

## Travel & Outfitting Guide

### (A complete guide for the Angler traveling to Casa & Playa Blanca Lodges)

The area surrounding Casa & Playa Blanca Lodges is wild, virtually uninhabited and extraordinarily beautiful. There are miles of shallow bays, mangrove enclosed lagoons, white sand beaches and dense coastal jungle. When you arrive at the Island of Punta Pajaros, home of Casa & Playa Blanca Lodges, take the time to explore its vast tropical landscape and experience the exquisite isolation. Casa & Playa Blanca are truly unforgettable. The unique location of the two lodges always provides a desire to return over and over again.

#### Travel Planning

Please take the time to read the following information well in advance of your departure. The following information will answer many questions concerning your stay at Casa & Playa Blanca.

#### Flight Scheduling

All guests should book flights to Cancun, Mexico. From Cancun, Casa & Playa Blanca will provide an air charter, which will fly you directly to the lodge. **Guests must plan to arrive in Cancun no later than 2 P.M. and schedule their return flight no earlier than 11a.m.** in order to make connections with the air charter. Any flights that do not fall within this time period must be approved 30 days in advance by the lodge and may result in an air charter surcharge. The charges are listed in the Casa & Playa Blanca pricing literature. All airline or private flight itineraries must be supplied to the lodge 30 days in advance of your arrival in Cancun. (Generally, we request guests arrive the night before to Cancun, so that charters can start early in the morning.)

#### Required Documents

The traveler must supply a passport as proof of citizenship to obtain a Mexican Tourist Card and to enter the country. The Tourist Card application is issued at the ticket counter by airlines that fly into Mexico. Just fill it out while in flight and present it along with your proof of citizenship to the immigration officials when you arrive in Cancun. For proof of citizenship you need to use a **Valid passport** from your country of origin (**check the expiration date before your trip !!!**). The tourist card will be checked at your first point of entry. The immigration official will retain one copy and give you the other, which you must surrender at the airline ticket counter when you check in for your return flight. Keep your copy (Tourist Card) in your possession during your stay in Mexico.

No visas or inoculations are required for U.S. citizens. A Mexican departure tax is payable at the airport when leaving Mexico. Some airlines include this as a prepaid part of your ticket. Please check with your travel agent or carrier to verify this.

## Traveling With Minors

Children 17 years of age or younger entering Mexico accompanied by only one parent must have a notarized letter of consent from the other parent stating the child/children have his/her permission to enter the country. Single parents need a notarized documentation of divorce decree or death certificate of spouse. Minors unaccompanied by either parent require a notarized letter of consent signed by both parents.

## Baggage Issues

When you arrive in Cancun and find that your luggage has been misplaced by the airlines, you **must report** it to an airline representative before you **leave** the baggage claim area. If you do not, it is likely that you will not recover your lost items.

Here is the information you will need to report:

Hotel Name: Casa Blanca / Playa Blanca Lodges Address: Calle Polar Poniente Mz. Lt.12 Entre Acuario y Jupiter, Col. Centro Tulum, Q. Roo, CP 77780 Phone number: 998 8600536 Andrea Solidoro (Hotel Representative) After informing the airline, report the loss to the lodge's local representative. He/she will forward your baggage to the lodge if it is found by the airline.

**We strongly encourage guests to pack lightly (45lbs maximum) in soft-sided bags to facilitate loading in the charter aircraft.** If there is too much luggage it will be transferred by truck and boat to Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca (delivery may take up to 12 hrs.) Our daily laundry service on the Island is an important factor to consider while packing.

## In Transit Emergencies or Flight Delays

It is advisable to schedule your trip with an overnight in Cancun to avoid hassles caused by travel delays. If you are forced to change your travel plans while en route to Cancun, you should contact a Casa & Playa Blanca representative at the telephone numbers listed below. Travelers do not need to report flight delays unless they will cause you to arrive in Cancun later than 1:00 p.m. The lodge's staff is in direct contact with the airlines and will be aware of flight time changes. If your flight is canceled, or you are forced to change flights, please call one of the numbers listed below to report your new itinerary.

