

Mule Deer Hunting Alberta, Canada with Mike's Outfitting

FAQs

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1. Do you hunt public or private land? How much land do you have to hunt? Is there much hunting pressure?

We hunt mostly private farmland for the muleys but when we say private land it doesn't mean that we have exclusive permission on any of it. That is because it is actually illegal in Alberta to pay a landowner for hunting access. We simply ask for permission to hunt and he says yes or no. 90% say yes and we end up with hundreds of thousands of acres of land to hunt. Since resident hunters are on a limited draw for mule deer there isn't a lot of hunting pressure.

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2. How do you hunt the deer?

Our main hunting method is to drive around in a truck and spot the deer from the road and put on a stalk. It's not that we are lazy it's simply the most effective way to hunt the farmland. The next most used method is sitting farm field edges waiting for the deer to enter the field. We will do this frequently when we are after a specific buck. There are also some areas where we can glass the somewhat open river banks or sneak through the trees near fields, along the river valley but these are low percentage methods that take some physical fitness to do.

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3. Do you guys do much scouting or patterning of the deer before the hunt?

Yes we do extensive scouting and bowhunting before your hunt, both allow us to keep track of certain big deer. We are often hunting a buck in November that was first seen in August. It is one of the keys to successful trophy mule deer hunting.

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4. Which week is the best to hunt? Isn't the rut the best time?

We can hunt mule deer anytime from Sept 17 to Nov 30 and we have chosen the best dates, Sept 17 to 30 and Nov 8 to 30. Either hunt can be great with weather probably being the biggest factor. In most places the rut really is the best time to hunt but in our area the September hunts can be just as good, surprisingly some years it is better than the rut. The problem is that we can never tell you beforehand which week will be best.

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5. What is the average buck size, what is a top end buck?

In a poor year you still have an excellent chance to get a 170+ gross score deer and in a great year we are mainly killing 180+ bucks with the chance for a 200+. A poor or great year is usually determined by several factors such as how severe the past winter was, how much spring moisture we get, what the weather is like on your hunt, how many resident hunter tags there are etc. There are many things that we just can't control. What we can control is how much effort we put in and we always put in 100% effort to get you the biggest deer we can find for that year.

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6. Do I have to put in for a draw to get my license?

No, all of our licenses are guaranteed.

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7. What's the country/terrain like? Is it hard to hunt? Do I need to be in good shape?

The terrain is unlike most mule deer areas. It is mostly flat farm fields surrounded by heavy woods, more like whitetail country than mule deer habitat. You don't need to be in good shape to have a great chance for success but it does help to have the fitness to try all sorts of tactics, it just gives that extra 10% edge in killing a big deer.

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8. How do you handle 2 hunters with one guide?

The 2 on 1 guided hunts usually work just fine with enough opportunities for both hunters to get their animals. We can usually split up the 2 hunters with for example one hunter sitting a field edge and the other with the guide. The main reason we do most of our hunts 2 hunters to 1 guide is because it is difficult to find great guides who have the private land access that we need. We have found that one excellent guide can do a better job than just getting a somewhat unqualified one to take one hunter. With several hunters and guides in camp often hunts quickly become one on one anyway. If it is a big concern for you, you can get a separate guide for \$2000 a hunt.

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9. What caliber of gun do you prefer, bullets? How far a shot can I expect?

We prefer that you shoot the gun that you are the most accurate with. Our deer can have huge 300+ lb. bodies but it still doesn't mean you need to shoot a big caliber gun. A 30-06, 270, 7 mm are all perfectly adequate. Most of our deer are shot well under 300 yds. but a 300+ yd shot is definitely a possibility. As for bullets the only kind we don't like are ballistic tip bullets, we have seen them blow up on a shoulder blade and not even enter a deer's chest cavity.

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10. What temperatures and weather can I expect? What clothes are best? Do I need blaze orange? Gear list?

The normal temperature for September is highs of 60 to 70 F and lows of 35 to 50 F. It can be hot and dry or cool and rainy. Be prepared for both. In November it can be very cold, with lots of snow and temps in the -30F range or mild with highs of 60 F. Most of the time you will be in the truck checking fields so some decent warm clothes and boots you can walk in that have a good amount of insulation are fine. Sometimes you may be sitting a field edge for an hour or two so you do want some good warm clothes for that though. No blaze orange needed, you can wear full camo.

Gear, clothing list:

- Quiet rain gear, pants and jacket with a hood
- Leather, waterproof, ankle high boots you can walk in, more insulation for Nov.
- Light and warm gloves
- Extra sweaters, long underwear
- Binoculars, range finder, no spotting scope needed.
- Dayback
- Gun and 2 boxes of bullets
- Camera, if digital, extra battery, charger & memory cards. Sorry, we will not email pictures to you.

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Call Mike to book your next Alberta mule deer hunting adventure

1-780-864-3770