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Fall 2023, Vol. 27 No. 5

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GOLFChicago
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Founder: Bill Daniels
Publisher: Dave Weretka
Editor: Dave Silbar
Art Director: Stephen Hawk
hawk@hawkdesign.net

Senior Writer: Neal Kotlarek

Editorial Contributors: Joe Aguilar, Dave Lockhart, Dr. Kevin McGarry, Todd Mrowice, Dr. Ryan Pokrywka, and T.J. Sullivan

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Editorial Inquiries
Dave Silbar
dsilbar@silbarpr.com
847-845-7548

Advertising and Marketing Inquiries
Andy Rees
Director of Business Development
arees@golfchicagomagazine.com
312-451-1355

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OPENING SHOT

Dave Silbar

Is it me, or is this year's European Ryder Cup team the most likable one yet? Although the same could be said for the U.S. squad, I give the early nod to the boys across the pond, especially since the U.S. hasn't won a Ryder Cup away from American soil since a 15-13 victory at The Belfry in Warwickshire, England, in 1993. This year's event will be contested at Marco Simone Golf and Country Club outside Rome on Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

With the season-ending FedEx Cup now in the rearview mirror, it's a perfect time for the Ryder Cup to keep our interest intact for professional golf, especially with the NFL now in full swing.

We're hoping the same can be said with the latest edition of GOLFChicago, chock full of news you can use and travel stories that hopefully can find a spot on your bucket list. We kick things off with our Good Stuff Department, featuring the latest and greatest in equipment, apparel, training aids, and much more. From there, we slide into Sweet Home Chicago to learn about the latest improvements being made at Medinah and meet Terry Gallaher, who earned his 7th club championship at Midlothian Country Club.

If you thought the only attribute Lansing, Michigan, had was being the state capitol, then writer Dave Weretka looks to change your mind. He uncovers several golf courses that are worth the drive and just minutes from the Michigan State University Campus. All are worthy of a road trip to watch your favorite Big 10 football team compete against the Spartans this fall.

And if you think Blackhawks rookie Conor Bedard is the only reason to appreciate Canada, you'll be introduced to a slice of pure heaven located 90 miles northwest of Montreal in the quaint ski town of Mont-Tremblant, Quebec. The only thing more enjoyable than the laid-back attitude and incredible scenery is golfing on the area's two signature golf courses. A visit to Mont-Tremblant is the French getaway you've always dreamed about without having to take the overseas flight to Paris.

A trip to Lake Geneva is never complete without a hike around the lake and viewing the massive mansions from right in their backyards. Golf has also played a special part of the Lake Geneva experience and we'll introduce you to the latest round of renovations at one of our all-time favorite courses, Abbey Springs. Celebrating its 53rd year, Abbey Springs has experienced an amazing renaissance complete with redesigned greens, lifted fairways, and overhauled bunkers to evolve from a hidden gem into a stunning, rolling, challenging must-play layout that now ranks among Southern Wisconsin's premier courses.

Our Illinois PGA Spotlight introduces readers to this year's crop of Hall of Fame Inductees, while our staff take a trip to Alabama and offer up not only a wide selection of great courses but also some of the best values when it comes to bang for your buck.

Writer Joe Aguilar takes us just south of the Wisconsin border to introduce those who don't know about the wonderful course called Shepherd's Crook. Lake County golf doesn't get much better than this truly immaculate 18-hole layout. The course is just about ready to unveil a large, short game area this fall.

And finally, Sand Valley continues to expand, featuring the brand new and stunning Lido Course and Sedge Valley Cottages.

So grab your Bears jersey, root for the Monsters of the Midway and cross your fingers that the boys can get it done across the Atlantic. There's plenty of golf left in the season, I can just feel it.

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THE GOOD STUFF



Island TIme

The new PUMA and Palm Tree Crew collection has us thinking warm thoughts. Golf and lifestyle come together in designs such as this PUMA X PTC polo that will have people digging your flamingos.
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Chicago Golf Apparel has the pulse of local golfers, and this collab with Old Style is the perfect cover for your big dog. Yes, they make a Southside one for those that recognize that team.
$60
www.chicagogolfapparel.com

Be One with Your Putter

It's far from a household name, but the Patton Eagle putter has a great feel and a great story to back it up. An outgrowth of Patton Design—a consultant industrial design firm focused on using product development and innovation to best serve humanity, avid golfer and company CEO Doug Patton has spent years developing a putter that contributes both elegance and function to the sport. Along with the Patton Eagle, he has created over 300 products in over 20 market categories and is author of two books on harnessing the power and inspiration of creative problem-solving. The putter features Haptic feedback engineering that lets you feel the subtle energy of the ball as it's transferred to your hands. The Patton Eagle uses precision milled putter face grooves for a smooth transition at impact and a unique combination of 802 stainless steel and 6201 aluminum. Available in 33, 34, and 35 inches and in three colors: gold/black, blue/silver, and silver/gray.
$399.99 www.pattoneagle.com



THE GOOD STUFF



On a Rope
Winner of our Favorite Hat of 2023 (not a real award). This Rope Script Snapback from UNRL Golf is a little classic, a little modern. Available in three colors, it even has a convenient spot for a golf tee.
$34 www.unrl.co

Sycamore to the Rescue
A few new additions to the Sub 70 putter lineup include the Sycamore 008 Mallet, a CNC-milled beauty with perfect sightlines. A 5, 10, 15, and 20g weight kit is included to fine tune this flat stick to your stroke.
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Gear Up for the Cup
This lavish hoodie is 100% cashmere and 100% an official team uniform for the U.S. Ryder Cup squad. The patriotic design is from Ralph Lauren (who else?) and has the 2023 logo on the chest.
$368
www.shop.rydercup.com



A Boost for Your Beverage
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$59.95 www.oakbottle.com





Master of Midlothan

Midlothian Country Club has a bit of a dynasty on its hands. Earlier this summer, Terry Gallaher won his 7th club championship, defeating Jake Vennetti, a much younger opponent but one who Gallaher politely noted "has many club championships in his future." Gallaher took a 3-up lead after three holes in the final match and never looked back. It was the fourth consecutive club championship for the 49-year-old Clarendon Hills resident. Much like the Chicago Bulls exorcising their demons when finally knocking off Detroit en route to their first of six NBA titles in 1991, Gallaher's first victory in 2012 came after he beat the same opponent who he had lost to a year earlier in the final match.



When asked who would win a club championship pitting a 49-year-old Terry Gallaher versus himself at age 38, the champ didn't hesitate in answering. "The 49-year-old me for sure, he laughed. "Not only have I learned how to handle the pressure, albeit I can also mask it a lot better, but my mental game is so much greater as I grow older."

20th Annual Mistwood Jambalaya Open

Play one of the best courses in Chicagoland that will have you howling like it was Mardi Gras! On November 4th come tee it up in this two-person scramble/alternate shot event that features over $10,000 in tee gifts and prizes. Bring the heat and play one last event before old man winter comes a calling.
https://mistwoodgc.com/component/content/article?id=155:jambalaya

October at Fox Run

Fox Run Golf Links in Elk Grove has two events in October that stray from the normal course layout.

On Saturday, October 14, all 18 holes will be converted to par 3s for the Par 3 Challenge. The cost is $60 per player and includes golf, food, and closest to the pin prizes on every hole.

The Superintendent's Revenge Tournament will take place on Saturday, October 28. This four-person scramble will feature the toughest layout possible. $320 per team covers golf, food, and prizes.

More information on both events at foxfungolflinks.com.

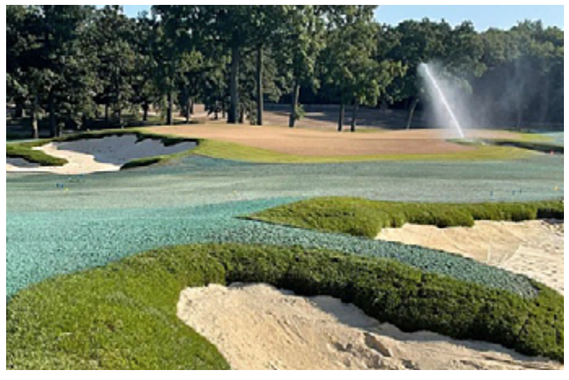
The Shack Indoor Golf Club Kicks Off New Season

In our last issue of GOLFChicago we featured The Shack Indoor Golf Club located in Glenview. This golf simulator establishment is serving up top-notch food, drinks, and drives. Starting on September 18th, The Shack ushers in a new indoor league season. Competitive formats include 2v2 handicapped, team net, scramble, best ball, and match play. Don't wait to sign up, or you might be too late. Visit theshackgolfclub.com for pricing and additional details.

First Peek at Medinah CC Renovations

In August, Medinah Country Club and OCM Golf began giving the public its first looks at the renovation to course No. 3 via its social media outlets. The project, which was approved in December 2021, is slated to be completed soon with an anticipated opening sometime in 2024. The original budget for the renovation was about $23.5 million.

OCM Golf is an Australian company which is directed by 2006 U.S. Open champ Geoff Ogilvy, along with Mike Cocking and Ashley Mead.



The renovation to No. 3 will have its full coronation when the Presidents Cup comes to town in 2026. It's an event that many invested in Chicago-area golf hope will propel Medinah into future consideration for other professional tournaments.

Bloomingdale Golf Club "Tough Pins" Fall Scramble

Want a challenge with some good golf fun? Gather your foursome and head over to Bloomingdale Golf Club on Sunday October 15th for this event that is also known as Superintendents Revenge, or The Angry Greenskeeper. For just a $100 per player this includes a welcome gift, continental breakfast, contests, prizes, dinner, draft beer, and soda. Sign me up! https://www.bloomingdalegc.com/upcoming-events/

Bettinardi Golf's New Studio B in Oak Brook

This state-of-the-art facility is located at 1225 22nd St. and spans over 7000 square feet, offering a haven for golf enthusiasts seeking unparalleled quality and expertise.

At Studio B, golf enthusiasts have access to two bays specifically designed for putter fittings where golfers can fine-tune their performance with Quintic putter fitting software. Additionally, a cutting-edge simulator for wedges will be available to help players enhance their short-game skills.

One of the highlights of Studio B is The Hive, a special vault dedicated to exhibiting high-end putters, and exclusive headcovers. This unique space will showcase the pinnacle of craftsmanship, where golfers can marvel at exclusive creations and limited-edition models. Those desiring a truly personalized touch can utilize the custom room to create their own bespoke putters.



Moreover, Studio B goes above and beyond by offering on-site club adjustments in their build shop. This ensures that every golfer leaves with equipment tailored to their individual needs, optimizing their playing experience.

Beyond the realm of equipment, Studio B boasts a retail section that caters to both men and women. Featuring a wide range of clothing, bags, headcovers, and accessories, this collection beautifully complements your golfing attire.

"We've been dreaming of this new Studio for many years and it's amazing to see it finally become a reality," said Sam Bettinardi, President of Bettinardi Golf. "The ability to have our flagship store in a such primetime location in our hometown, with all of the new amenities and upgraded experience, we cannot wait to show our customers this new brand experience."





Booking a fitting at Studio B is made easy through their online appointment system at https://bettinardi.com/collections/fittings. Once booked, their team of experts will guide golfers through the selection process, ensuring they find the perfect model among their outstanding range of putters. From the iconic BB Series to the elegant Queen B, the versatile Studio Stock, and the innovative Inovai, all of Bettinardi's production line putters will be available for purchase.



Bettinardi Golf cherishes its heritage, celebrates innovation, and exemplifies craftsmanship. Their commitment to excellence is underlined by their motto: "Be the best you can be" with a Bettinardi putter. Bettinardi Golf looks forward to having guests at Studio B in Oakbrook, where their passion for the game and dedication to superior quality will elevate anyone's golfing experience to new heights.

Studio B Oak Brook is open Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To book an appointment at Studio B, please visit https://bettinardi.com/collections/fittings.

Arrowhead Golf Club's Three Person Scramble

Head over to the glorious Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton on October 7th and participate in a great fall scramble event. Made up of three-person teams this is an entertaining competition on one of the best conditioned public facilities anywhere. Come play where PGA Tour player Kevin Streelman honed his game!
https://arrowheadgolfclub.org/events/10-7-three-person-scramble/

TRAVEL

Golf in Alabama Rocks!

Dave Weretka with Neal Kotlarek

Golf, music and space exploration make Alabama a lyrical vacation destination.

In the heart of the Southern US, the state has many identities. To some, it is a place of rich history, southern rock music and great weather. To others, it is the bedrock home of college football, led by the Alabama Crimson Tide and the Auburn Tigers. To still others, it is a perennial vacation destination with dozens of outstanding tourist attractions, including the space center and a Frank Lloyd Wright museum. And for golfers, Alabama is a mecca of tremendous and varied courses, including 26 designed by legendary architect Robert Trent Jones.

As you start your golf odyssey, your first stop should be Pursell Farms. Built on vast historic acreage, Farmlinks at Pursell Farms is considered by many to be among the top public courses in all of Alabama. It was designed by the formidable partnership of Hurdzan-Fry (architects of Wisconsin's heralded Erin Hills and Wild Rock layouts). The signature hole is the incredible No. 5—a par 3 featuring a stunning 172-ft. drop from tee to green. Make sure to take your cell phone to the tee to catch both a selfie and the view from the top of the world.

The 9th hole holds a fascinating history. In 1540, explorer Hernando de Soto led a group of Spaniards through this very property in search of the lost gold city of El Dorado. Legend has it that during his trek—which followed the Coosa River—de Soto hunkered down for the winter in the forested land lining this property. Some of the remains of that encampment can still be located. While de Soto never uncovered the lost city on his visit, players will feel they struck gold if they ring up a par on this intimidating 458-yd. par 4.

How does your golf group not play a course called "Fighting Joe"? Don't be intimidated by the scorecard's listing of 8,092 yards off the back tees. Most of us mere mortals will take on the course from the orange tees at 6,768 yards or the more polite white tees at 6,294 yards.

Fighting Joe and the tree-lined Schoolmaster are the two courses which headline The Robert Trent Jones Trail at the Shoals in Muscle Shoals. Not to be confused with other Alabama courses which are all part of the incredibly popular Robert Trent Jones Trail which crosses the state, The Shoals serves up 36 holes of fun and challenge. The longer but more open Fighting Joe course was named after Confederate general Joseph "Fighting Joe" Wheeler. Built high above Wilson Lake, Schoolmaster was named after Woodrow Wilson—the motivating force behind the adjacent Wilson Dam. The country's 28th president and leader of the Progressive Movement was known as The Schoolmaster for both his two decades in academia and his scholarly approach to politics.

While distinct from one another, both Shoal courses feature the classic RTJ features of wide fairways, massive greens and sprawling bunkers defending both landing areas and putting surfaces. Fighting Joe is more open with dunes-like mounds



The Shoals Fighting Joe Hole #18





Grand National Links Hole #18

and tall grasses lining fairways, while the fairways of Schoolmaster are tightened by mature trees.

Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountain Range and alongside Lee's Lake, Silver Lakes is an intriguing combination of three nine-hole championship courses along with one challenging par-3 nine. All four nines were designed by Robert Trent Jones. The Heartbreaker, Backbreaker, and Mindbreaker nines all sound more intimidating than they play. Each resides on spectacular rolling land and features wide fairways and huge greens. While the most common 18-hole loop is the combination of the Heartbreaker/Backbreaker courses, the other two nines have the most dramatic landscape on the property, including forests, wetlands, and severe elevation changes.

Jason Callen, the Director of Golf at Silver Lakes articulated what makes his course special. "I think the topography that we have here is unique," he said. "It's mountainous in the North River valley area. I don't think people realize the rise and fall at this particular facility. To see the surrounding foothills of the Appalachian Mountains is just spectacular." The course is a perennial host to U.S. Open qualifying events.

Twin Bridges Golf Club in Gadsden is a real treat. This city-owned course offers fantastic views and challenges on every hole. Elevation changes and the Coosa River leaves you smiling as it is so beautiful to play.

Hampton Cove is a 2,800-acre property that incorporates a nature preserve, luxury homes and three RTJ-designed championship courses. The Highlands course serves up 18 Scottish links-inspired holes and stretches to over 7,400 yards from the tips. The layout is highlighted by the iconic 5th hole resting next to an old mule bar. The River course incorporates wetlands, lakes ,and the Flint River to challenge players with water on 16 of the 18 holes. This course is proof that the architect had a heart, as this is the only RTJ course in the world without even one bunker. The short course opened in 1992—long before it was fashionable for a golf complex to add a par-3 course to its offerings. The course plays to a par 54 and combines both short holes with long holes to force players to pull out every club from their bag of tricks.

Any visit to the Huntsville area should include time to visit the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. This inspiring institution houses a remarkable collection of artifacts from the country's history of space missions. Visitors can marvel at the Saturn V rocket—the very vehicle that propelled astronauts to the moon. Interactive exhibits, simulators, and educational programs provide a hands-on experience. Immerse yourself in the wonders of space with a visit to this must-see attraction.

As our latest trip to experience the wonders of Alabama golf centered on properties in the north and west part of the state, we spent nights at two outstanding Marriott properties. Marriott Grand National Resort & Spa featuring 54 holes of outstanding golf, all within a stone's throw of Auburn University. Abutting the 600-acre Saugahatchee Lake, the RTJ-designed courses include the amazing Links and Lake layouts, as well as a short course.

Marriott Shoals boasts 192 rooms and is topped by a terrific revolving restaurant that offers a 360-degree view of Florence. Besides golf at the aforementioned Fighting Joe and Schoolmaster courses, our stay included a visit to the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio where artists including Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and the Rolling Stones once crafted some of their finest tunes. While in the Auburn-Opelika area, make a special effort to dine at The Hound restaurant, a unique dining experience that focuses on bacon, bourbon, family, and community. What more is there?

Alabama's landscape paints a vivid picture of both the natural hilly terrain and the state's commitment to wondrous golf experiences. From the picturesque beauty of Farmlinks at Pursell Farms to the world-class courses on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, golfers can savor a diverse range of challenges, all at highly affordable green fees. Somehow, someway, music, space exploration, and golf combine here to create a symphony of fantastic experiences.

Visit GolfAlabama.org for more information on booking a trip.


Muscle Shoals Marriott


The Inn at Pursell Farms

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the new home of modern GOLF

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Introducing Omni PGA Frisco Resort, the new home of modern golf. Fields Ranch hosts two 18-hole championship golf courses; Fields Ranch East designed by Gil Hanse and Fields Ranch West designed by Beau Welling. Paired with the resort's luxurious accommodations and high-end amenities, Omni PGA Frisco Resort is the ultimate golfer's paradise.

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TRAVEL

Golf in Lansing, Michigan: A Slice of Sporting Serenity

Dave Weretka

Lansing, the capital city of Michigan, is often associated with its political significance and a vibrant cultural scene. However, nestled amidst the hustle and bustle of this urban center lies a sporting haven that brings together enthusiasts and professionals alike: golf. With its lush greens, serene landscapes, and a rich history, golf in Lansing offers a unique blend of relaxation and competition, making it a cherished aspect of the city's identity.

The Eagle Eye golf collection includes courses such as Eagle Eye, Hawk Hollow, and Timber Ridge. This group of courses is a prime example of Lansing's golfing offerings. Hawk Hollow was designed by renowned architect Jerry Matthews. This this 27-hole course is a harmonious blend of natural beauty and strategic design. Rolling terrain, water features, and well-placed bunkers make every round a captivating journey. Eagle Eye Director of Sales and Marketing, Cory Amendt, describes Hawk Hollow as "A traditional golf course feel with tree-lined fairways, a little bit smaller and flatter greens, that includes really challenging par 3s. And with four sets of tees, you can find as much challenge as you're looking for."

After completing your round, try your hand, or putter, at Little Hawk, an 18-hole natural grass putting course. It includes undulating putting surfaces, sand, rough, and water. It has lights and is perfect for golfers that need to settle those bets from their earlier round or families looking to enjoy a casual golf experience.

Eagle Eye Golf Course stands as a testament to tradition. Its expansive links-style layout, punctuated by meticulously manicured fairways and fast greens, challenges even the most skilled players. This Chris Lutzke/Pete Dye creation has earned accolades for its championship design and has hosted prestigious events. "Everything's right in front of you. A lot of sand and a lot of water come into play out on the golf course. This course has big wide fairways and greens. It kind of plays like a resort course, but it includes a few more more challenges on and around the greens", says Amendt.

Timber Ridge Golf Club, another gem in Lansing's golfing crown, showcases a more relaxed and approachable atmosphere. Its 18-hole layout winds through mature woodlands, offering a scenic backdrop for your entire round. "It feels more like a traditional Northern Michigan golf course," adds Amendt. "It features elevated tees hitting down to fairways and then approach shots back up into greens. Tall evergreen trees line the sides of most fairways here, so much so that it doesn't even look like you're in mid-Michigan. The topography is just totally different."

College Fields Golf Club adds a unique dimension to Lansing's golf scene. Situated in close proximity to the Michigan State University campus, this course offers not only a challenging round but also a scenic one that allows you to enjoy nature. The course features rolling hills and well-designed holes that harken back to the Golden Age of design. This includes minimal topography changes from what was originally there. From our firsthand experience, it provides a truly relaxing, fun, and challenging experience for all.


Eagle Eye Hole #17

Golf and the Great Outdoors

Lansing's golf courses offer more than just a sporting experience – they provide a connection to nature that is both rejuvenating and inspiring. The lush fairways, picturesque water features, and serene landscapes create a sanctuary where players can momentarily escape the urban environment and immerse themselves in the beauty of the great outdoors.

Homewood Suites by Hilton is a perfect place to call home while you enjoy all that Lansing has to offer. Most of the courses and the MSU campus are only a 10 minute drive from the hotel. Several dining options are within walking distance, and you are just a short drive from Lansing Brewing and the Lansing Lugnuts stadium.

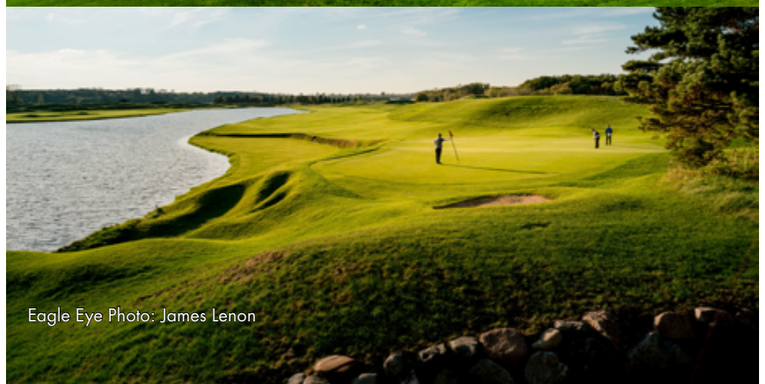
As Lansing continues to evolve, its golfing legacy remains a cherished part of the city's identity. The blend of championship courses, community engagement, and a deep-rooted history paints a vivid picture of golf's impact on the region. Whether it's a weekend round with friends, a competitive tournament, or a junior golfer's first swing, Lansing's golfing scene encapsulates the values of tradition, sportsmanship, and the pursuit of excellence.

In Lansing, golf isn't just a sport – it's a journey that connects people, landscapes, and experiences. From the meticulously designed fairways to the welcoming embrace of the golfing community, this city's golf courses offer a slice of serenity in the heart of Michigan. Whether you're a scratch golfer or a beginner, stepping onto a Lansing course is an invitation to immerse yourself in a world where competition, camaraderie, and the joy of the game converge.

For more info, visit: www.lansing.org/things-to-do/sports-and-leisure/golf/


Little Hawk


Hawk Hollow Clubhouse


Eagle Eye Photo: James Lenon


The Graduate Rock Bar Photo: Tom Gennara


Lansing Brewery Photo: Tom Gennara


Jackson Field Ballpark


MSU Football

TRAVEL

Oh Canada! Mont-Tremblant est Magnifique

Dave Silbar

Canada, our neighbor to the north, is known for hockey, friendliness, and unmatched beauty. And then there is golf.

Few have Canada on their list for must-play golf destinations, but 90 minutes northwest of Montreal you'll find the town of Mont-Tremblant, offering an exceptional Canadian golf experience and so much more.

Grab a direct flight to Montreal, rent a car, and an hour and a half later you'll be in the Laurentian mountain range and the quaint ski town of Mont-Tremblant, a summer and winter destination known by all in Quebec (and throughout Canada).

The town of Mont-Tremblant is the French getaway you've always dreamed about minus the overseas flight to Paris.

Suitable for families, couples, and groups, an array of activities are just beyond your hotel door. Most notably the gondola rides up the 2,871-foot Mont-Tremblant ski hill, a neighboring chair lift/luge ride (which goes about a quarter-way up the mountain), a fun gondola that goes from the bottom of Mont-Tremblant to the top, live music in the town square, hiking, biking, and a wide array of restaurants and shops to browse.

"Mont-Tremblant started becoming popular as a ski and summer destination in the 1960s, although the first chairlift and hotel were built in the late 1930s," explained Tremblant spokesperson Catherine Lacrosse. "From the 1940s until the 1970s, people would come up north by train, and it was always seen as a high-end ski destination. While the 1970s and 1980s saw more and more people coming up north, it was in the 1990s when Intrawest bought the mountain and started building the small town to make it a four-season holiday destination and ski resort."

Intrawest is one of the largest developers and operators of resort properties in North America, offering skiing, snowboarding, golf, mountain biking, lodging, and real estate. Once the company became involved, Tremblant skyrocketed as a European-style pedestrian village with world-class lodging and amenities, restaurants, boutiques, and other activities.

"Large hotel chains have locations in Mont-Tremblant, activities are numerous, and the snow conditions are fabulous, while the golf courses are known for their challenging terrain and stunning views,"added Lacrosse. "Celebrities and people from all around the world make it their go-to holiday destination all year long."

Accommodations abound, but you must try to book a room at the suites of Sommet des Neiges, where you'll be thrust into the height of elegance, offering every sumptuous amenity just 300 feet from the panoramic gondola, the village of Mont-Tremblant, and steps away from the gondola to the casino.

Coming in from a day in the breathtaking countryside, you'll be amazed by the beautiful lobby and octagonal fireplace. Sommet des Neiges has an outdoor pool, a spa, and a BBQ for hotel guests on the outdoor terrace. In your unit, you have a full kitchen, washer, and dryer.

While it's hard to go wrong with any of the numerous restaurants here, La Forge steakhouse is not to be missed. Overlooking the town square and the 28th Mont-Tremblant Blues Festival during our stay in July, we were treated to one of the finest dining experiences we've ever had. Perfectly grilled steak and seafood offerings, au gratin potatoes, and some of Montreal's best red wine and locally crafted beer were all outstanding.

The La Forge signature dessert, what locals refer to as "poor man's cake" is infused with locally-sourced maple syrup and was one of the best desserts we've ever had.

Other local favorite snacks include poutine—french fries topped with cheese curds, gravy, and a wide choice of other toppings. And then there are the beavertails, a flat fried-dough creation that can be topped with any number of treats. We opted for apple pie filling the first day and Nutella and peanut butter M&Ms on day two. Another must try is the maple taffy on snow at the Cabane à Sucre (Sugar Shack).

Dining alfresco in Mont-Tremblant offers scenic views of the surrounding mountains and everything that the village has to offer, including live music on virtually every weekend during the summer.

Le Golf

While you'll find an array of choices when it comes to golf, the two "can't miss" layouts are Tremblant Resort's Le Géant and Le Diable courses.

Two very distinct and magical experiences await. While the golfing experience on both is a rare gem, so is the drive through the forest from each green to the next tee box.

Le Géant features views of the Laurentian range, lakes, and holes cut right through the neighboring Mont-Tremblant National Park (Parc National du Mont-Tremblant).

The Le Géant course requires fairly accurate tee shots, as dense forests line most every hole. The exception is the par-5 opener, which plays downhill and has bunkers lining both sides.

Le Géant was closed for two years during COVID as it was forced to move all of its golf carts to Le Diable to accommodate golfers who were required to ride individually.

A mile down the road from LeGéant is Le Diable, a Dana Hurdzen-designed 18-hole championship course that cuts through towering pine trees and, while offering a bit less mountainous experience, the views on every hole are still to die for.

The course forces golfers to be very precise with their tee shots, with giant sand waste bunkers lining either one or both sides of most holes tee to green.

Standing on the very first tee of Le Diable is an experience all of its own. In front of you is a lengthy, 420-yard par 4 with towering pines running the length of the hole on both sides, forming a near triangle shape from tee to green. Inside those trees are the signature waste bunkers, also running the entire length of the hole.

No less memorable is hole No. 2, a 360-yard par 4 that doglegs left with a pond spelling doom for errant tee shots and with bunkers and trees that guard the right side of the green.

Hole 3 features a 150-yard shot over a lake to a green surrounded by, you guessed it, more towering pines. Fast forward through mountain terrain and holes that sit alone from one another, offering a pure solitude-like experience, and you'll find yourself standing on the 10th tee, a downhill par 3 offering a mountain view that takes your breath away.

Next comes the par-4 11th, playing downhill to the fairway, only to dogleg its way to the right and back up the hill to the green.

Expect to see deer and an array of wildlife roaming the course. The deer that we ran across seemed just as interested to see us as we were to see them. On the par-4 14th, a short dogleg left, three deer enjoyed an afternoon meal of grass just steps from where my wife was teeing off.

Cut through the Canadian forest, Le Diable differs from Le Géant as it is built on top of nearly four feet of sand, helping the course drain quickly after storms. And while nearly every hole on Le Diable is signature-like, standouts include the par-3 6th hole, playing anywhere between 130 and 160 yards, with a tee box looking down to the green over a beautiful lake with forest framing the entire hole, creating a mini stadium-type feel.

The back nine features more of the same views that only the Great White North can provide.

Standing on the tee of the par-5 15th hole, you'll smile ear to ear, knowing that this is why you chose Canada as your golf destination. The short, 475-yard par 5 plays downhill, with a view of the mountains and Lac Ouimet framing the back of the hole from behind the green.