If your delay causes you to arrive in Cancun later than midafternoon, it is likely that you will miss all the scheduled air charters to Casa & Playa Blanca fishing lodges and will be required to spend the night at a hotel in Cancun. If this is the case, please contact Casa & Playa Blanca's representative as soon as you check-in to your hotel. Delays that require an overnight stay in Cancun will cause you to incur a substantial air charter surcharge. These charges are listed in the Casa & Playa Blanca pricing information.

In case you need to contact a Casa & Playa Blanca representative

Please read the following. Monday through Friday, 9 am -5 pm, central time:

Tulum Office Toll free number from US (877) 261-8867

Local (Cancun) 01(984) 802 5610

On Saturdays from US dial 011 (52) 998-860 0536

Local Cancun from public phone 044 998 860 0536

From your cell 52 1 998 860 0536 ANDREA SOLIDORO Arrival host

Email: andrea@casablancafishing.com Cell: 998- 860-0536 (24 HOURS) feel free to send text message and emails upon arrival.

Casa Blanca Tulum Office ACTIVIDADES CINEGETICAS PANAMERICANAS SA DE CV Calle Polar Poniente Mz. 5 Lt. 12 Tulum Quintana Roo CP 77780

## **Emergency Contact with the Lodge**

In case of an emergency please call our Tulum office. A message will be relayed to the lodge as soon as possible. Faxes can also be sent to the Tulum office for two-day delivery to Casa & Playa Blanca. To send a fax, call the toll free number and our lodge representative will patch you through.

## **U.S. Customs Registration**

To certify proof of ownership of cameras, jewelry or any other valuables you should obtain a U.S. Customs registration certificate from a U.S. Customs office before you depart the U.S. This certificate can be especially helpful when reentering the U.S.

## **Arriving in Cancun**

Upon arriving in the Cancun airport you will be processed by Immigration. You will then claim your baggage. Next you will clear Customs. After customs, proceed to the Arrival Area outside. If you are scheduled to fly to Casa & Playa Blanca on your day of arrival our lodge representative will meet you in the Arrival Lobby. The Arrival Lobby will be full of tour operators with arriving passengers and is usually somewhat chaotic.

**Andrea**, the Casa & Playa Blanca representative, will have a sign printed with "**Punta Pajaros Casa & Playa Blanca lodge**". If you do not immediately see her, this means she is transferring other guests to the charter plane and will return shortly. This is a rare occurrence. Do not leave the Arrival Area and attempt to find her. She will find you. The Casa & Playa Blanca representative will arrange for you and your baggage to be transferred to the General Aviation

Terminal by car. The transfer will take approximately 10 minutes. You will then board a plane and fly directly to the Casa Blanca airstrip. The flight takes approximately 50 minutes. If more than eight guests arrive in a 2-hour period, the later arriving guests may have a layover of up to two hours in the General Aviation Terminal.

## **Staying in Cancun**

If you plan to spend a night or two in Cancun before you go to Casa & Playa Blanca a representative will **NOT** meet you when you arrive. You must arrange your own transportation to your hotel. There is a wide range of transportation options available in the airport. Please be sure to supply Casa & Playa Blanca with the name of your hotel 30 days before you arrive in Cancun.

The night before you are scheduled to take the air charter to the lodge, you will be contacted at your hotel by a Casa & Playa Blanca representative. The fishing lodge representative will tell you what time to arrive at the General Aviation Terminal to meet your air charter to the lodge. You must take a taxi to General Aviation Terminal. It is located approximately ten minutes from the International Arrival Terminal.

## **Ground Transportation to Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca**

Should a guest elect not to take the air charter, the alternate ground transportation would be a 6-hour drive to Punta Allen, followed by a 45-minute ride in an open boat.

## **Arriving at Casa & Playa Blanca Lodges**

After the plane arrives at Punta Pajaros on the Casa Blanca airstrip it is a short trip via boat and truck (1.5 miles) to the lodge where a cold beverage awaits your arrival. There is a short walk from the plane to the boat dock so change into your boat shoes before departing Cancun. Insects can be a problem on the airstrip because it is protected from the wind. Pack insect repellent where it is handy. Your baggage will be transferred by the lodge staff and placed in your room. The boat ride can be wet so dress accordingly or pack your rain gear on top.

When you arrive at the Casa Blanca main dock the lodge staff will greet you and show you to a waiting area. Your baggage will arrive a few minutes later. Once your luggage arrives Playa Blanca guests load up into a safari style truck for the 30-minute ride to the South lodge. Casa Blanca guests have arrived at their destination. The truck ride to Playa Blanca winds along the island beachfront and provides an adventure in itself.

