



Life in the Wild West of Wyoming

Wenn man gleich vor der Haustür Fischen oder Skilaufen gehen kann, ist es vielleicht nicht so wichtig, mit welchem Job man seine Brötchen verdient.

medium US

When my brother Ed invited me to his ranch in Wyoming recently, I didn't hesitate. My first visit was 20 years ago, when I decided it was time for my sons Stefan and Toby — 10 and 12 years old at the time, and being raised in Germany — to see the Wild West. After all, I'd been telling them adventure stories about Wyoming for years. It was time to check it out.

Dressed in our new cowboy boots, hats, and leather vests with metal sheriff's stars, we went to a rodeo. There we saw wild horses, calf-roping competitions, and glamorous rodeo queens. We rafted the Snake River and enjoyed a three-day camping trip deep in the mountains, where we went fly-fishing and horseback riding and spent evenings sitting around the campfire. Now, that's Wyoming!

Twenty years later, little has changed — except my perspective. I'm thinking of moving from an urban area in Boston to a more rural one, and I wanted to see what day-to-day life is like far — very far — from what we Easterners think of as civilization.

In some ways, it differs little from the experience that Ed introduced us to all those years ago. He and his wife, Wren, live by choice in idyllic Star Valley in rural Wyoming — none of the big-box stores, strip malls, or heavy traffic that are so common on the East and West Coasts. The surrounding rivers, woods, and mountains are their playground. Every season has its attractions, and they take full advantage of them all.

Summer is the season for white-water rafting, or just floating on a peaceful river in a boat, fishing along the way. Ed and Wren ride out on their horses, tour on their BMW motorcycle, and camp in the wilds. In the fall, they

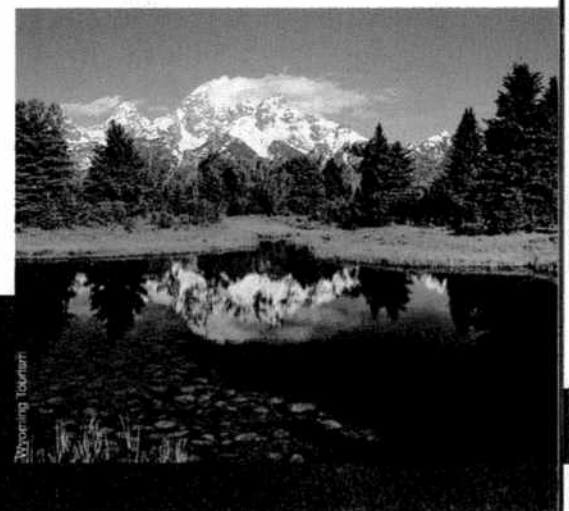
pack their horses into the mountains for hunting; the bow-hunting season starts first, followed by rifle hunting. Of course, they're delighted if they manage to bring in an elk with which to fill their freezer, but it's more about being deep in the silence of the woods, waiting, watching, marveling. Winters, which generally start in October and can last until June, are for skiing and other snow-based sports. Then the cycle begins again.

As the saying goes, some people live to work and others work to live. It's clear that Ed and Wren are in the latter camp; and most of their friends and neighbors are, too.

Kate and Mark, for instance, moved to town from southern California about 15 years ago. Kate wanted to have a horse, but the cost of the land they needed was far too high in California. In Wyoming, they were able to buy 20 acres — and a horse. The valley was booming at the time. Mark,

a contractor, and Kate, who is a nurse, had no trouble finding jobs. Today, however, the area is suffering from the same economic problems as the rest of the country, with the construction industry among the hardest-hit. Mark's solution? "I'm driving a garbage truck for the town," he told me.

I don't know too many people in my world, the corporate environment, who would even consider doing that. But it was clear that, for Mark, a job is just something you do to make money. Life is more about what he does when he's not at work. It's not a bad way to live — not a bad way at all. ●



"The rivers, woods, and mountains around them are their playground"

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acre ['eɪkə]	Morgen
big-box store [bɪg 'bɒks ,stɔː]	großer, schuhkastenartiger Laden
bow [bəʊ]	(mit Pfeil und) Bogen
calf-roping ['kæf ,rəʊpɪŋ]	Einfangen von Kälbern
contractor ['kɒntræktə] US	Handwerker(in)/Kleinunternehmer(in) im Baugewerbe
corporate ['kɔːrpəɾət]	Unternehmens-
elk [elk] N. Am.	Wapiti
garbage ['gɑːrbɪdʒ] N. Am.	Müll
hesitate ['hezɪteɪt]	zögern
marvel ['mɑːrvəl]	staunen
playground ['pleɪgraʊnd]	Spielplatz
raft [ræft]	mit einem Boot/Kanu fahren
rifle ['raɪfəl]	Gewehr
rural ['rʊərəl]	ländlich
strip mall ['stri:p mɔːl]	Einkaufszentrum an einer belebten Straße
whitewater ['waɪt,wɔːtə]	Wildwasser-