

# Whitetail Deer Hunting Alberta, Canada with Mike's Outfitting

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### 1. When is the best time to come hunt for whitetails?

Since we take a very limited number of hunters each year we only hunt the best times, Nov. 8 to 30. Most of our whitetail hunters come at 2 different weeks, Nov 8 to 14 or Nov 16 to 22 for a 6 ½ day hunt. The peak of the rut is about Nov 15 so these 2 weeks catch the best ends of the rut.

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### 2. How do you hunt the deer?

Our main hunting method is sitting in stands back in the woods covering deer travel routes across open cutlines and pipelines. These lines are cut through the woods and they are 10 to 100 yards wide with often a practically unlimited view. On most of them you could shoot a long ways. Usually the lines are near farm fields that the deer like to feed in, preferably the line is between 2 doe groups and you are trying to catch a buck crossing the line checking does. We also sometimes set up on field edges looking over the whole field but your hunt is more likely to be disturbed by resident hunters this way. We also occasionally set up right in the woods with a less than 100 yard view, much like bowhunting. We only do this when it is a really good spot that has no good cutline option and has the deer concentrated to certain trails.

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### **3. What kind of stands do you use?**

We have a whole variety of stands available and we are constantly setting up new ones to stay on top of the best areas. We mainly use open topped tripod stands and enclosed box blinds. The tripods are the most effective hunting stand allowing you to see and hear everything around you and not miss that opportunity at a huge buck. The tripods are fairly portable, allowing us to quickly move you to a



better spot. There are no windows to bang on and the open top gives plenty of cool fresh air to keep you awake. They have a large plastic swivel seat, 40 inch platform and a skirt which blocks the wind from your shoulders down and hides movement. The box blinds are very comfortable with a padded office chair, plexiglass windows and we can heat them but they are not the most effective hunting stand. You can miss seeing a deer with the small blindspots, you can bang your gun on the window and you can fall asleep in them. They are crucial though when it gets brutally cold. Sometimes we use ladder stands, climbers and small hanging tree stands.

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

We hunt a mix of private farmland and public land 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. Often our stands are actually on public land that has virtually no one else sitting a stand anywhere close to you. Resident hunters mostly drive around in a pickup hoping to get a lucky road hunting kill or they sit in their truck watching an open field. There is virtually no competition for our hunting method and it is the best way to take a big buck. Mentally it can be tough sometimes though, that's why locals don't do it.

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

Everyone comes to Canada for the chance to shoot an absolutely giant deer, a 350 to 400 lb monster, 180+ score buck with incredible mass and long tines, maybe even a drop tine or two. Well we have them here. They are certainly not easy to get or even see but at least they are here. You never know when one of them might walk out. We have so much country to hunt and the whitetails like to

stay hidden. You rarely ever see the big bucks more than once, sometimes not at all, often we are just hunting the sign they leave behind. Though getting a huge buck is tough it isn't too tough to get a great shot at a 140 to 160 class deer. If you can judge a deer well and make the shot you probably have an 80+% chance to shoot a deer of that caliber.

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## **6. 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 kinds 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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## **7. Will I see lots of deer, how many a day?**

Our deer are concentrated in population pockets with much of the country having almost no whitetails. You generally will not see lots of deer unless you are hunting a hot food source and the weather is very cold. Normal would be seeing 5 to 10 deer a day, sometimes more. You are mainly sitting waiting for that one special buck to step out. Our buck to doe ratios is very good so you don't need to see many deer to see the right one.

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## **8. How bad can the weather get? What's it usually like?**

The weather is not normally too bad to handle, 0 F up to 50F, especially if you are dressed right. If it does get really cold, possibly -30 F or more, you can sit in a heated box blind.

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## **9. Can you bait the deer?**

No, but we can but we can hunt private farmland which has crops and it is almost the same as baiting. Sometimes it is better because the big bucks aren't avoiding a concentrated food source which can be an obvious danger to them. Also hunters aren't tempted to just shoot the small buck that keeps hanging around the bait pile. They are allowed to grow up here.

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## **10. Do I have to put in for a draw to get my license?**

No, all of our licenses are guaranteed.

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## **11. What clothes are best? Do I need blaze orange or all white? Gear list?**

No blaze orange or all white clothing is needed and it's not necessary. You can wear full camo.

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### **Gear, clothing list:**

- The best insulated boots you can buy, even insulated overboots that slip over your regular boots.
- No leather boots, we have never seen a pair warm enough.
- Warm bib overalls or one piece jacket and pants.
- Rain gear, pants and jacket with a hood
- An insulated pocket or muff you strap around your waist to put your hands inside.
- Chemical hand and foot warmers.
- Light gloves you can shoot with and heavy ones.
- Extra sweaters, long underwear.
- Warm hat and face mask.
- Binoculars, range finder, no spotting scope needed.
- Dayback to take your gear to the stand
- Gun and 2 boxes of bullets
- Camera, if digital, extra battery, charger & memory cards. We will not email pictures to you.

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Call Mike to book your next Alberta whitetail deer hunting adventure

**1-780-864-3770**