



**Travel Report
Minipi River, Labrador**

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From the Minipi River in Labrador – last month, we featured a trip report with specifics from the week we spent at Anne Marie Lodge on the Minipi River. This report includes more reports from Anne Marie Lodge and also the other lodges on the Minipi watershed, Little Minipi Lodge and Minipi Lodge.



John Marlowe and John Cadle were at Anne Marie the week after our trip. Mr. Marlowe (at right with a nice brookie) commented, “Of course, it was wonderful. How could it miss with a chance to snag one of those beautiful big brookies on a little dry. Brookies aren’t counted unless they are over 3 pounds.....what??? The place has a great feel. Thanks for putting us onto this spot.”



Joe Brancato and his father, Joe (below left), are outdoor enthusiasts from Pennsylvania where son Joe says a “trophy wild brookie would be about 10 inches long.” Joe gave us a comprehensive report which captures the essence of the fishery at Anne Marie. “My father and I had a great time. Beautiful scenery, the guides were a great group, and the two ladies that did the cooking took good care of us.



The fishing and highlights:

- casting from shore in Lover Boy channel between 10:00am and 3:00pm with big brookies rising to a hatch of small mayflies, Dad and I hooked 9 fish, lost two (a straightened hook and breakoff), and released 7 with a total weight of 31 pounds.
- Had a great time fishing for smaller fish in the rivers. One afternoon between the outlet of Anne Marie and Woody’s Pond, I caught approximately 45 brookies between 7 and 18 inches long, mostly on bombers.
- Largest brookies: Dad 7.25# and me 7.75#.
- Pike could be a nuisance when you were fishing for brookies. When I targeted them with wire leader and pike flies, they were fun.
- Lots of wind our first three evenings, but the last three were calm, drakes were hatching, and Anne Marie offered the classic stalking of fish that we came for. Dad and I caught 3 to 6 brook trout each evening including a father-son double header with each fish over 6#. The last evening, the seven guys at the lodge collectively released 23 “book fish” (a “book fish” is 3+ pounds).
- I was surprised how difficult the big fish were to catch when no hatches were occurring, but how easy they were when they were rising to dry flies.



This destination is most accurately described as a challenging “trophy fish” destination where you can take brook trout of 5 to 9 pounds on dry flies.....not normally the type of spot for newcomers on their first fly fishing adventure. However, this summer Minipi Lodge had two people who were on their first fly fishing trip, attempting to catch their first fish on a fly. Berniece Patterson chose this wilderness to cast a fly for the first time and accompanied her husband, Pat (above left, who’s fly fishing territory spans the globe), and took her first fish on a fly (first fish, second from left). George Fareed, joined fly fishing friend Peter Boasberg at Minipi Lodge, and had this comment on his first fly rod trip: “My first wilderness fly fishing experience far exceeded my expectations – it was definitely one of the greatest trips of my life. I was a Pop Warner fly fisherman who jumped suddenly to the NFL of fly fishing.” Nice comparison George, above in the stream celebrating the wilds of Labrador. The Minipi Brook Trout certainly could qualify as part of the “NFL of fly fishing” as most of the world’s legendary fly fishers have made a pilgrimage to these waters to take their giant brookies on dry flies.

Photo credits - thanks for submitting photos for this report to Joe Brancato, Pat Patterson, George Fareed, John Marlowe, Bill Lucoff, Phil Drees, and Don Olen (above right).



Bill Lucoff (l) and Don Olen (r) with big brookies – Bill at Anne Marie and Don from Little Minipi. Phil Drees (lc) and George Fareed (rc) with pike. Bill focused on pike exclusively one day and had a 100+ pike to 10#, using floater/diver patterns.



Peter Boasberg deplanes in Goose Bay, arriving from Halifax. Berniece Patterson, new fly rod in hand, lands at Minipi Lodge (right) via float plane from Goose Bay. You gotta really want to go to Goose Bay, Labrador!



Son Joe with his 7.75# trophy (left) and Dad Joe with a river sized brookie. The second of their father-son 6# brook trout double being netted – the first fish is already at the bottom of the net.



Joe and Dr. Tom Wall enjoying a rainy day shoreside cup of coffee, Phil Drees with an Anne Marie trophy, and Pat Patterson with one of his 6+ pound Lake Minipi brookies. Brown drake.



Water, spruce trees, and big brook trout