

THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY FLY FISHERS, INK

Montana On A Budget



*Beautiful
water,
giant trout,
big sky—
must be
Montana!*



By Kevin Brennen

So you have always wanted to fish the fabled Blue Ribbon waters of Montana but you just can't muster the four or five thousand dollars that the big name outfitter wants. Well, I am here to tell you that you can fish those water for a fraction of that cost, actually around twenty five to one

hundred dollars a day. The first thing you need to do is plan ahead. Right now you can book your airfare for under four hundred for next year and this will be your single largest expense. Next, would be shop around for a car (minivans are the best and this is the only time that you will hear me make that statement). Make sure that you get unlimited mileage-you will need it. I have yet to drive any less the a thousand miles on a fishing trip. Now that you have bought your plane ticket and reserved your transportation, it is time

to decide where you want to fish. The state of Montana is working on getting rich on the non-resident fisherman. You will

be paying twelve dollars ever two days to fish or fifty seven for a year. The only way around this is to fish Yellowstone Park. A fishing pass for the park is only ten bucks. But I will warn you-everyone fishes the park. The fish have been in school for some time and they are not stupid.

Next is where to stay. Now you can really save some money here if you are willing to camp or at least camp ever other day. There are endless amounts of free camping sites in the state. You just need a DeLorme Montana Atlas to find them. Now if camping is just not your thing, there are a number of hotels in most Montana cities. I have the names of a couple that have good rates in cities that I stay in. Contact me for more info (BRENNENKC@peoplepc.com). You will be looking at around fifty bucks a night if you book early.

Now for food, I like food as most of you can tell by looking at me but I don't go there to eat. I go to fish. I take a large plastic cooler out as one of my checked bags (great place to pack wader boots and other shoes) and hit the Super Wal-mart as soon as I get off the plane. I get lunch meat, milk, salad in a bag (that's right I eat salad) and water, lots of water (and a couple of adult beverages). Now you're set. One thing that you need to remember is that most towns out west really do roll up the sidewalk at dark, so don't think that you are going to spend all day on the river and then go to town for a nice dinner. You will

be eating corndogs at the local truck stops (which are not that bad).

OK, now let's talk about what rivers to fish. You need to have a couple of rivers picked before you go, but have an open mind. Rain, or lack thereof, may make the river you want to fish a lost cause. Be willing to try whatever river the local flyshop offers. Also try to get in contact with a couple of shops in the area prior to going out. Let them know where you want to fish, what should be coming off and a good place to access the river and, if you are going to use a guide, this would be a good time to book. A guide will run you about three hundred to three and a half a day, but if you have never fished western water it might be money well spent. When you get out there, introduce yourself and thank them for their help with the planning of your trip and make sure that you give them some business. This will help them give you the most up to date (correct) info. Plus it keeps them around for you next year.

Hopefully, this will start you thinking about fishing out west. It is a beautiful place and I was luck enough to get my wife out there for her first flyfishing trip this summer. She had a great time, caught fish, and yes, we camped, but only for two days at a time. Then it was off to the hotel for a hot shower.

If you need any more information feel free to drop me an email.