

Outfitter Critiques (continued from page 11)

■ We've had quite a few positive reports on Cerro Indio Safaris in **Argentina** in the past, with subscribers describing the estate as a first-rate hunting establishment (www.cerroindio.com; 011-54-249-440-6101; safaris@cerroindio.com). Our database has two reports on Cerro Indio from 2012 from Mark Hampton (8789) and George Straw (8665) and more than a dozen earlier reports. According to Straw, Cerro Indio is an "excellent place to hunt and vacation," and to bring a non-hunting spouse. Our latest reports come from subscribers Joe Schetz and Carlos Diaz.

In report, 9640, Carlos Diaz gives Cerro Indio a thumbs-up from a bowhunter's perspective. He writes:

"I had excellent hunting for free-range red deer and water buffalo with my bow. I also took a hybrid sheep and feral goat. Fallow deer were quite abundant, but difficult to hunt, and I didn't harvest one.

"Juan J. Perez Mouriz, who was my guide, is something of a bowhunting specialist. He worked non-stop for me and has a great knowledge of field methods and knows a lot about the country. We spent the whole time hunting right up until it was too dark, and he showed great perseverance.

"Cerro Indio is very well-prepared for bowhunters, and the stalks were run perfectly. Initially, bowhunting water buffalo was not one of my goals, but Mouriz talked me into it, and it was an experience I would not have wanted to miss. I would recommend bringing knee pads, as there was a fair bit of crawling around. Be ready to walk a lot, although there are stands (which we did not use) for those who wish. I should also note that this is a particularly good hunt for bringing an observer along. My guide made sure that my observer was an active participant in the hunt."

Diaz adds that Cerro Indio's primary area, the Estancia Acelain, is a must-see. This is a five star estate, with a large manor-style house brought from Spain by the great-grandfather of owner/operator Gonzalo Llambi. Guests stay

in a lodge on the grounds of the main 'castle.' The property includes 27,000 acres, much of it free range.

In a follow-up email, Diaz gave the cost of his hunt as \$500 per day, \$250 for an observer. This cost included lodging at the Estancia and all meals and drinks. Trophy fees apply, from \$3,500 for red deer to \$700 for feral goat, but Diaz says he received a 10% discount on trophy fees for booking six months in advance. "I highly recommend this operation. We enjoyed a great experience overall. Premium cooking, especially if you have a sweet tooth, and the facilities were excellent."

In report 9662, subscriber Joe Schetz says that he had an excellent trip with Cerro Indio in March. "Very nice folks," he reports. We talked with Schetz over the phone for more information on his trip.

"Cerro Indio has several different options for hunting areas and lodges. My trip started with two days of hunting in Tandil at the Estancia Acelain. My sense was that this area is primarily for water buffalo hunting, although there are a number of species available there.

After Acelain I went to the Cerro Colorado Lodge, a three- to four-hour drive, where I hunted red stag. We stayed there for two nights. This is a great hunting area, and I had a very successful hunt for red deer. The final day we went to another nearby area for blackbuck. This was an enclosure, but it was so large that it definitely did not feel like a canned hunt. My guide, Juan Mouriz, knew that I had limited time, and I think that we moved around to get everything done as expeditiously as possible. It certainly worked. Juan is a great guide, very pleasant and his English is perfect.

"I would recommend making sure that you know your schedule in advance. I did not realize that I was moving to a different area. It was no problem for me, and I was glad to have the opportunity to try the Cerro Colorado Lodge, but if you have a non-hunting companion along, they might prefer to stay in one place. Overall, I strongly recommend this outfitter. Very attuned to the hunter's needs. I very much enjoyed both lodges, and the food was

excellent."

According to Cerro Indio's website, the operator has four different lodges in Argentina, with options for big game and bird shooting, as well as fly fishing for trout and dorado. Enjoy!

CONTROVERSY!

■ The somewhat confusing saga of the sika deer hunting in **Japan** continues...

In our April 2013 issue, (page 10, Article 3063 in our online database), we published a very short heads-up on what sounded like an exciting new archery-only "cull hunt" for sika deer on the northern island of Hokkaido. This was based on a report from subscriber Mario Nobili describing his hunt with Eric Rose, an American expat who works with local landowners. We followed that up with a more extensive report in our May, 2013 issue (page 16, Article 3092) on the opportunity, noting clearly that it was archery only and that Rose, by his own admission, was only interested in guiding a certain type of self-sufficient client. At that point we felt comfortable passing on the information on a hunt which might interest a segment of our readers.

We heard nothing more about this opportunity until the 2013/14 winter season, when we received three more reports, one from subscriber and occasional correspondent Mel Toponce and another from Terry Betteridge, who was in camp at the same time as Toponce. Both men told horror stories of a primitive, filthy camp arrangement awash in mud and manure with no heat or sanitary facilities. Toponce raised concerns about the legality of his hunt, contending that it appeared Rose only had permission to hunt on one horse farm, but conducted hunts elsewhere. The third hunt report was from Tony Rathbone who hunted with Rose the previous February and reported numerous problems. Rose's only response to their complaints was a vitriolic personal attack on the hunters, particularly Toponce.

In mid-February we received a long and quite detailed report from

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