## **Lodge Orientation**

There is no guided fishing on the day you arrive, but feel free to wade the flats around the lodge or fish along the beach. Guests have had very good luck in these areas. On the day you arrive, after dinner, lodge staff will provide a general orientation explaining daily schedules and lodge policies. If you are unsure about some aspect of your trip, please be sure to ask questions.

## On The Flats

Casa & Playa Blanca are known worldwide for providing excellent fishing to the big four flats species. Casa and Playa Blanca are surrounded by a unique fishery that provides the angler possibilities to target Permit, Bonefish, Snook and Tarpon in a single day. Along with the most popular targets Ascension and Espiritu Santo Bays also boasts opportunities at other fish as well. Large Jacks, Barracudas, Ladyfish, Snapper, Triple Tail, and the occasional Cobia all round out a fishery that never fails to entertain. All of these fish can be targeted in the skiff as well as walking the flats. Any of these options can be discussed nightly with your Fishing Host.

## Boats

Casa & Playa Blanca provide 16 foot, Dolphin flats skiffs equipped with Yamaha 4 stroke engines. Each skiff is designed to accommodate two fishermen and a guide. Each is constructed with a forward casting deck, tandem passenger seats, rod holders, a poling platform, angler storage in the bow and safety equipment storage in the stern. Lean bars are available by request be sure to communicate any lean bar requests with the Fishing Host. The fly rod holders are constructed with bungee cord so it is recommended to keep the reel cover on your reels while in transit. The holders do tend to bounce thus possibly causing abrasion or breakage in extreme conditions.

## Guides

The guides (Guias) at Casa and Playa Blanca Lodges are an extremely knowledgeable crew. The guides bring with them years of experience fishing the waters that surround Punta Pajaros as well as a friendly, can do, attitude that is unrivaled by other parts of the Caribbean. The language skills of the guides range from fluent to efficient at **Fishing English**. If at any point communication becomes frustrating please speak with your Fishing Host so as the lodge team can work out a solution.

## Lodge Purchases

All bar charges and purchases at the lodge will be placed on your personal account which is payable on the day of departure. We accept cash and credit card (Visa and MasterCard). A 16% Mexico value-added tax is applied to all purchases. We **do not accept** personal or traveler's checks or **American Express**.

## Valuables

Punta Pajaros is very proud to be a location where security is never an issue. If you do have certain possessions that you feel would be better suited locked up please speak with your Fishing Host and we will arrange to store them in the office safe.

## **Communications-INTERNET & CELL SERVICE!!**

Cell service is ***not available*** on the Island of Punta Pajaros. When the weather and the internet cooperate it is feasible to communicate via FaceTime Audio (Apple) or Whatsapp Audio (Smart Phones).

The Internet at Punta Pajaros is available in the common (dining) areas of both lodges. ***The internet is not available in the individual rooms.*** The Internet on the island is Satellite driven and can be unpredictable with service. The use of texting and email is the most consistent service but surfing the web is spotty at best.

***It is highly recommended that if the guest is planning on day to day business negotiations and communications with persons or employees in other countries that guest should rent a Satellite Phone via the internet at home.*** In this day and age renting a Sat phone that is delivered to your home is very easy and often times include a package of minutes. Punta Pajaros does have an island Sat phone that we reserve for emergencies.

## **Water**

The drinking water and water for ice on the island is purified using the "reverse osmosis" process with a UV filter via our R.O plant. Drinking water is provided in your room. The water from the tap is from a natural well or "cenote". We recommend that you do not drink it because of salt content but the water is fine for brushing your teeth or taking a shower. Please help the team by conserving the water when possible.

## **Electricity**

The lodge provides all the electricity at Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca via generators. Casa Redonda is completely solar powered. The generators operate daily from approximately 3:30 P.M. until 8:00 AM. This schedule will vary seasonally. The generators are operated all night.

## **Fans and Air Conditioning**

All the rooms at Casa & Playa Blanca are equipped with new air conditioners that provide extreme comfort for all seasons. For the traveler that prefers fresh air to AC all the windows are built with hand-crafted hardwood shutters that may be opened to take advantage of the Caribbean breeze. Casa & Playa Blanca both have ceiling fans in the common areas and pedestal fans are available by request.

