

Title: The Islands

Deck: A network of streams and lakes amid temperate rainforest, surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, its tidal narrows, sheltered inlets and majestic fjords; make fishing an adventure on the west coast.

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With a diverse ecosystem that showcases old-growth rainforest, mountain ranges, rivers, lakes, and is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, the Vancouver Island region offers limitless freshwater and saltwater angling options. From remote wilderness destinations to full service fishing resorts, this area has become a Mecca for outdoor recreational enthusiasts.

Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and Rivers Inlet make up this region. Wild and rugged coastline is interrupted by pristine inlets with sandy beaches, leading to spawning rivers, mountain lakes, and wilderness streams. This abundance of possibilities creates a consistent fishery year-round.

Most locations on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands are accessible to those travelling with their own boats and nearly every town provides full services from accommodations and meals to fuel, fishing charter guides, tackle and supplies.

The Rivers Inlet is located on the mainland of British Columbia off the northeastern tip of Vancouver Island, roughly 300 kilometres north of Vancouver. It's carved deep into the coast mountains and historically produces some of the most impressive trophy salmon in the world. It's not accessible by road, only by boat or by air, which makes this fishing destination extra special.

The Vancouver Island region is dotted with lakes of all different sizes where freshwater anglers reel in rainbow, cutthroat and Dolly Varden. Although many of these water systems have native inhabitants, the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC raises and supplements the trout population, releasing over a million trout raise at the Vancouver Island Trout Hatchery in Genoa Bay near Duncan.

Those searching for bigmouth and smallmouth bass, or even catfish, should head south. Nearly all the lakes in southern Vancouver Island contain bass, including St. Mary's Lake: a popular bass hot-spot on Salt Spring Island.

Saltwater enthusiasts will find all five species of salmon, halibut, ling cod, rock cod and a span of rockfish. Anglers catch the moving salmon trophy offshore, finding schools of inlet bound baitfish, or by casting into river estuaries in the seasonal salmon runs are underway.

Simply put: Vancouver Island is a sport fishing paradise.

GULF ISLANDS AND CENTRAL EAST COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

Tucked away in the southern portion of the Georgia Strait are the Gulf Islands: Salt Spring, North and South Pender, Galiano, Saturna, Mayne and Gabriola. Their friendly residents enjoy the relaxed, rural island lifestyle. These islands are known as charming and naturally beautiful vacation destinations.

The Gulf Islands are easily accessible, are boater friendly with full service marinas. Saltwater fishing charters for both salmon and halibut can be arranged from any of them. The swift currents flowing through Active Pass, between Mayne and Galiano Islands; and Porlier Pass, between Galiano and Valdes Islands provide ideal conditions for year-round salmon fishing. However, the season peaks May through October, with August and September producing the most impressive salmon.

Nanaimo, the Harbour City, is the second most populated city on Vancouver Island. Located on the central east coast, it is well situated for a fishing holiday putting anglers in the middle of the Georgia Strait fishing action.

Fleets of fishing charters are available year round. Feeder Chinook reside in this area throughout the winter months. A salmon migration runs through in early April, guaranteeing a successful spring fishing trip. The run builds through June and July, peaking in August and lasting through September. This is the best time for casting and trolling for pink, sockeye, and Chinook salmon. The bulk of the coho run June through September, and chum join in late September through November.

Jigging for halibut, rock and ling cod and a variety of bottom fish is most successful around Five Finger Islands off of Departure Bay, Entrance Island north of Gabriola, off Orlebar Point on Gabriola, and off of Snake Island east of Nanaimo.

In late summer anglers are found lining the mouth and banks of the Millstone River in Maffeo Sutton Park, just north Nanaimo Harbour. Casting from the rocks or offshore boats, these fishermen, women and children have been seen netting their limits of pink before a downtown skyline.

Nearby lakes worth a visit for cutthroat and rainbow trout are Long, Brannen, Rhododendron, Westwood, Loon Lakes, Colliery Dam Park, as well as the four Nanaimo Lakes.

Heading north from Nanaimo on the old Island Highway, 19A, you'll find the Oceanside communities of Parksville and Qualicum Beach. There are freshwater opportunities for trout at Englishman River Falls Provincial Park, just west of Parksville. Be sure to check with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) regarding trout conservations in this water system.

The Qualicum and Little Qualicum Rivers are good for trout, and further west is Cameron Lake. This pristine lake is a steelhead run destination, perfect for shore or boat casting with lots of picnic areas.

