



Orvis Announces 2015 Endorsed Lodges, Outfitters and Guide Awards: Recognizing the Very Finest Sporting Operations Worldwide

SUNDERLAND, VT (May 2015) – The Orvis Company has announced the winners of the company’s 2015 Endorsed Lodges, Outfitters, and Guide Awards. There are eight categories; three for lodge operations, four for guiding operations and one lifetime achievement award. These awards are chosen based on customer survey feedback that Orvis solicits from their customers who patronize these operations.

“It is with great pride that we announce the 2015 award winners of the annual Orvis Endorsed Lodges, Outfitters and Guides,” explains David Perkins, Vice Chairman of Orvis. “These designees are selected based on the feedback from customers - the people who matter most to all of us here at Orvis. Each of these winners demonstrates the highest standards for customer service, professionalism, commitment to conservation, and respect for our natural world. These are the factors that have earned them the prestigious designation of 2015 Orvis Endorsed Lodges, Outfitters and Guides.”



Orvis-Endorsed Guide Lifetime Achievement Award –

George Hunker - Lander, WY (www.sweetwaterfishing.com)

George Hunker started Sweetwater in 1977 along with his wife Paula. George has personally led most of the trips into the Wind Rivers. He is a former National Outdoor Leadership School Instructor and staff member, former rancher and farmer, a lover of the outdoors, an addicted fly fisherman and fly tier from his youth in New Mexico. George was named the Orvis Endorsed Fly Fishing Guide of the Year for 2003!

Growing up in New Mexico, George came to fishing at an early age. “I was addicted by the time I was 10 years old,” he says. He made his way to Wyoming in his early 20’s, became a climbing guide with NOLS, the National Outdoor Leadership School known for teaching outdoor skills in some of the most jaw dropping wilderness locations, and

eventually worked his way up to Associate Director. He and his wife Paula started Sweetwater in 1977. In between, they spent time in New Zealand, a celebrated Mecca for fly fishing, and returned to the States to try their hand at ranching and farming.



Fly-Fishing Lodge of the Year –

Madison Valley Ranch-Ennis, MT (www.madisonvalleyranch.com)

Located just three miles north of the trout mecca of Ennis, MT our handsome ranch-style lodge is nestled in the heart of the Madison Valley bordering the famous Madison River and Jack Creek. Our river access and private two acre stocked pond are just yards from our door. Outside each room’s front porch offers a countryside view of the surrounding three mountain ranges, the ever-changing Montana Big Sky, and the resident wildlife in the fields.

The team at the Madison Valley Ranch is passionate about fly fishing, and always excited to share the wonders of Southwest Montana with their guests. In Southwest Montana, the outdoor recreational opportunities and wildlife abound. Hiking, fly fishing in alpine lakes, bird watching and photography are all great activities that capture the spirit of Big Sky country! Whether you prefer a full day hike, or just want to walk out the path from the lodge, the fishing and wildlife is plentiful.



Outfitter of the Year –

North Park Anglers-Walden, CO (www.northparkanglers.com)

North Park Anglers is far different than most North Platte fly fishing shops. Offering the amenities one would expect from a quality fly shop; retail products, guide services, and expert advice, they also offer much more. North Park has a unique situation of belonging to a large ranching and outfitting family of businesses based here in beautiful North Park. North Park Anglers is the retail and fly fishing arm of our outfitting business, Buffalo Creek Outfitters, LLC. Since North Park Anglers is the only North Platte fly fishing shop within miles, they take pride in stocking all of the most essential fly fishing gear so that their customers can get what they need.



Guide Service of the Year –

Long Outfitting- Livingston, MT (www.longoutfitting.com)

Long Outfitting is the only Orvis-endorsed fly fishing guide service on the Yellowstone River and the world famous spring creeks of Paradise Valley near Livingston, MT, Gateway to Yellowstone.

Nestled between the scenic Absaroka and Gallatin Mountains and Yellowstone Park, Long Outfitting family-run services provide clients with over 75 years of fishing experience on blue ribbon trout waters. Long Outfitting caters to novice and expert anglers alike and have established themselves as a knowledgeable, patient, and personable staff.