## **Tipping**

Mexico follows the custom of tipping the staff and guides for the services they provide. This can sometimes become a confusing proposition so we would like to suggest the following general guidelines. We recommend tipping your guide \$50-\$100 per day, per boat. If your guide provides you with exceptional service you can consider a larger tip. You may wish to tip your guide directly

each day but most guests tip at the end of the week. Tipping each day is a good idea when the angler is part of a group that rotates guides each day. We suggest a tip for the staff of \$120-\$200 for the week, per guest. The "Staff Tip" will be paid at the end of your trip when you settle your lodge bill with the Fishing Host. The staff tip does not include the Masseuse, Guides or the Laundry service. If any of the lodge staff provides you with service you consider exceptional feel free to tip them additionally individually. US Dollars are the preferred tip currency. Small bills are very much appreciated.

## Departure Day

There is no guided fishing on the day of departure. Each departure day is scheduled differently depending on guests' airline departure times. In most cases Saturday departure will take place in the morning. Your schedule will be posted the evening before your departure in the lodge. On the day you depart please be sure to clear your lodge account and have your bags packed and ready for transfer to the airstrip one hour before your scheduled departure. If you are scheduled to depart on an early flight you should clear your account the evening before. The Fishing Host will provide instructions on when and where the lodge bills will be settled.

## Inconveniences at the Lodge

If at any point you encounter any problem at the lodge please report it to the staff immediately. Small problems (hot water, light bulbs, A.C.) can be corrected easily but only if we are informed. Please do not suffer in silence. The staff is there to help. The isolation of the Island provides a tranquil atmosphere, void of large resorts, but does create a logistics challenge. All of our supplies are brought to us via a long truck drive and then a crossing by boat. This price of paradise can cause us to run out of certain items or force the use of patience while dealing with day to day issues. The staff thanks you for your understanding dealing with these small issues.

Mother Nature can sometimes be the largest inconvenience of all. As with anywhere on the planet Saltwater Fly Fishing can largely depend on sunlight, wind and storms. Please be advised that our guides will work as hard as possible to provide the angler with the safest, most productive, opportunities at hand to enjoy a successful outing. If and when extreme weather is approaching it is ***the decision of the Guides and the Manager as to whether the skiffs will leave the dock not the Angler.*** When the weather gets tough we appreciate your understanding and hope that you will enjoy every minute on the water.

## Daily Schedule

The daily schedule is flexible at Casa but is more planned out at Playa due to meeting at the truck with other anglers each morning. The Fishing Host will help you plan your mornings and afternoons and will provide the guides with any information or requests. The schedule at Casa Blanca revolves around breakfast from 6am to 7am then departure at 7:30 am. The skiffs at Casa Blanca are located directly next to the lodge so at the conclusion of breakfast the Angler has a 2 minute walk to the beach. Breakfast follows the same routine at Playa Blanca but requires the

anglers to meet at the truck at a set time. This time will be agreed upon during the Fishing Hosts orientation on Friday night. Both lodges return to the dock between 3:30 and 4pm.

### **Refreshments on the Water (boat cooler)**

Each morning your guide will stock the boat cooler with twelve complimentary soft drinks, beer, and water. The fishing host will receive your cooler order during orientation on Friday night. Feel free to offer your guide a soft drink but lodge policy prohibits guides drinking alcoholic beverages.

### **Equipment**

#### **(Fly Rods)**

The fishing around both lodges provides a plethora of species. With that being said the best case scenario is to travel with at least three rods. The fishing staff recommends bringing a 7 or 8 weight for Bonefish, a 9wt for Permit, Snook & Tarpon and a 10wt for Permit, Snook and Tarpon. It is a true advantage while fishing these waters to be ready for several different fish at one time. If you are thinking of bringing just one rod a 9wt is the best selection. The lodge does provide rental equipment as well. If a rental is needed we have Sage xi3 and Orvis Helios2 rods equipped with Orvis and Sage reels. There is a 25\$ a day for rental rods. **Please advise your agent** before your trip if rental equipment is needed before your trip and be sure to specify **Right or Left handed retrieve** for the reel.