Continuing north on the old Island Highway to brings you into Lighthouse County. A row of sleepy villages with seaside cottages settled along the shoreline starting at Qualicum Beach, running to Fanny Bay, just across from Denman and Hornby Islands. Salmon fishing occurs in the summer months with plenty of chartered guides standing by.

Larger Chinook are attracted by the spawning herring and shrimp hatching in Deep Bay, specifically near Norris Rocks, Chrome Island and Eagle West. Riverbank casting is usually successful at the mouth of Rosewall Creek in Qualicum Bay.

A jog rock from Lighthouse County will find bass enthusiasts fishing the regularly stocked Spider Lake. There are plenty of smallmouth bass to catch in this Provincial Park. The best results are in early spring and in the fall, avoiding warmer temperatures. No motorized boats are permitted on this lake.

Further north on the old Island Highway awaits the Comox Valley, comprised of the twin towns of Courtenay and Comox. Outdoor enthusiasts arrive here with a to-do list that could include white water rafting, extreme mountain biking, and skiing and snowboarding on Mount Washington in the winter months.

This region has beautiful and extremely accessible waterways with full marine and fishing charter services available. The aggressive resident Chinooks provide a consistent winter fishing season from December through April. By May, and into July, migrating Chinook arrive and are later joined by mature coho and chum in September through November. These transient fish show off incredible surface acrobats!

North of the Puntledge River Estuary, between Courtenay and Comox, off of Cape Lazo, King Coho and Bates Beach, offers sheltered waters free of dangerous currents. The shoreline in this area is perfect for rod fishing from a small boat.

Jig for sole and rock cod at Mitenatch Island, a Nature Provincial Park Reserve just off the mainland. This island is home to the largest seabird colony in Georgia Strait and is worth the trip. However, Rockfish Conservation Areas occur in this park. Always check with DFO when planning your trip.

Fly-fish for salmon, trout and steelhead at the mouth of Black Creek that flows through Miracle Beach Provincial Park. The best times are late summer and fall. Similar opportunities are found at Oyster River further north. The Comox Valley is webbed with water systems for the spring and summer trout angler. Comox Lake has year-round koanee, cutthroat, rainbow, and Dolly Varden. Smaller lakes in the area like Maple, Wolf and Chickadee are stocked with rainbow and cutthroat trout.

CAMPBELL RIVER AND THE DISCOVERY PASSAGE

You'll see the sign as you continue north on Highway 19. Welcome to Campbell River - the "Salmon Capital of the World." The offshore islands within the Discovery Passage protect these waterways, making ideal conditions for salmon and bottom fishing year-round, though most saltwater anglers plan their trips from April to the end of October.

Campbell River is home of with the historical Tyece Club. It started in 1924 by a group of anglers who returned to Campbell River to pursue the great TYEE, a coastal First Nations word meaning "the chief", a name given to fish weighing 30 pounds or more. To become a member an angler must fish from a classic row boat, usually rowed by a guide, using only artificial lures. If the angler boats a Chinook weighing 30 pounds or more, the fish is recorded and they become an official Tyece Club member. The heaviest Tyece caught last year in the club weighed 54-pounds!

Salmon fishing happens all year in Campbell River, thanks to the inhabiting winter Chinook. By June the migrating mature Chinook arrive, followed by pink, coho, and sockeye in mid-July. Finally, in late September chum start to populate the passage. Lingcod, rock cod, snapper and halibut can also be caught here.

Campbell River is also home to the Discovery Pier, Canada's first public saltwater fishing pier designed for salmon and ground fish jigging. It is 600-feet long and is wheelchair accessible with a concession stand operating in the summer months.

Just across the Discovery Passage, amongst breathtaking coastal scenery, stretches the Discovery Islands. The most visited and inhabited of these islands are the tranquil and friendly Quadra and Cortes Islands. BC Ferries offers a convenient service from downtown Campbell River to both.

Tidal flows within Discovery Passage churn up clouds of nutrients which contribute to a complex food chain with the salmon king being near the top. These currents also make for tricky navigating and should only be transited by experienced boaters who've consulted local and current tide guides.

Anglers fish both sides of Discovery Passage from Chatham and Browns Bays north of Campbell River to Quadra Island hot spots like Cape Mudge, Plumper Bay, Copper Bluffs, April Point and particularly the entrance to Quathiaski Cove, where the ferry terminal is. A public boat ramp at Rebecca Spit Marine Provincial Park provides easy access to calm fishing grounds.

Inland on Quadra Island, cutthroat trout are numerous in Village Bay, Mine and Main Lakes.

