

2000 Lake Erie Walleye Tournaments

April 1. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Catawba Island State Park. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

April 19-20. Professional Walleye Trail (PWT) Lake Erie Tournament. Port Clinton, OH. Contact PWT Headquarters at: (218) 829-0620.

April 29-30. North American Walleye Anglers (NAWA) Open "Team Challenge". Monroe, MI. Field limit of 200 boats. Entry Fee: \$150/boat. Contact K.J. Beam of Sportsman's Quest at (800) 224-4990.

May 20. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Huron River Boat Basin, Huron, OH. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

June 10-11. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Lorain - Hotwaters, Lorain, OH. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603

June 10th North Coast Charter Boat Association. Fairport Harbor, OH. Pro Division \$400/boat (8 rods max) Amateur Division \$150/boat (8 rods max). 80% payback, first five positions. Contact Bernie Roell: (440) 257-9544.

June 10-18 Southtowns Walleye Association of Western New York. Several Western New York weigh stations. Contact Tom Marks: (716) 947-9350.

June 16-18 444 Walleye International Fishing Tourn. Port Colborne & District Conservation Club. Marina H, H Knoll Park in Port Colborne, Ontario. Entry Fee: \$130/team (US) Contact Mike Shatkosky (905) 834-4314 or Mike Hili (905) 835-1891 Email: pcdcc@inter-pc.com www.thefishingspot/pcdcc

June 17. The '99 West Cleveland Open. Rocky River Metro Parks Ramp, Cleveland, OH. Contact: Chris Songer; (440) 835-2892 Email: cmsms@aol.com. Entry Fee: \$100-\$124 per boat, 1-4 man teams.

July 8-9. New York Walleye Association. Ameri-Can Walleye Classic. Chadwick Bay Marina, Dunkirk, NY. \$150/team (3 man teams). Limit 150 teams. Contact Jim Dolly (716) 695-8199.

July 21-23. Walleye Challenge. Port Colborne, Ontario \$375/3-4 person team (US). 100 team limit . Contact Dave Malloy (905) 834-9218.

July 29. Fairport Harbor Rod & Reel Association. Fairport Harbor, OH \$25.00/person. (8 rod limit) 90% Payout. Contact Chuck Fievet: (440) 352-2160.

August 12. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Geneva State Park. Geneva, OH. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

August 26-27 United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Two day Championship. Fairport Harbor, OH. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

Ask the Captain

Lake Erie Charter Captains Answer Reader's Angling Questions

Q: I've seen Fisheries Reports that indicate the average size of walleyes caught in the central and eastern basins of Lake Erie are larger than those caught in the western basin. What are the reasons for this fact?

Captain Bob Brown, Jr. responds:

The main Walleye spawning areas are in the western basin of Lake Erie. As the eggs hatch and turn into small Walleyes, they tend to hang together in schools for protection purposes. The Walleye "fry" tend to hang out fairly close to the area they were hatched. When the fish reach two years old (about 14"), they become very aggressive in their feeding habits and are sometimes caught in large numbers. Usually this happens in Late May through July. As these two year old are normally about 40-60% of the total Walleye population, they usually make up the largest part of the total catch of Walleye per year. Since these fish haven't ventured too far from home yet (they will when they get older and larger), they are concentrated in the western basin. Having fished the western basin and island area for the past 25 years, I can assure you that there are plenty of larger Walleye in the western basin. Just more small ones than the rest of the lake!

Q: I know that the zebra mussel has helped improve water quality in the lake. How has this affected fishing for walleyes? Can you suggest any special techniques for fishing for clear water walleyes?

Captain Joe Holly responds:

By the increase water clarity due to the zebra mussels, expect the walleyes to be more light sensitive and spooked more easily by boat traffic. Expect your

fishing success to increase on more windy days or when rough lake conditions exist, compared to calmer days. This is due to the waves breaking up any light penetration through the clean water. Also expect walleyes to generally move off into deeper water adjacent to the reefs earlier in the season than in years past.

Early morning or late afternoon fishing trips can be more productive when the sun is at a lower angle. Trolling with dipsy divers that allows for a more wide presentation can also increase your success. Night fishing can be very productive as walleyes are very active at night.

Q: In the Eastern Basin of Lake Erie, when is the best time of year to fish for walleyes? I've heard that walleyes are generally greater in size in the Eastern Basin than in the Western Basin. Is this true?

Captain Phil Swiatkowski responds:

The Eastern Basin of Lake Erie offers both shallow and deep water fishing opportunities. A variety of depths and bottom structures (reasonably close to each other) hold walleyes throughout all seasons and weather conditions. Fish don't have to travel very far to find favorable conditions. These combinations also attract forage fish and other species of fish that walleyes feed on easily. This just might be the reason for the exceptional size of Eastern Basin walleyes.

Q: *What is the typical diet of walleyes in the western and central basin during the summer season? Is there a particular time of day that's best for catching them or can you catch walleyes anytime?*

Captain Bryce Seymour responds:

Walleyes typically eat anything they want to, but shad and alewife are probably the most common things we find when we check the stomach contents. Worms are effective at catching them even though I doubt there are many earthworms swimming around 20 miles off shore in 76 feet of water.

I like to fish low light conditions and you will see more captains leaving the docks earlier and earlier because for a good part of the season the fishing slows when the sun gets higher and this is usually around 11 am when the fish are up higher in the water column. The other advantage is these fish are caught with shorter leads so you can catch more fish faster. The other thing that will have the captains leaving earlier is that we only have so many fishing days and we are starting to see more captains fish two trips a day so they can accommodate all their clientele.

Thank you Captains for responding to our reader's questions

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Captain Phil Swiatkowski
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Try This Walleye Recipe

Crispy Beer Batter Fried Walleye with Mango Sweet and Sour Sauce

1 c. sugar
2 tsp minced garlic
1 1/2 c. rice wine vinegar
2 tsp. chile paste with garlic
2 T. Asian fish sauce
Cornstarch slurry as needed
1/2 mango cut into 1/4 inch dice (other fruits such as fresh peaches, raspberries, wild blueberries, or strawberries or a combination of fruits may be substituted)

Garnish

1/2 red pepper, finely diced (or a combination of colored sweet peppers)

4 green onions, green part only, finely sliced on the diagonal

Beer Batter

10 oz. all-purpose flour

3 T. paprika

2 T. kosher salt

1 T. ground black pepper

2-3 12 oz. cans beer

All-purpose flour (to dredge walleye in before battering)

6 (8-10 oz.) boneless, skinless walleye fillets, whole or cut into finger-sized strips.

Make the sweet and sour sauce first. Combine sugar, garlic, rice wine vinegar, chili paste, and fish sauce in a heavy bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil and simmer for 4 to 5 minutes until reduced and the flavor reaches desired intensity. Thicken with cornstarch slurry. Refrigerate until needed. Serve warm. Makes about 2 cups of sauce.

Prepare garnishes and refrigerate until needed.

Make your beer batter next. Whisk the flour, paprika, salt and pepper together until well combined. Whisk in beer to make a thin batter, not much thicker than buttermilk or very heavy cream.

To serve: Dredge walleye fillets or pieces in flour and shake off excess. Dip into beer batter and deep fry until golden brown and crisp. Remove and drain.

Cover the bottom of 6 heated plates with 1 1/2 to 2 oz. of the sauce mixed with 1 to 2 tablespoons of the chopped mango. Sprinkle the red peppers and green onion tops over the sauce. Place walleye on top and serve.

Tip: Leftover sweet and sour sauce keeps almost indefinitely in the refrigerator in a covered container. Serves 6.

The above recipe courtesy of www.OnlakeErie.com