

Epic Narrows Musky Camp

LAKE OF THE WOODS ONTARIO, CANADA



The Fly Shop

TRAVEL & TACKLE GUIDE

GPS Coordinates: 49°40'29.10"N | 94°31'49.72"W

WWW.THEFLYSHOP.COM

Trip Questionnaire: Please click on the link below. This will take you an electronic questionnaire form that we ask you to complete and submit to The Fly Shop. Please be sure to click the **“Submit”** button at the end of the form. The information provided will help us -- and the outfitter best coordinate your trip.

THANK YOU! Click [HERE](#)

IMPORTANT: ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS:

Entry into Canada is solely determined by Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) officials in accordance with Canadian law. Please see the CBSA’s website for details: <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>

Non-Canadians Entering Canada:

When you enter Canada, a border services officer will ask to see your passport and a valid visa, if you need one.

If you are a citizen of the United States, you need a passport to fly to or transit through a Canadian airport, but not to enter Canada by land or by boat. You must carry proof of your citizenship, such as a birth certificate, certificate of citizenship or naturalization, or a Certificate of Indian Status, as well as photo identification. If you are a permanent resident of Canada or the U.S, you should bring your Permanent Resident Card with you.

U.S. citizens entering Canada from a third country must have a valid U.S. passport.

When returning to the United States from Canada, it is very important to note that all U.S. citizens are required to present a valid U.S. passport to enter or re-enter the United States **via air**. For entry into the United States via land and sea borders, U.S. citizens must present either a U.S. passport, passport card, NEXUS card, Enhanced Driver’s License, or other Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)-compliant document.

Important: You must claim your luggage on your first point of entry into Canada and clear immigrations and customs. Failure to claim your luggage will result in your luggage not showing up at your end destination.

Inoculations & Health Concerns:

There are no formal requirements, or recommendations for immunizations and very little risk of infectious disease in Canada. The risk would be about equivalent to what it would be for trip to Colorado. You should check with your personal physician if you are concerned. We recommend that anglers be up-to-date on their Tetanus, Hepatitis-A and Hepatitis-B and COVID vaccinations.

Getting There:

Friday:

The day before you are scheduled to arrive at the camp, you will fly from your home airport to Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada (YWG) the geographical center of Canada. International flights are usually no more than a 2.5-hour flight from any major hub in the U.S. You will clear Canadian Immigration and Customs in your first port of entry into Canada or in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Overnight in Winnipeg, dinner this evening is on you own. Suggested hotel, [Courtyard Winnipeg Airport](#)

Arrival Note:

Please text Derek Botchford when you arrive Winnipeg to let him know you have made it and get any final instruction for pick-up the following morning: 604-838-0245

Arrival Day - Saturday:

Very early on Saturday morning, you will be picked up at your hotel and shuttled to the small town or Kenora, followed by a short boat taxi to the lodge, an approximate 2 hours in total transfer time. Fishing will immediately follow, allowing for a full day on the water.

Sunday – Wednesday:

These are full fishing days, starting early in the morning after a delicious breakfast. Expect to be fishing as many as 12 hours per day – dawn to dusk in some cases. Fishing starts as close as a 10-minute boat ride from the lodge. Lunch is taken on the fly and often includes a shore lunch, freshly prepared by your guide. The dinner schedule is flexible depending on the fishing day.

Departure Day - Thursday:

On day six, after a hearty breakfast, you will be shuttled back to Winnipeg, Manitoba (YWG). Baring any travel delays, you should be able to catch a 12:00 noon flight back home.

Ontario, Canada Fishing License

Fishing licenses are not included in the package. Anglers can purchase their basic 8-Day Ontario Non-resident fishing licenses by clicking on the link below.

[8-day Ontario Non-resident Fishing License \(Zone #5\) \(\\$54.38 CAD & Outdoor Card \(\\$8.57 CAD\)\)](#)

Please print two (02) copies of your fishing license, store them in a small zip-lock bag and pack them in your carry-on luggage. You must have your fishing license on your person while fishing.

Contact Numbers

If you have any problems during your trip with missed connections, or want to leave an emergency number for family members or office:

Epic Narrows Mucky Camp

Derek Botchford (owner)

P O Box 7

Smithers, BC, Canada V0J2X0

250 846 9153 | Toll free: 1 877 846 9153 | dbotchford@gmail.com

Derek Botchford Text: 604-838-0245

[Courtyard Winnipeg Airport](#)

780 Powerhouse Road

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3H 1C7

Tel: +1 204-505-8600

The Fly Shop®

(530) 222-3555 | (800) 669-3474 | travel@theflyshop.com

U.S. Consulate General

Calgary consular region (includes Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories):

During business hours, please use our contact form at <https://usacs-info.com/en-ca/>. After business hours, please call [403-266-8962](tel:403-266-8962), and press “0” for immediate assistance

General Information

Currency:

The Canadian dollar is the official currency in Manitoba & Ontario, however; US dollars are widely used and accepted. Credit cards will also be accepted anywhere. Remember to call the Credit Card Company and inform them of your travel dates.

