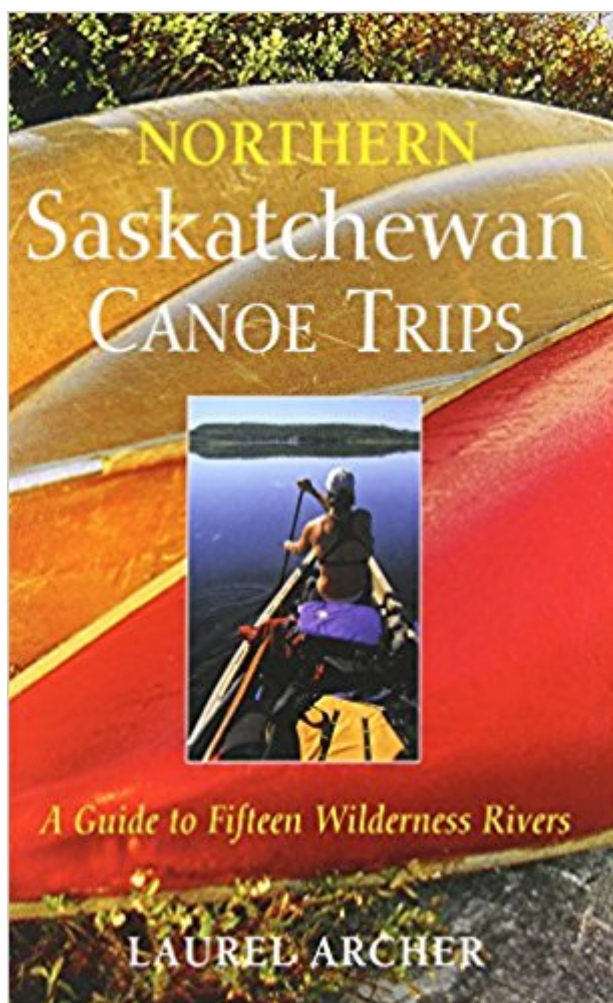


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# Northern Saskatchewan Canoe Trips: A Guide To 15 Wilderness Rivers



## Synopsis

There are few places on the planet that still offer true wilderness paddling. Northern Saskatchewan is one of them. Wilderness adventurer Laurel Archer takes us on 15 trips down 15 rivers: the well traveled and the less traveled. With detailed route descriptions, maps, sage advice on rapids, hazards, campsites, and special attractions, as well as notes on the recreational, historical, and wilderness value of each river.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Provides important detailed descriptions, maps and sage advice ... this book in format, content and style has a lot going for it. (Ron Cherkewich Rural Roots 2003-03-16) Detailed ... a keen sense of what real life paddlers -- as opposed to macho endurance heroes -- want out of a wilderness trip. (Bartley Kives Winnipeg Free Press 2003-03-23) Will be appreciated by serious paddlers planning multi-day trips into the rugged, pre-Cambrian wilderness of northern Saskatchewan... filled with route descriptions and practical details... Best of all, Archer references her descriptions to map coordinates. (Laszlo Buhasz Globe and Mail 2003-05-10) Archer has painstakingly documented the rivers and generously shared her notes about rapids and campsites; her writing is organized, consistent and reliable. (Monika Rohlmann Canadian Book Review Annual)

Northern Saskatchewan is not prairie, but Precambrian Shield country, and this rugged and sparsely populated land is home to some of the best wilderness canoe tripping rivers in the world. With few roads or development of any kind, the wild beauty and solitude of the North is best experienced by

canoe. A large area of the northern half of the Saskatchewan, the Churchill River Upland, is 40% water, made up of lakes, rivers, streams and the rest is muskeg, rock, and boreal forest. Further north, the Athabasca Plain hosts rivers with amazing glacial drift features along their banks, from eskers up to 80 km long, large kames and deposits of moraine to the stunning sand dune fields decorating the southern shore of Lake Athabasca. From the northern shore of this 8000 square km lake to the border of the Northwest Territories, the Taiga Shield ups the ante. Adventurous canoeists will find awesome granite gorges and heavy waters in this "land of little sticks." Northern Saskatchewan Canoe Trips: A Guide to 15 Wilderness Rivers covers river trips in all regions of the northern half of the province and for all levels of paddlers, including the well known First Nations and fur trade routes, the Churchill, Clearwater and Sturgeon-weir rivers, routes growing in popularity with modern voyageurs, such as the Waterfound, Fond du Lac, William and Cree rivers, as well as some more lightly traveled routes, like the Wathaman, MacFarlane, Haultain and Porcupine rivers.

I've been canoeing northern Saskatchewan since the 70s and lead 1-2 cost sharing brigades with friends flying in from all over North America, and even (twice) from Bangkok where I live winters. Saskatchewan's 100,000 pristine wilderness lakes and rivers offer the best canoeing on the planet and are this province's best kept secret. As well, the Main Highway of the Fur Trade and exploration went through here, particularly on the fabulous Churchill River. All the great explorers from Sir John Franklin to Alexander Mackenzie to David Thompson to Simon Fraser paddled through here. It's loaded with history. Laurel's book (and I know her, of course, you can't canoe that long here without doing so, so that's full disclosure) is a Must Buy guide if you're doing our waters and there's not a trip that I do that I haven't xeroxed her meticulous crib sheets for my map pack. As well, her trip descriptions are outstanding on all levels and there's the bonus that she's a helluva talented writer and knows how to turn a phrase. Her love and passion for both canoeing and the wilderness shine through. There's room for lots more paddlers in the north and that's a secondary reason I'm writing this review: the more paddling activity, the greater the chance we'll protect this precious chunk of real estate from the damn dam builders. I'm sure Laurel would concur.

Anyone contemplating writing a wilderness canoeing guide would do well to go the distance in emulating this guidebook; it is nothing short of fantastic on every front and especially well-written and organized. I will also add that it is one of the better "Look inside" presentations I've seen on Northern-ish Canada, i.e. the latitudinal belt running across the sub-arctic provinces, is a wonderful part of the globe to explore, especially by canoe, and for its broad range of skill requirements (there

are options for every skill level; not everyone is looking for a Class IV or V rapids experience) and this guide covers them all, and more, for Northern Saskatchewan. Ms. Archer also includes considerable, fascinating history regarding the area and the river trips described. Especially interesting is the detailing of where each of the rivers covered fit into both the First Nation's history and the early fur trade voyageurs. I very highly recommend this guide.

If you plan on going canoeing in N. Sask. this is the book you need. Almost every major river in this area is profiled with history, character of river, detailed map with UTM coordinates of important sites. Also includes info. on the type of fish in each river - important for the anglers. I have used it on several occasions when paddling in this beautiful area of N. Sask. The appendix includes important outfitter contacts and websites to check water levels.

I took last summer off to float some rivers in Canada. This book is excellent both for deciding which of the rivers of Northern Saskatchewan to float and for use during your trip. It is exceptionally well organized and detailed. Ms. Archer will not steer you wrong and the book is full of helpful advice that comes from a person who has obviously done a multitude of river trips and who has an exceptional level of wilderness wisdom and skill.

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