In addition to the two incredible courses, other activities are numerous, including luge rides, ziplining, Tonga Lumina (light and sound show on trails in the mountain at night), a ride on the gondola to the top for some hiking, mini-golf (a replica of the Le Géant course), indoor activities (escape games, laser tag, virtual reality), an indoor water park, and the Beach and Tennis Club for water activities including canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, pedal boats, pontoon rides, a cruise on the lake, just a simple swim, or a relaxing moment at the beach.

There are also plenty of off-resort activities to choose from: helicopter rides, dune buggies, kayaking on the various rivers, rafting, and bike and e-bike rentals.


Le Géant


Mont-Tremblant


Le Diablo

Illinois PGA Announces 2023 Hall of Fame Class

The Illinois Golf Hall of Fame Selection Committee voted to induct six candidates representing all facets of the game into the Illinois Golf Hall of Fame Class of 2023. Inductees will be recognized at an Induction Ceremony scheduled for Friday, November 10 at The Glen Club in Glenview, Ill., home of the Illinois Golf Hall of Fame. The nominees include:

Margaret Abbott Dunne The first American woman to win an Olympic competition, Margaret Abbott triumphed in the 1900 golf competition in Paris, and was awarded a decorated porcelain bowl, gold medals not yet in vogue. Her golf game was honed at Chicago Golf Club, where she was taught by James Foulis and played often with Charles Blair Macdonald and his son-in-law, H.J. Whigham. Abbott Dunne went from a 19 handicap to scratch in a year, won several club competitions and was second in the 1897 Governors' Cup at Onwentsia, the leading tournament for female players in the west.

Harry Collis Most closely associated with Flossmoor, Harry Collis was a player, club professional, architect, superintendent, and turf grass innovator across 40 years. His Flossmoor Bentgrass strain was planted on courses in the Midwest served by his Flossmoor Nursery for decades. His surviving Chicago-area course designs include Glenwoodie and the redesign of Flossmoor. He also finished in the top 10 in four Western Opens.

Dr. Randy Kane Nicknamed "The Family Doctor" for his close attention to the turf quality of the Chicago District's courses, Kane has a doctorate in plant pathology from Cornell University and served as the Chicago District Golf Association's first director of turfgrass programs from 1985 through 2006. He was a leader in identifying problems and passing the solutions to some 400 clubs in the CDGA area.

Tim O'Neal, PGA Like mentor Bill Ogden before him, Tim O'Neal has been a mentor to many assistants in his 22-year career as Head PGA Professional at North Shore Country Club. O'Neal was an assistant to Ogden for three years before taking the head job at Country Club of Peoria, returning to North Shore in 1995. Twice a Section Professional of the Year (first in South Florida in 1994, then in Illinois in 2005), O'Neal also served on the Illinois PGA and Foundation boards and is currently President of the Illinois PGA Foundation. Twenty-three of his assistants and students have become head professionals, or directors of golf or instruction across the country. In recent years, O'Neal has been responsible for reuniting hundreds of PGA Professionals with their earned share of a total of $3 million held in a forgotten retirement savings fund created by golf manufacturer Slazenger in the 1980s.

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Bruce Patterson, PGA A two-time Illinois PGA professional of the year (1993, 1996), Patterson was instrumental in creating and nurturing the Illinois PGA Foundation. The longtime Head PGA Professional / Director of Golf at Butler National Golf Club spent a decade as President of the foundation, was the Section President in 1995-96, and also a PGA of America Regional Director. Named the Illinois PGA Teacher of the Year in 2001, he is among the best at getting his players to escape bunkers. He earned PGA Master Professional status with a thesis on hosting a PGA Tour tournament, in Butler's case the Western Open, at his club.

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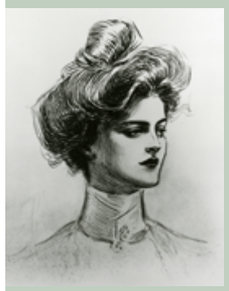
Dave Ryan Coming out of Taylorville, Ryan has built a formidable resume in senior amateur golf. Four times (2009, 2013, 2015, 2016), Ryan's won the Illinois Senior Amateur. Seven times in an eight-year span from 2009 through 2016, he won the Chicago District Golf Association's Senior Player of the Year award. Three times he captured the Central Illinois Player of the Year honor. And in 2016, he won the U.S. Senior Amateur at Old Warson Country Club in St. Louis. He's 8-5-2 in 15 Radix Cup appearances.


Margaret Abbott Dunne


Harry Collis


Dr. Randy Kane


Tim O'Neal


Dave Ryan



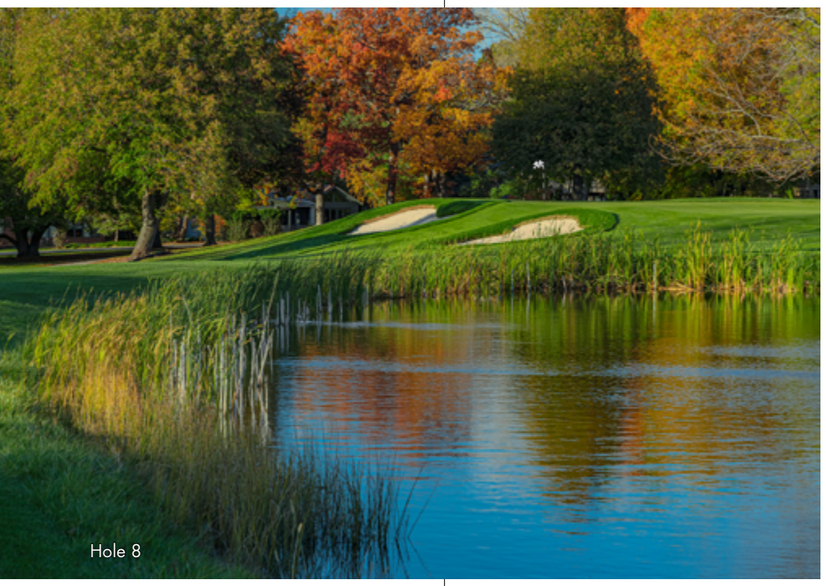
COURSE SPOTLIGHT

Advertorial

Stunning Vistas, Great Golf at Newly Renovated Abbey Springs

Celebrating its 53rd year, Abbey Springs has experienced an amazing renaissance complete with redesigned greens, lifted fairways, and overhauled bunkers to evolve from a hidden gem into a stunning, rolling, challenging must-play layout that now ranks among Southern Wisconsin's premier courses.

Originally designed by the esteemed team of Ken Killian and Dick Nugent, the course underwent a $2.5 million renovation in 2021 by Bob Lohmann and Todd Quitno, whose projects over the years have included Merit Club in Libertyville and Blackstone Golf Club in Marengo. Some of their work at Abbey Springs addressed lowland fairways that retained moisture following storms, while the project also involved expanded greens, adjusted bunker placements, and enlarged ponds to update the look, feel, and playability of the championship layout.



Hole 8



Hole 7

"Our golf course was always beautiful," said long-time Abbey Springs pro Jack Shoger. "But after 50 years of the status quo, our membership wanted the course to compare in beauty, challenge, and conditioning to the best courses across Wisconsin."

One huge advantage Abbey Springs has over most Wisconsin and Illinois courses is rugged topography that takes players up massive hills and down vast dales. While most of the front nine rolls gently from one hole to the next, the back nine dishes out extreme transitions from each tee to each fairway to each green. "The course is located on a really interesting property," said architect Lohmann. "The dramatic landscape also meant that there were areas where water has historically collected. That issue needed to be addressed. On the 9th fairway, alone, we added four feet of soil to lift it above the wetlands."

The end result of the renovation work is a course that maintained the character of the original design but has expanded tee shot landing areas as well as larger green sites and improved quality of the putting surfaces.

"Today, Abbey Springs is a shining star in Wisconsin's prolific golfers paradise in the Lake Geneva area," grinned Shoger. "Set among the rolling slopes of Geneva Lake's south shore, rich in beauty, it rises to spectacular views of the lake and its surrounding hillsides. An outstanding 18-hole course with exceptional service, carefully manicured greens, lush fairways, beautifully tended trees, and wooded hillsides, it is a course of true championship caliber."

"As the new and improved Abbey Springs reopened in Spring of 2022," added Shoger. "Golfers throughout the Midwest are finding a golf course that retained its personality and playability, but with an array of new features—rebuilt bunkers and redesigned green complexes featuring state of the art "007" bentgrass."

Membership packages include weekday, twilight, and 9-hole options.

To book a tee time or for more information on Abbey Springs, visit www.abbeysprings.org.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Shepherd's Crook Golf Course is both challenging and exciting to play. It is a links-style course that returns golfers to the game's past by creating a feeling of playing Ireland's Ballybunion or Waterville courses. Shepherd's Crook's design reflects the golden era of golf course architecture of the 1920s and 30s, with bentgrass fairways, tees, and greens. Book a round today!

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zion's shepherd's crook: well worth the drive

By Joe Aguilar

Photos: Mike Whealan











As a former NBA point guard, Billy McKinney appreciates keen vision, shot-making, dedication to a craft and, sure, a good bounce.

That appreciation grew during McKinney's seven seasons as a pro player and 32 as an NBA executive. When he was finishing up his playing career as a member of the Bulls in 1985, he witnessed perfection-in-the-making. He was a teammate of Michael Jordan, who was a rookie a year earlier. McKinney later moved into the Bulls' front office, and the Northwestern University graduate helped construct a roster that resulted in Jordan's Bulls winning six NBA titles.

"I'm the reason he really became good," jokes McKinney, who likes to tell this story everywhere he travels, including when making the rounds in his role as mayor of the city of Zion, which sits on the eastern-most border of Wisconsin and Illinois in Lake County.

"I got tired of kicking his butt in practice," McKinney says with a laugh, "so I decided to move into the front office."

Like McKinney, Bill Hartmann appreciates teamwork. Hartmann is board president of the Zion Park District, which owns and operates Shepherd's Crook's championship-caliber 18-hole golf course in the city. Shepherd's new short game area is the latest addition that has the Park District smiling.

"Allen, Charlie, Kara and all the staff at Shepherd's Crook are top notch," Hartmann says of golf operations manager Allen Parkes, superintendent Charlie Lukan and food and beverage coordinator Kara Kaneko. "Their hard work and dedication are the reason why Shepherd's Crook is ranked amongst the top public golf courses in the state. The Park Board is proud of the new short game area and the continued success of the Park District's golf operations."

On an August morning in Zion, where he grew up and attended Zion-Benton High School, McKinney is again appreciating vision, shot-making, dedication to a craft, and a good bounce. He's wearing soft spikes, not high tops or dress shoes. The task of dropping a ball, no matter its size, into a cylinder remains difficult, and the skill and focus required to do so never goes unappreciated.

Heck, you know MJ, as serious a golfer and competitor as he was as a basketball player, appreciates that.

"It's beautiful … and it's peaceful," McKinney says as he stands inside the clubhouse at Shepherd's, where he was hosting his third annual golf outing. "I can sit here and look at the people coming up the 18th green all the time."

Shepherd's Crook has that quality that every golf course seeks. Like all the greats—Michael, Jack, Tiger—it grabs you and lifts you out of your seat, and then plops you back into it until the next "Did you see that?!" moment.

Opened in the summer of 1999, Shepherd's essentially hasn't changed the look of its course in its almost 25 years of existence. The exceptions are the growth of several well-spaced old trees and the pre-COVID-19 addition of a breathtaking patio overlooking the 18th green.

That's why a new 27,000-square foot putting and short-game area is noteworthy.

"If you haven't been here in the last five years, it's completely different," Parkes says. "We've upgraded the carts, patio, and putting green. [We have] 12-minute tee times, which no one has in Chicago. We're trying to not be just a transactional relationship with you, but [consider] what's the lifetime value of this customer."

Sitting adjacent to the clubhouse, the newly built putting and short game area grabs your attention as soon as you drive up. At about 90 yards in length, it could double as a warm-up par 3. The practice sand bunker can fit three golfers.

"He had the original idea of making this one massive green, and it turned out awesome," Lukan says of Parkes. "I think it's as good as we could have hoped for. We were on the same page pretty much all the way through as far as undulation and getting this as big as we can."

Shepherd's latest addition, which was scheduled to open Labor Day weekend, blends with the existing layout seamlessly.

"This is definitely a great piece of property and a great palette to paint on," says Parkes, who's been in his role since 2016 and whose golf resume also includes stints as a general manager, certified course superintendent, and PGA professional. "They didn't move much dirt. It looks like it's always been here, because it has always been here."

Designed by renowned architect Keith Foster, whose work includes the renovation of Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, where Justin Thomas won the 2022 PGA Championship, Shepherd's is a par 71 that can stretch 6,800 yards from the silver tees and plays mainly as a links course. Parkes calls it a hybrid layout, as golfers can either "throw the ball up in the air" or roll it onto the green. Foster says on Shepherd's website that the course is "routed with classic and strategic design principles that cut features naturally to the terrain."

Shepherd's opens with what Parkes calls a "very fair hole." Called "Short Fuse," the par 4 measures only 350 yards from the tips and plays to a sloped green, before the course

gradually leads to holes that become more challenging.

"But you're warmed up by then," Parkes says.

Most of the bunkers are positioned on the sides of greens, which allows golfers that option of running their ball onto the green. Be prepared for wind, however, as Lake Michigan sits just a couple of miles away, providing a welcome breeze on a muggy summer afternoon.

"It can get windy out here," says Parkes, also noting Shepherd's high elevation. "You can bounce it on."

The course's other fun features include Parkes' favorite hole, the short par-4 7th ("Surf and Turf"), which features a split fairway guarded on the right by a bunker, with a pair of deep bunkers protecting the green.

Scream your approach shot on the par-4 13th ("The Farm") over the green and your ball might roll across Russell Road, which would put it in Wisconsin.

The par-5 14th ("Brute"), which requires a shot over a ditch on the approach (water near the green) and often plays into a breeze, features a giant landfill hill in the background. For Illinois, the hill qualifies as a "mountain" in terms of its height.

"It pops, and it frames it in," Parkes says. "I don't mind it at all."

Be careful on the par-4 15th ("Straight and Narrow"), which can spoil a good round thanks to a severely sloped green that can yield ample 3-putts or worse. The hole plays uphill from tee to green.

A fun par 5 ("Devil's Ditch") completes the round. The 18th hole boasts a double dog leg, and the approach features another ditch, which sits in front of a perched green. Long hitters can carry their tee over the left of two fairway bunkers and reach a downward slope to provide more distance. As you're reading your putt—who knows?—maybe a patio audience will include Mayor McKinney.

McKinney plays in a Thursday night league at Shepherd's and has grown to love the game that he didn't pick up until after his pro ball days. He says he enjoys everything about his local 18-hole course. The Park District also owns and operates Shiloh Park Golf Course, a nine-hole layout (par 35).

"I call it a friendly course," McKinney says of Shepherd's. "It's challenging, but it's not so hard that it will discourage you from playing. Every hole you have a chance to score well."

Parkes relies heavily on Lukan, a technician who was a member of Byron High's 2007 IHSA state championship golf team. Lukan was applying his turf management skills at Evanston Golf Club before coming to Shepherd's in 2018.

"He's somebody with a real keen eye to detail, and that's translated for our customers," Parkes says. "They love the conditions. He top-dresses those approaches and everything out front, mows them shorter to kind of be true to Keith Foster's vision of being able to play the ball on the ground."

