



Empower boating 101

Why do some women parallel park a super-sized SUV in five seconds flat, but blanch at the thought of docking a bow-rider? It's that sort of feminine boat phobia that keeps so many women in the passenger seat when they take to the waves at the cottage.

But perhaps the tide is starting to turn. We've heard of two cottage-country marinas offering successful boating courses designed for women who want to feel more comfortable at the helm.

Pride of Muskoka's five-hour Women on the Water program began in 2004. The entire five-hour session (cost: \$125 in 2005) is spent on water, where chart reading, navigation, and engine-oil inspection are covered, as well as techniques for the dreaded docking manoeuvre.

Women Making Waves, offered by Paris Marine in the Kawarthas and the brain-child of U.S.-based boat manufacturer Genmar, offers a free, three-hour course that covers dryland techniques

such as trailer use and boat launching. On the water, women learn skills such as controlling the boat at slow speeds and effective use of the throttle.

"We want to show women the basics," says Deborah Paris of Paris Marine. "Once they have that down, the harder stuff, like docking, comes easy." —*Kate Barker*

For more information, contact Pride Marine Group at (877) 774-3347 and Paris Marine at (888) 933-3434.