

HIKING

Idaho's



HOT SPRINGS



STACEY MATHEWS - HIKING ON THE HOT SPRINGS TRAIL, SELWAY BITTERROOTS, IDAHO

"THE THING I LOVE ABOUT HOT SPRINGS IS THAT THEY APPEAL TO EVERYONE. I CAN BE AT A SPRING AND SEE A GUY WHO RODE IN ON HIS HARLEY, A YOUNG COUPLE WHO'S OUT TOURING IN THEIR MINIVAN, AND MEET OTHER ADVENTURERS LIKE MYSELF WHO'VE WALKED OR RODE THEIR BIKES THERE FROM PLACES POSSIBLY MUCH FURTHER AWAY."



SHEEPEATER HOT SPRINGS



SACAJAWEA HOT SPRINGS



RED RIVER HOT SPRINGS RESORT



BERNIE KRAUSSE • WEIR CREEK HOT SPRINGS

LAST SUMMER, I THRU-HIKED THE ENTIRE HOT SPRINGS TRAIL, WHICH COVERS 2,421 MILES FROM SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA TO PRIEST FALLS, IDAHO, VISITING EVERY HOT SPRING I COULD FIND. ON THIS TRAIL, HIKERS CAN ENJOY 96 HOT SPRINGS, INCLUDING 63 IN IDAHO. WITH DRAMATIC SUMMITS, FRESH PRODUCE AT FARMERS MARKETS, AND A VARIETY OF HOT SPRINGS BOTH WILD AND RESORT, I WOULD CALL IT THE WORLD'S LONGEST THERAPEUTIC TRAIL.

Long-distance hiking changed my life. After ACL/MCL knee surgery in 2003, I radically cleaned up my diet and lifestyle and just five years later, I successfully thru-hiked the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada. Next I completed the Hayduke, Colorado, Arizona, John Muir, and Idaho Centennial trails. I've walked across every state in the western U.S. since my knee surgery, some of them twice. I was a Sandpoint resident in 2003 and worked on the Stella lift at Schweitzer that year.

I am an anomaly in distance hiking because I haven't taken a single ibuprofen. I believe it's because I didn't take any pain meds after my knee surgery. Instead, I allowed my natural pain levels to dictate my mobility. I used any sensation to let my body know something was wrong and needing to be rested. I've hiked more than 12,000 miles post-surgery without taking a pill. Along the way, I became known as the Whole Food Hiker for my healthy habits.



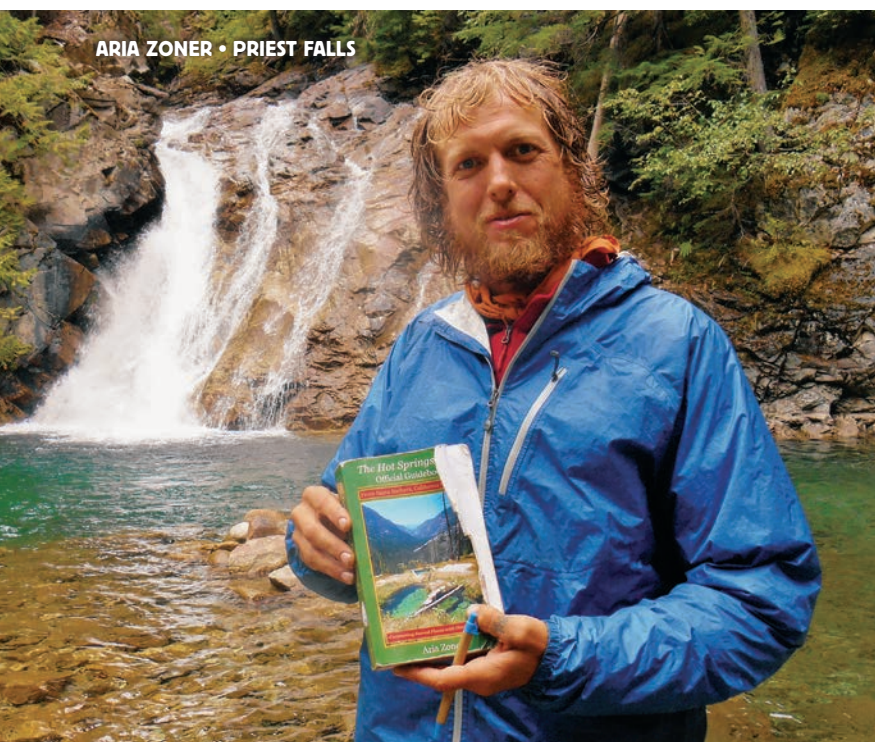


TRAIL FLAT HOT SPRINGS

"WHEN I WAS THRU-HIKING THIS TRAIL THERE WAS AT LEAST ONE MOMENT EVERYDAY WHERE I WOULD LOOK UP IN THE SKY AND SCREAM 'YES!'"

I came up with the name for the Hot Springs Trail, or HST, and wrote a four-part guidebook series. The fourth book is The Idaho Soaktenial Trail – A Soaker's Rendition of the ICT. Heading north, the final hot springs are Stanley, Weir and Jerry Johnson, along with Lolo Hot Springs Resort which accepts and holds packages for hikers. From the Lochsa River north to Canada, the way is scenic but the hot springs are absent. Yet the Idaho Soaktenial Trail ends, as any good hot springs soak should, with a cold plunge. This is done at Priest Falls at trail's end, and is not to be missed.

I know firsthand that the combination of lifestyle, nutrition, and outdoor recreation the Hot Springs Trail provides, such as climbing mountains, eating fresh produce and soaking in therapeutic waters, is not only extraordinarily healthy, but can offer a unique experience for those who are interested in both challenge and reward. [CdA](#)



ARIA ZONER • PRIEST FALLS

NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

WINDS THROUGH 4 NATIONAL PARKS AND 14 WILDERNESS AREAS TO TROPICAL, DESERT, ALPINE AND RAINFOREST HOT SPRINGS.

MARTEN HOT SPRINGS IN IDAHO'S SELWAY-BITTERROOT WILDERNESS IS THE MOST REMOTE HOT SPRINGS IN THE LOWER 48.

HIKERS WHO VISIT EACH OF THE 96 HOT SPRING AREAS ARE CALLED THRU-SOAKERS.

THE IDAHO SECTION IS OPEN TO BIKE-PACKING (OUTSIDE OF THE 3 WILDERNESS AREAS: SAWTOOTH, FRANK CHURCH AND SELWAY-BITTERROOT).