

# AMERICA'S TOP 100 Golf Communities

TRAVEL + LEISURE GOLF'S annual list of the best places to live—and live well

BY DAVID GOULD

Teton gazing: homes along  
the eighteenth at Three Creek  
Ranch, Jackson, Wyoming



IF YOU COULD LIVE ANYWHERE, WHERE WOULD THAT be? To help you decide, we present the second annual T+L GOLF report on America's best golf communities.

The question of where to invest is daunting. Top-tier communities have proliferated to meet the demand of the many well-heeled baby boom retirees. Caddie programs, multi-season recreation options for all ages and upgraded dining and spa amenities are practically essential. "Pronghorn just hired Fabrice Beaudoin, who trained under Alain Ducasse and Michel Rostang," says David Lott, publisher of [GolfCourseHomes.net](http://GolfCourseHomes.net). "Ten years ago no one knew Who a golf community's chef was." Also, a softer housing market makes it hard to buy land in a golf community with the idea of "flipping" the lot, so a property buyer in 2007 should

feel a stronger commitment to the development. (Getting in early, when the development is still being defined, can offer the homeowner a more integral role in the community.) So this year we've added more information about developers and their visions and track records.

Overall, the list looks similar to last year's, with a few new additions to the top twenty-five, including Spring Island in South Carolina, Stock Farm in Montana and Three Creek Ranch in Wyoming—the latter two being part of a major trend, that of the golf-home boom taking place in Big Sky Country. Bottom line: All one hundred of these offer the best golf-community living in the country and are fine-looking investments, but the ones claiming the top spots are winning the modern-amenities war. >

# THE NEXT 15 LIFE AT THE TOP

## 11. ESTANCIA Scottsdale, Arizona

Estancia maintains a lofty status in the competitive Scottsdale market with superior planning and design, from the internationally honored Fazio course to the amenity-packed clubhouse to the eye-pleasing architecture.

## 12. THE GREENBRIER SPORTING CLUB

White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia

There are still hints of the Social Register over at the great resort, but the club displays a more unbuttoned approach: a Fazio-designed course, as well as access to the resort's three courses, a heavy-beamed members' lodge, shooting grounds and multiple fly-fishing streams.

## 13. ISLEWORTH Orlando, Florida

For all its mansion-filled boulevards and Edwardian personal service, Isleworth still has a golf soul and a jock mentality: a Steve Smyers layout and a seven-thousand-square-foot lounge with golf simulator and basketball court.

## 14. SILVER LEAF Scottsdale, Arizona

Tom Weiskopf's fairways and green sites echo the folds of the surrounding McDowell Mountains, while the fifty-thousand-square-foot club and spa call you inside. A New Urbanist aesthetic permeates the first-class residential plan.

## 15. KUKI'O Kona, Hawaii

The half-mile-long Big Island beach here outshines that of any other gated golf community. Kuki'o's fifteen hundred acres hold only 375 homesites and include a full-service beach club, world-class spa and twenty-eight private Tom Fazio-designed golf holes.

## 16. WADE HAMPTON Cashiers, North Carolina

This mountain retreat was prospected by a brother-and-sister development team blessed with a beautiful Blue Ridge site, a golf course that would catapult Tom Fazio to fame and the foresight to draft covenants, add amenities and recruit well-off, unpretentious people to join in the fun.

## 17. YELLOWSTONE CLUB Big Sky, Montana

Amid log-style mansions and ski-in, ski-out chalet homes for the residents, there is also a resort component with private skiing and private golf (by high-country veteran Tom Weiskopf), plus hiking and fly-fishing.

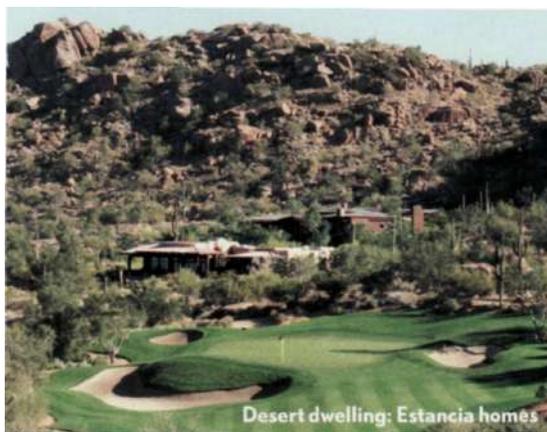
## 18. JOHN'S ISLAND Vera Beach, Florida

No community needs publicity less than "J.I." (as the locals call it), which advertises only to attract good help. Located

on a pristine barrier island between the Indian River and the Atlantic, it has three courses, a private beach club, tennis courts, a full gym and elegant architecture.

