

The Region's First Hunting & Safari Magazine - GULF

1&S

hunting & safari

African Antelope

The Big Five

The New Zeiss
Conquest HD

Binoculars are the best
in their class

Elaine Coetzee

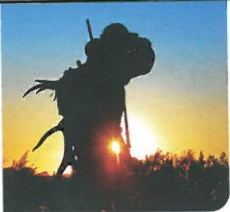
An interview with a
Passionate & Professional
Lady Hunter

The Legend is Back
The New
Browning A5



9 772078 225005

BHD 3 / QAR 25 / KD 2.5 / EGP 50



Evelina Aslund

An interview with a Swedish Lady Professional Hunter and Yoga Enthusiast

Our second Lady Professional Hunter interviewee and contributor, Evalina Åslund, hails from a small village in Sweden and comes from an active outdoors family. Her love for the outdoors is complimented by her passion for Yoga and physical well being, both of which help with the physical side of the hunt. Evelina will be providing H&S with articles as a regular contributor so look out for interesting stories from Sweden in future editions.

First thank you, Evelina, for agreeing to this interview and lets start by you telling us about your upbringing. Are you from a hunting family and are your family members interested in animals?

The interview is my pleasure and I'm 38 years old, and I was born and raised in a hunting and cross country skiing family in Åsarna, a small village in the middle of Sweden. My father and my two brothers hunt so hunting has always been a natural part of my upbringing. I've spent a lot of time with my dad out in the forest ever since I was a child - it was a good way for me to spend quality time with my dad who, as a professional cross country skier spent a lot of time travelling during my childhood.

My huge interest in hunting took leaps forward when I took my hunting certificate as a 17 year old. In my home county Jämtland, hunting plays a large part in people's lives, especially moose hunting that has old traditions and is the most common way of hunting.

Tell us a little about your career so far. How did you start working with, and arranging, hunts?

After finishing high school in 1994, I lived in several places in Sweden and in London and Dubai. I still have good friends in Dubai and my job gave me plenty of good contacts within the fashion and music business. I still benefit from this network of contacts and friends.

After my time abroad I spent a couple of years in Stockholm, the

capitol of Sweden, and this life offered me other things than what was available to me in my little home village in Jämtland. But no matter where I was, my interest in hunting and outdoor activities remained intact and every autumn I returned home to participate in the annual moose hunt.

After two years in Stockholm, with lots of hard work and socialising, I wanted to go back to school. I chose a program focusing on hunting and tourism, spent a lot of time outdoors in nature, did some soul searching to maybe find out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life... and sure enough I found it! This was when and where I decided to work with what I am best at: Being outdoors, using my service minded nature to take care of guests in the best way possible and at the same time being able to control my own time as a self employee. But it took some time getting there. I continued studying marketing and tourism a couple of years and that landed me a job at the County Council in Jämtland, working with marketing and events. I worked there for five years and during that time I met the father of my child Ronja who is now ten years old. The relationship didn't last and we separated seven years ago.



Have you encountered resistance from customers or other hunting guides because of your gender?

No I haven't! Quite the opposite actually! There are many female hunters in Sweden and they are my main target group. Sweden has 260 000 licensed hunters today and 14000 of them are women. That's an increase of 75 % over the last ten years, 25% percent

of everybody who get licensed today are women. However, many of the licensed women never go hunting. That's why I also include a one day game-bird hunt in my licensing courses.

What are your hunting ethics?

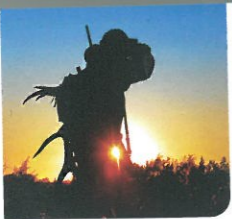
In Sweden the hunting ethics and morals are high. I think that's good. It is important that the hunt is well planned and is executed in a sustainable way. Hunting should be performed in a way that means as little suffering to the animals as possible. For example I don't agree with hunting with bow and arrow. The animal will die if the shot is well executed but it will take longer than with a well aimed shot with an expanding bullet.

What products do you sell?

Products by JoyEvent:

- Hunting and yoga
- Hunting exam
- Pointing dogs training
- Grouse hunting
- Shooting course
- Hunting and spa-trips to Estonia
- Game watching
- Hiking and yoga in the mountain >





Hunt and Yoga is my most cherished product and I've worked on developing it since autumn 2010. The product symbolizes my company idea of contrasting experiences.

Hunting and spa-trips to Estonia is a product that we've trialed for two years, November 2010 and November 2011. This is also JoyEvent's leading product with hunting combined with activities focused on health. JoyEvent is the only company on the market with these kind of trips and therefore I hope to be successful with selling these trips.

