



The Hunt for an Experience

BY ANDREA BOGARD



What's a hunt to you? To some it's solitude. To others it's a physical and mental challenge that must be conquered. For many it's the pursuit of an experience over an animal, surrounded by family or friends. At Legends Ranch in Bitely, Michigan, the goal is providing memories you will treasure more than any trophy you could possibly harvest.

Come along as we take a look at Legends Ranch, a premier whitetail deer ranch in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. It all starts with a gate. Gates are funny things that are designed to work two ways – to keep things in, but they also keep things OUT. They can keep furry predators at bay, but they also seem to keep the emotional predators of stress, doubt and distraction firmly in their place. Ironically enough, there is a sign in the main lodge that reads, "Legends – Where Mother Nature is your only distraction."

As you drive through the gate, a curious calm and presence of mind seems to settle. At the lodge, the greeting is warm, the smiles genuine and the hospitality flawless. Your bags arrive magically in your well-appointed room. A rose

adorns the nightstand and warm lamp light bathes the room.

Once settled in, you make your way to the main dining room for a magnificent feast before the afternoon hunt. Let the adventure begin!



Situated on over 2000 acres, Legends Ranch can accommodate around 20 hunters at a time with their team of nine guides. This gives the Legends team the ability to hunt the right stands at the ideal time to achieve optimal hunting

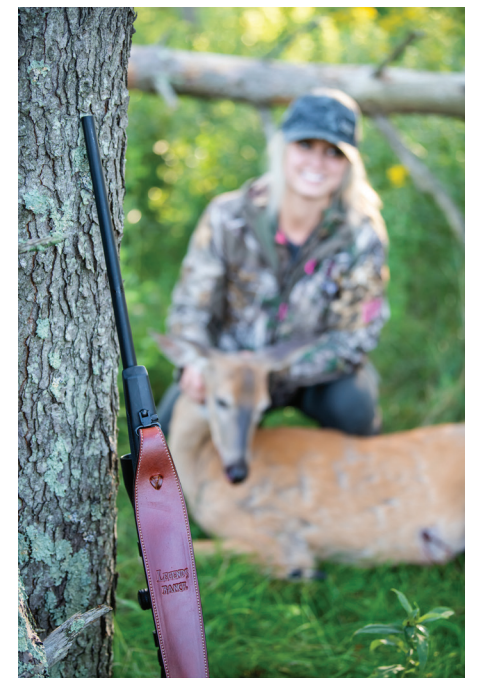
experiences. Things like wind, weather, light and deer patterns are all taken into account in tandem with each hunter's goals.

Let's talk about that for a minute. Each hunter has their own unique goals for a specific hunt. Whether spoken aloud or merely felt, every hunt has a goal. It may be related to harvest size, shot distance, hunting method, harvest style, physical achievement or something completely different. At Legends, they believe there is that "legendary" deer for every person. Perhaps more importantly, they work as a team to bring you experiences and memories that are just as legendary.

With a camp full of new friends, the energy is both contagious and dynamic. As each hunter writes their story afield and the deer are brought back to the lodge, a toast is raised. Tailgates are dropped, stories re-told and champagne corks



*The pursuit
of a legend
calls for a
toast!*



popped. The excitement of the hunt, the warmth of friendly banter and the crackling of a nearby fire mingle with the unmistakable “clink” of a champagne flute.

With a smile and a cheers, a torch of success is lit by the guides of the successful hunters. It is placed along the path beside the magnificent fire pit to await the beginning of a new day.

Mornings dawn early and full of promise. There is no bad sunrise in the field, and Legends is no exception. No matter where you are at the ranch, the magic and stillness of that “perfect” time of day soothes the soul.

As the deer start moving for the day, the question is mentally posed – will I see MY legendary deer today? Will I find it? Will I be able to place the shot and complete the harvest?

The sunrises and sunsets herald amazing experiences afield, but the moments outside the stand are just as memorable. For many, time around a fire is a precious and uncompromising part of a hunt. Legends takes this to a new level by creating a hub of conversation, gathering and story-telling around a massive, covered fire ring.

You may be seeing a pattern here. The focus is the friendship, the memories and the experiences. Your very own legendary deer is a magnificent part of that, but not the sole goal. Many ranches and guides can help you connect on the deer you want. Very few can give you the gift of moments and memories that are just as vivid and beautiful as a mount on the wall.

On the subject of mounts, Legends offers a full-service taxidermy facility onsite called The Studio. From European mounts to full body



scenes, The Studio can create the ultimate visual reminder from your hunt. This is just one more way the team at Legends provides an effortless, enjoyable and top-level experience to their clients.

Legends focuses on the preservation of memories (both past and future) in another amazing way. Welcome to the Wildlife Center. This is a 24,000 square foot facility featuring over 2,500 animals from around the globe.

Upon returning from the field each night, successes are celebrated and the migration begins to the Wildlife Center for food, fellowship and tales from the day. While only a 75 yard stroll from the lodge, it feels like a much more significant journey.

Let me tell you about the Wildlife Center at

Legends Ranch. The phrase “size matters” comes to mind. But not how you think...

Are there magnificent, trophy class animals adorning most available surfaces? Yes. There are also monumental, trophy class conservation efforts imbued in every fiber and molecule of the space. Each animal there has a story. It fed a village. It clothed a child. It funded anti-poaching efforts. But the story doesn't end there.

It's a place that holds space for memories of times had and excitement for the future. It is a place that upon entering, “wow” is the most appropriate response. It's a place that makes you believe in legends.



Legends can take many forms. The team at Legends Ranch creates experiences for service men and women and their loved ones through their annual Purple Heart Hunt. Additionally, they run hunts every year for terminally-ill children to come out and make priceless memories in the outdoors surrounded by family and friends.

Legends Ranch has created a place for hunters to pursue world class whitetails, but also build memories through truly incredible moments. Those moments are relived not only in your mind, but also through the perfectly curated and thoughtful custom touches that make Legends the world-renowned destination it is. From hand-carved custom Christmas ornaments to personalized stories of your hunt in the newsletter, your Legends experience is never far from your mind during the months away.

Are you ready to make legendary memories? Contact Legends Ranch today for booking information. ■

legendsranch.com
231-745-8000



LEGENDS RANCH