

The Occidental Tourist - Henry Winkler

Los Angeles Times

April 16, 2006

The actor, director and producer stars in the CBS comedy "Out of Practice."

In Montana, near West Yellowstone, there's a lodge called Firehole. I go with my wife, and we fly-fish for trout. I think it holds 22 people at once. The chef's name is Bruno, and he's from France ~ and that's all you need to know about dinner.



When they call it the Big Sky, that's no joke. I take pictures every time I go, and I'm shocked every time at the enormousness, the gorgeousness and the tranquillity.

I fish sometimes from 8:30 a.m. to 8 or 9 at night. One of my greatest achievements on this planet is that I caught a brown trout by sonar alone. I heard him slurping and eating, and I couldn't see him, and I cast for him and reeled him in. And I said thank you and put him back in the river.

It is like a washing machine for your brain. There's nothing to do but to concentrate on you and the fish. Everything else drips away off the planet. Whatever is bothering you is gone.

I've been doing this for 20 years, and I'm still an intermediate. Even when I get all tangled up, while my rig is being straightened out, I look out at the river, at the trees and the sky and mountains, and I think I am one of the luckiest men on the planet.