#### **(Fly Reels)**

Reels should be anodized corrosion-resistant saltwater models that will hold a full fly line, plus at least 250 yards of 20-30 lb. backing. Reels with a high quality, smooth drag are essential to prevent break-offs from the blistering runs of hooked fish.

#### **(Fly Lines)**

Fly lines should consist of Tropical Floating varieties based on the size of your rods. There is no need for sinking lines on the flats of Punta Pajaros. It is a good idea to pack an extra spool or fly line when visiting a remote location like ours.

#### **(Leaders)**

A tapered leader of nine feet or longer is recommended. The most simple solution is to buy pre-tied bonefish, permit, Snook and tarpon leaders by Scientific Anglers, Trout Hunter, or Rio and then use separate spools of tippet 10lb -12lb (for bonefish) 15lb-20lb (for permit) 40lb-60lb (for Snook and tarpon). We also recommend 15-30 lb. wire leader for barracuda. It is highly recommended to bring a spool of **50lb leader** with you. Many Anglers are not informed that Snook can cut through lighter leader like butter. Tarpon will also chafe and break smaller leader sizes. Tapered leaders are NOT required for these fish. A piece of straight leader (6 to 8) feet to the fly



line is sufficient but you need to have it in your arsenal if you want to land these fish. At this time the lodge **Does Not** stock any of these items.

### **(Fly Selection)**

Having the proper flies can make or break a fishing trip. The Guides at Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca tie flies that are popular for our area but supplies are hard to come by so the selection is not consistent. A small selection of flies is available for cash purchase at the lodge. If you are interested in lodge exclusive flies please relay a request to your agent and we will do our best to have them on hand at your arrival. Concerning the rest of the flies in your box we are happy to make suggestions and discuss current conditions any time.

### **(Fly Color)**

The color of the flies is always a debatable issue but there are a few broad rules you can stick by on the flats of Casa and Playa Blanca. Bonefish can be taken on a variety of small flashy (Caribbean style) flies as well as larger natural (tan) shrimp patterns. The Permit tends to prefer natural color crabs and shrimp. The varieties of green patterns popular in places like Belize are generally passed over here for light shades of tan, sand and white. Tarpon seem to gravitate to dark shades. Black and purple, black and red, dark grey and solid chartreuse seem to be the most popular. The Snook prefer the other direction and tend to crush the chartreuse and white, red and white, gray and white or a little blue sparkle and white. As with any fishing it sometimes doesn't matter but these are the trends that have stood the test of time.

### **(Fly Size)**

It has been our experience that big bonefish generally prefer big flies. The bonefish of Ascension Bay prefer patterns in hook sizes 2 through 6. Permit flies are generally sized when they are tied. Any Permit flies you purchase should be sized correctly. Snook and Tarpon flies can start from 2/0 down to 1.

### **(Fly Sink Rate)**

You should have flies with three sink rates in your box: un-weighted, slightly weighted, and heavy. Normally, un-weighted, bead chain patterns are used in the shallow water (less than 1 foot) over turtle grass: intermediate, small eyed flies, like Crazy Charlie are used in one to two foot water; and heavy flies, like Crabs, are more effective in 2 to 4 feet water (or deeper).

### **(Bonefish)**

Bonefishing in our area is known for user- friendly specimens. Basic shrimp patterns are preferred. Gotcha's, Crazy Charlie's, and Squimps should be all you need. A total of 2-dozen will be what you need for the week.

Crazy Charlie- sizes 4-6 (medium lead weighted eyes) in white/cream, pink, and light tan.

Crazy Charlie- sizes 4-6 (bead chain eyes) in white/cream, pink and light tan.

Flashy Charlie-sizes 4-6 (both medium lead eyes and bead chain eyes) in pink and pearl.

Squimp- sizes 4-6 (both medium yellow lead eyes and bead chain eyes) in tan.

Other Productive Patterns: Puff, Grass Shrimp, Bonefish Muddler, Snapping Shrimp, and Mantas Shrimp

## **(Permit)**

The Permit fishing at Casa & Playa Blanca may be the very best in the world. More than 30 permits have been caught on fly in a single week. Other week's guests have boated 10 Grand Slams (one permit, one bonefish and a tarpon) in a single day. Permit is by far the most difficult fish you will encounter on the flats. They have superb eyesight and a well- developed sense of smell. Although it is fairly common to see permit with their tail and dorsal fin out of the water they usually do not "tail" for a longtime. The Permit is constantly on the move; so quick, accurate casts (and luck) are essential. Don't become discouraged with a few refusals. Permit are difficult but catchable.