Gratuities:

We recommend guide and staff gratuities of approximately \$500 - \$700 per angler to be divided amongst the staff. Tips are pooled and can be left in an envelope provided to you. If you find service by any individual to be exceptional, feel free to give them additional direct compensation. US dollars are preferred. All tips must be paid in cash.

Weather:

Summer weather in the Lake of the Woods Region is quite nice, although it can get pretty hot and humid. Expect daytime temperatures in the mid-eighties and nighttime temperatures in the fifties. Afternoon thunderstorms are not that uncommon, so do bring a light set of rain gear, both jacket and pants. Additionally bring a light to medium fleece for cooler evenings and boat rides in the morning. Lightweight sun protective clothing is a must during fishing hours.

Power & Communications:

Epic Narrows Musky Camp has wireless broadband internet access (Star Link), and reasonable cellular reception. Power outlets in every room will allow you to charge all of your devices every night.

Other Amenities:

We do offer limited laundry service at the lodge, for if you fall in but do not plan on having regular laundry service.

The lodge also offers a variety of toiletry articles' including shampoo/conditioner, hand creams, and lindy's handmade soaps so feel free to keep your toiletries to a minimum.

Alcohol

The lodge provides beer and wine, but no hard alcohol. They can stop at a store on the way to camp. Duty free is a great place to purchase alcohol prior to entering Canada. Our health care is expensive and you will feel it when you buy booze here. Please note there is no liquor store at the lodge and people regularly regret not bringing scotch to toast that 30 lbs Musky they caught!

Liquor:

Canadian Liquor Laws are different than ours here in the States. Beer and wine must be purchased in special stores. These stores usually stay open well into the evening and are open on weekends. However, "spirits" or hard liquor must be purchased at a Government Store. These stores do not stay open past 6:00 p.m., and are closed on Sundays. If you like a cocktail at the end of the day, plan on bringing your own from the States. You are able to bring 1.5 liters of wine, 1.14 liters of liquor or 24 x 355 ml cans or bottles (8.5 liters) of beer or ale. There is an opportunity to purchase beer, wine and spirits at a Government Store at your end destination.

Food:

Epic Narrows takes extraordinary pride in preparing some of the finest meals you will ever see at a fishing lodge. Top quality ingredients and an excellent presentation are paired to serve you hearty meals with ridiculous proportions.

Bugs:

The bugs aren't bad on Lake of the Woods but are out real early in the morning and come out at 10:00 PM religiously so some bug spray is handy.

Recommended Equipment

Equipment & Gear:

Although all of the fly rods, reels, fly lines, leaders and flies are supplied by the Camp and guides, we understand that you may want to bring your own equipment, especially if you plan to fish for smallmouth bass – which we highly recommend. Here is what Derek suggests for tackle.

For Musky a 10 - 12 weight is ideal. Saltwater rods and reels work great if you have one. Also, interestingly enough, more and more Musky fishermen are moving to switch rods to overhead cast flies (not roll cast).

Our favorite way to fish is to have 2 rods per angler. One rigged with a floating line and a very large popper fly for top water action. The other rod rigged with an intermediate line or medium sink for fishing a couple feet down in the water column. **No need for any super deep sinking lines.** We have a few on hand if it ever comes up, but it is rarely needed.

Fly Lines:

Lines are very important as we will be throwing very large flies. Here are the best lines to choose from

- Scientific Anglers Mastery Titan Taper
- Orvis Bank shot
- Rio Elite Predator
- Rio outbound short

Cortland is making some great lines and is the only one making a 12 weight

- Pike Musky Float
- Pike Musky Intermediate
- Pike Musky Sink 4
- Scientific Anglers Sonar Musky

Switch Rods:

We all have our own preference, and some of the guides favorite way to fish for Musky is casting two handed rods. They do need to be built differently than your average spey rod. The only one we have used so far that works perfectly is the Beulah opal 2 handed surf rod. If you are an experienced spey fisherman this should be your rod of choice.

- G2 Opal surf rod 7/8 - for a line you want to throw a 10 weight

- G2 Opal Surf rod 9/10 - for a line you want to throw a 11 or 12 weight

Reels:

This is really just a matter of personal preference but any good disc drag will work fine. Even Click and Pawl spey reels work great. It is more important to match the weight of the reel to your rod so it balances out nicely. This helps limit the weight of the rod in your hand while casting.

Flies:

We will mainly be casting 6 - 10 inch flies that are designed very sparse for easy pick up. 12 inch flies do come out if we have seen a Musky or had a follow. Musky flies need to be built to last. If you like to tie, we highly recommend the beginner series by Gunnar Brammer. Youtube Musky Flies

Tying Musky Flies:

If anyone wants to tie flies let me know I can send YouTube links of best patterns. Fun to tie but take nearly 2 hours per fly. The best patterns to get size yet are the most castable is called a hollow fly sometime called Beast Fleye. The best YouTube guy to learn about this is Gunner Brammer. Here are a couple good links to check out.

