

## Tourism Week 2018

### Testimonial: [Kumsheen Rafting Resort](http://kumsheen.com/)



### The Beauty of BC's Legendary Thompson River Fuels a Three Generation Rafting Dynasty

“My father, Bernie Fandrich, started Kumsheen Rafting resort from the side of the road in 1973 with nothing more than a van and a rubber raft he bought in Vancouver. Rafting on the amazing blue waters of the beautiful and rugged Thompson River has been part of my family ever since, and the industry brought my mom and dad together, which led to me, my dad, my mother, my brother and my sister all working with the wonderful people who come to BC from all over the world. Dad first put me in a raft when I was four years old, and now we can say that both my brother, sister and I all have little children, and we expect they'll eventually be making a living off of adventure tourism as well. The things we're most proud of? Working in British Columbia's beautiful outdoors, and providing a thrilling, yet safe, white-water adventure for more than a quarter-million people since dad started the business 46 seasons ago. Best advice for those who want to enter the tourism industry? Be great with people, and be true to yourself.”

— Braden Fandrich, for Bernie, Lorna, Andrew & Megan, their children and children to follow.  
Kumsheen Rafting Resort, Lytton, BC <http://kumsheen.com/>



Braden Fandrich was just four years old when his father, Kumsheen Rafting Resort founder Bernie Fandrich, put him in a white-water raft for the very first time. It was prophetic, in a way, for Braden would literally follow his father's footsteps into the adventure tourism industry, as did his mother Lorna so many years before, and would his brother Andrew, and for a while, his sister Meghan. And what's more, both Andrew and Braden's wives have worked at the resort, and their toddlers have now also made their way on to a white-water raft.

Did Bernie know he was building a life-long, three-generational business when he started Kumsheen with one raft and one van, beside the Thompson River, way back in 1973? “Well, I knew I was doing something special,” Bernie recalls, “the river was magnificent—it still is—and I knew if I could make a living at it, I’d want to be on the Thompson for the rest of my life.”

Since those modest beginnings 46 seasons ago, Kumsheen has grown into a powerhouse in the rafting industry, fuelled by the beauty of the Thompson River’s legendary white water rapids on an swirling, azure river, and a dedication to safety and customer service.

More than 276,000 people have visited the resort, located just outside of picturesque Lytton, BC, and more than 600 people have worked at the resort, hailing from across the province, across the national and from many countries around the world.

Working at Kumsheen gives people a sense of pride and accomplishment, says Braden Fandrich, “People who spend their time here are blown away by how nice the operation is in all aspects—in the experience they have in the water, in the staff that they have interactions with, the whole thing.”

Braden, 37, and Andrew, 34, learned the rafting business from the ground up, gaining first-hand, expert knowledge on long family outings that the Fandrichs spent days running BC’s rivers. Bernie is still involved with Kumsheen as a consultant, while Lorna can be found nearly every day working at the resort’s lodge.

Andrew Fandrich, when he’s not on the river, looks after much of the operations, with dozens of trips and hundreds of rafters to deal with each week. His take on the family business? “There’s a great deal of pride in doing this work,” Andrew says, echoing his brother, and carrying on that family legacy. “Learning from Bernie and Lorna over the years has been pretty natural. Having my parents teach us this whole time has been a pretty great experience as well.”

And so, when it comes to the adventure tourism industry, it’s no exaggeration to say that white-water runs in the veins of all the Lytton-based Fandrich clan. The question is, however, will the grand-children carry on the family business? “Of course,” says Andrew, of his son Callum, who’s only nine-months old. “I mean, I don’t know, but yeah!” Braden is a bit more definitive when it comes to his son Theo’s future role at Kumsheen. “Oh yeah,” Braden jokes, “he’s going to take over the place someday.”