Guide of the Year –

Brown Hobson-Asheville, NC (www.browntroutrflyfishing.com)

Hobson is the owner and head guide for Brown Trout Fly Fishing LLC. He started fly fishing in Western North Carolina as a teenager and the passion for catching trout on the fly created in North Carolina propelled Hobson’s move to Jackson Hole, WY.

Hobson spent four years in the ORVIS store in Jackson Hole as a sales associate, fishing manager, and store manager and was fortunate to learn from many of America’s great fly fishermen while there. Seeking milder winters and closer proximity to family, Hobson moved to Asheville and started Trout Fly Fishing.

Hobson is a member of the North Carolina Fly Fishing Team, Fly Fishing Team USA, is a former Orvis Trout Bum of the Week, and a 2014 Orvis Guide of the Year nominee. His fly fishing experience combined with his Orvis customer service background gives Hobson a skill set that allows him to provide exceptional days on the water.



Guide of the Year –

Chuck Page-Bighole River, MT (www.flyfishinglodge.com)

Chuck has been guiding on the Big Hole River and other Southwest Montana waters since 1984. His incredible work ethic, knowledge of the river, and unmatched desire to "get his clients into fish" are renowned. Chuck seems to find a fly pattern that will work even when the fishing is slow, much to the delight of the clients in his boat. He and his father own an elk hunting business in the Wise River area and he spends the fall guiding hunters in the Pioneer Mountains. In the winter he grooms the Lost Trail ski area at the top of the Bitterroot watershed. Chuck lives with his wife and daughter in Wise River where he guides most of his angling guest from The Big Hole Lodge.



Wingshooting Lodge of the Year –

Greystone Castle-Mingus, TX (www.greystonecastle.com)

Greystone Castle is a Texas ranch that offers some of the finest hunting in the United States. Ideally located near the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area, Greystone Castle’s location offers easy access for domestic and international travelers.

The 6,000 acre ranch and castle facility allows Greystone Castle to offer an unmatched range of sporting activities combined with luxurious accommodations and gourmet dining. From September through March, they offer a huge variety of wingshooting and big game hunting opportunities. Other activities such as fishing, sporting clays, corporate meetings, and weddings are available year around.



International Destination of the Year –

Rio Manso-Patagonia Region, Argentina (www.riomansolodge.com)

Located in Northern Patagonia near the border with Chile, Orvis-Endorsed Rio Manso Lodge offers a host of activities led by exceptional fly fishing, elegant yet comfortable lodging, and extraordinary cuisine.

Nestled in Nahuel Huapi National Park in the midst of virgin waters and lush forests, the caring staff will make a Patagonian experience a very special one. Travelers who come here are looking for the best fly fishing in Argentina, and they will find that and more at Rio Manso. At Rio Manso Lodge, guests will fish a wide variety of waters from small streams and large rivers to intimate spring creeks and deep productive lakes where monster browns, hefty rainbows and trophy brook trout swim. A visit to Rio Manso Lodge lets travelers savor the Patagonian outdoors while being pampered with fine food, wines, and legendary hospitality.

For over twenty years the Orvis Company has been recognizing excellence in sporting experiences through its Endorsed Lodges Outfitters and Guides program. Each endorsed operation has its own character, but all share the same high standards: great service, great fishing or wing shooting, and an experienced, professional staff. These standards of excellence are continually reviewed by the Orvis staff and evaluated by visiting guests in post-visit critiques sent directly to The Orvis Company. Orvis-Endorsed operations cater to sportsmen of every ability level from beginners to experts.

About Orvis

Founded in 1856, Orvis pioneered the mail order industry in the United States. It now operates multiple catalog titles, three websites, more than 80 retail stores in the US and the UK, including its Flagship Store in Manchester, Vermont, and serves a network of over 400 authorized dealers worldwide. The oldest continuously operated catalog company in the country, Orvis provides authentic products, knowledge and experience that define outdoor adventures, with unsurpassed innovation and expertise in fly-fishing and wingshooting. A leading corporate steward for the environment, Orvis contributes 5% of pre-tax profits every year to protect nature, support communities and advance canine health and wellbeing. The company’s international headquarters for its mail order, e-commerce, retail, and wholesale businesses are in Manchester, Vermont. Learn more at www.orvis.com.