Casa Blanca stocks a small selection of hand tied flies that work well on the local permit but please stock your box before coming. Permit flies are generally larger than bonefish patterns because Permit seems to prefer crabs over shrimp. Although there is much debate over the best permit pattern the best advice is to stick with one pattern that looks good to the guide and keep trying.

Permit seems particularly fond of small crabs so the majority of the productive patterns are crab imitators. The most productive patterns at Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca are the Casa Blanca Rag Head, Kung-Fu Crab, McCrab and the Squimp. A dozen or so will work for the week.

Casa Blanca Rag Head Crab-size 2 in tan (preferably with yellow lead eyes)

Kung Fu Crab- size 2 in tan & tan/olive

McCrab- size 2 in natural

Squimp- Size 2 in tan (preferably with yellow lead eyes) Qty. 4 Peterson's Spawning Shrimp- Size 2 in tan

Flexo Crab-Size 2, tan & olive

Enrico Puglisi sells many shrimp and crab patterns that work as well.

The Permit at Punta Pajaros provides the angler with two distinctly different conditions while fishing for them. Cruising fish in schools and deeper water will be enticed by shrimp patterns that the angler strips in a swimming motion past the fish. Other Permit will provide the more traditional Permit shots by tailing or waking in shallow water. In these cases the crab is a better

selection. For those anglers that are very serious about dedicating several hours or days to Permit fishing it is **Essential** to be ready with two rods, a shrimp and a crab. Having both patterns ready will increase your chances by 100%.

The angler may need several casts to get the fly into position. When the permit is several feet from the fly the offering should "walk" along the bottom (about 6") in a slow, deliberate, crab like fashion and then stop completely. All smart crabs know that they cannot outrun a permit and will remain motionless in hopes that the permit will overlook them. If the permit doesn't immediately pounce on your fly (which seems to be most of the time) be patient. Think like a crab and slowly manipulate the fly into slowly "removing" itself from the vicinity. (This is quite difficult with all the adrenaline flowing). The trick is to keep the fish interested. Best method is to listen to your guide and work as a team.

### **(Tarpon)**

Tarpon are the largest, strongest and most acrobatic of the flats lineup. Even juvenile fish will put your angling skills to the test. They will also strain your tackle. Casa Blanca & Playa Blanca are primarily known for its small to midsized specimens (10-30lbs) with the occasional monster thrown in. A majority of these fish are residents which remain in the area throughout the year. Although migratory Tarpon do make their way past the Yucatan it is not a fishery that is very predictable. The Tarpon seem to move based on the weather in the spring and fall. When the wind lays down or trickles from the West the Oceanside becomes a turquoise, aquarium. This is when the Big Tarpon seem to swim. The real challenge is putting down the Permit rod on these days to go chase the Silver King. Other non- migratory tarpon are attracted to the area because of their affinity for brackish water that is found in the mangrove lagoons. Adult and juvenile fish will often remain in the protected waters because it offers refuge from larger deep-water predators. Perch and other small fish provide year round forage. The ideal size Fly rod for Tarpon is a 10wt. Tarpon flies should be constructed of stout hooks with a large hook gap. If you tie flies at home the Gamagatsu SC 15 in a 1/0 is a good choice. Bait fish patterns and Bunny are great enticers. Flies in the colors discussed above provide the best chances. Below are recommended patterns.

Puglisi Peanut Butter- size 2/0, 1/0 in grey/white and black/purple.

Tarpon Toad- size 2/0,1/0 in chartreuse, black, purple and white.

Skok's Mushmouth- size 2/0 in sand/white.

Laid-Up Tarpon- size 2/0 in Tan.

### **(Other Species)**

The waters of Casa and Playa Blanca are teeming with a variety of fish that can be targeted on the fly rod. Barracuda are at the top of the list. Cudas will take a fly or a lure and are lightning fast. In addition to Barracuda you will also find Jacks, Ladyfish and a variety of Snapper.

#### Barracuda Flies:

Deceiver (blue or green/white 2/0), Poppers and Sliders in blue, red. Note: For Barracuda and Jacks an extra-fast retrieve will usually provoke more strikes than a slower retrieve. Use a steel leader.