Lukan has enjoyed working on his new project this summer. Gone is the modest 7,300-square-foot practice green, replaced by one that's tripled in size. Todd Quitno designed it and his reputation is as stellar as Foster's. According to Quitno Golf Designs' website, the Ball State University graduate has been involved in a half dozen new course designs and more than 150 renovation projects, ranging in size from one-hole feature upgrades to 27-hole comprehensive overhauls.

Golf Creations out of Marengo built the green, which boasts almost eight feet of elevation change. Lukan has 18 mini flagsticks in his inventory that he can use when strategizing.

"We're going to have a lot of fun putts," Parkes says. "I can even envision state competitions for putting."

Parkes estimated the cost of the new practice green and short-game area at $375,000, which was financed thanks to an enterprise fund. The other nice thing for golfers is there is no tee time required to use the area, and it's free. Just bring your putter and a couple of balls.

"That's one of the questions the architect had," Parkes says. "How do you monetize this? My contention is you don't need to monetize it. It's just an improvement to your property. How do you monetize bunker renovations? You can't. They just need it. This is one of the things that this (course) needed because we don't have a driving range, we don't really have a practice area, and this was one way to check the box."

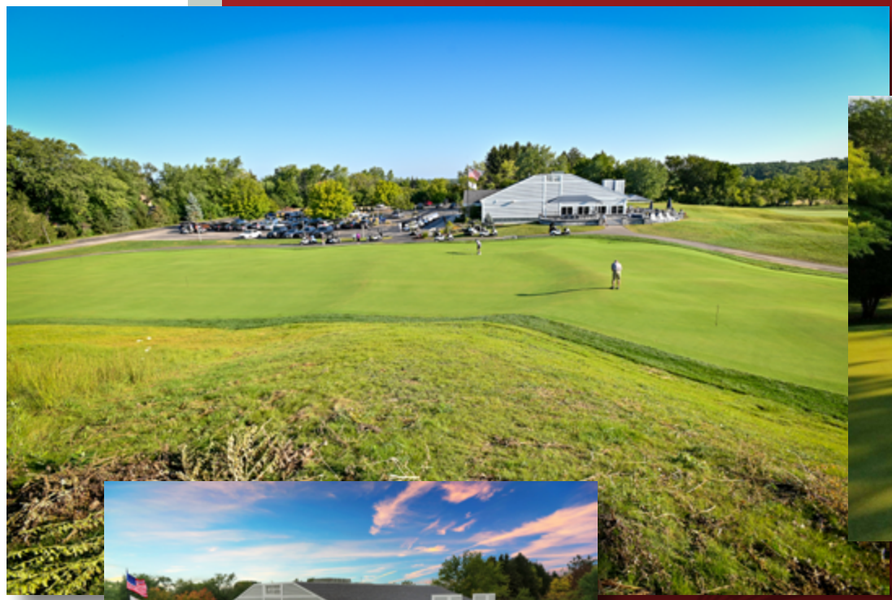
"As the Zion Park District's lone enterprise fund, Shepherd's Crook has achieved tremendous results in recent years," Zion Park District Executive Director Eric Bradley says. "The course's profitability has allowed it to fund all aspects of golf operations, including capital needs and course upgrades, such as the new putting green and patio. The Zion Park District is very cognizant of the community's challenging property tax rate and Shepherd's Crook's ability to be self-sustaining is essential to our district. In addition to funding its own capital improvements, a portion of course profits are utilized in our Recreation Fund to pay for the Park District's concert series that is enjoyed by residents throughout the summer at no charge."

Parkes says many golfers tell him Shepherd's is the best value in Lake County. Golfers can play 18 holes with a cart for $59 during the week and $79 on weekends. There are also resident rates.

The new putting green and short-game area should only help enhance his facility's image.

"My Ferris State marketing background, I don't remember a lot," jokes Parkes, who earned a marketing degree from the Michigan university in 1983. "But I do remember, 'Differentiate or die.' If you want to compete with other people, and they've got brand preferences for other amenities or pace of play or cost, the creature comforts are important. They add to the overall golf experience.

"[Shepherd's Crook] is kind of a destination, being right on the Wisconsin border. This is a little bit of a drive, so we've got to give folks a reason to return."

















Stunning Lido Course, Elegant Sedge Valley Cottages Highlight Sand Valley's Continued Expansion

By Neal Kotlarek

Plunge a tee into the ground on the straight-away par-4 No. 1 of the newly opened Lido golf course at Sand Valley and take a deep breath. Pause for a moment before you assume your address position and look left, then right, then straight ahead. Study and absorb your surroundings. Somehow, someway, you have been transported back in time and space to 1917. Instead of Nekoosa, Wisconsin, you are in Long Island, New York, on a course that long ago ceased to exist. The lunar landscape of sand, water, and sod around you was designed by legendary architect C.B. Macdonald. Know that his singular objective was to create the most challenging, creative, and intriguing golf course ever designed. The course was intended to dazzle and inspire. It was meant to confront golfers to hit approach shots and putts that they may never have previously considered. Once you have processed all of that background history, go ahead and hit your tee shot. And then proceed to relish the 18 holes of thrills, chills, and (possibly) spills in front of you.







Sedge Valley

The Sandbox

The Lido is just one of an array of dazzling new offerings either completed or under various stages of construction at Sand Valley Resort in Central Wisconsin. Since the opening of the original Sand Valley course, the property has undergone an amazing growth spurt. The acreage has expanded to 12,000 acres and presently incorporates the stunning Mammoth Dunes, the delightful par-3 Sandbox course, the private membership (but available for limited play by resort guests) The Lido course, grass tennis courts, an elegant clubhouse, lakes, hiking trails, fat-tire biking trails, winter sports, 4 and 8-bed cottages and multiple restaurants.

In 2024, those celebrated assets and amenities will be joined by still another 18-hole course located near the entrance of the resort. Designed by master architect Tom Doak, Sedge Valley is built on sweeping sand-based terrain that makes the layout distinct from its sister layouts. Shorter, narrower, and more intimate than the resort's other courses, the 18-hole layout takes the player up, down, over, and around dunes, prominent rock outcroppings, mature trees, sand, and untouched prairie. The course will play to a par 68 and a length of around 6,000 yards when finished.

With 12 holes already completed as of late July, the course dazzles the eye with some holes that climb up ridges and others that dive into glens. Inspired by the first great English heathland built in the early 1900s, the tract features shorter-length risk/reward holes that dare players to fire away at the flagstick. But buyer beware on those propositions, however, as Doak's trademark bold, heavily contoured green complexes can shuttle shots away from the hole as often as they may direct a good shot toward it. Doak has called Sedge Valley a course that "lends itself to match play" as players of all ability levels encounter holes that can be conquered using strategy—as opposed to distance of the tee. Two par 3s, for instance, play to modest lengths of 119 yards and 143 yards.

I predict that the 18th hole will quickly be considered the most interesting par 4 in Wisconsin as the tee opens to a dramatically split fairway. The steeply elevated landing area to the right provides a direct line to the green. The lower tier landing area to the left is easier to reach, but then requires a daunting short-iron to a hidden target. Whichever your decision, you confront a putting surface with multiple intricacies. Approach shots directed from the upper right side may spring forward as the landing area just short of the green is severely sloped. Approach shots from the lower tier have a restricted angle to the hole, particularly when the flagstick is tucked on the far backside of the green. All that said, a par on this short hole is in all likelihood a winning score.

"We are hearing lots of rave reviews of Sedge Valley from our regular guests who have toured the course grounds," said Brandon Carter, Marketing Director at Sand Valley. "Sedge Valley doesn't necessarily provide great advantages of the tee. A good course management will probably do better than a player who hits the ball a long way off the tee but not always with accuracy."

The final shaping and seeding work on the course shares the timeline with construction work on Sedge Village, a resort and residential neighborhood unobtrusively placed on the outskirts of Sedge Valley. When completed, the village will incorporate 36 home sites of various acreages featuring tennis, dining, and entertainment venues along with a massive, man-made lake. A 13,000-square-foot tennis center will include a distinctive indoor tennis court, a bistro-style restaurant, and a fully stocked pro shop. The tennis court is built under the specifications of "court" or "royal" tennis—a version of the game that incorporates pear-shaped racquets, walls, and cloth balls.


Sedge Valley


Mammoth


Sedge Valley

Cottage construction began this past spring. Each cottage design follows various elegant floor plans inspired by the Sedge Village sites. Estate homes that offer owners more architectural design flexibility will add variety and scale to the project. Owners of both the cottages and estate homes can participate in the Sand Valley Rental Program that provides a shared rental split when resort guests use those facilities.

My July stay at one of the first completed cottages revealed some unique design and amenity elements, including a screened-in porch with a unique custom-built table tennis set and access to a lakeside fire pit. The spacious kitchen features top-line appliances and opens to a huge dining area and living room space. Each of two bedrooms reside on opposite sides of the main floor while a staircase leads to the two bedrooms and bathroom on the second floor. As I enjoyed my morning coffee, I watched in wonderment as workers cleared the area of brush in preparation for the formed lakebed to begin the fill process.

"This is an exciting time to visit the resort," said Carter. "The village plans that were outlined just a year ago are already in various stages of development. When completed, the lake will provide residents and guests a beautiful amenity to view and the lakeside will be a great place to rest and relax before and after playing golf, tennis, hiking or cross-country skiing during the winter months."

The rapid development of both the Sedge Valley golf course and Sedge Village almost obscure the fact that Sand Valley Resort opened a mere six years ago. The vision of Bandon Dunes founder Mike Keiser and now owned and managed by sons Chris and Michael, the resort has evolved from a relatively modest footprint of a single golf course with limited lodging on 1,700 acres of tumbling sand dunes to a vast recreational community that caters to active lifestyles.

The actual origins of Sand Valley Resort date a little further back to the early 2010s when golf construction executive Craig Haltom came across a parcel of sand, trees, and wild vegetation that he sensed would make for a great golf property. Haltom shared his discovery with the Keiser family who very quickly shared his enthusiasm. After the land acquisition from the Plum Creek Timber Company, the Keisers hired acclaimed architects Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw to shape the land into a championship course unlike any other in Wisconsin. From an emptied lake bed and forested dunes emerged the humble beginnings of what would quickly evolve into one of America's premier golf destinations.

Honored as the Best New Course of 2017 by multiple national golf magazines, the Sand Valley championship layout appears at first glance to have been designed by Mother Nature. Sand dunes flow into wide expanses teeming with red pines, native grasses, and even prickly cacti. The course design is amazingly varied and dramatic. Fairways play hard and fast; thus, tee shots spring forward by 10, 20, and even 30 yards if the ball catches the back end of a hill. Greens are large and massively undulating as they challenge players to consider angles and pin positions on every approach shot.

While it is tempting to compare Mammoth Dunes to its sister course, the fact is that the layouts reside on completely different landscapes. The first course is wide open with saplings and shrubs lining the layout's perimeters. Trees are a prominent feature on Mammoth Dunes—not necessarily as obstacles but to frame holes. Named Best New Course of the Year by multiple national golf magazines in 2018, Mammoth Dunes was inspired by David McLay Kidd's earlier work at Bandon Dunes in Oregon. The stated philosophy of Kidd's design firm is to create courses "as natural as possible, as seamless as possible, and as sustainable as possible." Given 500 acres of pristine land, the architect produced a feast for the eyes complete with remarkable panoramas, extravagantly wide fairways, contoured greens, and even a pair of drivable par 4s. The end-result is a course that is unique, fun and visually thrilling.

The course's logo is a wooly mammoth, which serves as a reminder that the sand base of the property was a result of the end of the Ice Age. Far more fascinating to golfers is the mammoth sizes of the sand dunes which tower as high as 80 feet, the greens which stretch to over 75 yards from front to back, and landing areas—some as wide as a football field. Most note-worthy is the ingenious separation of holes which provides utter solitude.

Fans of golf architecture will appreciate some of the flairs Kidd installed in this masterpiece design. The horseshoe-shaped putting surface of the short par-4 6th hole was contoured to allow even putts from the front side of the green to curl toward a flagstick positioned on the backside. Prior to planting grass around this green's rim, Kidd rolled

basketballs alongside the ridge to ensure the desired effect.

The par-5 No. 7 provides even more entertainment as the bunker protecting the front side of the green was at one point the foundation for an old settlement home. The brick wall stretches across the width of the hazard. Note to self: Keep your approach shot to this putting surface far, far to the left or to the right or risk a huge X on your scorecard.

No visit to Sand Valley Resort is complete without a romp in The Sandbox. Opened in 2018 and built by the team of Coore and Crenshaw, the course is an ingenious 1,757-yd. 17-hole creation that serves up loads of fun in a fraction of the time it takes to play a regulation course. Laid out over 25 acres of sandy soil, The Sandbox features holes that vary in length from 40 yards to 150 yards. The green complexes are the featured attractions on the course, with undulations and tiers challenging players to calculate landing areas sometimes far away from the flagstick locations. Depending on the greenkeeper's inclination, some flags on the course have to be ignored as their position just behind a greenside bunker basically eliminates any chances of landing the tee shot anywhere near the hole.

One of the most talked-about projects among the national golf community over the past few decades, the aforementioned Lido is a faithful re-creation of a New York course repurposed as a WWII military base in the early 1940s. Golf historian Peter Flory studied old photographs and source materials to create 360-degree models of each hole. In the midst of working on Sedge Valley, Doak and his Renaissance Golf Design team suspended that operation to adapt Flory's meticulously reproductions into physical reality right down to every hump, hollow, and hummock of the original Lido Club. What made this massive engineering feat even possible is that the original course had been laid out on a parcel of flat, rectangular shoreline property using two million cubic yards of sand and top soil. Thus, the course was far easier to replicate than one placed atop rolling land that had been shaped by nature for 16,000 years or so.

"The Lido was an idea that wasn't going to go away until someone did it," said Doak in an exclusive interview with GOLFChicago. "The challenge was to be as faithful as possible to the original course—which was tough, because it's been gone for decades—and we only have a bunch of old photos and rough sketches of what it was. But as we assembled all of that for a video-game version, we realized we could use that to get most of the dirt in the right places and then interpret the photos just like we do on any other restoration to try to get the course right. In the process, we used all kinds of mapping and construction technology I normally avoid like the plague. So it was a really interesting crash course in how that stuff can help us in the future."

The addition of The Lido and Sedge Valley to the resort has also led to a planned expansion of Sand Valley's practice area. A 50-acre practice facility will include a driving range that stretches out to 500 yards, target greens, and expansive short game and putting green areas.

Dining options across the property include the Green Fire BBQ located adjacent to The Sandbox; rustic indoor or outdoor dining at the clubhouse's Mammoth Bar, and scrumptious food sourced from local farmers and purveyors at Aldo's Farm-to-Table Restaurant. Looking for a quick bite before or after your round? Craig's Porch overlooking the 1st tee on the Sand Valley Course serves up $1 egg-bacon and egg-sausage sandwiches in the mornings and phenomenal $1 carnitas tacos in the afternoons. These are both can't-miss treats.

