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ADVENTURE

STORY BY JILL LAYMAN





READY

Outdoor enthusiasts flock to Wyoming's Snake River Sporting Club for a breath of fresh air and the best of Jackson Hole.





The Martin Creek Cabins (this page and opposite) at Snake River Sporting Club feature 4 bedrooms and 4.5 baths.

I'm not sure if I fell in love with the Snake River Sporting Club in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, as I toured its oxymoronic rustic-luxury model homes, or during my float downriver with a highly knowledgeable (and pretty handsome) fishing guide, or perhaps at the very moment he pointed to the sky where I spied a mature bald eagle escorting its offspring back to the family nest tucked precariously at the top of the highest Douglas fir. All I know is, like many avid outdoor enthusiasts, I was captivated.

Having grown up in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, I've always had an affinity for a clear blue sky interrupted by the jagged edge of a mountain range. And like many Northern Californians, I appreciate having the Sierras here in our backyard. But the majesty of the king and queen of the Rockies—the Grand Tetons—literally took my breath away (although perhaps it was the altitude). Jackson Hole illustrated my vision of a perfect world, sans shopping malls, parking structures, and gated communities. I wanted to breathe it all in—every gulp of river-washed, fir-scented, mountain-fresh air.

Snake River Sporting Club is as obvious as its name implies. It sits just south of the confluence of the Snake and Hoback rivers along six miles of pristine, private-access riverfront, and offers its members Wyoming's foremost outdoor sporting playground. With initiation fees starting at \$5,000 plus dues, the club affords a variety of membership options catering to local residents, second homeowners, as well as multi-destination club-hoppers who crave its privileges and amenities.

The 800-acre Snake River Sporting Club resort is owned by the Atlanta-based Cygnus Capital Real Estate Advisors. Since re-opening the club in 2013, membership has grown to nearly 200 resident and club members. "Our goal is to capture and perfect the four-season appeal of Jackson Hole in one place," says Jeff Heilbrun, the club's General Manager and COO.

Perhaps its best amenity is its unrivaled location. This spot has been revered for hundreds of years. Prior to the 19th century, Native American tribes spent the summer months hunting the wildlife in the valley and the area surrounding it. Among the tribes that trailed through the valley were the Shoshoni, Crow, Blackfeet, Bannock, and Gros Ventre. In the early 1800s, mountain men in search of beaver wrote the first accounts of Jackson Hole, and the



land along the Snake River was important beaver territory. Trapping was lucrative, and they exported beaver and other animal hides to the eastern United States and Europe for the manufacture of hats. The first homesteaders arrived in Jackson Hole in 1884 and were primarily bachelors. Johnny Counts (who appears as a confirmed bachelor in the 1900 census) homesteaded the area where the Snake River Sporting Club's Jackson Hole Golf Course now sits and his original cabin can still be seen today near hole 3.

