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Wellington Harbour fishing – boat

Techniques

For bottom fishing anchoring up is normally the best way to catch fish. Exceptions are drifting through schools of kahawai or if there is little or no tide running and no wind blowing. I normally anchor up and fish for 30 – 45 minutes with berley to bring the fish on an if it doesnt look like the good fish are coming on the bite then re-anchor and try again. The edge of the main shipping channel is often good fishing. If any ferries or launches are coming to you call them on chanel 14 (harbour radio) or channel 16 (emergency) on VHF to make sure they have seen you. Try using different rigs, baits and traces to find out which is working best on the day. Never leave a spot when you are catching fish.

Line and hooks

Using light line (3 - 6kg) and small hooks (1/0 - 3/0) is a good idea in most spots, especially on the sand or shingle. You can even get away with a #1 or #2 hook but you have to take it easy after hooking a fish otherwise the hook may bend out or come out of the fishes mouth. Braid is very good for feeling the fish bit and getting down with lighter sinkers.

Softbaiting

Using your favourite softbait with a jighead, worm hook and trace, or simply using a softy with a conventional rig and bait as well can often work well. I always put a piece of bait like a squid strip or pilly cbue ontop of my soft bait and it works well. 3" chautruce mullet is my favourite for snapper but works well on most fish. You'll find different colours and shapes work well in different spots and on different speices

Baits

Having a variety of baits like squid, pilchard and fillet bait (mackerel, trevally or skipjactuna) will cover most of your options.

Traces

A trace or leader of around 8-10kg but no more than 15kg is good too, flourocarbon even better. You will always catch more fish with lighter line and smaller hooks.

Wind and tide

Try and get the wind with the tide - outgoing tides runs out of the harbour (nth wind), incoming tide runs in (sth wind),

Berley

Use a berley bomb on the bottom (weighted), try altering the position of the bomb and see if it makes any difference as sometimes the trail doesnt always go the direction you think it is (depending on the wind and tide. Try a surface berley bomb too. You can thrown chunks into the water at regular intervals as well if you have enough berley.

Sinkers

The tide does not run all that fast in the harbour so vary your sinkers from 1/4oz to 2oz running sinkers and 1 to 4oz for ledger rigs.



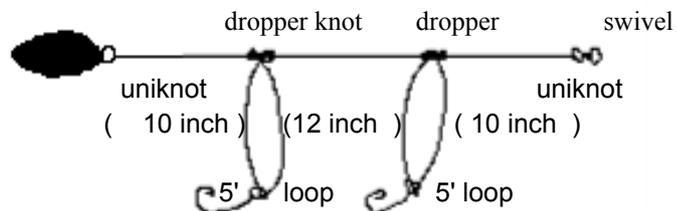
One of the best fish to consistently catch in the harbour – the elephantfish

Time of year - plenty of redcod and kahawai in the winter months, gurnard in the spring and through summer. snapper oct - may.

weather conditions – the key is to pick a spot for the prevailing weather conditions so you are realivly comfortable, your anchor is holding and it wont be too rough getting back to the launching ramp. 0 - 10 knots is great for all areas, 10 - 20 knots is starting to get a bit lumpy, 20 - 30 knots is ok for larger boats but you do have to be careful, 35knots plus - its your call but launches are ok but small boats can have problems.

boat ramps - Seaview is the best as it has floating pontoons. Evans bay is the next best but can be difficult whe you try and tie your boat to the side wharf in windy conditions. It also gets slippery on the low tide when launching and retrieving. There are small ramps at Petone wharf, Seatoun and Lowry bay are all ok for small boats (up to 14ft)

rigs - ledger rig, running rig, soft baits with jig heads, lures, livebait rig



The ledger rig with one or two hooks

20 - 30lb nylon should be ample with 2/O to 4/O recurve or circle hooks

flasher rigs are great or just put a coloured float or lumo bead sliding onto your hook



running rig

The running rig is great for catching snapper, gurnard, elephantfish and trevally. The trace length can be 50cm – 1.5mtr. A #3, 5 or 8 swivel is about right with a ¼ to 2oz sinker depending on the tide and wind and water depth.

Species of fish

You can catch most species of fish in the harbour at varying times of the year. If you are fishing on the sand then expect gurnard, kahawai, trevally, snapper, kingfish, elephantfish, redcod, spiny dogfish. If you are fishing on the shingle or rock/reef, expect bluecod, tarakihi, kahawai, snapper, warehou, trevally, kingfish, sea perch. Snapper and kingfish are more abundant in the summer months and redcod, warehou, spiny dogfish are more common in the winter months. Tarakihi, bluecod are all year and gurnard are more spring time though to autumn.

Blue cod - ledger rig on the foul or shingle bottom - falcon shoal 12mtr, steeple rock lighthouse, point halswell 18mtr, squid, mackerel or trevally baits,

Tarakihi - small baits (about the size of your finger nail) and small hooks, squid, mussel, pilchard fillet.

Elephantfish - cast away from the boat and try altering casts, small hooks (1/0) and light line (6kg or under), on the sand 10mtrs at seatoun, or east and sth east from ward island

Gurnard - anywhere on the sand, fillet baits, berley up, fav places - sth of ward out to pencarrow light, especially the last 2 bays (8mtrs) nth of Pencarrow light. The edge of shipping channel 8-12mtrs

Trevally - sth of ward island, berley is a must. light line and small hooks, go easy on them and net them in the boat (soft mouths)

Snapper - an hour either way of the turn of light is normally the best, pilchards, fresh squid or tuna baits, running rig

Kingfish - point halswell, point jenningham, barretts reef, point howard wharf, livebaits or trolling rapalas or longjigs.

Kahawai - everywhere, baits (especially pilly) usually outfish lures. the harbour entrance and nth of ward island are my best spots

Spots

Point Halswell – 15 to 20mtrs – tarakihi, snapper, kingfish, trevally, bluecod, kahawai, warehou

South of Ward Isl – 100 to 200 mtrs away from the southern beacon and on the edge of the shipping channel. 8-12mtrs depth. Good gurnard, kahawai and trevall with the odd elephantfish and snapper

BP gas to Ngaranga Gorge to the green sign – 25mtrs – snapper, kahawai, redcod, multi-species – a good spot if the NW wind is blowing hard.

Places we have done well is the green sign (aotea turnoff sign) - 20mtr, off the reclamation (logs) for teris and cod 15mtr, off the petone stream 7mtrs (for kahawai). If you sit it out with heaps of berley you might catch gurnard, snapper and definitely catch kahawai, redcod and barracouta . Dont forget to anchor up

Falcon Shoal - Off Scorching bay in 12mtrs is normally god bluecod and tarakihi fishing. We steam around looking for a bit of foul ground and/or good looking fish sign on the sounder. Then we put the anchor down and berley and fish for 30 – 45min. If it doesnt look promissing, we move a bit and try again. tarakihi, bluecod, trevally, snapper, kahawai. Some of the best tarakihi and bluecod fishing in the harbour

Eastborne to Pencarrow – 10mtr. Good spots at anchor for gurnard and sometimes trevally. Anywhere will do especially towards Pencarrow.

30mtr hole – south of Somes Island - We normally drift this spot and do well on kahawai and red cod with the odd couta. Protected in a northerly

(left) Jackie Lamb with a large barracouta. They always impress novice or young anglers. They make good fillet bait and a 'berley filler' – mix it 50/50 with pilchard, tuna or shellfish.

a falcon shoal winter snapper of 20lbs



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