## 19. IRON HORSE Whitefish, Montana

Twisting through 820 acres above Whitefish Lake is a tidily tended Fazio course, though the other outdoor activities available—like horseback riding, white-water rafting, hiking and fly-fishing—are more rugged. And that's not counting what's on tap when it snows.



## 20. THE VINTAGE CLUB

Indian Wells, California

This 712-acre community on the former Eldorado Polo Grounds is all waterfalls, lakes, two Fazio courses and multi-million dollar estates, with an incredibly sophisticated security component.

## 21. STOCK FARM

Hamilton, Montana

The views from the sixteen-acre ranch are of Bitterroot peaks and high prairie dotted with grazing elk. The developers managed to lay in great golf, fine dining as well as a gleaming fitness center without breaking the frontier spell.

## 22. REYNOLDS PLANTATION Greensboro, Georgia

Established in 1985, the addition of the Ritz-Carlton Lodge a few years back gave this lake-loving and golf-heavy community a higher profile and some added texture. The upcoming debut of the Creek Club (Jim Engh), a members-only course, will do more of the same.

## 23. SPRING ISLAND Spring Island, South Carolina

Environmental stewardship and lifelong learning abound here. Thus, the fitness center, pool and tennis courts complex is called the Sports Garden, a Zen-like designation. Also offered are classes in studio art and music, plus a Master Naturalist course taught by a PhD staff member.

## 24. MIRABEL Scottsdale, Arizona

Self-indulgence meets self-discipline at the fitness center, by the lap pool and cabanas. The luxurious El Corazon neighborhood is at the center of the property, but fine service is everywhere—there's even a chef on the Fazio course.

## 25. LAS CAMPANAS Santa Fe, New Mexico

The two Nicklaus Signature courses, Sunrise and Sunset, suggest that you should devote entire days to golf. Yet the stunning spa, classic clay tennis courts and fitness program, plus arts and culture in every direction, make it tough.

# AMERICA'S TOP 100 Golf Communities

## ALABAMA

**GREYSTONE** Birmingham This former Champions Tour site features grand estates and a genteel atmosphere, plus a top practice facility. Developed by the Daniel Corporation and home to some of its principals. Due for equity conversion in 2010. GOLF: 36 holes (Bob Cupp, Rees Jones). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$300,000 to \$1.2 million. CONTACT: 205-986-5120 or [greystonecc.com](http://greystonecc.com).

**SHOAL CREEK** Shoal Creek Nearing its thirtieth year, there are still some unbuilt lots here, but having hosted PGA Championships, Shoal Creek's golf legacy is secure. Extensive equestrian facilities. GOLF: 27 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$595,000 to \$5.3 million. CONTACT: 205-991-4653 or [shoal-creek.com](http://shoal-creek.com).

## ARIZONA

**BLACKSTONE CC AT VISTANCIA** Peoria Home to the golf course many consider the jewel of the West Valley. Poolside cabanas and private-resort feel add luxury. A joint venture of Sunbelt Holdings and Shea Homes, the largest privately held home builder in the United States. GOLF: 18 holes (Jim Engh). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$700,000 to \$2 million. CONTACT: 800-617-5301 or [blackstonecountryclub.com](http://blackstonecountryclub.com).

**DC RANCH** Scottsdale Panoramic views of the McDowell Mountains combine with first-class management by DMB Associates. Active community is centered on \$20 million clubhouse. Homeowners association (HOA) will be established in 2007-08. GOLF: 18 holes (Scott Miller, redesigned in 2002 by Tom Lehman/John Fought). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$750,000 to \$4.9 million. CONTACT: 480-502-2725 or [dcranch.com](http://dcranch.com).