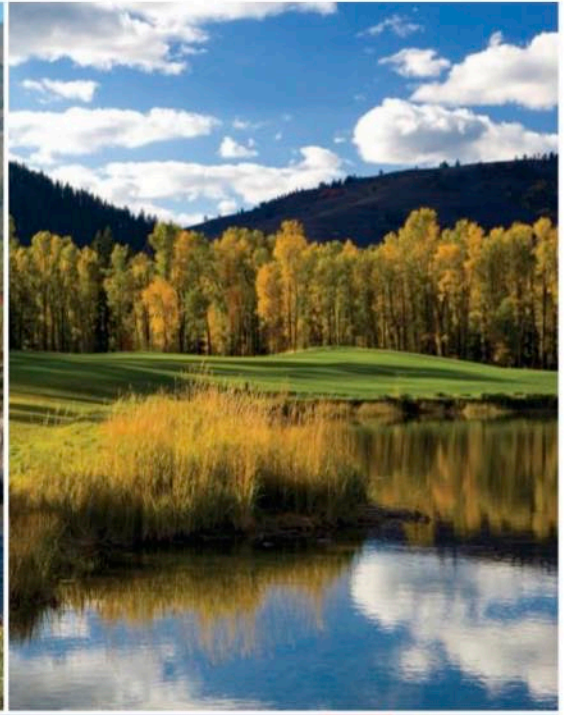
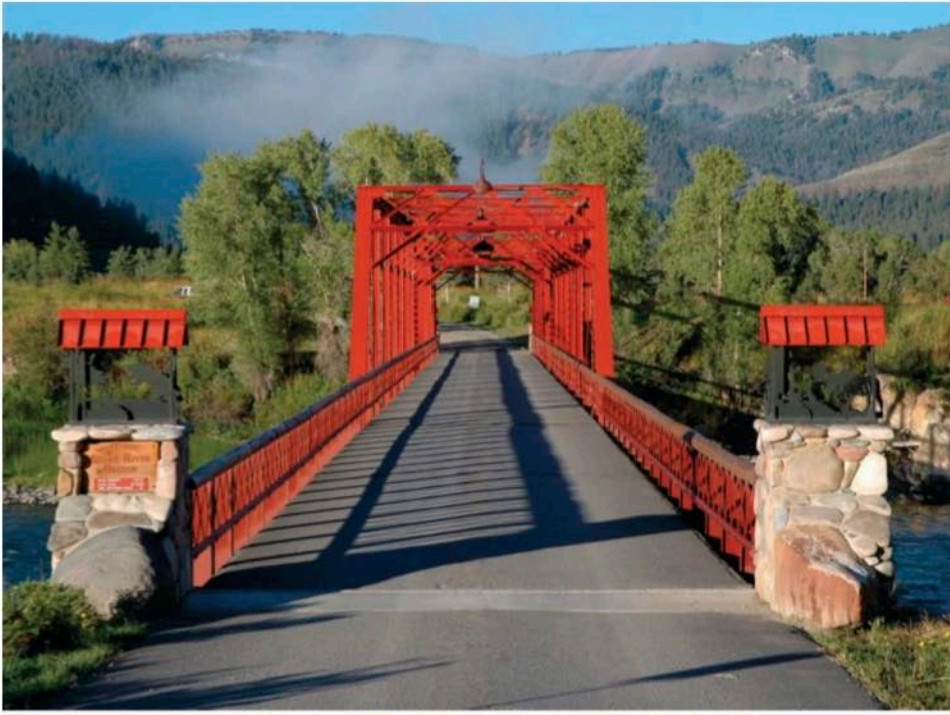
Although nestled in a seemingly remote wilderness, the club is convenient to the airport and to the charming western town of Jackson with its distinctive dining, shops, and entertainment options (both about a 20- to 30-minute drive). Not only does the Snake River Sporting Club property border 3.5 million acres of the Bridger-Teton National Forest, it is also only some 20-odd miles south of Grand Teton National Park (considered the No. 1 wildlife park in the country), and is about a 1.5-hour drive from America's first National Park, Yellowstone—home of the Old Faithful geyser.

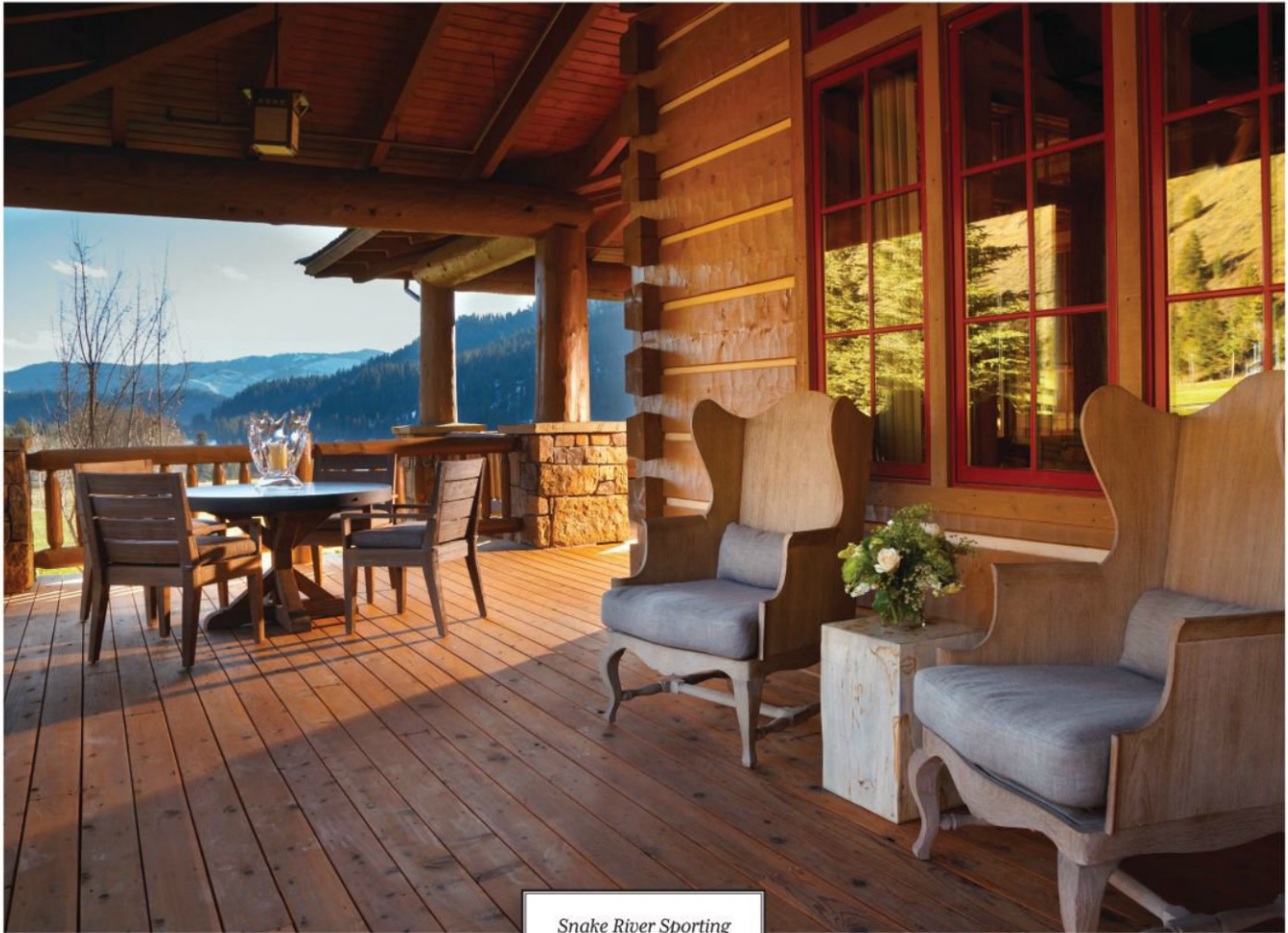
No wonder the club boasts a fulltime Outdoor Pursuits staff—the possibilities are endless. Summer pursuits like hunting, fly fishing, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, river rafting, mountain biking, and

