

FLY FISHING IN TASMANIA

FLY Fishing Lake Leake © Samuel Shelley

Tasmania's fly fishing heritage began on 4 May 1864, when brown trout eggs from England were hatched in the Plenty River. It was the third attempt by English settlers to transport brown trout eggs to the island, and their first successful acclimatisation in the Southern Hemisphere.

Today, Tasmania's thriving wild brown trout population and pristine waterways have built its international reputation as a fly fishing destination, with thousands of lakes, rivers and private fisheries attracting strong visitor interest.

During the 2024-25 season, 24,166 recreational fishing licences were issued, with nearly one in five licences issued to interstate and international visitors.

What makes fly fishing in Tasmania special

DIVERSE WATERWAYS

Tasmania has an array of fishing experiences with thousands of tarns and lakes (highland and lowland), rivers, creeks, estuaries and private fisheries to choose from.

EASY ACCESS

Many waterways are located within wilderness areas yet remain close to the main gateways of Hobart, Launceston and Devonport.

WILD BROWN TROUT

Tasmania's isolation and pristine conditions support what industry experts regard as arguably the purest strain of wild brown trout in the world. The fish exhibit instinctive, wild behaviour that creates challenging fishing conditions – a drawcard for experienced anglers.

Other introduced salmonid species available in wild waterways and private fisheries include rainbow trout, brook trout and Atlantic salmon. Some private fisheries stock tiger trout (a hybrid of brown and brook trout).

FISHING METHODS

Tasmania's water clarity enables exceptional sight fishing with a technique called 'polaroiding' – spotting trout using polarised sunglasses to cut surface glare. Anglers can sight-fish in shallow water near lake and lagoon edges where trout feed with their tails breaking the surface.

Tasmania accommodates multiple other fishing styles including dry fly (presenting artificial flies on the water's surface), shore-based or wading methods, and boat-based fishing through loch-style on lakes or drift boating on rivers.





Fly Fishing Lake Leake © Samuel Shelley



RiverFly 1864 © Kate Von Steglitz

Where to fish

WILD LAKES

Tasmania's shallow glacial lakes offer excellent fly fishing for wild brown trout. Many are located in the Central Plateau Conservation Area, part of the UNESCO Wilderness World Heritage Area. Woods Lake, Penstock Lagoon and Little Pine Lagoon hosted the World Fly Fishing Championship in 2019.

RIVERS

The Mersey and Meander rivers have featured in world championship competitions. Macquarie River and Brumbys Creek are popular for 'drift boating' – fishing from specially designed boats whilst rowing downstream with the current.

PRIVATE FISHERIES

Tasmania has [12 registered private fisheries](#). Recreational fishing licences are not required at private fisheries. Contact [Inland Fisheries Service](#) or [Trout Guides and Lodges Tasmania](#) for current access information.

Competitive landscape

Tasmania competes for fly fishing visitors in both domestic and international markets.

Key international competitors include New Zealand, Canada, Montana and Oregon (USA), Patagonia and Chile.

Tasmania's primary competitor is New Zealand, which offers similar cool climate, wilderness and alpine fishing with the advantages of larger trophy fish and direct international flights from the US and UK. Tasmania differentiates through the purity of its wild brown trout strain with challenging, instinctive fish behaviour rather than trophy-focused fishing.

Last updated January 2026 with current references and statistics from Inland Fisheries Service Annual Report 2024-25 and industry sources.

Essential information

SEASON

Brown trout season runs from the first weekend in August until the last weekend in April. Rainbow trout season is from October to May. Some public and private fisheries can be fished year-round.

LICENCES

All recreational anglers aged 14+ require a current angling licence for inland waters (except registered private fisheries). Licences available for 48 hours, 7 days, 28 days, one season or multi-season periods. Purchase online, at Service Tasmania, or through authorised agents and fishing guides.

GUIDES AND ACCOMMODATION

All fishing guides in Tasmania are required to meet certified accreditation standards through the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania. Trout Guides and Lodges Tasmania connects visitors with accredited guides and accommodation providers.

Fly fishing accommodation options include [Great Lake Hotel](#), [Central Highlands Base Camp Lodge](#), [Pumphouse Point](#), [Currawong Lakes](#) and [28 Gates Farmstay](#).

