

# *Bali Hai on the Strip,* *Vegas Style*

*Walters Group  
drives innovation at  
iconic Strip golf course.*



LAS VEGAS, NEVADA: There's no question that Bali Hai remains one of the most iconic golf courses in America.

It's the only course situated directly on the Las Vegas Strip, with the golden Mandalay Bay towers framing the fairways and Allegiant Stadium, home for the Las Vegas Raiders, just a well-struck driver away. Its South Pacific tropical theme is unique among golf courses in the United States. And, at 7,000 yards from the tips along with four sets of tee boxes, it presents a true test for the purist.

Often voted among the top courses in America, Bali Hai is owned by the Walters Group. It was designed by Brian Curley and Lee Schmidt, two renowned golf architects who were just beginning their careers. More than \$32 million was invested to create Bali Hai out of vacant scrubland.

Since its opening in 2000, the championship-caliber layout on 155 acres continues to impress newcomers. Bali Hai has more than 4,000 trees, 2,500 stands of towering palms, and more than 100,000 imported tropical plants. Fairways are framed with volcanic rock and white sand rough. And, its proximity to Vegas hotels offers an incred-



ible advantage for guests with action-packed schedules. There is no need for visiting golfers to travel miles away from the Strip; Bali Hai is right there.

Yet, Bali Hai is not resting on its location, beauty, or history. The property is leading a revolution in the industry—partly driven by the pandemic and changing attitudes about the golf experience. Bali Hai's motto is "award-winning golf, on the Strip—Vegas style." It is a motto that defines Bali Hai's long-term strategy.

"We are creating an experience that is designed to make



golf more fun,” said Joe Dahlstrom, director of operations at Bali Hai. “If you care about your score, this is a great place to play. But if you want to have fun, particularly with a group of friends or business colleagues, then Bali Hai is right for you.”

Dahlstrom explains that Bali Hai isn’t just competing with other area courses to attract players. Indeed, daytime guest experiences in Las Vegas have expanded to include everything from pool parties and matinee shows to helicopter rides, machine-gun shooting parlors, and race-car driving experiences.

Bali Hai is turning the staid reputation of golf on its head. Bali Hai’s golf carts are equipped with Bluetooth speakers, allowing players to enjoy music as they navigate the fairways. Complimentary Jell-O shots accompany a wide array of beverage and food options on course. The club also offers an option of taking forecaddies—male or female—for all players.

“The strategy is paying off,” said Dahlstrom. “Bali Hai hosted a record number of golfers in recent years before the pandemic struck. The COVID outbreak brought a dramatic decline in tourism to the Strip, and golf courses suffered along with nearly every business in Las Vegas.”

However, a silver lining emerged. COVID ignited golf fever in the United States, as people sought outdoor venues to counterbalance forced quarantines and social distancing that marked most of last year. “Golf got a big bump from COVID,” continued Dahlstrom. “People who had never played the game took it up, and players who had left the game came back.



“Our team strives to be innovative and aggressive in designing golf and entertainment packages that appeal to all of its clientele. About 40 percent of Bali Hai golfers are corporate customers attending business conventions or C-suite executives entertaining clients. About 50 percent are smaller groups in town for golf vacations, special events, or simply a week of fun. About 10 percent are local residents.”

Among Bali Hai’s features: The 16th, par-3 island green, a signature hole akin to the famed 17th at Sawgrass. “We boast the only bet in Vegas you can’t lose. Make a wager to hit the green on a par-3 [either No. 16 or No. 9, depending on the day] and you get pro shop credit for double your money,” smiled Dahlstrom. “If you miss, you get a credit for the exact amount of your wager.”

Bali Hai is adding a 3,000 square-foot sports bar that will seat 60 guests, providing an opportunity for golfers to linger for an entertaining 19th, 20th, and 21st hole experience. Plans are under way to provide a special game-day package for Raiders fans at Bali Hai’s 325-spot parking lot. Fans will be able to enjoy the amenities at Bali Hai before and after Raiders games, with just a short walk to the stadium.

Billy Walters, owner of Bali Hai and an icon of Las Vegas golf himself, remains proud of the property and its long-tenured staff. Although he has divested most of his golf courses in recent years, Bali Hai still holds a special place in his heart.

“The incredible history of Bali Hai speaks for itself,” said Walters. “It’s definitely stood the test of time. And I have to say that I’m excited about what’s happening today and how well we’re positioned for the future.” ■

*For tee times, please visit [BaliHaiGolfClub.com](http://BaliHaiGolfClub.com). To learn more about Billy Walters, visit [RealBillyWalters.com](http://RealBillyWalters.com).*

