, speaks four languages, and is a fiercely driven hunter.

"Come try our duck lodge in a few months," he insisted. "We do it the other way in Las Flores," he said. It is a luxurious old estancia with phenomenal food, private rooms, a pool table, Turkish rugs, a gigantic hearth, and red stag horns bookending the sprawling living room.

When the rains hit Las Flores, as they do most years, the shooting is lights out for rosey-billed pochards, five kinds of teal, and pintail. Huge limits of ducks are often taken before the sun is fully up, and splashing decoying ducks into small waters is the coolest wingshooting available in a country that is full of it.

Afternoons are spent kicking up delicious perdiz, chasing fox, or another evening limit of ducks. But the biggest luxury? The lodge is just over an hour west from Buenos Aires. Normally with foreign hunts, you land in-country and the travel is just beginning. Not here.

Women mop the hand-hewn stone floor every day, and outer walls are covered in ivy. Inside, Malbec is flowing like champagne at an heiress' third wedding.

I wandered 100 yards from the lodge and sat at a tiny pothole. As the sky bled to dusk and hundreds of black ibises descended all around, I quickly limited on yellow-billed pintails and ringed, speckled, and silver teal in an hour. Four guys who were there at the same time with their own private jets could not wait to rebook Diego's Las Flores lodge for more of the same, even though they'd been hunting all over Argentina.

Long, empty roads stretched out from the estancia, making for pleasant strolling after a nap, which came after your morning limit, after breakfast, and before a lunch of beef or duck prepared by the wonderful Peruvian chef, Rosanna. Impromptu pigeon hunts in the trees surrounding the place were a riot.

Five-star thread counts and white-glove level luxury? Not really—it's much better than that. The clean, well-lighted place is packed with rustic warmth, Rosanna's cooking, and a fire always going, even at 5:30 a.m. wakeup. Diego is one of the best red stag and fly-fishing guides in the country as well, for those who wish to extend their trip, and he is always ready with another adventure. —*Skip Knowles*

Contact: Ramsey Russell to book a trip to Las Flores.

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