North of Campbell River anglers target a May run of white Chinook salmon near Toba and Bute Inlets. South of the city an extremely lucky angler can actually land a Tyece by casting from the beach in late summer and into the fall.

Steelhead runs twice a year at the Quinsam and Campbell Rivers. The Quinsam flows into the Campbell River just inland, both opening into the ocean at an estuary. The summer run occurs from June through October and the winter run anytime between November and April. All five species of salmon also run into this system and are usually present year-round in nearby water systems.

Lakes within an easy drive of Campbell River include Beavertail, Drum, Quinsam, Buttle, Echo, Upper and Lower Campbell Lakes. For a true freshwater fishing adventure ask the local visitor centre for a back country map book and let your search for rainbow and cutthroat trout begin!

NORTH ISLAND

As Highway 19 continues north passed Campbell River it winds through the North Island Region. This area is engulfed in rugged wilderness, rich with history and coastal First Nations culture, and a wildlife photographers dream. Visitors will catch a glimpse of bald eagles, black bears and Orca whales from Port Hardy, Port McNeill, and the recognized whale watching hub: Telegraph Cove. Anglers arrive to take advantage of the North Islands world class saltwater sports fishing!

The North Island makes up only three percent of Vancouver Island's total population; Port Hardy and Port McNeill are the larger centres in the region and launch points for saltwater fishing. Port Hardy is also accessible by air from Vancouver, and other points. It's the gateway to the Inside Passage with ferry services to Prince Rupert on the mainland, and to Haida Gwaii, formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands. Rivers Inlet can be reached by floatplane from here as well.

It will appear that most residents in these North Island communities own a fishing charter, fishing lodge or operate some form of fishing service. Because nearly every spot is a fishing hot spot here, the local's expertise on the subject has become their passion. Not sure where to start? Any local visitor centre will help you plan the perfect fishing vacation.

Port Hardy is the first North Island town to see the salmon run, traveling through Queen Charlotte and Broughton Straits, on its way to the Strait of Georgia. The first of these Chinook arrive in May, with the largest moving through the area in August. Coho come in late June. Pink and chum are on the bite throughout the entire summer.

In the south part of the North Island region, Sayward village on Kelsey Bay offers the only full service wharf between Campbell River and Port McNeill. Sayward's friendly residents will point you towards the mouth of the Salmon River for amazing steelhead fishing.

Blackfish Sound, a group of islands most accessible from Port McNeill and Port Hardy, is productive for salmon fishing. Anglers troll from the eastern tip of Malcolm Island, to north of Hanson Island and all the way to West Cracroft Island north east of Alert Bay. North of Port Hardy trollers run near Nigei, Baldklava, Gordon and Deer Islands. Those wanting to stay closer to town can try their luck at Duval, Daphne and Dillon Points, or Barkley Bay.

It's not all about the salmon! Excellent lingcod, rockfish and red snapper fishing can be found here, not to mention phenomenal halibut fishing. Halibut fishing starts from April to June and goes off through September. Massive halibut, weighing over 100-pounds, are caught regularly near Richards Channel, Ripple and Bolivar Passage. Anglers return year after year to reel in these monsters. Sometimes halibut are boated weighing over 200-pounds! These halibut are females holding millions of eggs and should be considered for release.

Because of the isolated nature of the North Island, rivers and lakes are not fished regularly, making this region an untouched secret for freshwater anglers. A tip: arm yourself with a logging road map or guide as these routes will take you to the most remote freshwater systems. Most logging companies provide free maps.

Popular lakes for Dolly Varden, rainbow and cutthroat trout include Klaklakama lakes before the village of Woss, Muchalatand Woss Lakes with access from Woss on Highway 19. Further north try Bonanza and Nimpkish Lakes and Victoria, Benson, Kathleen, Mayard and Alice lakes with access from Port Alice. Rivers consistent with steelhead and salmon from late summer onwards include Cluxewe, Keogh, Quatse, Nahwacchi and Nimpkish, the largest river on Vancouver Island.

East of the North Island, buried in the coastal mountains on the mainland side, are inlets featuring streams bearing steelhead, salmon, cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden. These inlets are very difficult to get to. Private boaters searching for salmon and bottom fish should navigate Toba, Knights, and Kingscome Inlets. The scenery is well worth the trip and grizzly bear sightings are almost guaranteed.

