BLACK DIAMOND RANCH

A TRIFECTA OF SUCCESS

Where to live if you live for golf.

The Ranch Course, a member favorite, is framed by hammocks of live oaks and tawny colored sand.

LECANTO, FLORIDA: In the mid-1940s, John Taylor Jr., a farmer not far from Tampa Bay, Florida, named the property Black Diamond Ranch, after a premium grapefruit of the same name grown in the region. As a side note, grapefruit got its name because of the way it grows in clusters—like grapes. Last season, Florida produced 1.8 million boxes of grapefruit, or about four percent of global production.

"Since we are located in Citrus County, our name rings true," teased Tim Cole, general manager at Black Diamond

Situated on the highest point of the property with 25-mile views, the Highlands Course is a mix of lush, rippling fairways, stands of oak and pine, pristine water features, and natural beauty.

Golf Digest ranked the Quarry Course on its "Top-100" list for 20 years.

Ranch. "Eventually, the land was developed by Stan Olsen, a New Englander, with 49 holes of Tom Fazio golf. Our topography is atypical for the Sunshine State, with rolling hills and thick vegetation, with few palm trees in sight. If you were dropped on property from a helicopter, you might think you were somewhere in the Carolinas."

Now owned by Escalante Golf (a boutique owner/operator of luxury golf properties with 25+ properties in its portfolio), Black Diamond Ranch has undergone a renaissance.

"Over the past couple of years, most of our attention was committed to renovations on our golf courses," said Cole. "Now with our clubhouse receiving a major facelift and the grand opening of the member cottages, we are ready for prime time. The trifecta of pristine playing conditions, a fresh clubhouse interior, and onsite accommodations places Black Diamond Ranch on your short list for consideration."

During the clubhouse renovation, management had to be creative. "The lobby, Champions Pub, Diamond Room, and Main Dining Room had extensive construction activity," recalled Cole. "We were able to keep food and beverage operations open, but we faced some challenges. Considering that the majority of work was completed over the summer, hosting functions outside was limited due to the heat, humidity, and ever-present chance of a passing rain shower. So, we converted our boardroom into a dining venue and introduced 'Chef's Tableside Experience.' The culinary staff would prepare meals tableside, including sophisticated desserts like Cherries Jubilee and Bananas Foster. It was so well received that we are continuing the event in our newly renovated Main Dining Room."

In Their Own Words

"Holes 13 through 17 on the Quarry Course are the five best consecutive holes of golf in the world."

— DAN JENKINS, LEGENDARY SPORTSWRITER

"The Quarry Course navigates to the edge of a limestone quarry dug 80 feet into the ground and winds through lush tropical vegetation and towering oaks. Black Diamond Ranch is so unusual, dramatic, and spectacular. It took months and months of planning to get it just right."

— TOM FAZIO

That Fresh Paint Smell

The three new member cottages overlook the 11th hole on the Ranch Course. Each cottage features four bedrooms with en-suite travertine bathrooms, a fresh floor plan, and a large backyard with a private inground pool and Jacuzzi. "With our enhanced exclusivity, we expect strong demand for our National Membership Program, which is available to those living outside a 50-mile radius and affords the opportunity to enjoy our special destination and striking accommodations. A limited number of National Memberships are available," concluded Cole. ■

For more information on national memberships, please visit BlackDiamondRanch.com.

New Member Cottages