

## THE BEAR ARCHERY EXPERIENCE



What if I said you get to experience the place that arguably helped grow archery and bowhunting into what it is today? Let alone, build your own unreleased 2022 bow, right there alongside the workers of the archery factory, eat a world class meal, and spend a day hunting gators and hogs in Southern Florida? This is the Bear Archery Experience.

On the first full day, we were greeted by Neil Byce III, a second-generation Bear Archery Bowyer. His father, Neil Byce Jr., was Fred Bear's master bowyer and they both learned and worked directly with Mr. Fred Bear themselves. We discussed the history of Fred Bear and Bear Archery that is truly fascinating for any passionate archer or bowhunter. We toured the factory as Neil took us to all facets of the in-house production from making limbs for some of their compounds, to machining cams, to sanding and working on the final details of their popular line of Bear Archery recurves and putting together the final pieces to their line of compounds.

Guests were treated with their custom 2022 compound bows and were also given a special surprise given to them by Neil and the Bear archery team. Everyone worked with a team member from Bear to assemble their bows from scratch along with setting the weight and draw length to fit them perfectly. Guests then hit the range to sight in and enjoy their new bows. It was truly humbling to know that we were shooting on the very same range that Fred Bear once did on his lunch breaks, just outside the Bear archery factory. The history and influence this place has is overwhelming, and unlike any other to today's archer and bowhunter.

If the factory tour, building a new unreleased 2022 bow, and talking with Neil Byce III wasn't enough, we continued the day by heading South towards Venus, FL, stopping at Charley's Steakhouse for one of the finest steak dinners you can find. We overnighted at the Lightsey Family ranch where we then met with captain Kevin Brotz of Get Bit Outdoors to guide the gator hunting the following morning. Traveling the hunting grounds with an elevated buggy large enough to carry the group, we circled the perimeter searching for gators. All six guests were successful in their hunt, harvesting 6 gators the largest boasting a length of over 10' in length. Some guests continued their hunt in search of pig and trophy boar as well. Dinner was had as drinks were had to cap off the day and an amazing trip.

Before departure, there was a feeling of gratefulness and deep appreciation to be able to see what so very few people get to Experience. To tour the factory that Fred Bear built in Gainesville after their move from Grayling, to build your own custom 2022 compound bow from scratch, to know the history that Bear Archery encompasses, and the impact Fred Bear and Bear Archery has had on the sport of what you see with archery and bowhunting today is simply humbling. If you are an archery fanatic like me, this Experience is a must for you.