Beginning in 2020, Sand Valley Resort transitioned into a four-season resort complete with holiday and wellness events as well as cross-country skiing, fat-tire biking, and snowshoeing during the winter months. "The transition from a seasonal resort to a full-season property was the result of demand from our guests, many of whom consider Sand Valley Resort their home away from home," said Carter. "The obvious benefit is that our resort staff can stay in place year round."

Carter stated that one of the Keiser brothers' proudest achievements in the development of the property is the number of jobs attributable either directly or indirectly to the resort's presence. "Heavy and light construction work; members of our superintendent's crew; hotel, golf course, and tennis court management; chefs, cooks, and restaurant service members; caddies and residential architects have all played an integral role in our success," said Carter. "And business buildings and cafes in nearby communities that were vacant before we got here are now occupied. We are confident we've played a role in improving people's lives."

Once the golf season ends, the resort quickly transforms into a recreation haven that welcomes couples, groups and families. Active experiences include fishing, hiking, yoga, and star gazing in autumn months; and ice-skating, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing in the winter months. Popular events include regularly scheduled wellness weekends, whiskey tastings, and a Brews & Brats festival. Last year's events calendar was highlighted by a Snow Valley weekend which including sledding, tubing, snowman building, and pond hockey.

For more information on golf packages, accommodations and the resort's fall and winter calendar, visit the Sand Valley Resort website: www.sandvalley.com.



The Lido





4 The perfect SOME

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A short drive from the western suburbs sits a premier golf destination on a scenic stretch of land that overlooks the Rock River in Byron, Ill. Owned and operated by the Byron Forest Preserve, PrairieView Golf Club is regarded as one of the best public golf facilities in the state and is also home to PrairieFire Golf & Grill + Toptracer® Range that offers year-round golf entertainment set on a driving range with scenic course views. Throughout the years many Chicago-area golfers have come to enjoy this gem of a course with many commenting that PrairieView is "well worth the drive."

PrairieView Golf Club

Designed by renowned golf course architect James Spear, PrairieView is a scenic and well-conditioned par-72 bentgrass layout that treats golfers to a mix of both tight tree-lined and open links-style holes. With four sets of tees stretching to over 7,000 yards, the course design takes advantage of a natural rolling terrain. PrairieView also features added touches including electric GPS golf carts and large practice areas.

Well-known for excellent course conditioning, PrairieView features large, undulating greens and rolling fairways that are rigorously maintained to ensure ideal course conditions. "We take a lot of pride in maintaining our course at a high-level from both an aesthetics and playability standpoint" says Scott deOliveira, general manager. "Given our rural setting, our exceptional course conditions, and scenic views are what draws golfers from both the Rockford and Chicago areas."

To complete the golf experience, PrairieView features the PrairieGrass Pub for great post-round food and drink options and a scenic deck and patio overlooking the 18th green. The golf shop is fully stocked with equipment and apparel.

Take the trip to experience why so many golfers consider PrairieView a premier golf destination. Tee times can be booked up to seven days in advance at www.prairieviewgolf.com.

PrairieFire Golf & Grill

Gone are the days of putting the clubs away for the winter at PrairieView. In 2020, PrairieFire Golf & Grill opened its doors on the driving range at PrairieView with great reviews from both golfers and non-golfers alike. PrairieFire is a year-round driving range with eight hitting bays featuring Toptracer® technology.

The Toptracer system includes a variety of fun, interactive game modes using high-tech cameras to track and trace the ball down range. From "Go Fish" and "Points Game" to 20 different virtual courses, the Toptracer system provides golf entertainment for any skill level. Each hitting bay can accommodate up to eight players and is equipped with heaters, fire tables, and lounge furniture making it a year-round destination for golf entertainment. The LED-lit range targets provide a warm glow on the range for golf well into the night.

PrairieFire has come to be known as a fun and inviting setting for both golfers and non-golfers alike. With great food and drink selections, PrairieFire hosts many birthday parties, family gatherings, date nights, and corporate events throughout the year. There are many sharable items on the menu and the bar has ten beers on tap, many of which are locally sourced.

"PrairieFire is such a unique and inviting golf entertainment facility" says deOliveira. "We are so happy to be able to provide a year-round facility for golfers and a place where non-golfers can be introduced to the game in a fun and inviting setting."

PrairieFire Golf & Grill is open Mon. 10am-10pm; Sun, Tues-Thurs 9am-10pm; and Fri-Sat 9am to 11pm. Bays at PrairieFire are rented by the hour and can be booked online at www.prairiefiregolf.com.

For more information, tee times, or PrairieFire reservations, visit www.prairiefiregolf.com or call (815) 234-FIRE (3473).







ON THE CORKSCREWS



Stephen Hawk

A Champagne Fit for a King

Louis Roederer [Road-ur-ur], a distinguished champagne producer situated in Reims, France, traces its origins back to 1776, when it began as Dubois Père & Fils. While its early days were marked by still wine production, the focus soon evolved to embrace the art of crafting fine champagnes. The business underwent a transformation under the stewardship of Louis Roederer in 1833 when he not only inherited but also renamed the company for himself. He boldly ventured into international markets, focusing particularly on Russia. This endeavor gained him immense recognition, including from Tsar Nicolas II, who appointed Louis Roederer as the official wine provider to the Imperial Court of Russia.

Created in 1876, the wine made for Nicolas' grandfather, Alexander II, was the first Cuvée de Prestige (Prestige Cuvée) of Champagne and is called Cristal, referring to the unusual clear glass of the bottle. The Tsar had noted that the design of a standard champagne bottle made the color and effervescence of champagne invisible to the eye. He therefore instructed Roederer that his personal cuvée be served in bottles made of transparent crystal glass with a flat bottom (allegedly to foil the insertion of explosives in the indentation by would-be assassins) to remedy this defect. For more than a century, the appearance of the patented Cristal bottle has remained unchanged, and it remains one of the world's most sought-after champagnes in the world.

Despite encountering financial challenges due to events like the Russian Revolution and U.S. Prohibition, Roederer emerged as a premier Grandes Marques producer. In the 1930s, Camille Olry-Roederer took charge after marrying Léon Olry-Roederer. The 1970s saw Jean-Claude Rouzaud, a descendant of the Olry-Roederer family, take the helm. Focusing on modernization and expansion, he shaped Roederer Champagne's contemporary identity.

Today, it stands as one of the few champagne houses that remain independently operated and family-owned. The estate vineyards encompass 590 acres [240 hectares] that produce approximately two-thirds of the grapes required for their champagne production. (The remainder is sourced from long-standing farmer partners.) Like most producers around the world, Roederer Champagne has embraced sustainability. 185 estate acres [75 hectares] adhere to biodynamic principles, making Roederer a pioneer in sustainable viticulture. 285 acres [115 hectares] are farmed organically. Since the 2021 harvest, these plots have borne the official "AB" [agriculture biologique] organic certification, symbolizing their embrace of organic viticulture. They earned the prestigious Robert Parker Green Emblem in 2021 as well, a recognition that reflects their commitment to sustainable viticulture, acknowledging a profound dedication to environmental preservation and biodiversity.

Each year, approximately 600 individuals engage in hand-picking grapes from Roederer's vineyards, with the harvest usually spanning ten to fifteen days. the grapes are transported in 110lb [50 kg] baskets from the vineyards to Roederer's dedicated press-houses. The resulting musts embark on their transformation within the Reims' cellars, ensuring that the unique qualities of each plot endure through to the blending process. A winter ritual involves Cellar Master Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon and staff oenologists assessing each wine before the final blending and spring bottling.

With a global presence, Louis Roederer annually exports over 3.5 million bottles of their exceptional champagne to more than 100 countries.



smhawk@winervana.com

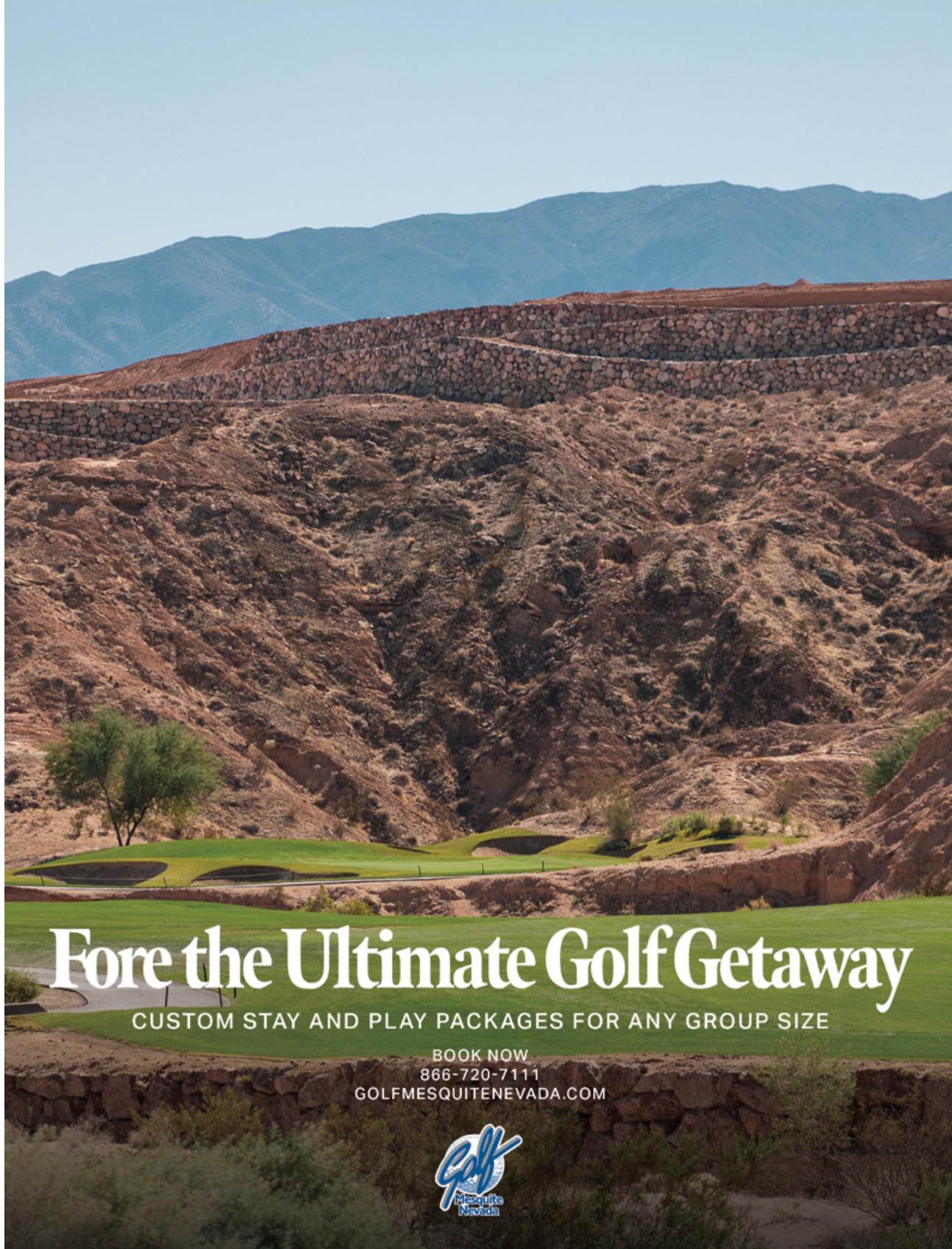
Louis Roederer Collection 242

Collection 242 is … wait for it … Roederer's 242nd blend. Much more complex than just the usual mix of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, it is a multi-vintage champagne made from a selection of plots located in La Vallée de la Marne: the vineyards of "La Rivière," La Côte des Blancs, and La Montagne de Reims. Each contributed one third of the blend, with priority given to sustainable winegrowing practices. The "collection" of varietals, barrels, and vintages were 42% Chardonnay, 36% Pinot Noir, and 22% Meunier. 34% came from the "perpetual reserve" stocks of 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016. 10% are "reserve wines aged in oak" from 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016. The remaining 56% is from the 2017 vintage. 34% of the juice underwent malolactic fermentation. After bottling, the wine was aged for a minimum of four years. (Collections 243 and 244 have since been made as well.)

On opening the bottle, I could smell the bready/yeasty notes from a foot away, which I love. The somewhat coarse fizz quickly dissipated, but all was forgiven once I tasted it. The wine opens with an excellent mouthfeel, with a luxurious texture that coats the palate, the signature of an outstanding Chardonnay. Ripe, sweet fruit complemented by subtle oaky notes is supported by bracing acidity and a hint of lemon. The ABV is 12%.

Note: Roederer also has a Napa Valley operation, where they make my favorite California sparkler, Roederer Estate Brut. An excellent value, it is fresh and crisp with elegant bubbles, and features pear and subtle spice flavors. Equal to or better than its French cousin, which is twice the price.

For many more wine and spirits reviews, be sure to visit www.winervana.com.



TRAVEL

Golf Rocks in Arizona's Mystical City of Sedona

Neal Kotlarek

Not that many decades ago, a vast stretch of Arizona was little more than a desert settlement for homesteaders drawn to grasslands, a constant water suppl,y and a comfortable year-round climate. When the Schneblys of Gorin, Missouri, arrived in this canyon community located 27 miles south of Flagstaff back in 1901, they bought 80 acres along the banks of Oak Creek. They then built a two-story frame house and joined neighbors in lobbying the US government for the rights to maintain a local post office. But what to name their new community? "Oak Creek Station" was too many words. "Schnebly Station" had too many consonants. Eventually, the town agreed to name itself after Theodore Schnebly's lovely wife. And thus was born the stunning, mystical, romantic, and historic city of Sedona.

The two-hour drive from Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport snakes due north on I-17 and teems with fascinating views of desert plains and mountains. Mile by mile, the elevation changes from 1,000 feet above sea level to 4,350 feet. Eventually, the Saguaro cacti that dot the landscape at the start of your drive give way to sparse vegetation. Take exit 298 (AZ 179) and the 14-mile drive quickly unveils a transformative, unforgettable landscape of stunning rust-red buttes, mesas, and towering rocks. Welcome to Sedona.

The gateway to the city's red rocks is also home to the elegant Hilton Sedona Resort at Bell Rock. The 220-room hotel caters to an eclectic array of guests, including hikers, spa enthusiasts, bicyclists, families, couples, and nature lovers. The resort is adjacent to Sedona Golf Resort, one of Arizona's most intriguing courses due both to its challenge and its panoramic views. Designed in 1988 by Gary Panks, the 6,640-yard layout was immediately recognized by national magazines as one of America's best new courses. Fast forward 35 years, the course remains a gem as holes weave toward and alongside the surrounding mesas and soaring red rocks. Beginning from an elevated tee next to the clubhouse, the layout takes you into a basin lined with emerald green fairways, massive sand bunkers, and trees. The course length varies from 6,646 yards from the tips to just over 5,000 yards from the front tees. This variance makes Sedona Golf Resort a great couples course as it is playable by all handicap levels.

"While all of our guests rave about the beauty of the course," said resort GM Jeremy Hayman, "we get lots of compliments on how fun it is when you choose the tees that fit your game. The landing areas for most tee shots are pretty wide, allowing players the opportunity to grip it and rip it."

My favorite hole on the front nine is the par-5 No. 5. The hole plays 623-yards from the back tees but is a more friendly 586 yards from the regular tees. A good tee shot and a good fairway wood still leaves a long-iron to a green protected by bunkers and thick rough when the pin is located on the left side of the green.

