



GREAT OUTDOORS

D'ARCY EGAN HELPS YOU GET THE MOST FROM YOUR NATURE EXPERIENCE

British reporters reel in perch, praise allure of autumn in Ohio

A small group of travel writers from England, Ireland and Scotland on a recent visit wanted to sample Ohio's fall treats. They enjoyed the brightly colored forests of Hocking County in southern Ohio, the late-season parties at Put-In-Bay and, to their surprise, the bountiful yellow perch of Lake Erie.

"I really don't fish, though there are places back home where fishing is popular," said Andy Rudd of the Daily Mirror in London. "It's quite something that people can enjoy good fishing in the shadow of such a big city as Cleveland."

Shepherded around town by Positively Cleveland, the group had tasted Lake Erie yellow perch the night before at the Great Lakes Brewing Company. That morning, guided by Wildwood Marina's Vitas Kijauskas on the 35-foot Express party fishing boat, they had the chance to catch their own perch.

It wasn't a perfect day of fishing. West winds had Lake Erie in a bumpy mood and one writer opted to stay on firm ground. The other four — Rudd, Phil Harrison of London's TimeOut magazine, Mary Johnston of the Belfast Telegraph and Phil Johnson of The Scotsman — bundled up and learned to dunk shiner minnows for yellow perch.

There is a good reason for introducing a crew of rookie anglers from overseas to the fun of fishing for yellow perch. The fish are plentiful, fairly easy to catch and close to shoreline marinas — especially in the Cleveland area, a perch fishing hot spot in spring and fall.

This is a time of year when fishermen are chasing the biggest perch to be caught all season. For some of us, it's a time to put perch and walleye fillets in the freezer before the long Northern Ohio winter slams the door on most of Lake Erie.

This week's winds have the fine fall Lake Erie fishing on hold, but not for long. There is little doubt the big lake will settle soon, and give everyone a chance to boat a trophy walleye or a few jumbo yellow perch.



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Phil Johnson, left, of The Scotsman newspaper, and Mark Schutte of Positively Cleveland compare the yellow perch they caught while fishing aboard the Express, a party fishing boat docked at Wildwood Marina in Cleveland. Meanwhile, Mary Johnston of the Belfast Telegraph poses with a perch she caught in Lake Erie.

