

# FISHING INFORMATION

## ST. IGNACE FISHING HISTORY

The history of the Straits has always been interwoven with the fishing resources of the Great Lakes. The abundant stocks of fish were a food staple for the native people and early European traders and settlers. Commercial fishing during the last half of the 1800's and early part of the 1900's dominated life in St. Ignace. The fishing industry still provides many jobs for residents of St. Ignace and the Straits. Several varieties of fresh fish: including whitefish, perch, trout and walleye are featured on menus at many area restaurants.

After the fur trade moved farther west, fishing came into popularity. Whitefish and Lake Trout thrived in the cool waters of the Great Lakes. Just as before, Mackinac Island served as a depot to bring in the catch and package the fish for further shipment. This industry employed many people who were first involved with the fur trade. People could fish, make barrels and shipping crates, or transport the fish.

Lake whitefish are a cool, fresh water fish that generally live in large lakes and rivers. They are a slender fish with elongated body averaging about 15 inches in length and weighing up to 20 pounds in the Great Lakes. The largest whitefish on record was caught off Isle Royale in 1918 weighing 42 pounds. Whitefish are known for their exceptionally fine flavor and are considered one of the valuable commercial freshwater fish. Whitefish are caught commercially in gillnets or trap nets (rarely by hook).

The spring fishing season begins in April. The smelt begin to run and dippers arrive with nets and lights. Trout season begins in late April and walleye season begins May 15.

Summer is the season for charter fishing, as brown trout, lake trout, salmon and steelhead are prevalent. July and August are king salmon months where the action is fast and furious.

Fly-fishing is also excellent in the summer and all the way through fall. Anglers seeking a quiet getaway can find solitude on one of the many brook trout streams flowing through our area. Once the ice freezes over in December, venture out onto the lakes for some bluegill or walleye fishing. Ice fishing in and around the Straits of Mackinac is great fun and every angler should experience it!

Fishing in the St. Ignace area is nothing short of spectacular! The Straits of Mackinac offers extraordinary opportunities for migratory salmon and steelhead as well as small mouth bass, pike, muskie and many other species. Our location is an obvious advantage for fishing Lake Michigan and Lake Huron but don't miss out on the inland lakes and rivers, which are abundant in our area. Any time of year is the right time for fishing in St. Ignace!



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## CASTLE ROCK PONDS

Castle Rock Ponds with 14.5 acres of ponds is a quick 8-minute drive from downtown St. Ignace and is a popular fishing spot for many. The Department of Natural Resources sponsors a Kids Fishing Derby here every June at this location.

**What You'll Catch:** Ponds: Rainbow Trout, Yellow Perch, Bass, Bluegill, and Catfish



## STRAITS OF MACKINAC

The Straits of Mackinac is the 5 mile stretch of water that separates the upper and lower peninsula. Featuring magnificent views of Mackinac Island and St. Ignace. If big game fishing is what you're looking for then this is the spot for you.

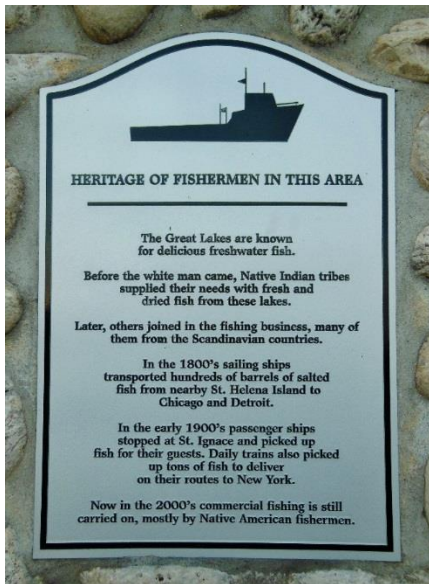
**What You'll Catch:** Muskie, Pike Salmon, Smallmouth Bass, Steelhead, and Trout

**When the Bitin's Good:** Typically dusk to early morning from 5am - 9am

**TIP:** Want to keep your travel light and don't want to worry about bringing your own poles or that big bulky tackle box? Charter Fishing takes the worry out of lugging all that extra stuff with you on your trip. North Shore Sport Fishing Charter supplies fishing rods, tackle, bait, etc. This charter specializes in catching trout and salmon on the Straits of Mackinac.

