



DISCOVERING



REAL ARGENTINA



Wild marsh stretching for as far as could be seen. Imagining how Louisiana must have appeared centuries ago to pioneer Acadians inhabitants was easy. And ducks. Lots of them. More than I'd seen in the air at one time anywhere else in Argentina. The countless flocks trading over our corner of the massive wetland and to the horizon were ceaseless, spellbinding. A decade's worth of scouting trips, usually for several weeks at a time, had terminated at the end of a dim, mucky trail distinguishable only by our hours-old boot prints. Before the morning's heavy bag was even tethered to the strap, the decision had been made. I wanted my ashes scattered there.

Searching for new and better duck hunting is the nature of the beast in this line of work, but true bearings for real Argentina began nearly a decade ago at convention. While describing decadent accommodations, haughty wine lists and over-the-top chef specialties came an interruption. "No offense, son," the man standing beneath a big Stetson drawled, "But if I want all that stuff (only he didn't say stuff), I'll take my wife to Italy. We want to shoot the heck (only he didn't say heck) outta ducks and made to feel comfortable like we're at camp among our own kind of people. Show me sure-enough Argentina duck hunting. We're real duck hunters, you know?" As a genuine American duck hunter, I certainly did know.

So far off the beaten path it hardly seems you can get there from here, there exists a massive marsh, one of the largest in the country. The last couple hour's drive is down a dirt road. But once there you're never more than 10 minutes to the hunting area. Camp is an authentic u-shaped estancia, perfectly comfortable and situated virtually in the middle of duck paradise. The time-honored skills of traditional scouting, skillful calling and decoy placement from natural cover consistently produces superior hunting experiences to short-cut practices commonly used elsewhere in Argentina. Because there are no finite bait piles to protect from overhunting, guests hunt alone with their guide unless otherwise requested, a real treat anywhere. Accessing secluded areas is simply accomplished with outboard-equipped, push-poled and horse-drawn boats.

Encompassing about 130 contiguous square miles, it's productive waterfowl habitat as God perfectly intended; a relatively undisturbed wetland that completely satisfies the life-cycle requirements of myriad waterfowl and associated species that seasonally ebb and flow through and within it. Duck density and species diversity is greater than elsewhere. Duck species seen include the usual dozen Argentina duck species, plus black-bellied whistling ducks, South American knob-billed ducks, occasional blue-winged teal and masked ducks.

Countless great real Argentina duck hunts remembered in a euphoric blur: push poling deep into a remote section of marsh, arriving to the spot and silently watching duck shadows dart across black sky. Positioning ourselves in marsh grass, the sights and sounds of emerging rush hour entertains us until it's light enough to shoot. Patos! Aqui! A 12-pack of fulvous whistling ducks maple leaf quickly into the decoys, seduced by a whistle fashioned from shotshell hulls. Scarcely is the gun reloaded before the guide growls at a long flock of rosy-bills careening over on the invisible rails of a roller coaster, coiling tightly, then passing low over the decoys, their wings tearing air like lightening. Throughout the morning there's a constant stream of singles, pairs, trios and groups of ducks crashing our party from all directions. Shotguns popping steadily in the distance indicate other hunters' similar success. Returning, the lodge entrance is lined with heavy straps, as many ducks as some camps shoot in several weeks back home. Spirits are high around the table as t-bone steaks are piled onto plates, mugs are refilled with cold cerveza, and everyone recounts the morning's events in the hushed banter of hunters that have truly experienced hunting unlike anything they've experienced elsewhere.

"Killed more ducks here than anywhere else I've hunted in 10 trips to Argentina, these are truly the best duck guides I've ever hunted with anywhere in the world," says the retired US Air Force Colonel on the front porch, where everyone has retired to a rocking chair to continue visiting between hunts. Another hunter chimes in, "It's like hunting one of the last untouched places. It's absolutely pristine, and these guides know how to get to and hunt these ducks the right way."



Great dog work is a hallmark of waterfowling, but is doubly impressive in a country where waterfowl retrievers are largely absent. We knew we were among our people the afternoon we witnessed Overo, a stout German short-hair bearing the Spanish name for Chiloe wigeon, spank a 250-yard mark on a barely crippled white-cheeked pintail. Racing across open marsh like his tail was on fire, he delivered a still-flapping bird that'd have otherwise been lost.

GetDucks.com's acclaimed success has come from "truth in advertising." We've personally been there many times. There's no one-size-fits-all duck hunt in Argentina. Where vendors must sell anyone anything and stack mixed groups to the rafters in the almighty interest of bed nights, we will not. Instead, we match guest expectations with programs that best satisfy specific goals and avoid ever mixing groups when possible. It's just that simple. The GetDucks.com brand favors real Argentina - consistently high-quality shooting, comfortable lodging and dining, excellent guides, genuine hospitality. Whether you choose convenient or remote locations, duck-only or combination hunts, you can be assured that we are committed to what YOU want most to experience in authentic Argentina. As genuine American duck hunters ourselves, we know real duck hunting.

