

Dear Shane, Chummy and Crew:

Many thanks again for letting me come to your fine establishment. In fourteen years this was the best trip ever! First day out a 30 pounder – damn you Tony. As usual Mother Bear shows her muscle in wind, some rain but the good days are diamonds!

My best day ever fishing with Tony Jeffers – 23 seconds after letting the gold half wave drop down, wham – 18 lbs. Six fish later a 45 lb fish, with an incredible body and head, whammed a pink flat fish. “Tony you are going to need a bigger boat” I said. “Should I chase him?” Tony responded. Some vicious top water head shakes trying to dislodge the flat fish hook made us cheer the fish but at the same time feel sick to our stomachs.

Tony can run a boat like nobody else can. I know why you use him and Larry for the guest shuttles to the lodge from airstrip, never a mishap. Until you experience crappy boat operators you don’t know what fish can do. Run under the boat, in the prop, mayhem. Tony can calm the water in a big wind and not spook a big fish, like our 65 pounder, sneak up on him, lure him into shallower water where they can’t sound and roll and get away.

Tony landed 3 big fish for me that day, all without a net. Tailing – me holding him in the boat by a firm grip on his belt. If you have never caught a big lake trout trust me – skimpy 8 lb test sounds great sitting in front of the fire in the lounge at the lodge. These fish have cartilage around their mouth like ½ inch cable covered with fishy armor. You could pound 3 inch nails into the roof of their mouth and they would never flinch. So give it a good hook set and hang on!



Brian, the chef this year, made the best soups and food overall in 14 years. The pilots are the best, Maria from Ecuador, a smile as big as Great Bear Lake. I don’t know how you do it. Good job on fixing the walk-in cooler Shane, you are amazing.

P.S. I have always preached it was more than fish that we were after when we came to Great Bear Lake. That is true. But believe me when you see some of the creatures that swim in her waters you will have second thoughts. These big fish are amazing. They are true creatures of evolution, genetics and God's hand. The shore lunches, the good people you meet and watching Jerry Perlow – 80 some years old out fish me two days in a row, bigger fish, more fish. I salute you Jerry, and to spend the best days of our lives together, wow. Unforgettable. Jerry came with 3 sons and I believe 2 grandchildren and had a wonderful time. You could never spend money or time more wisely – and I hope you all reading this realize that before it's too late. -Gene Johnson, Alberta