## LAKE HURON/EAST MORAN BAY

If you're looking to stay close to where you and the family are staying, look no further. Located in the Marina by Dock #3 on the southwest side of St. Ignace, there lies a fishing pier that offers fantastic fishing on Lake Huron. Since this spot has some of the best views of both the lake and Mackinac Island, it's the perfect place to bring the entire family.



**What You'll Catch:** Yellow Perch, Small Mouth Bass, and Sunfish

**Fisherman's Favorite Spot:** Wawatam Lighthouse and Chief Wawatam Park offers a unique view to pair with a favorite fishing spot.

**TIP:** Are you looking to bring some more excitement to your fishing trip? E.U.P Fishing Charters bring the excitement to charter fishing. Not only are you able to catch some big game but you will also enjoy the calm waters and stunning views of Mackinac Island. This charter runs May through October catch King Salmon, Lake Trout and Steelhead Trout.

## CARP RIVER

The Carp River, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, flows through predominantly forested lands with little development along its way. Spring's high water provides for canoeing and offers steelhead fishing and dipping for smelt near the river's mouth.

**What You'll Catch:** Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, and Walleye

**When the Bitin's Good:** Typically dusk to early morning from 5am - 9am. Although locals claim that the most epic time to fish these waters are around 6am.

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## MORAN RIVER – CHAIN AND FRECSHETTE LAKES

Moran River runs a total of 2.2 miles and connects these two in-land lakes. Chain Lake resides just 1.5 miles from the town of St. Ignace. On the other side of the Moran River is Freschette Lake.

**What You'll Catch:** Bullhead Catfish, Carp, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Perch, and Sunfish

**When the Bitin's Good:** Typically dusk to early morning from 5am - 9am. Although locals claim that the most epic time to fish these waters are around 7am.

## LAKE MICHIGAN/WEST MORAN BAY

Enjoy the west side of St. Ignace without the hustle of the city. West Moran Bay offers a relaxing and calm way to fish Lake Michigan.

**What You'll Catch:** Brown and Lake Trout, Coho and King Salmon, and Steelhead.

**When the Bitin's Good:** Typically dusk to early morning from 5a-9a

**TIP:** Chasin' Tail Charters runs May Through October. Although prime King Salmon season is between July and August, Chasin' Tail helps even the least experienced fishermen catch King Salmon that can reach up to 30 pounds!

## BREVOORT LAKE

Right in the heart of Hiawatha National Forest lies Brevoort Lake Campground which is surrounded by Brevoort Lake. The campground is open between May 7th to October 8th but the lake can be accessed year-round.

**What You'll Catch:** Bass, Bluegill, Northern Pike, Perch, Sunfish and Walleye

**When the Bitin's Good:** Typically dusk to early morning from 5am - 9am.

## FISHING SEASONS

### Large & Smallmouth Bass

Catch & Release | Open All Year

Catch & Keep on all Waters | May 25th – December 31st

### Muskellunge

Catch & Release | Open All Year

Catch & Keep on all Waters | June 1st – March 15th

### Northern Pike & Walleye

**Season:** Begins May 15 each year

Lower Peninsula Great Lakes | Open All Year

Upper Peninsula Great Lakes, inland waters & St.

Mary's River | May 15th – March 15<sup>th</sup>

### Salmon & Trout

**Season:** Trout season begins in late April

Great Lakes | Open All Year

### Smelt

**Season:** The spring fishing season begins in April when the smelt begin to run and dippers arrive with their nets.

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### Additional Information

Summer is the ideal season for charter fishing. Brown trout, lake trout, salmon and steel-head are abundant throughout the summer months. July and August are the ultimate king salmon months. Fly fishing is also excellent during the summer and throughout the fall. Anglers seeking a quiet getaway can find solitude on one of the many brook trout streams flowing through the area.

### Information & Information Provided By

St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.



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