

# Trophy Specialists Fishing Charters, LLC.

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2019 News Letter

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Our 2018 charter season got kind of a late start last year. We had an early ice breakup in late Feb. but March and April weather was persistently cold. In fact, on a couple of my early spring charters, we ran into patches of skim ice on the Bay during mid-April, which is very abnormal. Those early spring trips though usually yield some big walleyes with fish over 27 inches long taken on most, if not all of those charters. Limits then aren't as easy as they are



later in the season, but the much bigger average size of the fish is the draw along with good chances to catch a mixed bag of cold water fish along with the walleyes too. We often catch salmon and trout during April, but when the water warms up in May, those cold water fish move out into Lake Huron. After we got past that early April cold snap, the fishing was actually very good with fewer than normal charters lost last spring as a result of bad weather. While April does produce the largest walleyes of the year for us, the first week of May has served up perhaps the best fishing of the year recently. This is when a huge run of some big male walleyes drop out of the rivers ahead of the smaller ones, and they stage in some known areas with gravel bottoms where they seem to continue in spawning mode out in the Bay.

During that early May time period, with decent conditions, we usually limit out on every trip catching larger than average sized walleye that are super aggressive and pretty hard fighting too. Once the water warms up though by mid-May, those fish move deeper and are joined by millions of other walleyes where we get into some fast paced action fairly close to Au Gres that lasts well into the summer.



The summer walleye fishing last year was nothing short of phenomenal all through the season. It used to be that we had a lull in the action during late summer, but in recent years the late summer walleye bite out of Au Gres has been outstanding with limit catches taken all through the summer months. The reason being is the sharply escalating walleye population in the Bay. We've had some very big year classes over the last four years. We had yet another super walleye year class in 2018 too. The walleye growth rates have also increased some in recent years too, likely due to the high Great Lakes water levels, which opens up a lot of habitat for baitfish to thrive in. It now only takes walleyes two years to grow to legal "keeper" sizes, which is well above state growth rate average. Last year set a new Saginaw Bay walleye catch record and I wouldn't be surprised if 2019 breaks the record once again. Needless to say the DNR plans to keep the walleye limit at a generous eight per angler, which is the most allowed anywhere in Michigan or anywhere else in North America that I know of too.



With the year round, world class walleye fishery Saginaw Bay enjoys, I will no longer be offering charters anywhere else. I'm seeing more and more charter operations moving to Saginaw Bay because many other fisheries in Michigan are not doing nearly as well. Even though there are more charters now on the Bay than ever, we were still super busy last year fishing almost every day that Mother Nature allowed. Since my schedule fills up to capacity every year, savvy charter customers book early to insure they get a date. Charter pricing for 2019 are unchanged at: 5-hour (half-day) charters costing \$400 for one or two persons plus \$50 for each additional person. 8-hour (all-day) charters are \$450 for one or two persons plus \$50 for each, additional person. We limit our charters to four clients. The deposit will be \$200 per charter.

As always, trip planners are available for viewing on our website. We will be emailing out trip planners this year starting in March for early bookings.