INFISH APP

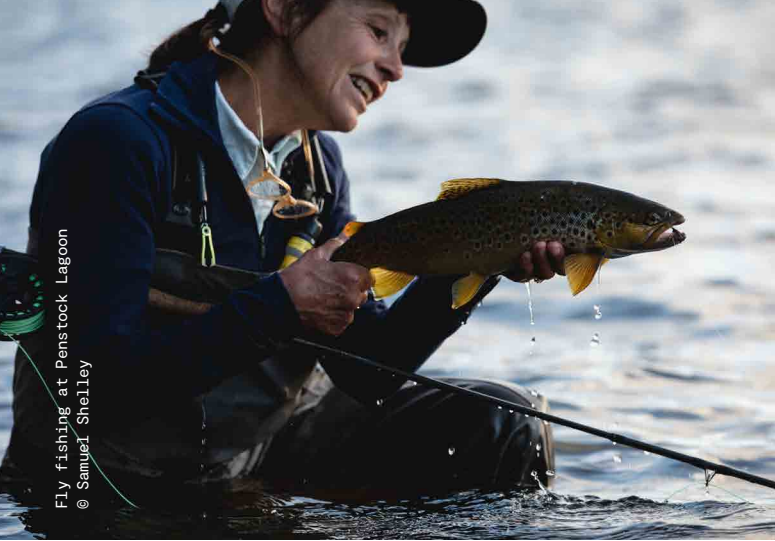
Information about fishing conditions at more than 150 Tasmanian waterways is available on the IFS InFish app.

QUARANTINE LAWS

Australia and Tasmania have strict quarantine laws. Anglers must check, clean and dry their fishing gear before coming to Tasmania, and declare any used fishing equipment on arrival from overseas.

ANGLERS ACCESS PROGRAM

Some inland waterways are located on private or restricted lands. The Anglers Access Program – a collaboration between the IFS, Anglers Alliance Tasmania and landowners – enhances fishing access to these regions, providing maps and resources for fishers to negotiate with landowners.



Who fishes in Tasmania

Understanding who Tasmania’s fly fishing visitors are helps operators target the right audience, tailor their offer and make the most of every booking.

Market size	Fly fishing enthusiasts represent approximately 1% of Australians who travel for their special interest. This group is high value, with 87% intending to return to Tasmania.
When they visit	Visitation is spread across the year: summer draws the most visitors (38%), followed by autumn (22%), winter (20%) and spring (19%).
Who they are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They typically travel as a couple without kids. • Based mainly in Victoria, followed by New South Wales. • 43% have a household income of \$150,000 or more.
How they travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They always travel with their own fly fishing equipment. • Many travel to Tasmania by air and favour all-inclusive packages covering transport, transfers and accommodation.
What else they do in Tasmania	Away from the water, fly fishing enthusiasts often visit national parks, go on road trips and take in historic sites and attractions.
What drives them	Fly fishing evokes escape, calm and focus. It is a contemplative experience with a strong connection to nature and, for many, a tradition passed between generations. Visitors seek guides with genuine local knowledge, a sense of achievement, and a place where they can switch off and reconnect. This audience researches trips months in advance and is detail oriented. Correct use of fly fishing terminology matters to them.

THE VALUE OF FLY FISHING VISITORS

Fly fishing visitors stay longer and spend more than the average visitor.

	Fly fishing visitors	Average visitor
Annual visitor volume	19,000 interstate and international	
Average length of stay	21.6 nights	9.4 nights
Average spend per person	\$4,903	\$2,691

Sources: Kantar research commissioned by Tourism Tasmania, 2020. Tourism Tasmania Fly Fishing Situational Analysis, 2019. Tasmanian Visitor Survey, year ending Sept 2025

Fly fishing visitors are typically repeat visitors with high disposable incomes, a strong appetite for quality accommodation and fine food and wine, and a preference for all-inclusive guided experiences. They represent a concentrated, loyal and commercially valuable audience.

THREE TYPES OF FLY FISHING VISITOR

1. Destination seekers

The primary focus is fishing iconic destinations across diverse geographies, fish and insect types, and refining their craft. Predominantly males aged 40 and over, some well over 65, with high disposable incomes. Major international markets are the USA and UK; domestically, the eastern seaboard. These visitors are the most likely to seek all-inclusive guided packages and high-end lodge accommodation.

2. Mid- to high-end professionals

High-pressure careers with disposable income and a need to switch off and recharge, without sacrificing comfort. Constrained to short stays due to busy schedules. Largely from Melbourne and Sydney, and moderate to experienced fly fishers. They book well in advance. Those with high disposable incomes have a strong appetite for fine local food and wine, whisky and premium accommodation.

3. Families

A minor segment and not identified as a priority growth area. Anecdotal evidence suggests many interstate fly fishing families own Tasmanian properties near key fishing locations and travel via the *Spirit of Tasmania* with their own equipment and boats.

Key insight: Fly fishing visitors live and breathe their pursuit. It is central to their identity, not simply a holiday activity. Operators who demonstrate genuine expertise, use correct terminology and offer seamless, high-quality experiences will earn the word-of-mouth advocacy that drives this market. The female fly fishing market has been identified as a key growth opportunity despite currently representing a small minority.

For up-to-date data, visit the [Tasmanian Visitor Survey Analyser](#).

Helpful links

Discover Tasmania:

discovertasmania.com.au/fly-fishing

Inland Fisheries Service: ifs.tas.gov.au

Trout Guides and Lodges Tasmania:

troutguidestasmania.com.au

Anglers Alliance Tasmania: anglersalliance.org.au

Facebook: fb.com/tasmania

Instagram: @tasmania

Weibo: 塔斯马尼亚旅游局官博