The Sedona Golf Resort course is highlighted by the stunning 210-yard No. 10. Featuring sculpted mounds and bunkers left and right of the green, this par 3 is widely considered "the most photographed par 3 in all of Arizona" due to the presence of Bell Rock majestically looming in the distance behind the green.

The design of the par-4 finishing hole incorporates a fascinating obstacle to the left of the fairway landing area as the remnants of a long-abandoned homestead were left to stand as a reminder of Sedona's early roots. After avoiding that hazard, the golfer is tasked with weaving a short-iron approach shot around water and sand to a large, rolling putting surface.

Follow your round with a cold beverage on the clubhouse veranda while enjoying a great view of the course. Before taking on Sedona Golf Resort a second time, you will want to take advantage of at least a few of the many outstanding amenities available at your home base across the street—the Hilton Resort at Bell Rock (while not directly affiliated, the Hilton offers affordable Stay & Play packages which incorporate the golf property).

"Sedona is obviously a unique and special community," said KC Kinsey, general manager of the Hilton property. "Look around the hotel lobby and you'll notice golf groups gathering to make their tee times. Right next to them might be a group of hikers studying their day's trail map. And next to them might be a couple enjoying a romantic weekend among the red rocks. The hotel serves as a great base for activities away from our property and as an outstanding facility for activities using our vast array of amenities on our property."

Dining options at the hotel include a fine dining restaurant, a café, and a lush outdoor patio area where you can enjoy evening cocktails and listen to live music while watching hummingbirds dart around vegetation. Cascades is a family-friendly outdoor pool maintained at 82 degrees year round and includes kids' play features. A 25-meter heated lap pool is exclusive to adults and is part of the resort's wellness center.

Wellness is a recurrent theme across all of Sedona. The Hilton serves up a stand-alone 25,000 sq. ft. spa facility

continued on page 50


Seven Canyons


Hole 4


Hole 6


Hole 10


Hole 12


Hole 17


Hilton Sedona Spa

We-Ko-Pa Golf Club. Unspoiled. Unrivaled. Unbelievable.

Over the last 20 years, avid golfers with high standards thought of We-Ko-Pa and thought one thing: great golf. The shoe certainly fits. The two golf courses at We-Ko-Pa Golf Club – Cholla and Saguaro – tend to stand out to discerning players as among the best tracks in the state. But with the completion of the all-new We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort which opened in 2020, there's now more to the We-Ko-Pa story than great golf set against the natural beauty of the untouched Sonoran Desert. Much more.


Saguaro #14 Photo: Lonna Tucker

We-Ko-Pa begins where the city ends at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, just east of Scottsdale in Fort McDowell, Arizona. Open landscapes, vibrant colors, and incredible mountain views perfectly complement an extraordinary day on the golf course. But if you're looking for a bit more "play" out of your stay-and-play vacation to Scottsdale, look no further than the brand-new, state-of-the-art We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort adjacent to We-Ko-Pa Golf Club – Arizona's Ultimate Golf Experience.

The new, 167,000-square-foot We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort offers guests a larger casino with a garden court, specialty high-end dining, a sports bar with entertainment stage, and other best-in-class amenities. The new facility is the cherry on top of what has been a 30-year stint as the torch bearer for casino gaming in the Valley of the Sun. And, speaking of new, Arizona's new gaming compact brings with it sports betting, craps, and roulette to go along with your favorite card and slot games all under one roof.

On the dining side is Ember – We-Ko-Pa's fine-dining experience – which starts with a scratch kitchen in full view from any dining area in the restaurant and serves up an extraordinary selection of the finest steak cuts and chops available. Choose from USDA Prime or American Wagyu beef in seven different sized cuts, braised buffalo short ribs, Colorado lamb chops, and veal and venison dishes all perfectly prepared over a wood burning grill.

We-Ko-Pa's two award-winning tracks provide a unique 36-hole experience in the Valley of the Sun. Both courses are ranked as among the best (if not the very best) in the state, but the routing and playing experience couldn't be more different.

The Cholla course embodies some of architect Scott Miller's favorite design philosophies. Traditional landing zones are relatively large. Trouble is easily identified, well defined and not terribly penalizing. And if players don't feel comfortable over the ball and want the added benefit of a bail-out area, they can usually find it fairly easily. Cholla is more "traditional desert golf" than its Saguaro counterpart. There are some forced caries and clear landing areas – especially on par-5 second shots. Unlike other Scott Miller tracks, however, Cholla is not an ultra-forgiving "resort" course where every single wayward shot finds its way back to the middle of the fairway. Players will have to pick their spots.

On the Saguaro side, the first time out can present a little changeup for people who are either used to traditional desert golf, or they haven't played a Coore/Crenshaw design before. The forced carries and clear landing areas were scrapped for a more natural approach where the course flows with the organic feel of the land itself. Coore and Crenshaw didn't move much dirt to complete the design on Saguaro, so the dips, turns, arroyos and elevation changes have been there for hundreds if not thousands of years.

Another non-typical thing for Scottsdale golf you'll find at We-Ko-Pa's Saguaro course: Links-style design. The course is built for walking and guests can play any shot they would normally play on their favorite Midwestern courses back home. Players won't be penalized too badly for missing greens by a few feet and shot shaping will do you more good on Saguaro than anywhere else in Scottsdale.

The routing and playing-style differences between Cholla and Saguaro are more noticeable than other 36-hole facilities, but the commitment to an unbelievable experience – and attention to detail – is the same throughout the entire property, regardless of season. But Cholla and Saguaro also have a lot in common. Both are meticulously maintained, both have received high praise from the golf media and consumers alike, and both offer a tranquil golf experience free of houses and roads, thus preserving the unobstructed mountain views of the Sonoran Desert.

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Orange Tree Golf Resort
Scottsdale, Arizona

Once an orange grove, Orange Tree Golf Resort has evolved into one of Scottsdale, Arizona's luxury golf vacation destinations. We offer a complete experience with our scenic 18-hole golf course, versatile event spaces for any occasion, a vibrant Sports Edition Bar with live music, and the convenience of an on-site Starbucks. Enjoy the Scottsdale landscape paired with a stunning mountain range in the distance.

Red Mountain Ranch Country Club
Mesa, Arizona

For over three decades, Red Mountain Ranch Country Club, located in Mesa, Arizona, has been a symbol in the eastern valley. It represents a vibrant community enriched by outstanding schools, numerous parks, convenient shopping, recreational opportunities, and a rich cultural scene. Whether you're an avid golfer who makes business deals on the greens or someone who enjoys the social aspects of dining, sports, aquatics, and fitness, Red Mountain Ranch offers a tailored experience, ensuring there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Painted Mountain Golf Resort
Mesa, Arizona

Golfers will appreciate Painted Mountain's 18-hole championship course that has a classic desert landscape, mountain views and abundance of wildlife. In addition to the course, Painted Mountain also offers a short-game area, and practice putting green. Inside the clubhouse is a well-stocked golf shop, offering a fine selection of apparel and accessories.



Hillcrest Golf Course
Sun City West, Arizona

With its elegant and welcoming atmosphere, Hillcrest Golf Course has become the top choice for over 100 corporate and private gatherings annually. Situated in Sun City West, Arizona, the course offers a challenging experience with numerous doglegs, water hazards, and white sand bunkers. Hillcrest has hosted the Senior PGA Tour five times, LPGA competitions twice, and previously held the Johnny Miller Pro Am, solidifying its reputation as the premier choice for thrilling tournament play.



Legend Trail Golf Course
Scottsdale, Arizona

Renowned architect, Rees Jones, left an incredible mark on the landscape of Scottsdale when he crafted Legend Trail Golf Club's course. He artfully blended the essence of the Old West with a captivating and enjoyable golf challenge. Our masterfully designed course has earned its reputation by being named one of the Top 100 Golf Courses by Golf Magazine. Here, players encounter a course that suits both newcomers and seasoned golfers, promising an unforgettable golfing experience.

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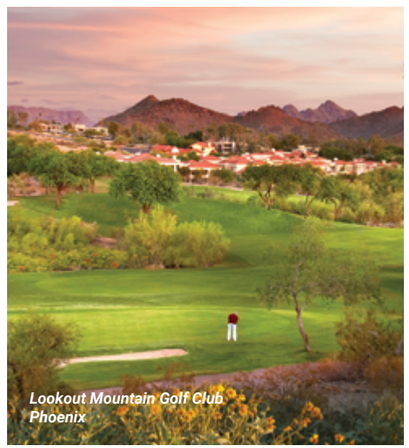
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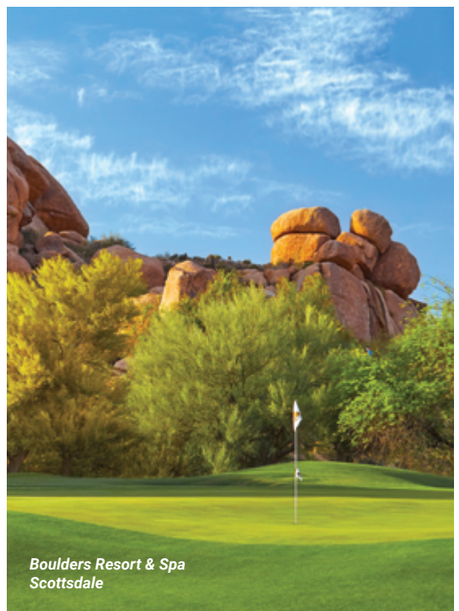
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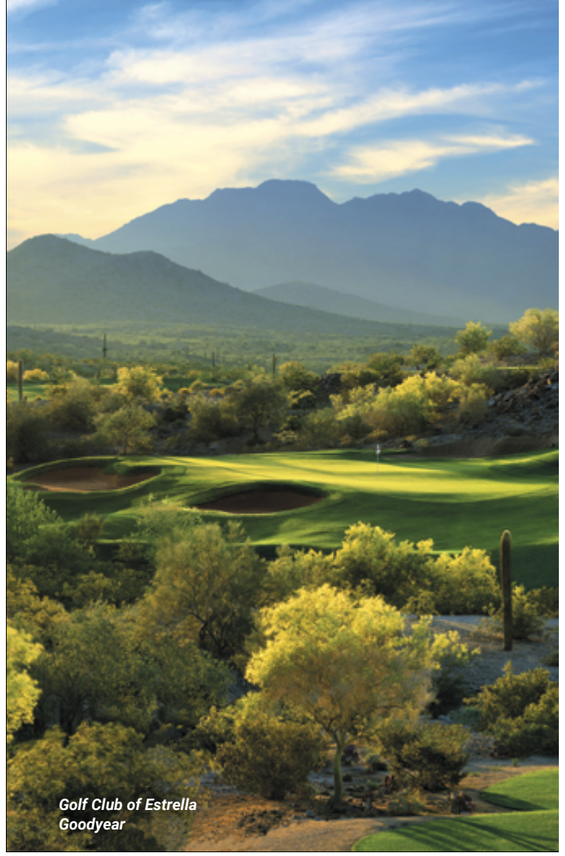
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Sweet Home Alabama
www.GolfAlabama.org



Kiva Dunes Golf & Beach Resort, Gulf Shores

Sedona

continued from page 41

to provide guests with both recovery and rejuvenation. The "eforea Spa" offers luxurious skincare using hydrafacial technology; nail and massage services, along with unique empowerment treatments that incorporate guided meditation and breath work to nourish the mind, body, and soul. For a true Sedona experience, consider the Sedona Energy Vortex Treatment which eases tension and stores energy through aromatherapy and other therapies.

Your energy now fully restored, it's time to take on a second round at the golf resort or take a 10-minute drive to Oakcreek Country Club. Designed by the father/son team of Robert Trent Jones, Sr. and Robert Trent Jones, Jr., the course is a dramatic contrast from the Sedona Resort Course as it features gently rolling fairways and tree-lined doglegs. The only desert features on Oakcreek are the breathtaking red rocks lining the edges of the property. Perfectly manicured and managed by a friendly staff, the layout is made challenging by trademark Trent Jones fairways, slightly elevated greens, and sprawling greenside bunkers.

True golf enthusiasts visiting Sedona might wish to schedule a night's stay at Enchantment Resort as that property offers exclusive but limited access to the stunning Seven Canyons Golf Club. Otherwise an exclusive private club, Seven Canyons was designed by Tom Weiskopf and incorporates all of the classic features that brought architectural renown to the 1973 British Open champion. Built within 200 acres of the Coconino National Forest, the championship course literally abuts a number of red rock formations and features breathtaking views on each and every hole. The course's signature hole is a 172-yard par 3 that towers above the property and drops over 65 feet to a huge green surrounded by bunkers. Don't leave this tee without taking at least a few selfies!

"The course is bordered on three sides by spectacular vermillion cliffs," said PGA Professional Eric Bradley who serves as the club's director of membership sales. The course was built as part of a luxuriously appointed residential community built on ridges and next to forest trails. "While the course is obviously the main feature of the property," said Bradley, "our members enjoy access to secluded hiking trails, a 20,000 sq. ft. practice park, and fine dining—all within one of the most beautiful spots in all of Arizona."

As tempting as it might be to play golf during the entirety of a visit to Sedona, the trip would not be complete without spending at least half a day hiking up, down and around at least a few of the red rock trails which annually attract hundreds of thousands to the area. Trail maps are available at almost every grocery store and coffee shop in the community. Bring a pair of quality hiking boots, plenty of water and trek upwards toward one of the epic rocks. If you are lucky, you may just happen upon a vortex—one of the invisible energy zones that are said to exist across various spots on the trails.

My wife and I opted to explore the ancient ruins inhabited 700 years ago by the cliff-dwelling Sinqgua people of Sedona. We used the popular Pink Jeep Adventure Tour service located in downtown Sedona to take us to the base of the cliff where we observed ancient artwork and artifacts still visible from another time. While I never experienced an actual vortex on my hike, I left the ruins both energized and inspired.

For reservations or more information on Sedona, visit Hilton Sedona Resort at Bell Rock at www.hiltonsedona.com.



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DU PAGE GOLF

Maple Meadows Golf Course
Wood Dale, 630-616-8424
This 18-hole championship course is home to some of the area's best golf outings and is honored to be a qualifying site for the Illinois Open.

Green Meadows Golf Course
Westmont, 630-810-5330
This 9-hole gem features quality conditions and traditional parkland styling.

The Preserve at Oak Meadows
Addison, 630-595-0071
Golf Digest Green Star Award Winner
Golf Inc. Renovation of the Year
Golfweek Best Courses You Can Play
Get ready to experience The Preserve at Oak Meadows: 18 holes of award-winning golf set within 288 awe-inspiring acres of restored prairies, woodlands and wetlands and within minutes of O'Hare Airport.

