



Sweet Fishing

by Bob Frye photos by the author

You can fish hot chocolate-colored crankbaits, chocolate thunder flies, chocolate snowflake spinnerbaits, even chocolately-looking soft plastics.

But, there's only one place where you can fish them and, in the same day, get a cocoa massage, create a 1-pound peanut butter cup, tour a chocolate factory and enjoy a chocolate martini. That's Hershey.

The self-proclaimed "Sweetest Place on Earth," home to the famous candy company, boasts all kinds of chocolate-themed attractions targeting adults, children and families. And, it's located in Dauphin County, a county central to some really good fishing and boating.

Here are five spots to check out, all within 30 minutes of Chocolate World.

Memorial Lake State Park

The highlight of this park, located north of Hershey and surrounded by Fort Indiantown Gap, is 85-acre Memorial Lake. It's

➔ *Memorial Lake State Park, Lebanon County, is a great place to paddle. It has two boat launches and a seasonal boat rental concession.*

a warmwater fishery, with Bluegills and Largemouth Bass most common. But, you can catch muskies, pickerel, Black Crappies, White Crappies and Yellow Perch.

The lake's north side offers the most shore fishing and has two boat launches, a seasonal boat concession, restrooms and picnic areas. There's a parking lot, trail and some shore fishing on the south side, too.

Quittapahilla Creek

Much of the nearly 17-mile "Quittie," all just east of Hershey and accessible off Route 422, gets stocked with trout. Three sections—3, 4 and 7, running from near Palmyra upstream to Cleona—are managed under stocked trout water regulations and get stocked at least twice a year with Brown Trout, Rainbow





People who visit Hershey can find good fishing nearby. Rainbow trout are one of the main draws when it comes to fishing Stoevers Dam, Lebanon County.

Trout and golden Rainbow Trout. Section 3 flows by Cleona Community Park and is kid-friendly.

Section 4 is managed under Keystone Select Stocked Trout regulations, meaning it gets stocked with a higher number of trophy-sized trout. It largely flows through Quittie Creek Nature Park and is open to artificial lures only.

Stoevers Dam Park

A 23.5-acre lake gets stocked with trout—Rainbow Trout and golden Rainbow Trout—each March, in time for opening day of trout season. It's home to panfish and Largemouth Bass, too, so there's usually something biting.

It offers good shore access, as well as one boat launch suitable for canoes, kayaks and other unpowered boats.

The surrounding park offers permits for primitive camping on a first-come, first-serve basis for tents and recreational vehicles. Hiking trails and a 125-year-old "Nature Barn" entertain with natural history displays and educational programs.

Swatara Creek

Forty-two miles of the creek known as "the Swattie" constitute an official water trail, flowing from Swatara State Park past Hershey on its way to the Susquehanna River.

It's a Class I water, suitable for beginners, flowing through a mix of woodlands and farm country. There are a couple of low-head dams to be aware of, but it's otherwise a peaceful float.

Anglers can expect to catch Smallmouth Bass, as well as Channel Catfish, panfish and, close to the mouth at the Susquehanna River, additional species.

Lions Lake Park

Located almost due east of Hershey, just off Route 72, Lions Lake is perfect for those with young children.

Its 13-acre lake gets stocked twice each spring with Rainbow Trout and golden Rainbow Trout, and it holds plentiful-if-smallish Largemouth Bass and panfish. But, if attention spans fizzle, there's also a playground, paved walking path, picnic areas, modern restrooms and lots of open space. There's a small boat launch suitable for unpowered boats and electric motors, too.

So, whether you prefer stream or lake, trout or bass, big water or small, serious fishing or family-friendly fun, there are options aplenty around Hershey. That's sweet, as you'd expect. ☺

"Sweetest Place on Earth"

Hershey is a chocolate-lover's delight, as anyone who visits here can get their fill of all things tasty and good. And, where else do the street lights resemble Hershey kisses?

Many of those who come here take in the rides at Hershey Park, explore the attached ZooAmerica, visit the Hershey Story Museum, learn about falconry in programs featuring live birds at The Hotel Hershey, eat at places like the Chocolatier, delight in Hershey Gardens and enjoy Hershey Theatre.

Memorial Lake State Park:



dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/FindAPark/MemorialLakeStatePark/Pages/default.aspx

Quittapahilla Creek:



visitlebanonvalley.com/business/quittie-creek-nature-park/

Stoevers Dam Park:



visitlebanonvalley.com/business/stoevers-dam-park

Swatara Watershed Association:



swatarawatershed.org

Lions Lake Park:



northlebanontwppa.gov/lions-lake

Hershey, PA:



hersheypa.com