RIVERS INLET

The Rivers Inlet, named for the many waterways pouring into this remote fishing destination, is located about 300 kilometers north of Vancouver on the mainland. Visitors will be in awe of scenery in the deep fjords and magnificent coastal mountains, not to mention the continual opportunities for wildlife viewing. This area is so remote it's only accessible by boat or by float plane. Flights can be arranged out of Vancouver or Port Hardy.

It's known as a trophy Chinook destination, quite deserving of its reputation with a one-time sport-caught salmon record of 85-pounds. The four largest rivers flowing into Rivers Inlet are Chuckwalla, Kilbella, Wannock and Oweekeno, all of which see a return of giant salmon.

The fishing season runs from June to September. Chinook appear the earliest at the start of the season, followed by returning sockeye and coho in July, chum in July and August, and pinks throughout the entire season.

Halibut weighing up to 200-pounds have been landed in Rivers Inlet and enormous ling cod can be found closer to the reefs. Anglers can almost be certain that whatever is biting their hook will make them fight for it!

There are lodges and resorts in Rivers Inlet that offer full fishing packages, including accommodation, meals, guides and transportation. Anglers traveling to Rivers Inlet on their own should call ahead for accommodations and other services they might require, as facilities are limited.

The fishing is phenomenal in the waters of the inlet itself and in Fitz Hugh Sound nearby. Refer to a local guide about popular fishing spots like the Wall, Dome and Triangle. Penrose, Ripon and Wallbran Islands, along with Draney Narrows, Wadhams Point and Kilbella Bay are local favourites and can all be found on your GPS.

Fly-fishers enjoy wilderness stream fishing for Dolly Varden, rainbow and cutthroat trout, salmon and steelhead. Grizzly bears are common in this area, especially in the shoulder season. Anglers should not fish alone and should always make arrangements with an outfitter before arriving in the off season as very few services are available.

WEST COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

The west coast of Vancouver Island is drawn by both rocky, rugged headlands and immaculate sandy beaches. Its villages are tucked away amongst old-growth rainforest, sheltered in sounds and inlets, and are communities for people who enjoy sustainable living, outdoor recreation, and the laid back pace of west coast living.

Anglers challenge the open pacific in this prime saltwater sport fishing destination. Although the west side of Vancouver Island is expansive, there are three main hubs for this fishery and they are defined by their road access from the east side of the island. There are only a handful of roadways that run through from the east side to the west coast.

There are a few ways to access the northern section of the west coast. Logging roads do link up to fishing destinations in Quatsino, Kyuquot and Nootka Sounds. Travel to these destinations deals with long drives, unpredictable road conditions, with limited services along the way. Drivers should be prepared. Gold River can be accessed by Highway 28 just north of Campbell River. Anglers should take note that there are species and area restrictions in this area. Before fishing collect current information from DFO.

The central west coast, also known as the Pacific Rim region, can be reached via the Pacific Rim Highway (Highway 4). This route takes you to Port Alberni. To the northwest are Ucluelet and Tofino, divided by the world renowned Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, and to the southwest lies Bamfield. The southern portion of the west coast can be accessed via Victoria, which will be covered later in this section.

Extraordinary fishing can be found in the northwest locations of Quatsino, Kyuquot and Nootka Sounds. Because of their remote nature, and limited services in the area, it would be wise to book a full-service fishing charter. Charters for Quatsino Sound can be booked in Winter Harbour, and for Kyuquot Sound adventures find a guide in the village of Kyuquot. Fishing guides in Nootka Sound can be booked from Gold River, Tahsis, or Zeballos.

Anglers searching for halibut, lingcod, red snapper and rock fish will find them here year round. Chinook arrive in early spring and build throughout the summer. Coho join in late June. All five species of salmon are biting by July. These fish peak in groups and it is not uncommon for anglers to experience a slow day after a successful one; do not feel discouraged as the next school of salmon will be on their way shortly! Good fishing can continue well into the autumn, however, favourable weather may not.

Although the fishing season can start as early as April lasting through October, the unpredictable weather on the open ocean, especially in the shoulder seasons, can push in offshore trips. Anglers are advised to stay 15 kilometers from shore to safely beat nasty weather, winds, changing currents or thick fog back to shore. Novice boaters should check with a local guide before heading out. Always have a back up for every system on your vessel including a spare VHF hand held radio, cell phone, compass, charts and a full load of fuel.

The central section of the west side offers inshore and offshore fisheries that are growing rapidly with popularity for Vancouver Island sport fishing. Anglers should be aware of existing restrictions in this area as inshore waters have different fishing regulations than offshore. Please check with DFO on specific openings and restrictions when planning your fishing trip.