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

DUPAGE GOLF

Courses are owned and operated by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

GOLF360°



Be sure to tune into the award-winning Golf360 TV show on NBC Sports Chicago for all things golf in The Windy City and beyond.
Former Ms. Missouri Katie Kearney is your host with interviews provided by Chicago Bear longsnapping legend Patrick Mannelly. Additional information as well as airtimes can be found at www.linksvideo.net/golf360tv



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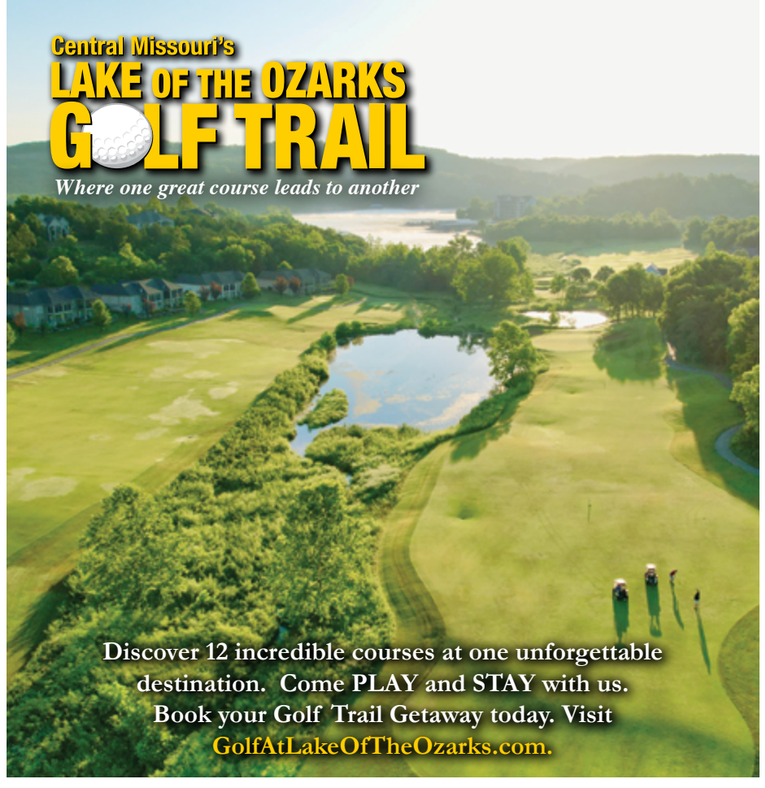

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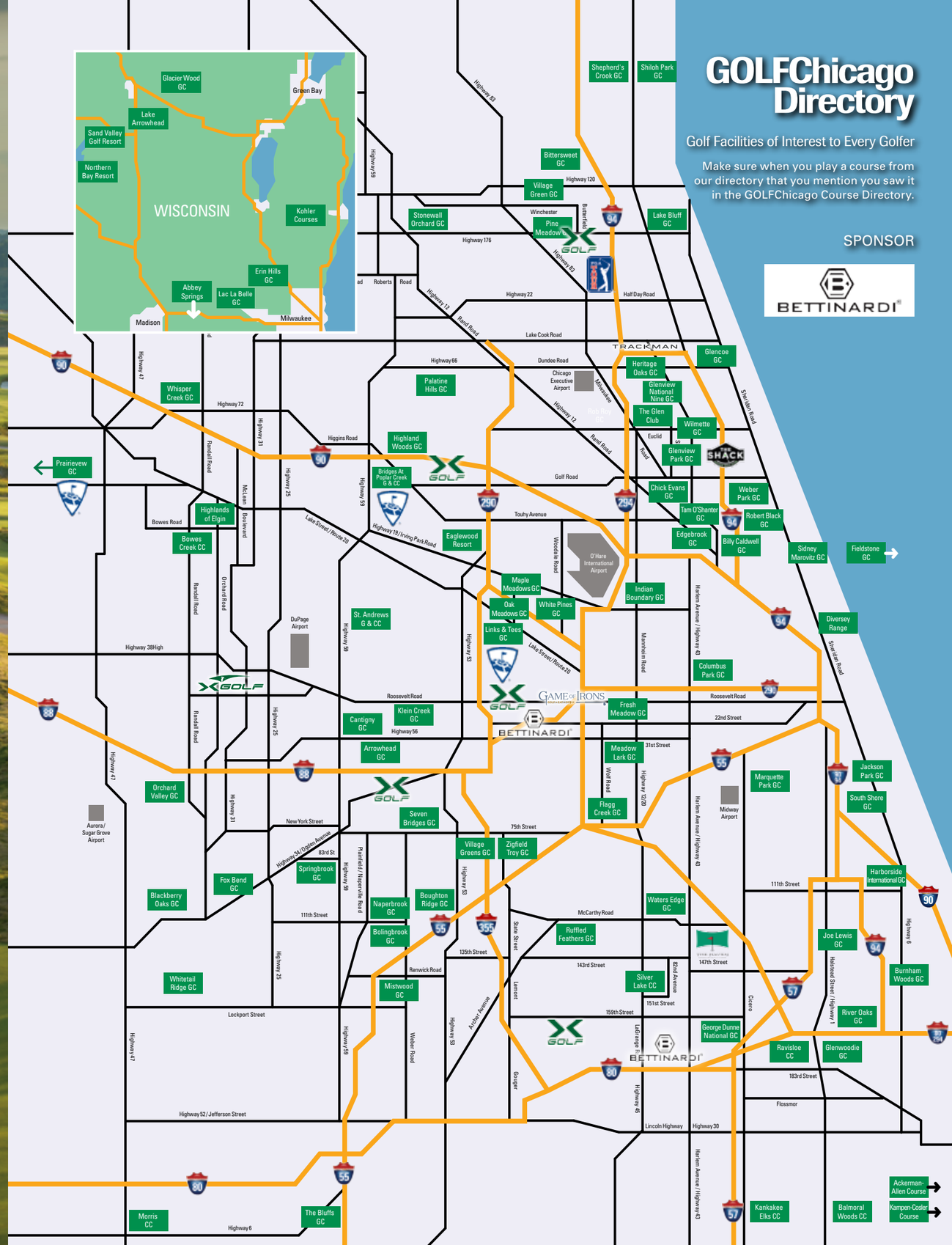

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Abbey Springs

262-275-6113
One Country Club Dr.
Fontana, WI 53125
abbeysprings.org

Abbey Springs has been rated 4.5 Stars by *Golf Digest*. With spectacular views of Geneva Lake, Abbey Springs underwent a major green renovation in 2021, featuring state of the art 007 bent grass on all greens. Make your reservation at the web site above.

Arrowhead Golf Club

630-653-5800
26W151 Butterfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
arrowheadgolfclub.org

Arrowhead Golf Club is recognized for its beautifully maintained course and inviting atmosphere.

Arrowhead is a public course which offers impeccable golfing conditions at affordable rates on three separate par-72 18-hole layouts surrounded by forest preserve. The West, East, and South Courses feature new bunker renovations and enhancements. The practice area includes a lighted driving range, putting green, and chipping green. Group and individual golf lessons are available.

Balmoral Woods Golf Club

708-672-7448
26732 S. Balmoral Woods Dr.
Crete, IL 60417
balmoralwoods.com

Balmoral Woods offers a demanding, superbly conditioned, magnificent round of golf.

Laid out over 280 acres of wooded, rolling hills, the course will test the skill of golfers with its 6700-yard, 72.6 rated, 133-slope layout. It is a public 18-hole golf course, has hosted many local and state events and tournaments, and is the annual home of the Will County Amateur Championship. Check out our website for new rates, reservations, and more information. Follow us on instagram for the latest updates and events.

Belmont Golf Club

630-963-1306
2420 Haddow Ave.
Downers Grove, IL 60515
belmontgolfclub.org

The historic Belmont Golf Club is a scenic 9-hole par-36 course featuring mature trees, natural areas, elevation, and water hazards. A driving range with 24 hitting stations, a practice putting green, sand trap, and chipping area includes a 10-station covered shelter.

Bettinardi Studio B Oak Brook

630-819-8592
1225 22nd St. Ste. 130
Oak Brook 60523
bettinardi.com/pages/studio-b

Studio B Oak Brook by Bettinardi is now open!

Visit the immersive performance center and boutique store with unparalleled short-game fittings by appointment, or shop our vast apparel and accessory collections!

The Bluffs Public Golf Club

815-467-7888
24355 W. Bluff Rd.
Channahon, IL 60410
heritagebluffs.com

18 Holes: Par 72
Yardage: 5,035 - 7,171

Located near the intersection of Interstates 80 and 55 just south of Joliet, Heritage Bluffs is the pride of the Channahon Park District. The tranquil surroundings make a day playing golf fun and relaxing.

Along with our award-winning course we also feature a large all-grass practice range, along with a large putting green and a separate chipping green and bunker. After your round you can relax in our Grille Room or out on the patio, enjoying a full menu of delicious food and beverage choices.

Bowes Creek Country Club

847-214-5880
1250 Bowes Creek Blvd.
Elgin, IL 60124
bowescreekcc.com

Ranked as *Golfweek*'s Best Courses You Can Play, Bowes Creek Country Club gives you every option to play your ideal round of golf. Along with annual memberships, we offer a "member for a day" pass, allowing you the privilege to play unlimited golf with cart as well as full use of the practice facility. If playing a quick round of nine or eighteen holes suits your game better, we offer that as well. Bowes Creek provides the public golfer a private-club experience, without an annual membership.

Cantigny Golf

630-668-8463
27w270 Mack Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
cantignygolf.com

Designed by Roger Packard, and five-time host of the Illinois State Amateur, Cantigny features 27 challenging holes on beautiful, rolling terrain covering 300 acres. Rated Top 30 Best in State by *Golf Digest*. Cantigny Golf Academy offers junior clinics, private lessons, club fitting, grass practice tees, and climate-controlled hitting bays. Cantigny Youth Links is a 9-hole, par-3 course for ages 8 to 15.

New for 2023
TrackMan Range at the Cantigny Golf Academy.

Cog Hill Golf & Country Club

866-264-4455
12294 Archer Ave.
Palos Park, IL 60439
coghillgolf.com

Cog Hill Golf & Country Club, a Jemsek Golf Facility, is a historic 72-hole public golf facility located 30 miles southwest of Chicago. The year-round facility includes a driving range equipped with lights and heated Toptracer stalls, two golf shops, patio dining, and a pavilion for events, along with a 280-seat banquet hall.

- Rated in"America's 100 Greatest Public Golf Courses" by *Golf Digest*
- 2020 GRAA Top 50 Public Range in the Nation

Green Meadows Golf Club

630-810-5330
18 W. 201 W. 63rd St.
Westmont, IL 60559
dupagegolf.com

Green Meadows is a fun nine-hole gem that offers quality conditions in a traditional parkland setting.

Featuring three par 4s and six par 3s, the Green Meadows layout is the perfect blend of challenge, enjoyment, and value for all skill levels!

Senior discounts are available every day, and DuPage Golf Discount Card holders save on every round.

Look for Green Meadows behind the Westmont water tower on 63rd St.

Find our best specials and promotions at www.DuPage-Golf.com.

Maple Meadows Golf Club

630-616-8424
272 Addison Rd.
Wood Dale, IL 60191
dupagegolf.com

Maple Meadow's Championship "West 18" features a modern prairie design, and is honored to be a qualifying site for the Illinois Open and the host course for the DuPage Junior Classic.

Choose from four sets of tees and enjoy immaculate bent grass fairways and greens.

Maple Meadows' convenient location features easy access from O'Hare, I-290, I-355, I-294, and Route 83.

Find our best specials and promotions at www.DuPage-Golf.com.

The Preserve at Oak Meadows

630-595-0071
900 N. Wood Dale Rd.
Addison, IL 60101
dupagegolf.com

After extensive renovations, The Preserve is a new 288-acre world-class 18-hole course, practice facility, and environmental haven—designed by Greg Martin.

- *Golf Digest* Green Star Award
- *Golf Inc.* Renovation of the Year
- *Golf Digest* Best Courses You Can Play
- ASGCA Design Excellence Award

The Preserve's location features easy access from O'Hare, I-290, I-355, I-294, and Route 83.

Find our best specials and promotions at www.DuPageGolf.com.

Erin Hills

866-772-4769
7169 County Road O
Erin, WI 53027
erinhills.com/

Erin Hills is a course like none other — routed over the kettle moraine areas left by glaciers, surrounded by wetlands and a river, with ground that consists of glacial till of varied composition of sand and small rock. In an unconventional decision for a course in Wisconsin, the architects routed the fairways around contours of the property and provided a firm playing surface that plays shorter than its length on the scorecard.

Fieldstone GC

248-370-9354
1984 Taylor Rd.
Auburn Hills, MI 48326
fieldstonegolfclub.com

Amidst over 170 local golf courses, Fieldstone is consistently hailed as one of the top daily fee facilities in Southeast Michigan.
We present an exceptional variety of hole designs by the renowned architect Arthur Hills that mesh the diverse landscape and wetlands with gently rolling fairways through majestic hardwoods. Add our unparalleled maintenance and dedicated staff of professionals for an experience that many private clubs try, but often fail, to emulate.

Fox Bend Golf Course

630-554-3939
3516 Route 34
Oswego, IL 60543
foxbendgolfcourse.com

Fox Bend Golf Course, Oswego's own welcoming and challenging public course, boasts plush fairways, mature trees, and challenging greens. This 6,890-yard, par-72 course tests skills of all levels with 34 well-positioned bunkers and water in play on 11 holes. Fox Bend has hosted three Illinois Opens, the 2010 & 2011 USGA Qualifiers, and the 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2023 Illinois State Amateur Qualifiers. Visit Christina's Pub & Grill before or after your round of golf to enjoy spacious outdoor seating with gorgeous views and American fare done right!

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Game of Irons

630-303-9454
3041 Butterfield Rd.
Suite 104
Oak Brook, IL 60523
gameofirons.com

Game of Irons is Chicagoland's most exciting virtual golf experience! Be transported to over 200 world-famous courses in the comfort of a premium indoor facility with 16 hitting bays in over 18,000 sq. ft. - perfect for corporate events, parties, and club meetings. We offer a full bar with craft cocktails and amazing food. We invite you to try out our #1 rated simulators with moving floors that adjust to the course contours, auto ball tee and multiple turf types (fairway, rough and bunker).

Glacier Wood Golf Club

715-445-3831
604 Water St.
Iola, WI 54945
glacierwoodiola.com

Glacier Wood Golf Club is an 18-hole public facility centrally located in the state, two hours north of Madison. Ranked as the #2 golf course in the state of Wisconsin through Golfpass.com, as well as #17 in the nation for value, Glacier Wood Golf Club is worth the drive. With four sets of tees, the golf course is fair for players of all skill levels, and offers a driving range equipped with four target greens and a 19,000 sq. ft. natural grass hitting area, as well as two practice greens used for putting and chipping. With tree-lined fairways, undulating green complexes, and a wide array of natural wildlife, Glacier Wood Golf Club is a must play.

Harborside International Golf Club

312-782-7837
11001 S. Doty Ave. East
Chicago, IL 60628
harborsidegolf.com

Harborside International Golf Center, home to the Port & Starboard Courses, is Chicago's home for golf. Located minutes from Chicago's Loop, Harborside offers a premier golf experience in the Chicagoland area. Harborside is the only facility with two of *Golfweek*'s "Best Courses You Can Play in Illinois" and is home to an expansive practice facility. Harborside is owned by the Illinois International Port District and managed by KemperSports.