#### Barracuda Lures:

You can take cudas by sight casting or trolling in shallow water. Tube lures (green, red, orange) are effective. Zara Spook, 5 1/4" Rapala Silver 9/16 oz. (Needlefish). Always remember to use a wire leader.

#### Jacks:

Flies: Lefty's Deceiver (red/white and blue/white), Streaker, Gaines Saltwater Popper (red/white and blue/white), Shark Fly. 2/0 -3/0 hook.

Rod / Reel: Follow tarpon guidelines -10 wt. rod Line: Saltwater taper, floating line. Large Jacks and Cudas also patrol the beaches for after-hours entertainment. Big metal lures and top water plugs are the most productive. Light colors are especially effective: Zara Spook (tarpon size), Magnum Rapala (tarpon size), Bombers and Corky.

### **Flats Fishing Accessories Checklist**

Here is a checklist of items that you may want to bring with you. The list consists of items that are often overlooked. Some of the below items are essential others are not. Feel free to reach out to the Casa & Playa office or the on island Manager via Email with any questions:

Polarized Sunglasses with Amber/Brown Lenses

- \* Knot Book
- \* Zap A Gap
- \* Snippers
- \* Reel Maintenance Kit
- \* Reel Covers
- \* Hook Sharpener
- \* Reel Lubricant
- \* Hemostats

- \* Tape Measure
- \* Pocket Knife
- \* Nail Knot Tool
- \* Leader Material
- \* Fly Line Dressing
- \* Needle Nose Pliers
- \* Adhesive Tape (for casting blisters)
- \* Extra Rod Tips
- \* Lumbar Support
- \* Fishing Belt
- \* Dry Bag
- \* Backpack
- \* Sunscreen
- \* Lip Balm
- \* Aloe Vera Gel
- \* Insect Repellent
- \* Required Medications
- \* Reading Materials
- \* Small First Aid Kit
- \* Flashlight
- \* Camera Gear
- \* Extra Batteries

### **Polarized Sunglasses**

Polarized sunglasses are ESSENTIAL to flats fishing. They are the anglers' most important tool for spotting fish. The lenses should be light amber, copper or brown in color. Buy the best you can find. Bring a spare in case you break or lose them.

## **Shirts and Pants**

There are many brands of clothing that are specifically designed for fishing. Simms, Patagonia, Orvis, Columbia and Ex-Officio are all good companies. Think lightweight, quick dry and full coverage for sun protection.

## **Foot Gear**

We highly recommend that all guests wear flats wading shoes with a rigid sole while in the water. Simms, Patagonia and Orvis all manufacture flats wading shoes.

## **Sun Protection**

A wide brimmed hat or a hat with front and rear visors and a dark under bill will aid in sighting fish. The dark under bill enhances the polarizing qualities of sunglasses. A lightweight sun balaclava, called a buff (manufactured by Buff, Simms, Patagonia) offer excellent facial protection from sun and wind.

Sun gloves, manufactured by Dr. Shade, Buff, and Simms are a good choices well.

## **Lightweight Rain Gear**

Rain is always a possibility in the tropics and the weather can change quickly during the day. A lightweight rain suit is a must. Be sure it is waterproof not water resistant.

## **Climate**

Temperatures can range from the low 70's in January up to 90's in July. Isolated afternoon thundershowers are a possibility year round. The weather tends to be relatively calm in April thru June.

## **Clothing at the Lodge**

The lodge is located on a beach in the tropics. Your clothing should be planned with this in mind. We recommend lightweight, quick-dry clothing in light colors. During the winter months a lightweight fleece, micro puff jacket or hoody for the early morning and evening can come in handy.

## **Laundry Service**

Casa & Playa Blanca offers laundry service. There is a small charge per article of clothing laundered. This service allows you to pack lighter than normal and adhere to the luggage restrictions on the charter plane.

## **Suggested Fishing Related Reading:**

- \*Brown, Dick, "Fly Fishing for Bonefish" New York: Lyons & Buford, 1994 Dimock, A.W.,
  - \*"The Book Of The Tarpon" New York: Outing, 1911. (Reprinted 1990 by Meadow Run Press)
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  - \* Kreh, Lefty, "Saltwater Fly Patterns" Fullerton: Maral, Inc., 1993
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