What does a normal working day include for you?

A typical working day for me on one of my trips during hunting season starts early. I get the stove going and together with my guests I have breakfast and prepare lunch boxes for the day. I then make sure the dogs are fed and prepared. Before the hunt starts, we gather and I go through rules and safety, and explain the history of the grounds we're

going to hunt on. All morning we hunt and at noon we stop for an hour's lunch. Whilst we eat our lunch and make coffee over an open fire the dogs get their well earned rest. Re-energized we then hunt for the afternoon.

On a grouse hunt a normal hunting day means a 15 km hike so once we're back at the cabin, the guests often enjoys a bit of rest. If they want we can run through a short yoga session - the stretch is nice for sore muscles and joints - or I start the sauna and the guests get to enjoy a sauna before dinner.

A typical working day off hunting season usually contains lots of office work. My office is situated 10 km from home and once I'm there I update my website and facebook account, talk to customers and partners, plan new concepts and take care of finances.

What is your favorite and least favorite part of your job?

The best about running my own company

is the freedom it creates. To be in charge of my own time is quality of life for me. The downside and worst with running my own company is the financial insecurity. The flow of money is not always consistent.

What made you add a fitness/health aspect/activity in your hunting products?

My own experiences of hunt adding/creating health. A very intense period of my life with lots of work and a separation resulted in me losing my health. I was diagnosed with exhaustion depression and was on sick leave for two years. With a lot of rehabilitation consisting of yoga and time in the mountains I was back in business after two and a half years. During this period I had time to think about what is important in life and reevaluate many things. I also went to India to learn more about yoga and meditation, which also helped my recovery. The yoga worked wonders! It helped me refocus and find a sense of direction.

Once I was well again I wanted to deepen my knowledge in the healing powers of nature and took a course in the subject at Mid Sweden University. My final paper resulted in me opening my own business - finally a dream would come true. After spending more than ten years thinking about running a business dealing with hunting and hunters, it happened. And of course, with my newly won experiences my original idea of arranging hunting trips was expanded and flavored with health activities. For me hunting is health and that's what I want my hunting products to reflect. Hunt and Health. In Swedish Joy in JoyEvent stands for Hunt and Yoga (Jakt och Yoga).

I also believe that the combination of hunting and health attracts the female hunters which is a goal in itself. I want to see more women hunting. With my products I want to kill the myth of what a typical hunter is, namely male, beer drinking and with a huge belly.

Are there many hunters looking to include a health/fitness activity in the hunting experience?

No, unfortunately not. There aren't that many people who have the guts to try out the combination of for example yoga and hunting.

But I am happy I have that unique product in my list of services.

Is there any animal you won't hunt?

I won't hunt elephants or zebras as I can think of spontanios.

Are there any special ways of hunting that you prefer?

Hunting grouse during wintertime is my favorite. It combines two of my greatest interests, cross country skiing on the mountains and hunting with shotgun.

Are there any organizations that you are associated with relating to your profession?

I am into many different organisations because I have so many different hobbies but associated to the hunting I'm into Jakt I Jämtland Ekonomisk Förening (organisation to develop hunting tourism in Jämtland), Svenska Jägareförbundet and NNFK.

Do you have any dreams or visions for you, your company and for hunting in Sweden in the future?



My vision is to make JoyEvent into the leading company within hunting and health and to create concepts around this theme. In the future I would like hunters from abroad to have to use a Swedish guide when hunting in Sweden. That would create work for small regional companies and would be the good way to ensure that our hunting guests from abroad know about the Swedish hunting ethics and morals.

It will also create that people in small regions will have jobs where we live. I also wish that we will start hunting wolfs in Sweden because the matter of fact the Wolf Population now is growing hysterically and the tradition of hunting successfully with loose, barking dogs is soon finished because of the rapid growing Wolf Population. I wish the government would have better understanding and respect of all the people and animals that are affected with wolves.

Do you have other interests or hobbies?

Yes. I like cross country skiing and I have competed in biathlon on a professional level. I spend a lot of time outdoors and besides hunting, I enjoy hiking, shooting, canoeing and dogs. I spend a lot of my spare time at my little country cottage where I can also go canoeing. Of course I also love spending time with my daughter, boyfriend, friends and travelling (my latest longer trip was to India in 2008).

What advice do you have to other women who strive to become a professional Hunter?

Be brave and go for what you are passionate about. It is great finding the right job and you have the greatest potential and energy when you do what you are good at doing. Benefit from being a woman, we do have some assets that men don't have. Don't be afraid of being in a minority, there are many people who actually appreciate you just because of it.

Richard Camm, H&S Magazine