The Alberni Inlet shoots 25 kilometers towards the open ocean from Port Alberni and into Barkley Sound. The town of Bamfield is situated on the south side of Barkley Sound and Ucluelet is nestled on the north. Further north up the coast, passed the infamous Long Beach in the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, is Tofino and Clayquot Sound.

Port Alberni is an established salmon fishing destination. The town has always competed with Campbell River for the title of "Salmon Capital of the World." Recently, after 630,000 votes, the World Fishing Network named Port Alberni the "Ultimate Fishing Town" for having the most fish caught in the area and for demonstrating a passionate fishing community.

Port Alberni is an active launching ground for both salt and freshwater fishing adventures. The Stamp and Somass Rivers both benefit from local hatcheries. Specifically, the Stamp River welcomes half a million returning salmon each year. Salmon, steelhead and a mix of rainbow, cutthroat, and bull trout inhabit in these systems. The Somas River runs through town and anglers can bank cast for sockeye, coho and Chinook in the early autumn. Steelhead run aggressively down both rivers from autumn to early spring.

There are several large lakes in the area, each offering populations of steelhead, rainbow and cutthroat trout. Great Central Lake is north of Port Alberni, Nahmint and Henderson Lakes south; all accessible by logging roads. Sproat Lake, a popular summer holiday spot runs along Highway 4 west of Port Alberni.

Port Alberni and the west coast towns of Ucluelet and Bamfield are the best access to fishing Barkley Sound. Accommodations, full marine services, and guided fishing charters are available at each location. Anglers can access Bamfield from Port Alberni west on the Bamfield Road that runs along the Alberni Inlet. Ucluelet is located south west down the Pacific Rim Highway (Highway 4).

Spawning bait fish in Barkley Sound draw feeder Chinook in early March. Coho join in June and July, usually providing anglers with impressive surface entertainment! Sockeye arrive in May and work their way into the inlet by late June. There are restrictions on sockeye in the Alberni Inlet, please refer to DFO for updated opening information. By August it's not uncommon to see anglers haul in Chinook salmon over 30 pounds or more.

The scenic and friendly community of Ucluelet is quickly growing as a primary sport fishing vacation destination. Anglers can participate in the annual Ucluelet Salmon Ladder Derby, a summer-long derby offering cash and prizes for lucky catches, organized to raise funds and awareness for salmon enhancement on the west coast.

Outside of the Ucluelet Harbour, wreck anglers will get the most bites at the Lighthouse bank, both inside and outside South bank, southwest corner, and out in front of Wreck beach, just north of Ucluelet. When the weather isn't as cooperative fishing boats take shelter in the Broken Group Islands of Barkley Sound. These grounds are excellent for halibut, ling cod, red snapper and a variety of rockfish.

Open ocean fishing occurs between Ucluelet and Tofino. The continental shelf runs offshore nearly 30 kilometers between the two towns to La Perouse Bank, or 'Big Bank' an undersea plateau. The waters here are rich with nutrients, creating the 'salmon highway', however the weather and swells may slow down your trip and boaters should be prepared.

Tofino, quickly becoming an international tourist destination, is located north of Ucluelet on Highway 4. Nestled into Clayquot Sound, Tofino is definitely picturesque and a beautiful place for a fishing holiday. Offshore areas from Tofino include Raphael and Portland point, producing larger salmon and halibut by early April.

Freshwater enthusiasts will find an active fishery in the Pacific Rim region year-round. The shallow, sheltered waters of Barkley and Clayquot sound, combined with the heavy population of baitfish, create ideal fly fishing conditions at any river estuary along the coast. Sea-run cutthroat chase the downstream migration of salmon fry, making them eager for the bite!

Nearby mountain lakes provide a pristine rainbow or cutthroat fishing venue. Kennedy Lake, located along Highway 4 before the Ucluelet/Tofino junction, has a boat launch and is inhabited by rainbow and cutthroat trout. Other lakes are more remote and can be reached via logging road or by boat, and even floatplane. More information on booking transportation to these destinations can be found at the local visitor centre.

This west coast is rich in fishing history and culture. Full service marinas, resorts, campgrounds, tackle and supply shops and guided fishing charters can be found in each town. Thanks to the hard work of local hatcheries in Port Alberni, Ucluelet and Tofino salmon enhancement and environmental awareness has increased in these communities.

SOUTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

The sport fishing territory of southern Vancouver Island extends from Port Renfrew on the west coast, through Sooke and Victoria, reaching to Cowichan Bay on the east side. Fishing charters, marine services, and fishing supplies are available at any of these centres.