climbing are all on property or nearby. Not to mention winter sports like alpine, backcountry, or cross-country skiing, ice skating, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing.

In addition to your après ski and valet service privileges at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, you can opt to go heli-skiing amidst backcountry powder from the club's private helipad. Other on-property amenities include a 440-acre equestrian facility for private boarding or trail rides, a three-dimensional archery course, an 18-hole Frisbee golf course, ice skating rink, clay shooting range, and an 18-hole championship golf course.

Set among cottonwoods, aspens, and native pines, the Tom Weiskopf-designed golf course was named the No. 2 Best New Private Course by *Golf Digest* in 2007, before lying dormant for five years until its purchase by Cygnes Capital. The new owners invested \$5 million for a major course rehabilitation that included replacing the greens, restoring the bunkers, and enlarging the practice facilities with a newly contoured chipping and putting green. Once again, golf legend Weiskopf was asked to design a companion 3,500-square-foot short game practice green adjacent to the 26,000-square-foot clubhouse. Ideal for unwinding after an exhilarating round, the log and stone clubhouse features a sports





Snake River Sporting Club members can get out and enjoy all that the club has to offer (opposite) or sit back and enjoy the view from their own Snake River porch (this page).

shop, restaurant/grill, locker rooms, and a furnished outdoor deck with unparalleled views of the Snake River and surrounding mountains—perfect for spying some of the 166 species of native wildlife (including those magnificent resident bald eagles).

For resident or second-home buyers, real estate options include cabin and estate home sites. New this year are the community's Tall Timber Cottages built along the second and third fairways. Designed by award-winning Poss Architecture + Planning out of Aspen, Colorado, the new single-level, 3,000-square-foot homes complement their rustic surroundings with contemporary sophistication. Construction of these turnkey homes comes on the heels of the successful sales of the club's first residential development, Martin Creek Cabins.

The four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath cottages boast an open floor plan with ample space for family and friends to enjoy the sporting life at Snake River. Features include 20-foot vaulted ceilings, rough-sawn oak floors, exposed timber beams, custom iron work, Wolf and Sub-Zero appliances, as well as 750 square feet of exterior porches and covered decks so owners can truly enjoy the natural beauty of this outdoor oasis. Buyers can work with the club's design partner, WRJ Interiors, for custom interior

design services and furniture packages. Pricing for completed cottages starts at \$2.5 million.

The club strives to offer a full calendar of fun events for members and their families, from full-moon ski outings to holiday dinners and junior golf clinics. Starting this summer, the Snake River Sporting Club will be hosting the Orvis Fly Fishing School – Jackson Hole, the renowned outfitter's first such school in Wyoming. For the first time, the club will welcome fly fishing enthusiasts from around the world to attend any of the 10 series of two-day intensive classes starting this July, just in time for prime fishing season on the Snake River.

Another amenity for the club's Bay Area members is nonstop flight service from SFO to Jackson Hole during the winter ski season. The awe-inspiring views from high above the Teton Range are alone worth the trip, as you fly into the only airport located within a national park. Landing at the base of those 7,000+ formidable peaks, you can appreciate why the early pioneers decided to unhitch their wagons and call Jackson Hole home. And whether you are looking for a destination club experience or your own mountain cabin, Snake River Sporting Club is an ideal place to settle. ♦