The Haven Indoor Golf

708-671-8052
12317 S. Harlem Ave.
Palos Heights, IL 60463
thehavenindoorgolf.com

The Haven Indoor Golf & Bar is the only indoor facility in the Southwest Suburbs using Foresight GC Hawks! Our simulators are true game improvement simulators making us the premier facility in the Southwest suburbs.

Foresight Sports launch monitors use exact photometric measurements and image processing taken with a clear, direct view of the critical ball launch condition and club head into impact. The result? Our launch monitors measure – not estimate – club head data based on the club's triangulated face plane, delivering vastly more accurate results.

Heritage Oaks Golf Club

847-291-2351
3535 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60623
heritageoaksgc.com

Conveniently located between the Edens Expressway and Interstate 294, 30 minutes north of Chicago. Featuring 27 holes of tree-lined golf, a practice range equipped with TrackMan® technology, our golf academy, and indoor golf simulators, Heritage Oaks offers something for everyone. With the elevated Acorn Grill + Terrace overlooking courses certified by the National Audubon Society, Heritage Oaks Golf Club welcomes you for golf, for a meal, or for a timeless experience.

The Highlands of Elgin

847-931-5950
875 Sports Way
Elgin, IL 60123
highlandsofelgin.com

The Highlands of Elgin has become a premier destination for thousands of golfers throughout the region. Nine new holes reclaim an old stone quarry, and take maximum advantage of the unique and dramatic landforms that were left behind, including a twelve-acre quarry lake. Four holes hug the top of the bluff thirty to forty feet above the water, providing golfers with incredible views and numerous shot options on each hole. The prairie-style clubhouse features an expanded golf shop, locker rooms, event rooms, and a full-scale food and beverage operation.

Kankakee Elks Country Club

815-937-9547
2283 Bittersweet Dr.
Saint Anne, IL 60964
elksgolf627.com

The Kankakee Elks Country Club is an 18-hole par-72 course. It is one of Illinois' premier Langford @ Moreau design courses, featuring some of the best green complexes in illinois, 40 miles south of Chicago along the beautiful Kankakee River with very affordable rates.

Chose from one of our four tees to accommodate all levels of play.

Driving range, chipping area, and putting green with newly remodeled bar and snack shop.

Klein Creek Golf Club

630-690-0101
1N333 Pleasant Hill Rd.
Winfield, IL 60190
kleincreek.com

Klein Creek Golf Club is an 18-hole public golf course located one mile south of North Avenue and easily accessible from I-355. Designed by Dick Nugent, the layout features an open design in which water is present on 15 holes. Trees frame the layout's gentle doglegs, and tall prairie grasses border the fairways. Contoured mounding frames the fairways and greens, allowing a variety of approach options and great risk-reward opportunities.

The Club at Lac La Belle

262-567-7833
6996 Pennsylvania St.
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
clubatlaclabelle.com

The newly renovated Club at Lac La Belle is now open for public play! If the club's original founders and its legendary Scottish golf professionals were alive today, our hope is that they would recognize our new course as fun "sporting" golf, which was a fundamental part of the game in 1896. We invite you to come see why Lac La Belle is the birthplace of the Wisconsin Golf Trail

Lake Arrowhead

715-325-2929
1195 Apache Lane
Nekoosa, WI 54457
lakearrowheadgolf.com

Located in the heart of Central Wisconsin, Lake Arrowhead boasts two of the Midwest's elite 18-hole golf courses. Here you have the rare opportunity to enjoy not just one, but two 4½ star championship golf courses in one incredible experience.

Naperbrook Golf Course

630-378-4215
22204 W. 111th St. / Hassert Blvd.
Plainfield, IL 60585
golfnaperville.org

Located in Plainfield, scenic Naperbrook Golf Course is a "links style" course that features rolling hills and wide fairways. Challenges in the way of ponds, a double green, and hidden bunkers await golfers of all levels. Additional amenities include a recently updated and expanded practice area featuring a one-acre turf range tee, large practice green, and practice bunker. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the picturesque patio. Naperbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and much more.

Northern Bay Resort and Marina

608-339-2090 ext. 2
1844 20th Avenue
Arkdale, WI 54613
northernbayresort.com

Play where the pros play.

Experience our unique replica golf course inspired by the most celebrated holes in the game and situated on the shores of Castle Rock Lake.

Northern Bay offers all the amenities of a Wisconsin Dells resort without all the hustle and bustle. Bring your golf buddies to play our one-of-a-kind replica course, or relax around the lake with your family. However you choose to stay, we look forward to greeting you at Northern Bay. Get started and book your tee time.

Pine Meadow Golf Club

847-566-4653
1 Pine Meadow Ln.
Mundelein, IL 60060
pinemeadowgc.com

Pine Meadow Golf Club is known for our beautiful 220 acres of fairways, greens, pine trees, and meadow areas.

Golfers of all abilities and ages enjoy the serene setting and fun playable design of the "Pine."

The Pine, due to its challenging design, has been host to all types of competitive events ranging from PGA Jr. League, to Men's and Women's State Ams, to Illinois PGA Championships.

This is truly a golf facility for everyone.

Wilmette Golf Club

630-208-7600
2325 Longest Dr.
West Chicago, IL 60185
prairielanding.com

Prairie Landing Golf Course is a prairie links style 18-hole course designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr. The course has been rated 4.5 Stars by *Golf Digest* for "Best Places to Play." Prairie Landing Golf Club prides itself on offering the quintessential golf experience of the Chicagoland Area.

PrairieView Golf Club

815-234-4653
6734 N. German Church Rd.
Byron, Ill. 61010
prairieviewgolf.com

Recognized by many suburban golfers as a hidden gem, PrairieView Golf Club boasts beautiful views of restored dolomite prairie land that is well worth a short drive west out to Bryon, Ill. (south of Rockford). With challenging greens, dramatic bunkering, and supreme conditioning, the course will test the skills and nerves of every golfer. PrairieView is also home to PrairieFire Golf & Grill, a year-round Toptracer Range® with heated bays, lounge seating, and great food and drink selections.

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Purdue's Ackerman-Allen Course

765-494-3139
West Lafayette, IN
purduegolf.com

The Ackerman-Allen Course, a Pete Dye design, is an 18-hole, parkland-style, par-72 championship golf course featuring large bent-grass greens, fairways and tees. The layout presents a challenge for golfers of all abilities with rolling hills, tree-lined fairways, white sand bunkers, and minimal water hazards. Ackerman-Allen offers five sets of tees with the championship tees playing over 7,500 yards and the forward tees playing at 5,300 yards.

Purdue's Kampen-Cosler Course

765-494-3139
West Lafayette, IN
purduegolf.com

The Kampen-Cosler Course, a Pete Dye design, is an 18-hole, links-style, par-72 championship course features large bent-grass greens, fairways, and tees. The layout is a challenge for golfers of all abilities with vast sand bunkers, native grasslands, ponds, and a natural celery bog. There are five sets of tees with the championship tees playing over 7,400 yards and the forward tees at 5,300 yards.

Kampen-Cosler, one of the top collegiate courses in the nation, has been awarded 4.5 stars on *Golf Digest*'s "Places to Play." It receives high marks as one of the most difficult golf courses in Indiana.

Sand Valley

888-398-8671
1697 Leopold Way
Nekoosa, WI 54457
sandvalley.com

Sand Valley is known for its three award-winning golf courses, Sand Valley, Mammoth Dunes, and the Sandbox, which were modeled after the great heathland courses of London. Enjoy dramatic views, a magnitude of strategic playing options, modern lodging, and a culinary experience to match.

The Shack Indoor Golf

847-904-2905
1717 Chestnut Ave.
Glenview IL, 60025
theshackgolfclub.com

The Shack Indoor Golf Club features TrackMan® simulator technology for an immersive golf experience. Enjoy delicious food and drinks from our full bar while practicing your swing. Perfect for socializing or improving your game, come and tee off at our state-of-the-art facility.

Shepherd's Crook Golf Course

847-872-2080
351 North Green Bay Rd.
Zion, IL 60099
www.shepherdscrook.org

Shepherd's Crook has earned rave reviews as a course that is both challenging and exciting to play. Keith Foster, who has designed some of the most interesting courses built in the last 10 years, created a links-style course that a feels like playing Ireland's Ballybunion or Waterville courses. The design reflects the golden era of golf course architecture of the 1920s and 30s, with bentgrass fairways, tees, and greens.

"Shepherd's Crook is routed with classic and strategic design principles that cut features naturally to the terrain. The vision of Shepherd's Crook returns golfers to the game's past." – Keith Foster, Architect

Springbrook Golf Course

630-848-5060
2220 W. 83rd St.
Naperville, IL 60564
golfnaperville.org

Springbrook GC commands some of the finest views of Naperville's open space and trails. This 18-hole parkland-style championship course was renovated in 2022, and is expected to reopen in mid-year of 2023 with exciting updates including new tees and bunkers. Work on your swing at the one-acre turf practice tee, or fine tune your short game at the large practice putting green or two short-game practice greens with bunkers. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the expansive patio with great views of the course. Springbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and more.

Stonewall Orchard Golf Club

847-740-4890
25675 W. Highway 60
Grayslake, IL 60030
stonewallorchard.com

Cutting through hundred-year-old oak and pine trees, Stonewall Orchard Golf Club has quickly become one of Chicago's most prolific public golf courses.

Since opening in 1999, the Arthur Hills-designed gem located in northwest suburban Grayslake has served as Final Stage Qualifying site for the U.S. Open, and currently sits in rotation with Olympia Fields and Medinah Country Club as host site for the Illinois PGA Section Championship held every fall.

Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center

847-965-2344
6700 W. Howard St.
Niles, IL 60714
golftam.com

One of the most important courses in popularizing the game of golf in America is located right here in Niles. In 1953, Tam O'Shanter Country Club hosted the first-ever nationally televised golf tournament.

Today, a public 9-hole par-33 course remains, maintained with the goal of providing playing conditions reminiscent of those Hogan, Palmer, and Nicklaus enjoyed years ago. Swing out for a scenic round and walk in the footsteps of legends at Tam O'Shanter!

Year-round instruction available!

White Pines Golf Club

630-766-0304
500 W. Jefferson
Bensenville, IL 60106
whitepinesgolf.com

The White Pines Golf Club's two 18-hole championship courses, situated on more than 260 acres, have been a favorite among Chicago area golfers since 1928. The public course, owned and operated by the Bensenville Park District, is an excellent choice for players of all skill levels. Whether it's an evening at the lighted driving range, a casual round with friends, an outing or special event, White Pines Golf Club offers the perfect setting to get "away from it all." Enjoy food and drink at 37 Bar & Grill. Take advantage of Monday-Thursday tee time specials and book online.

Whitetail Ridge Golf Club

630-882-8988
7671 Clubhouse Dr. Yorkville, IL 60560
whitetailridgegc.com

Experience a "tail" of two Nines at Whitetail Ridge Golf Club. Our Front Nine flows through a beautiful valley featuring a creek that splits through its relatively flat landscape. Our Back Nine begins on #10 with a climb up the slopes and follows the rolling hills into some towering trees. Finish your day in The Persimmon Room. This newly renovated space features an indoor/outdoor dining area with shareable dishes, scratch-made entrees, an extensive list of bourbons and whiskey, and the most spectacular sunsets around!

Wilmette Golf Club

847-256-9777
3900 Fairway Dr.
Wilmette, IL 60091
golfwilmette.com

Wilmette Golf Club is the closest 18-hole facility north of Chicago. This par-70 course will test all skill levels with the purest greens on the North Shore. A 30-station driving range and large putting green are available for working on your game. Enjoy a drink or dinner on the patio overlooking the 18th green at The Lawn. Contact us directly to book your next outing or special event. Take advantage of tee time specials by booking online at golfwilmette.com.

X-Golf Kildeer

847-847-1723
20771 N Rand Rd Suite I-4,
Kildeer, IL 60047
xgolfkildeer.com

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FINAL PUTT



Dan Vukelich

I'm Getting a Little Tired of Wearing an Oil Slick on my Back

That's what polyester is: petroleum refined and spun into threads and woven into the fabric of the golf shirts you'll find in any golf shop. Its formal name is polyethylene terephthalate, or PET. It's the same material they use to make the plastic bottles that hold Coke or Pepsi.

That oil slick thing isn't original to me. I heard it from Bob Conrad, one of two founders of Radmor, a Pacific Northwest golf-apparel company that is determined to reduce the amount of polyester in the world. They produce golfwear made from Peruvian Pima cotton.



I like cotton. I like how it feels. I don't like polyester, or what was euphemistically called "technical fabrics" in the early 2000s, when polyester pushed cotton off golf-shop shelves.

Have you tried to find a cotton golf shirt lately? They practically don't exist anymore. My search for them has led me to the ragged fringes of the golf fashion world.

I was at the Robert Trent Jones Trail campus in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, having just finished a round on the Fighting Joe course. "Got any cotton golf shirts," I asked the counter guy. No, he answered without looking up. He knew his merchandise.

I fared marginally better at the golf shop at the Pinehurst Resort, located a few steps from the first tee of the famed No. 2 course. "Got any cotton golf shirts," I asked a sales associate. "Hmm, let me see," she said. "I know they're here somewhere."

She took me on a circuitous trip through the massive shop to a back corner of an alcove far from the hub-bub of the crowd of shoppers and players checking in. Indeed, there were cotton shirts. Turns out they were all the same model and color, peach. All ten of them had breast pockets. I needed a breast pocket on a golf shirt like I needed a pocket protector.

During a visit to The Club at Nevillewood, a Jack Nicklaus design outside Pittsburgh that I played as the guest of a long-time friend, I asked again. They did have cotton, exactly three shirts worth, and none in my size, although I bought one anyway hoping it might fit, which it didn't.

Next came the shop at the Cypress Course of the Bonita Bay Club in Naples, Florida. No cotton, just rack after rack of high-end polyester logoed golfwear. A nice Foot Joy print from there is now my best oil-based garment.

I thought I had found the acme of cotton golf polo fashion foolishness when my girlfriend, knowing my affinity for cotton, had gotten me a Pima cotton shirt (again, in peach). It features a button-down collar – as if my tie would need keeping out there on the windswept links as I'm squaring off with Old Tom Morris.

This story has its ending at my local Dick's Sporting Goods back home in Albuquerque. After an associate with a radio confirmed there was some cotton in the golf section, which I had already breezed through, I began pawing in earnest through tables of carefully folded and stacked shirts. There were several that were either 50 percent or 54 percent cotton, according to the tags sewn into a seam above the hem. It was better than zero percent cotton, I figured.

I snagged four of them, including a white piquet knit beauty. You can't have too many white golf shirts, I thought. It wasn't until I got home, though, that I realized I had crossed yet another golf fashion frontier.

This shirt didn't have just three or four buttons by the neck. It had buttons all the way down the front. "You've found the ultimate dress golf shirt," my instructor said when I showed up wearing it the next day.

The shirt is now a reminder of my exasperating months-long search for cotton golf polos. I figure this'll be the shirt I'll wear when I finally win and accept a Golf Writers Association of America writing award during Masters Week in Augusta.

Now, if only it had a button-down collar and a breast pocket.

I like cotton. I like how it feels. I don't like polyester, or what was euphemistically called "technical fabrics" in the early 2000s, when polyester pushed cotton off golf-shop shelves.



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