

Explore some of the best places to get hooked on fishing.

It was winter, 1969. I was 10 years old and out with my dad and a half dozen of his friends, ice fishing at Chin Lake, Alta. The only other kid in the crowd was Peter Zubersky, a year or two older than me. Miffed to be out with a girl, Peter was quite convinced that he'd be able to teach me a thing or two about the manly sport of fishing.



I took to ice fishing immediately. At one point, Peter complained enough about my "good luck" and his jinxed fishing spot that my dad convinced me to swap holes with Peter. By the end of the day, it was Girl: 11, Pete: 0.

We've come a long way, baby. According to Beth Mairs, director of Wild Women Expeditions, women are taking to the sport like...well, like a fish takes to water. Women-only travel is mostly a North American phenomenon, says Mairs, and the number of women pursuing fishing vacations is on the rise. Canada is probably best known for salmon fishing, but with an abundance of freshwater lakes and streams, and the three-way border of oceans around us, great fishing experiences are a snap to find.

Below, find a few fishing hotspots to get you in the mood.

1. Newfoundland/Southwest Pond

Located along the northern tip of Newfoundland is Tuckamore Lodge. Renowned for its Atlantic salmon from Southwest Pond, it's not unusual to hook a four-pound salmon here, and fisherfolk frequently find brook trout and Arctic char dangling from their line.

TIP: Ask about the Outdoor Woman package -- geared to women who want to learn outdoor skills.

For Newfoundland's fishing guidelines, visit:
www.labrador-fishing.com

2. Quebec/Outaouais Region

The Outaouais Region of Quebec boasts 20,000 lakes with an ample supply of pike, walleye and bass. There are many fishing hot spots to choose from, but let's focus on a spectacular one!

Halfway between Ottawa and Montreal, the Fairmont Kenauk at Le Chateau Montebello sits on a 100 square mile, 65,000 acre protected wilderness area. One of North America's oldest and largest private fish reserves, the property includes more than 70 lakes. The preservation of these resources is protected by Fairmont Kenauk at Le Chateau Montebello's own biologists and naturalists -- who are available to guests of the property.

TIP: Successful fishing day? The chef at the Fairmont Le Chateau will prepare your catch for you.

For Quebec guides to fishing regulations, visit:

www.fapaq.gouv.qc.ca/

3. Manitoba/Knee Lake

Four hundred miles north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Knee Lake stretches for 50 miles, as wide as five miles in some areas. Bays, reefs, islands and weedbeds help create an idyllic fishing atmosphere. Northern pike, whitefish, lake trout, perch and walleye are plentiful here.

For Manitoba's fishing regulations, visit:

[click here](#)

4. British Columbia/Oak Bay Marine Group

The Oak Bay Marine Group operates two resorts on Campbell River, April Point (on Quadra Island) and Painter's Lodge, with the ripple benefit that visitors can play in both. April Point Resort and Spa is built on the original settlement of fishermen's cabins; a 10-minute water taxi ride takes you across to Painter's Lodge. Sheltered by the mainland, these resorts offer spectacular salmon fishing in calm waters.

In June every year, Painter's Lodge plays host to a women's-only fishing derby. More than 100 women flock in from all over North America for the four-day derby.

For British Columbia's fishing regulations, visit:

www.bcfishing.com

5. Alberta/Bow River

Alberta boasts 600 lakes, bursting with pike, perch, walleye, lake trout and Arctic grayling. But Calgarians know they can find a quick escape along the Bow River which threads its way through the bustling city of Calgary. The Bow River begins at Bow Glacier in Jasper National Park and continues through Banff and Canmore, into Calgary.

For Alberta's Guide to Sport Fishing Regulations, visit: www.albertaoutdoorsmen.org

BONUS -- The Best Place in Canada to Fish

Where is the very best fishing hole in the country? Calgarians have it right. The best fishing hole is the one most conveniently located near you, says Terri MacKinnon of Fishergirl.com. In a difficult phase of her life, MacKinnon recalls thinking that if she had one day left to live, she would spend it fishing with her family.

What would she want to catch? That's not relevant, she says. Fishing serves as a kind of meditation. The Henry David Thoreau quotation of MacKinnon's website sums up her fishing philosophy: "Many men go fishing their entire lives without knowing it is not fish they are after."

The bottom line? Regardless of where you live, fishing doesn't have to be about

landing the big one. It can be all about relaxing and connecting with yourself.

Check out your city website and the local travel and tourism office to find fishing spots in your province.

Cyber fishing for links:

Wild Women Expeditions

www.wildwomenexp.com

Fishergirl.com

www.fishergirl.com/

Note: 10 per cent of all Fishergirl.com sales are donated to breast cancer research. Check out the Special Edition Breast Cancer Survival Rod & Starter Fishing Kit or Survival Rod; 50 per cent of the profit from these rods goes to breast cancer research.

Outoaoouis Region

www.outdooroutaouais.com/home/index_e.html

Oak Bay Marine Group

www.obmg.com

Tuckamore Lodge

www.tuckamorelodge.com