Due to the convenient location of Victoria, British Columbia's capital city, this region has always been a popular angling getaway. Victoria can be reached easily from Port Angeles and Seattle in Washington State, and Vancouver by ferry. Scheduled or chartered flights to Victoria can be arranged from almost anywhere.

Anglers choose from dozens of fishing charters located right downtown in Victoria's Inner Harbour. The conditions for fishing are so consistent around the city; boaters don't have to travel far for a successful trip! Half-day charters can be arranged from the inner harbor, Oak Bay Marina, Peddler Bay Marina just north, or from Sidney, a small community 30 minutes outside of Victoria.

The salmon season here sees them to run on an entirely or different schedule. Huge herring runs spawning in the area have provided ideal winter feeding condition for resident salmon. It's one of the only fishing locations on Vancouver Island with thriving winter salmon population and reliable enough weather to take advantage of it. Locals claim the best season is 'shoulder season' and cohos over 20 pounds are often caught.

Winter fishing is best at Constance Bank, located south of Clover Point. The spires of rock rising from the ocean floor make a spectacular site. Chinook are often found on the outside ridge of these rocks. The waters here are often rough. Novice anglers should come with an experienced guide.

The first of the summer Chinook arrive in May. They grow bigger and are reeled in weighing 30 to 40-pounds by August. Coho, chum, sockeye and pink succeed in July. They are swept in by the currents in the Juan de Fuca Strait that runs between Vancouver Island and Washington State.

A popular summer fishing spot is Quarantine Bouy, located southwest of the harbor mouth. Trollers travel from Race Rocks to Trial Island catching the salmon schooling here as the tides change in Juan de Fuca Strait. In the summer, many Victoria based fishing charters visit the west side near Sheringham Point, west of Sooke.

Port Renfrew is less than an hour's drive north west of Victoria on Highway 14. Regardless of its easy access from the city and with fishing grounds literally swimming with trophy salmon, this fishery remains nearly untouched. Chinook caught from Sooke to Port Renfrew have often weighed in over 40-pounds, in some fish stories they top 50-pounds!

Migratory salmon travelling from the open ocean to their spawning rivers in southern BC arrive in Port Renfrew first. Throughout the summer season all five species of salmon move through this area. Anglers can expect a wildlife show of seals, sea lions, killer whales and humpback following the salmon in search of their next meal. Winter Chinook are also present in these waters; however, the unforgiving coastal weather usually spoils any fishing endeavors.

Fresh water anglers head to San Juan River, near Port Renfrew, Jordan River west of Sooke, and Sooke River for cutthroat, coho, Chinook, and steelhead. There are many lakes near Victoria worth visiting. West of Victoria is Langford Lake or head north to Elk, Dougan, Shawnigan, Fuller, Chemanus lakes, all good for rainbow, cutthroat and even bass.

Along the Island Highway north of Victoria are the marine villages of Mill Bay, Cowichan Bay, Maple Bay, Crofton, Chemainus, and Ladysmith. These coastal communities, located on or just off the main highway, offer fishing guides, marina services, fishing supplies and ferry access to several of the Gulf Islands.

Cowichan Lake, 30 kilometers west of Duncan, is one of the largest bodies of freshwater on Vancouver Island. Boats can be launched at Gordon Bay Provincial Park before pursuing Dolly Varden, rainbow and cutthroat trout.

Cowichan River is one of the most reliable fishing rivers on Vancouver Island. Chinook, coho, and steelhead enter the river from Cowichan Bay to spawn in the late fall and early winter. Brown and rainbow trout run up this river too. Anglers can catch the action from anywhere along the 20 kilometer riverbank. Drift boats and guides can be hired for a river fishing adventure.

Salmon, ling cod and sea-bass fishing is excellent in Sansum Narrows, the waterway between Vancouver Island and Salt Spring Island. Positive reports have come back from Arcbutus and Octopus Points, as well as Maxwell and Bold Bluff Points off of Salt Spring Island. As mentioned earlier, St. Mary's Lake on Salt Spring Island is a great spot for bass anglers. Boat launches are available at Maple Bay, Crofton, and Ladysmith.

Vancouver Island, from mountain streams to alpine lakes, open ocean, sheltered inlets, estuaries and rivers, offers some of the best salt and fresh water fishing in Canada. This angler's paradise offers endless opportunities for outdoor adventure, and in the Island region your next cast will be the catch of the day!