

Fishing Guide La Crosse Wi



Fishing Guide La Crosse WI – Nestled in the scenic beauty of the upper Midwest, La Crosse, Wisconsin, is a hidden gem for fishing enthusiasts. With the majestic Mississippi River flowing through the area and numerous lakes and streams dotting the landscape, La Crosse offers a diverse range of fishing opportunities. This comprehensive guide will delve into everything you need to know about fishing in La Crosse, including the best fishing spots, seasonal considerations, local regulations, and tips to enhance your fishing experience.

Why Fish in La Crosse, WI?

La Crosse is ideally located at the confluence of the Mississippi River and several tributaries, making it a prime fishing destination. Here are some reasons why fishing in La Crosse is a fantastic experience:

- **Diverse Species:** The waters around La Crosse are home to various fish species, including bass, walleye, northern pike, catfish, and panfish.
- **Scenic Backdrops:** The area's natural beauty, featuring bluffs, forests, and river landscapes, creates a picturesque setting for fishing.
- **Accessibility:** With numerous public access points, lakes, and rivers, anglers can easily find spots to cast their lines.
- **Community and Culture:** La Crosse has a vibrant fishing community, with annual events and local knowledge that enrich the fishing experience.

Best Fishing Spots in La Crosse

La Crosse offers numerous fishing locations, each with its unique features. Here are some of the top spots to consider:

Mississippi River

The Mississippi River is undoubtedly the crown jewel of fishing in La Crosse. This iconic waterway is teeming with fish and offers several access points:

- Lake Onalaska: A popular spot for anglers, Lake Onalaska is known for its excellent bass and panfish fishing. The lake features various structures, such as submerged trees and weed beds, making it ideal for fishing.
- Black River: This tributary of the Mississippi offers great catfishing opportunities and is also home to walleye and northern pike. The Black River is accessible via several parks and boat launches.
- Lock and Dam 7: The tailwaters of Lock and Dam 7 provide excellent fishing for walleye and sauger, especially during spring and fall. Anglers can fish from the shore or use a boat to access deeper waters.

Local Lakes

In addition to the Mississippi River, several local lakes offer fantastic fishing:

- Lake Neshonoc: Known for its outstanding northern pike and bluegill fishing, Lake Neshonoc is a great spot for both boaters and shore anglers.
- French Island: Located just south of La Crosse, this area features shallow bays that are perfect for catching bass, panfish, and crappies.

Trout Streams

For those who prefer freshwater trout fishing, La Crosse is surrounded by several cold-water streams:

- Coon Creek: This stream is a designated trout water, providing anglers with opportunities to catch brook and brown trout.
- La Crosse River: The La Crosse River offers excellent trout fishing in its upper reaches. It is known for its beautiful scenery and well-maintained fishing access points.

Fishing Seasons in La Crosse

Understanding the fishing seasons is crucial for a successful trip. Here's a breakdown of what to expect throughout the year:

Spring (March to May)

- Walleye and Sauger: Spring is the prime time for walleye and sauger fishing in the Mississippi River, especially during the spawn in April.
- Panfish: As the water warms up, bluegill and crappie become active, making them easier to catch.

Summer (June to August)

- Bass Fishing: Summer is ideal for bass fishing, with both large and smallmouth bass becoming active in the warmer waters.
- Catfish: Night fishing for catfish is popular during the summer months when they are most active.

Fall (September to November)

- Walleye Run: Fall brings another walleye run, making it an excellent time for anglers to target these fish.
- Trout Fishing: The streams see an uptick in trout activity as they prepare for winter.

Winter (December to February)

- Ice Fishing: La Crosse offers fantastic ice fishing opportunities on local lakes, with anglers targeting species like panfish and northern pike.

Local Fishing Regulations

It's important to familiarize yourself with local fishing regulations to ensure a sustainable and enjoyable experience. Here are some key points to consider:

- Fishing Licenses: All anglers aged 16 and older must possess a valid Wisconsin fishing license. Licenses can be obtained online or at local retailers.
- Catch Limits: Different species have varying catch limits and size restrictions. Always check the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website for the most current regulations.
- Seasons: Some species have specific open and closed seasons. Be sure to verify these before planning your trip.

Essential Fishing Gear and Tips

To make the most of your fishing experience in La Crosse, it's essential to have the right gear and techniques. Here are some recommendations:

Essential Fishing Gear

- Rod and Reel: A medium-action rod is suitable for most freshwater fishing. Pair it with a spinning reel for versatility.
- Fishing Line: Use a 10- to 15-pound test monofilament or braided line for general fishing.
- Baits and Lures: Live bait such as worms, minnows, or leeches works well. Lures like crankbaits and

jigs are also effective, especially for bass and walleye.

Fishing Tips

- Learn Local Techniques: Join local fishing groups or hire a guide to learn specific techniques that work well in the area.
- Be Patient: Fishing often requires patience. If you don't get bites immediately, try changing your location or bait.
- Respect the Environment: Follow "Leave No Trace" principles by cleaning up after yourself and practicing catch-and-release when possible.

Conclusion

La Crosse, WI, is a remarkable destination for fishing enthusiasts, offering diverse species, stunning scenery, and a wealth of fishing opportunities. Whether you are an experienced angler or a beginner, the area's lakes, rivers, and streams provide an exciting fishing experience. By following local regulations, utilizing the right gear, and understanding seasonal patterns, you can make the most of your fishing adventure in La Crosse. So grab your rod, prepare your tackle, and get ready to enjoy a day on the water in this beautiful corner of Wisconsin!

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the best times of year to fish in La Crosse, WI?

The best times to fish in La Crosse, WI, are typically from late spring to early fall, with peak fishing often occurring in May and June when the weather is warm and fish are most active.

What types of fish can I catch in the La Crosse area?

In the La Crosse area, you can catch a variety of fish including walleye, northern pike, bass, crappie, and catfish, making it a great spot for diverse fishing experiences.

Are there any guided fishing tours available in La Crosse?

Yes, there are several fishing guides and charter services in La Crosse, WI, offering guided fishing tours that cater to both beginners and experienced anglers.

What fishing gear should I bring when visiting La Crosse?

When fishing in La Crosse, it's recommended to bring a medium-action rod, a variety of lures and baits suitable for the species you're targeting, and appropriate tackle. Don't forget your fishing license!

Is it necessary to have a fishing license in La Crosse, WI?

Yes, a fishing license is required to fish in La Crosse, WI. You can obtain a license online or at local sporting goods stores.

What are some popular fishing spots in La Crosse?

Popular fishing spots in La Crosse include the Mississippi River, the La Crosse River, and local lakes such as Lake Onalaska, where anglers can find abundant fish.

Can I fish from a boat in La Crosse, or are there shore fishing options?

Both options are available in La Crosse. You can fish from a boat on the river or lakes, and there are also several accessible shore fishing spots along the banks and parks.

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