

Greenland

Greenland is the largest island that is not a continent. It is also covered by the largest land ice sheet. Greenland is a large ice sheet surrounded by mountains. Some of these mountains have grassy areas as in the south and west while others like the north do not. The eastern part of Greenland has some areas that are not covered by ice but there are few settlements in the east. All of the Greenland rivers have Arctic Char and there is one river with Atlantic Salmon. This country is unlike no other in the world. It is possible to fly to some of the cities but getting from the cities to the countryside requires a boat. There are fjords, islands and icebergs everywhere. Much of the ocean around the cities freezes in the winter and there is at least a month even in the warmest parts of the country that are frozen-in in the winter. It is cold in Greenland but this cold weather is perfect for Arctic Char and they are everywhere. There is a qualifier on that statement.



Icebergs surround Greenland and are caved off of the glaciers that move to the ocean from the Ice Sheet.

These Arctic Char are sea-run fish and are in the rivers from June until September. The date the fish enter the rivers varies from river to river and it is best to fish Greenland in July or August. I like August the best when all rivers have fish.

Arctic Char fishing in Greenland is excellent. I was able to catch Arctic Char on a dry fly in Iceland, but in Greenland the Char are larger and often rise to a dry fly. I did not catch what I consider monster trout but I did catch several fish

over four pounds and the vast majority were over two pounds. The most impressive thing about these ice Char was there fight. The Greenland rivers are not large nor are any of them long. They begin at the glaciers and flow quickly into the ocean. These relatively short rivers mean that the Arctic Char are all fresh ocean fish than will put up a good fight. I was not prepared for a 2-3 pound char that jumped all over a pool before I could get it in for a release. This happened time and time again. I have had many thrilling times with my fly rod and this was one of those times. These char acted more like mini-steelhead and that made for exciting fishing.

I knew the Char were going to be fairly large and started fishing with eight pound test leader. About two hours into the first day I had to change to ten pound leader and still lost many fish and flies. All of the fishing on Greenland is with barbless hooks so when fish start jumping it is easy to lose one. But it seemed these fish were smart and knew where every rock and ledge in the rivers was located. The largest fish I had hooked wrapped me around a boulder twice before it broke off. I ran out of peacock nymphs, olive conehead leeches and was down



This Greenland Arctic Char was over three pounds and was typical of the fish around the island. This was one of my last conehead leeches.

to one olive woolly bugger. Greenland fish were brutal on my fly box. I fished Greenland for several days and caught over a hundred fish.

It is not expensive to fish Greenland and there are daily and weekly licenses. The expense is getting there and once on the island getting to the rivers. Climate is an issue and it does vary around the island. South Greenland has the mildest climate and it is the warmest place in the

summer. I fished in South Greenland and the weather was excellent while I was there. South Greenland is a place where it is possible to take day fishing trips but I elected to stay at the Ipiutaq Guest Farm and fish the Ilua River for several days. The accommodations were great and the fishing was excellent. I recommend the Guest Farm. The Ilua is about an hour's hike from the farm but the walk is through some magnificent country.

There are several airports that are accessible from Iceland. The flights are seasonal and are only available in the summer. They originate from the local airport in Reykjavik and fly to several Greenland cities twice a week. This does mean that any trip has to be scheduled on days the planes will be flying. Once in any Greenland city boat transportation or guide service to a fishing camp is the next step. The two best cities to coordinate a trip are Narsarsuaq and Nuuk. It is possible to get to several rivers from both cities.