

Maravilloso Living in the Coachella Valley



Andalusia at Coral Mountain resembles architecture found along Spain's sun-baked southern region.

"Andalusia is one of the last great golf communities to be built in the California desert. It is likely that no new development of this scale will be completed for a couple of generations. We have studied our competitors and learned from our previous communities to incorporate what today's families seek." – NOLAN SPARKS, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, ANDALUSIA

LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA: Managing his family-run construction business in Alabama, Nolan Sparks was an unlikely candidate to oversee one of the most successful golf communities in the desert of California.

"Our company had a reputation for building large hospitals in the Southeast," explained Sparks. "Hospital construction is complicated. With all the necessary requirements, it is common for costs to average \$1.5 million per room. As an example, X-ray facilities require lead barriers, which in-turn require super structures to support the weight."

During the Clinton administration, there was a seismic shift from building large hospitals to smaller ambulatory facilities.

"We decided to broaden our construction expertise," said Sparks. "For four generations, our family has been friends with the Drummonds. My father and Garry Drummond played on the same high school football team [he was the quarterback and Garry was the halfback]. The Drummond family had acquired land in La Quinta and planned to build an exclusive golf community. We knew it would be something special. The Drummond Company has been a leader in the coal business for 75 years and last year was ranked 162nd on the *Forbes* list of America's Largest Private Companies." ►

“THE QUALITY OF THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE STARTS HERE. MY GOAL IS TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT. MEMBERS KNOW THEIR HOMES AND PROPERTY ARE BEING PROTECTED. I TRY TO MAKE EVERYONE FEEL WELCOME.”
 – JERMAINE MAYS, HEAD OF SECURITY SINCE THE COMMUNITY OPENED

ANDALUSIA’S EXECUTIVE CHEF, FREDERIC NAIL, WAS BORN AND RAISED IN FRANCE. HIS CHEF’S GARDEN IS KNOWN FOR ITS CHILIES USED TO PREPARE SPECIAL SALSAS THAT RANGE FROM JUST HOT TO REAL BARN BURNERS.

Plans were set wherein the Drummond family business would finance the community and the Sparks family would oversee construction and build-out.

“It was an ideal arrangement. The trust factor between us was high,” expressed Sparks. “My first trip to the desert was shocking. Coming from the lush landscape in the Southeast, I could not believe the different look of the arid terrain. I now appreciate the brown nuances of the surrounding Santa Rosa Mountains. God knew what he was doing when he created the Coachella Valley.

“Our first community developed was Rancho La Quinta with two courses,” said Sparks. “With its success, plans for Andalusia at Coral Mountain were put into motion.”

AN INSPIRED NAME

Andalusia at Coral Mountain is named after Andalusia, Spain—a rocky, sun-baked region along Spain’s southern coast. Set among nine lakes, the private club offers a brand new clubhouse, a Rees Jones golf course, and the 19,000 square-foot Racquet Club & Fitness Center.

“We are just a few miles from the hustle and bustle of



Andalusia’s Racquet Club includes a fitness center, eight lighted tennis courts, four pickleball courts, a 25-meter lap pool, and spacious sun decks.

Highway 111 and Interstate 10,” described Sparks. “Our serene location makes it easier to vacation from life’s daily routine. After all, isn’t that why you come to the desert?”

“We analyzed everything that made our first community [Rancho La Quinta] successful and incorporated the latest lifestyle trends into Andalusia,” continued Sparks. “Golf is still our core amenity, but fitness—and to our surprise—pickleball and bocce ball are member favorites. We are in the final stages of completing a four and one-half-mile hiking/biking trail that loops inside our property line. The trail has a unique feature. It actually crosses over the front entranceway gatehouse!

“Matching our best-in-class infrastructure is superlative service,” extolled Sparks. “Our Southern culture is evident. You will find our standards to be crisp, and a bit more formal, than other desert communities.”

A DIAGNOSIS FROM THE “OPEN DOCTOR”

In the last 30 years, Rees Jones has earned the nickname “Open Doctor” for his redesign of courses in preparation for major championships. He has his mark on seven U.S. Open venues, six PGA Championship courses, and four Ryder Cup sites.

“Designing a golf course is a craft learned by doing,” said Jones. “There isn’t a textbook to teach nuances in the business. The more experience, the better you are.

“I was 60 years old and had many well regarded courses under my belt when I was introduced to Garry Drummond and toured the land that would become Andalusia. I was familiar with the Low Desert of California and its many courses tucked into the hillsides.

“I felt fortunate to meet Garry at this stage of my career,” smiled Jones. “It was the right property, client, and budget to create something special. I have dealt with hundreds of developers over the years, and Garry is one of the ‘best of the best.’ Many developers faltered using borrowed money. Andalusia carries no debt, providing a certain level of security in your buying decision.

“MY MOM TAUGHT ME AT AN EARLY AGE THE BENEFITS OF GOLF. NO MATTER YOUR AGE OR BACKGROUND, IT IS AN ENGAGING SPORT. SOME OF THESE OUTLANDISH IDEAS OF BIGGER CUPS ON THE GREENS OR REDUCING THE NUMBER OF HOLES ON THE COURSE ARE BALONEY. AS MILLENNIALS AGE, THEY WILL GRAVITATE TO THE GAME. IT PROVIDES CAMARADERIE, EXERCISE [WALKING A REGULATION LENGTH 18-HOLE COURSE IS EQUIVALENT TO SEVEN MILES], AND YOU DON’T HAVE TO FIGHT FOR A SPOT IN A PARKING LOT.” – REES JONES, GOLF COURSE ARCHITECT



The 18th hole

“Andalusia has the best internal views [of the golf course] and external views [of the mountains] in the desert. The area has a reputation for golf courses with tight fairways and homes lining the holes from tee to green. At Andalusia, the generous setback of real estate ensures an errant golf ball won’t end up in your backyard.

“Working with Hart Howerton architects allowed us to perfect the master plan. The course setting is natural and looks like its been there forever. It is evident the community was developed by a group of people who do things right,” concluded Jones.

OH, THOSE COLORFUL ROSES

“Rees has an uncanny ability to deliver the type of golf experience ordered,” said John Cummings, general manager of the club. “We did not ask him to create a U.S. Open spec course. Andalusia is not a beat-you-up tough

design. When standing on the tee, you don’t feel like you are hitting down a bowling alley. Some of our holes have 400 foot-wide corridors.

“During the winter season, our course is alive with color. Landscape areas are accented with roses, oleanders, and Texas ranger shrubs with their brilliant purple blooms.”

Cummings knew a corporate career wasn’t in the cards. “I had no interest in a job on the 32nd floor in a downtown high-rise. When I was a young adult, I knew working at a private club was my dream job.

“Andalusia is a special place. Our staff’s average tenure, in all departments, is eight-plus years,” said Cummings. “When you see a familiar face that greets you by name, you feel special.” ■

For more information on real estate and membership call (760) 777-1000 or visit AndalusiaAtCoralMountain.com.

“YOUR DRIVER IS A KEY CLUB IN YOUR BAG AT ANDALUSIA. AIR IT OUT. OUR GENEROUS FAIRWAYS PROVIDE AMPLE ROOM.”
 – JOHN CUMMINGS, GENERAL MANAGER