

As Pure As Golf Gets

The Prairie Club allows you to unplug and recharge.

VALENTINE, NEBRASKA: The median distance that an American resides from a Walmart is 4.2 miles. The Prairie Club, set in the majestic Sandhills, is more than a 155-mile drive from the closest supercenter.

“We are located deep in America’s heartland and devoted to believers in the game,” smiled Paul Schock, founder of The Prairie Club. “We embrace seclusion. During your round, the only sound you will often hear is rustling native grasses swaying in the wind.”

AN UNTOUCHED BACKDROP

The Sandhills covers 19,000 square miles (just over 25 percent of the state of Nebraska), or almost the size of Ireland. “Our scale is so big with untouched backdrops and miles and miles of rolling hills,” described Loudan Steffes, director of golf at The Prairie Club. “We are an alternative unlike any other. While we might not have jaw-dropping mountain drop offs or ocean breezes, where else can you face 60-foot sand dunes between you and the pin? The natural blow-outs enhance what is already a special setting in its own right.”

The Prairie Club offers 36 holes of championship golf (The Dunes Course and The Pines Course), The Horse Course (a 10-hole short course), a newly revamped Himalaya putting green (centrally located near lodging), a



PHOTO: BILL HORNSTEIN

The Lodge



PHOTO: JEFFREY BERTCH

The Pines Course

17-acre practice facility, and The Lodge (with 71 comfy rooms and Nebraska inspired meals).

“I consider it distinctive that you can play two ‘top-100’ golf courses [as ranked by GOLF.com and *Golf Digest*] in a town that tops out with a population of 2,000,” described Steffes. “Each is so different. The Dunes Course doesn’t have a tree in play, while The Pines Course is set in a small forest. The contrast is eye-catching. After a day of play, an informal round on The Horse Course with your favorite drink is the ultimate pre/post dinner hangout. With holes averaging 95 yards, you only need a wedge and putter to settle your bets of the day.

“With no pool or spa facilities, we are a destination resort built for golfers,” concluded Steffes. “My two tips for you to enjoy The Prairie Club? If you hit a ball in the native grasses, loft is your friend. If you are thinking of pulling out a seven iron, use a nine iron for recovery. Also, although our golf season features long summer days, it can be surprisingly crisp in the morning. Make sure to pack a quarter-zip jacket if you plan to venture out at first sunlight.” ■



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The Dunes Course

For more information, please visit ThePrairieClub.com.