

The Western Home of Golf in America

PGA West and La Quinta Resort & Club define the desert golf lifestyle.

By Mark Pazdur, Publisher

LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA: Seeds were planted back in the 1950s to turn the Coachella Valley into a golf mecca. Many questioned the viability of attracting tourists to such an arid and remote location. Skeptics were quickly proved wrong.

The first 18-hole golf course to open was Thunderbird Dude Ranch in 1951, some 10 miles outside of town, launching the region's "golden age of development." Later renamed Thunderbird Country Club, the facility hosted the inaugural Palm Springs Golf Classic won by Arnold Palmer in 1960. Bob Hope, possibly Hollywood's greatest golfer, added his name to the tournament in 1965 and this year, with American Express as title sponsor, the purse increased to a jaw-dropping \$6.7 million.

THE WESTERN HOME OF GOLF IN AMERICA

The Club at PGA West opened its first of six courses (five open for resort play) in 1986. As the development expanded and additional courses added, the community earned a well-deserved nickname "The Western Home of

Golf in America." Over the years, PGA West has hosted tournaments from just about every governing body of golf, including PGA TOUR, Champions Tour, LPGA, and NCAA events.

One of the most famous shots in golf history occurred at PGA West on its Pete Dye designed Stadium Golf Course during the 1988 Skins Game. Lee Trevino's hole-in-one on the par-3 island green—a hole carrying the menacing moniker of Alcatraz—earned him a quick \$175,000. One has to wonder what his bar tab was that evening!

ELBOW ROOM TO SPARE

With more than 15,000 hotel rooms in the Low Desert of California, there is an option for every budget. One undeniable trend are requests for a group to all be able to stay "under one roof" and bypass a traditional hotel room. Statistics back up the shift, with more than 260 million guests booking with third party rental companies (the likes of Airbnb and Vrbo) around the world in recent years.

A new option to consider if you are looking for a desert



Stadium Course



Nicklaus Course

THE CAHUILLA INDIANS were the first to settle the area calling their home, appropriately enough, the “Land of Eternal Sun.”

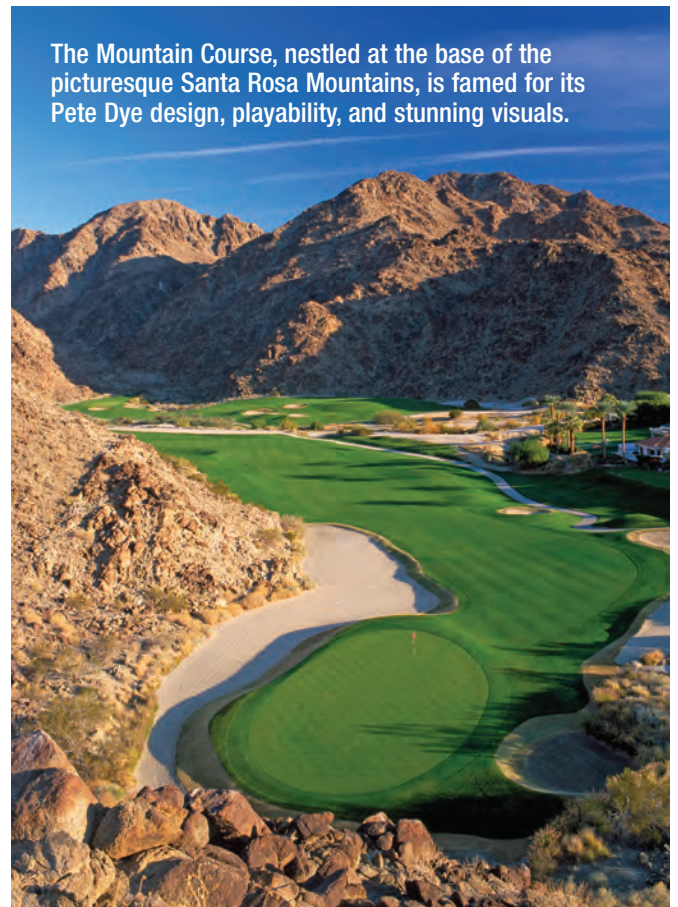
golf experience is to book with La Quinta Resort Leasing, allowing you and your family the opportunity to rent a home on property at PGA West and enjoy the amenities of La Quinta Resort & Club.



Bob Hope at the Desert Classic (circa 1970s).

“I was introduced to the ‘golf life’ as a teenager,” explained Michael Wiles, president of La Quinta Resort Leasing. “My uncle was president of The Homestead Resort in Virginia during the era of Sam Snead. I came to appreciate the importance of seamlessly blending service and amenities at an early age.

“When the Blackstone Group purchased PGA West and La Quinta Resort & Club two years ago, I was excited to be offered the opportunity to expand their home rental business,” continued Wiles. “It’s the right product, at the right time, in a market that offers everything from luxury shopping on El Paseo, the annual Stagecoach Music Festival, BNP Paribas Tennis Championship, world-class polo, and nearby casinos that draw entertainment acts from around the country.” ➤



The Mountain Course, nestled at the base of the picturesque Santa Rosa Mountains, is famed for its Pete Dye design, playability, and stunning visuals.



The 17th hole, Norman Course

Over his 25-year career in the resort hospitality industry, Michael's resume includes stints ranging from Hualalai on the Big Island of Hawaii to Sea Island, Georgia, with well over one billion dollars in development activity to his credit. "In 1996, I traveled to La Quinta for a business opportunity," recalled Wiles. "My wife and I quickly fell in love with the area. After working at several of the best resort locations across America, we chose to settle down here. Almost year-round sunshine and only a two-hour drive to the surf of Laguna Beach or skiing in

Big Bear, it's hard to beat! Now, my job is to entice others to visit and enjoy our unrivaled amenities that include five golf courses [two of which are on *Golfweek's* Top 100 list] and the Waldorf Astoria Spa La Quinta.

"While most accept the luxury vacation rental process, there is always the lingering concern of 'what ifs.' We have eliminated those concerns," stated Wiles. "If you book one of our luxury vacation rental homes through us, you receive 24-hour check-in [if your flight arrives late, simply pick up your rental keys at the front desk of La Quinta Resort & Club] and access to all services and amenities that has made Waldorf Astoria the benchmark of service for almost a century."

Options range from two-bedroom condos, tennis cottages, to a five-bedroom Mediterranean inspired fairway estate.

"Best of all, our staff, from housekeeping to landscaping, is trained to Waldorf Astoria standards," lauded Wiles. "Even the toiletries are identical to those found at La Quinta Resort & Club. Whether you stay for a week or a season, a consistent level of service is a guarantee.

"If the idea of a day of golf, followed by a steak BBQ on your outdoor patio sound appealing, a visit to our oasis in the desert might quench your thirst as the ultimate vacation option." ■



THE LA QUINTA HOTEL (today La Quinta Resort & Club) opened in 1926, featuring 20 guest casitas, an open-air glassed dining room, and three courtyards. Built at a cost of \$150,000, word of the luxury escape spread to Hollywood with Greta Garbo, Clark Gable, and Shirley Temple being frequent guests.

For a complete portfolio of luxury home options, visit LaQuintaResortLeasing.com.