

Canada – a great catch

Bass fishing on the Annapolis River, Nova Scotia

Northern Saskatchewan has one of the largest concentrations of floatplane fishing camps anywhere in the world.



Quebec – call of the wild

Quebec's varied climatic conditions is an important factor in the distribution of species. Broadly speaking the province can be divided into Southern, Central and Northern Quebec. Since each species is distributed differently from one region to another, Quebec is divided further into 25 fishing and hunting zones. This ensures careful protection and management of all fish and game.

You will discover nature at your doorstep in Southern Quebec where smallmouth bass, speckled and rainbow trout, and sturgeon can all be found within a short distance of Montreal. The forests of the Laurentians and Outaouais regions are also good for large game hunting. Most of these prime fishing and hunting territories are accessible by road.

Central Quebec, which includes the beautiful Gaspé peninsula, extends mostly along the banks of the St. Lawrence River. The lakes are teeming with rainbow and lake trout but there is also cod, mackerel and sea trout to be found nearer the eastern end of the St. Lawrence.

But if its the ultimate wilderness adventure you are seeking, head for the vast area of Northern Quebec. Here you can experience those endless horizons and virgin fir-tree forests, the lichen-carpeted taiga and the windswept tundra of the Far North. From Abitibi Temiscamingue in the west to Duplessis on the picturesque North Shore; from the beautiful Saguenay- Lac-Saint-Jean (300 miles from Montreal) to the remote Grand-Nord where local Naskapi Indians have been hunting caribou and fishing for generations; this too can be your fishing and hunting experience of a lifetime. Naturally you will need a bush plane to fly you in to these camps in the Grand-Nord and it is likely you will be met by the same Naskapis who will act as your guide. In terms of species, trout fishing is undoubtedly the speciality of these northern camps but arctic char and many others are also common.

When it comes to booking a fishing package in Northern Quebec you can pay around 3000 dollars for 6 days but this includes air transportation from Montreal and full meals at the lodge. Conversely the rental of a cottage in the Gatineau need only cost you 400 dollars for 7 days.

Atlantic provinces beckon the fly-fisherman

One feature which all the eastern provinces have in common is an abundance of Atlantic salmon. Restricted to fly-fishing only, an angler can try his luck almost anywhere on one of Nova Scotia's excellent salmon and trout rivers. Some of the world's best salmon streams are to be found in neighbouring New Brunswick, like the Saint John, the Restigouche, and the mighty Miramichi which all flow east to the Atlantic.

On Labrador's 112 000 square miles of majestic wilderness there are hundreds of salmon rivers like Eagle River and the Adlatok, the latter being the northernmost range of Atlantic salmon. These fish average 10 to 22 lbs while Grilse up to 8 lbs are also plentiful. Don't be surprised if you hook a 20 lb northern pike on your trout rod!

If you would like to have a first-class inexpensive salmon fishing holiday, then Canada's east coast must surely be your choice. Traditional UK techniques of fly-fishing work as well on Nova Scotia's rivers like the Margaree and St. Mary's as they do on famous Scottish rivers. The important difference is the abundance of fish in Atlantic Canada and the freedom to use virtually any river or lake at the modest price of just a provincial fishing licence.

Any review of fishing opportunities in Canada must of course include a reference to tuna fishing off the coast of Prince Edward Island. Because no other port in the world can claim to exceed its bluefin tuna catch statistics and line-weight records, North Lake on PEI attracts big game anglers from all over the world. Although tuna can be abundant all summer, after mid-August the average size tops 1000 lbs as the late season fish move through the Gulf of St. Lawrence and out to sea. North Lake currently holds three International Game Fish Assn tuna records.

An invitation

So come and experience Canada's 146 000 miles of coastline and millions of lakes and rivers. From 'Sea to Shining Sea' Canada remains unbeatable when it comes to exhilarating angling holidays.

