

WHAT MAKES FLY FISHING ENTHUSIASTS UNORDINARY



Meander River
© Adam Gibson

——— Tourism Tasmania’s Unordinary Adventures program is a Tasmanian Government initiative aimed at dispersing visitors to Tasmania’s regions. The program targets visitors who travel for their passions, and focuses on four special interest areas: fly fishing, mountain biking, golfing and walking. This audience profile is a summary of Tourism Tasmania’s research into fly fishing enthusiasts.

Fly fishing enthusiasts in Australia

The research conducted by KANTAR¹ into fly fishing enthusiasts across Australia, who are potential fly fishing visitors to Tasmania, revealed the following insights:

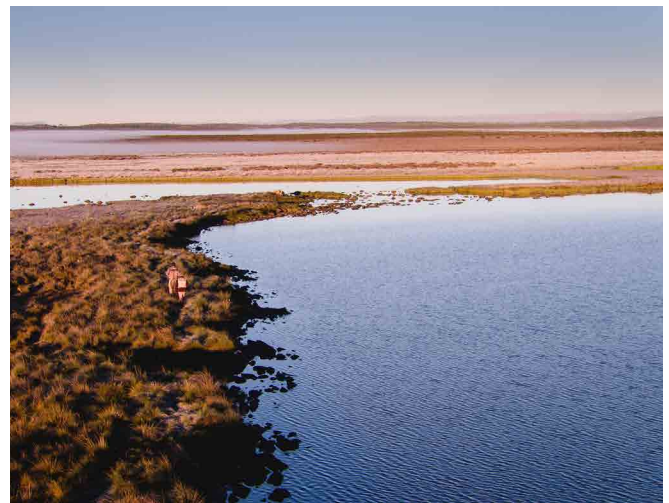
MARKET SIZE	Fly fishing enthusiasts represent approximately 1% of travelling Australians who travel for their special interest.
HOLIDAY HABITS	Fly fishers typically travel to different destinations with the same groups of people. Trips are usually 3-4 nights. The majority travel at least once every 6 months. While domestic destinations, both intrastate and interstate, account for 58% of trips, it’s not uncommon for fly fishers to travel internationally. Fly fishers tend to travel with one other (e.g. spouse or fly fishing buddy) or in groups of 3-4 people (e.g. fly fishing friends and family) and take their own fly fishing equipment.

PSYCHE	Fly fishing evokes a sense of escape, calm and focus. It is a contemplative experience, enhanced by being out in nature. For many, this experience also includes a strong element of family connection, bonding, providing valuable memories and passing on traditions through generations.
GENDER	Over 75% are male.
AGE	Nearly 80% are aged 54 and under.
LIFE STAGE	Typically family with children or dependent adults.
LOCATION	Across mainland Australia, the majority of enthusiasts are based in New South Wales, followed by Queensland and Victoria.
WHAT THEY SEEK AND WHY THEY TRAVEL	Fly fishers are seeking guides who have good local knowledge. They are also looking for an experience that provides a sense of achievement and makes them feel reinvigorated. A place where they can take the time reconnect with themselves and rediscover what’s important. This may be a place they return to time and time again.
SPEAKING TO ENTHUSIASTS	Specialist fly fishing sources, including forums, magazines and websites, are an influential and trusted source of information for fly fishers. Word of mouth recommendations, social media and print are also reputable sources of advice.

Fly fishing enthusiasts visiting Tasmania

Tourism Tasmania’s Fly Fishing Situational Analysis² was developed from interviews with key industry stakeholders. This revealed the following insights about fly fishing enthusiasts that have visited Tasmania:

<p>HOLIDAY HABITS</p>	<p>Typically enthusiasts travel in small groups, solo or couples. The majority travel to Tasmania via air and many book (or are interested in) the convenience of travel packages that are all-inclusive with transport, pick-ups, drop offs and accommodation. Fly fishers are often repeat visitors.</p>
<p>PSYCHE</p>	<p>The thrill of the chase and strategy are at the core of the fly fisher psyche. These enthusiasts live and breathe fly fishing. It’s an integral part of their identity and they recognise the vital role of reconnecting with nature for personal fulfilment.</p> <p>Underlying tones in the fly fishing community are that of focus and seriousness about their art form. Correct use of fly fishing terminology is very important to them. They are detail obsessed and will research their trip months in advance.</p>
<p>INTERESTS OFF THE WATER</p>	<p>Fly fishing enthusiasts prioritise time on the water when travelling. Many are time-poor and have limited scope to extend their trip to participate in complementary activities. Enthusiasts attracted to a specific destination, particularly those from international markets, are more likely to extend their stay to participate in complementary experiences. They favour experiences that resonate with their desire to reconnect with nature, including bushwalking and photography. Golf and mountain biking may also be of interest. Those with high disposable incomes often have an appetite for fine local food and wine, whiskey and high-end accommodation.</p>
<p>SPEAKING TO ENTHUSIASTS</p>	<p>While traditional fly fishing magazines are a key source of content for the fly fishing community, there is an increasing shift to online content, including fly fishing publications, forums and video.</p> <p>Fly fishing enthusiasts actively engage with social media, with Instagram and Facebook key connectors for the community as well as a platform for engagement between fishers and operators. Word of mouth advocacy is a core component and a major source of both new and repeat clients.</p>
<p>GROWTH OPPORTUNITY</p>	<p>Despite representing a minority in the fly fishing community, the female fly fishing market is identified as a key growth opportunity.</p>



Aerial of Nineteen Lagoons © Samuel Shelley



Fly fishing at Penstock Lagoon © Adam Gibson

There are three distinct sub segments of fly fishing enthusiasts visiting Tasmania.

1. DESTINATION-SEEKERS

These enthusiasts plan trips with the primary focus of fishing at iconic destinations with diverse geographies, fish and insect types and refining their skills. The major international markets are from the USA and UK, and domestically the Australian eastern seaboard. Predominantly they are males over 40 years old, some well over 65 years old, with a high disposable income.

2. MID TO HIGH-END PROFESSIONALS

These professionals have high pressure roles with disposable incomes, and seek an escape from their busy lifestyles. They are looking to switch-off to recharge and reconnect with nature, yet with all of the expected comforts. Due to their fast-paced schedules, they are constrained to short stays. A high proportion of this market are from Melbourne and Sydney, and are moderate to experienced fly fishers.

3. FAMILIES

Whilst family fly fishing engagement is a traditional route to develop an enthusiast, this is not a key segment in the Tasmanian fly fishing market, nor is it regarded as a place for growth. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many interstate fly fishers, including those with families, own Tasmanian properties nearby fly fishing locations and travel on the Spirit of Tasmania with their own equipment and boats for fly fishing trips.

References

- 1 Passion-first travellers were the key focus of 2020 KANTAR research, commissioned by Tourism Tasmania. The purpose of this research included gauging market size of potential future fly fishing visitors to Tasmania, developing an audience profile and understanding key drivers of destination choice.
- 2 Tourism Tasmania’s Fly Fishing Situational Analysis was compiled from data collected in a series of qualitative interviews with tourism operators in the Tasmanian fly fishing industry in 2019, which formed a snapshot of fly fishing visitors to Tasmania.