

Nootka Sound Hotspot – New Version

Outdoor Canada

Word Count:

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Nootka Sound on the west-central coast of Vancouver Island offers some of the hottest Pacific salmon fishing August has to offer.

While chinook averaging 25 to 40 pounds are the big draw as they return to their natal rivers to spawn, coho reaching 12 pounds are also present.

The best - albeit little known - jumping off point for Nootka Sound anglers is the peaceful village of Tahsis (pop. 800). About a half-hour boat ride away from Nootka Sound, Tahsis quietly goes about its business as one of B.C.'s top salmon destinations.

A small, easy-to-miss sign hanging at a local lodge says it all: Unofficial Salmon Fishing Capital – a slight dig at the well publicized city of Campbell River, on the island's east side, which bills itself as the "Salmon Capital of the World."

But to folks like Cec Ballard of Coquitlam, B.C., there is no contest. To him, Tahsis is "the" place to go.

Ballard's fished there every summer since 1956, and has landed two 40-pound chinook in the waters of Nootka Sound; last year, his largest catch tipped the scales at 34 ½ pounds.

The fishing can be good in late July and early September, too, but take it from me, August is tops – last year my family boated two chinook (23 and 19 pounds) and two coho (nine and six pounds) in just one day. As Ballard says, "I can't imagine not being there in August."

Beyond Nootka Sound:

Looking for more salmon hot spots? Also try:

- Esperanza Inlet
- Zeballos Inlet