- https://youtu.be/53tlS6408YI?si=s4ktsn_0NahbbcEE
- <https://youtu.be/shYqgLFUfEo?si=j7dUZ5kYyKIZ6a7v>
- https://youtu.be/IQLkIc2eaOY?si=l14WWDG6pFLD_oon
- <https://youtu.be/yOAUykbhpAQ?si=zqLdh7HYoUxfWl27>

The key is selecting patterns that look great in the water but cast well. We find the best colors to be white, yellow, black, olive and tan. Here are our favorite patterns

- Buford – single and double Bulkheads Bucktails
- Hollow Beast Gamechanger

The Camp will also be equipped with a range of rods, lines, flies and tippet materials that you will be welcome to use if needed. We will also have some flies for sale at the lodge. Musky flies aren't cheap, they run \$15 - \$60 a fly but you rarely lose them, and they look pretty darn cool.

Leaders:

Lake of the Woods musky tend to be 40-50 inches and have big, giant teeth. The leader is crucial to being able to land these fish. Leaders are usually around 6 feet long.

- Butt section: 40 lb. Clear maxima, our go to as always
- Bite guard: 80 lb. Seaguar Fluorocarbon
- Bite guard 50 lb. stainless steel wire
- Stay-Lok Snap #4 Clasp allows for a quick change of flies

Premade leaders:

- Scientific Anglers Absolute Toothy Fish 55 lb.
- Orvis - predator Poly Leader (personal favorite but you have to swap out to a larger stay-lok with the one it comes with)

Small Mouth Bass:

- Fly rods 6 - 8 weights work great for bass.

Lines:

If you are only going to bring 1 line, bring a floating line. The bass are in shallow water and we can use heavy flies to sink it to them with a slow retrieve. If you are bringing 2 lines, a floating and a medium sink works great.

- Scientific Anglers Mastery Titan Taper
- Rio Outbound short
- Orvis Bank-shot

Flies:

Lake of the Woods is literally chalk full of crayfish. The best pattern is a very heavy crayfish fly you can let sink and retrieve along the bottom in 4 - 6 feet of water

- Gamechangers
- An assortment of medium to large poppers

Double Handed Rods:

Again, we really love using the 2 hander rod for bass and pike and if a small musky bit you could handle him

- Beulah G2 Opal surf rod 5/6 - use 9 weight line on this rod

Leaders:

You will want to throw 8 - 10 foot tapered leader for bass, 10 lb. It is good to have a spool of light stainless steel bite wire as well as we often catch pike while bass fishing.

Conventional Gear:

There is no problem at all throwing gear, in fact if one angler wants to toss a few lures while the other is fly fishing that's fine. We usually just toss top-water when guys want to do this so they don't get snagged and mess up the flow. The lodge has some rods and lures but they are nothing fancy and not ideal. If someone wants to bring a conventional rod and reel that's fine. The guides won't have any issue guiding gear either. Personally, I sometimes throw a big bass Zara Spook out the back and try to catch bass. They do have a couple decent bass rods for gear. I've had several muskies follows on it but never a take, so that can help locate some musky.

Rain Gear & Fleece:

Although the summers on Lake of the Woods are very mild, you should be prepared for afternoon thunderstorms and possibly cool morning runs in the fishing skiffs. Please bring lightweight raingear; jacket and pants, along with a fleece (non-cotton).

Check List

- Hat with bill and neck protection (a dark underside on hat bill is best.)
- Polarized sunglasses - take an extra pair! Lens Cleaner & Lens Cloth
- Bandana (always a handy item for neck protection, lens cleaner, rag etc.)
- Long sleeve shirts (light colors, light weight)
- Short sleeve shirts
- Buff Face Mask (great for sun protection of face, neck, ears, nose, etc.)
- Long pants (light colored, light weight)
- Shorts
- Sandals, flip flops or camp shoes
- Deck/Boat shoes (no laces, non-skid) Crocs are excellent!
- Raingear (very light weight and packable, tops and bottom)
- Light to medium Fleece Jacket
- Sunscreen (at least SPF 30+, waterproof, PABA-free, UVA, UVB)
- Lip balm with sunscreen (highest SPF you can get)
- Tools: Nippers, good pliers and hook sharpener.
- Insect repellent with DEET (at least 30%)
- Camera, extra batteries, charger and memory cards
- Waterproof bag, garbage bags and Zip-Lock Bags (to carry camera, other gear while in the boat)
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Smart Phone and charger
- WhatsApp Application downloaded on smart phone
- Sun gloves, Striper fingers, FlexxRap Tape
- Passport and travel documents
- 2 Copies of passport (**packed separately in zip lock bag**)
- Airline tickets and itinerary
- Cash (small bills for tips, bar tab, gift shopping, etc.), credit card
- Notebook and pen
- Contact numbers
- Liquor (if you wish special brands – beer & wine supplied)
- Toiletries, including shampoo, hand lotion, bandages, roll of athletic adhesive tape
- Ibuprofen, other over-the-counter medications like antacids
- Prescription medications (packed in your carry-on bag)
- Swimsuit
- Prescription glasses