**DESERT HIGHLANDS** Scottsdale Famed 850 acre community that merged the Jack Nicklaus and Lyle Anderson brand names. Fitness center, manicured gardens and desert-style architecture. GOLF: 18 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$995,000 to \$11 million. CONTACT: 480-585-7444 or [deserthighlandsscottsdale.com](http://deserthighlandsscottsdale.com).

**DESERT MOUNTAIN** Scottsdale This vast Lyle Anderson community borders a national forest and includes six golf courses, nine miles of hiking trails, a spa and concierge services. GOLF: 108 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$600,000 to \$7.9 million. CONTACT: 800-255-5519 or [desertmountain.com](http://desertmountain.com).

**11 ESTANCIA** Scottsdale Plenty of elbow room between homes, plus luxury amenities including a wine cellar, a fitness center with massage rooms and an ornate clubhouse. Developed by Discovery Land Company, the community is now member-owned. GOLF: 18 holes (Tom Fazio). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.8 million to \$7.6 million. CONTACT: 480-473-4405 or [estanciaclub.com](http://estanciaclub.com).

**FOREST HIGHLANDS** Flagstaff Bentgrass greens helped attract the 2006 USGA Mid-Amateur. Two superior courses in addition to an eighteen-hole putting course, plus fishing and hiking. Member-owned. GOLF: 36 holes (Tom Weiskopf/Jay Morrish; Weiskopf). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$695,000 to \$2.9 million. CONTACT: 928-556-8606 or [dmbrealty.com](http://dmbrealty.com).

**THE GALLERY** Marana The MacMillan family owns and dotes on this Tucson hideaway that will host the WGC Match Play Championship in 2007. GOLF: 36 holes (John Fought/Tom Lehman, Fought). RECENT HOME LISTINGS (LOTS

ONLY): \$400,000 to \$1 million. CONTACT: 888-437-4800 or [gallervgolf.com](http://gallervgolf.com).

**24 MIRABEL** Scottsdale Stacked-stone interiors and cantilevered overhangs lend a Frank Lloyd Wright sophistication here. An award-winning spa and fitness center. A Discovery Land Company property, awaiting turnover to members. GOLF: 18 holes (Tom Fazio). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.5 million to \$4.3 million. CONTACT: 866-647-2235 or [mirabel.com](http://mirabel.com).

**THE RIM GOLF CLUB** Payson Wind-sculpted pines line the fairways of the Rim's lauded golf course. This 555-acre village has 326 homesites and a small-town atmosphere. A Crescent Resources development, ninety minutes from Scottsdale. GOLF: 18 holes (Jay Morrish/Tom Weiskopf). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1 million to \$2.7 million. CONTACT: 800-311-5370 or [therimgolfclub.com](http://therimgolfclub.com).

**SEVEN CANYONS** Sedona A visually astounding landscape surrounds developer David Cavan's foray into the golf-community niche. His daughter oversaw interior design of the villas, with stunning results. GOLF: 18 holes (Tom Weiskopf). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$2.5 million to \$3.5 million. CONTACT: 866-367-8844 OR [sevencanyons.com](http://sevencanyons.com).

**SILVERLEAF** Scottsdale An exclusive enclave within fellow Top 100 community DC Ranch. Panoramic vistas, desert sunsets and a superb spa. GOLF: 18 holes (Tom Weiskopf). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.5 million to \$10 million. CONTACT: 480-502-6902 or [silverleaf.com](http://silverleaf.com).

**STONE CANYON** Oro Valley Swarming with saguaro, wellness is the central theme here, with a staff of fitness trainers and therapists. Developed by a team led by the Wolfswinkel family. GOLF: 18 holes (Jay Morrish). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1 million to \$4 million. CONTACT: 877-219-9100 or [stonecanyon.com](http://stonecanyon.com).

**SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN** Phoenix A Lyle Anderson community and host to LPGA Tour and Champions Tour events. Its sports club offers spa treatments and a resort-size pool. GOLF: 36 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$599,000 to \$2.5 million. CONTACT: 877-983-3300 or [superstitionmountain.com](http://superstitionmountain.com).

## CALIFORNIA

**BIGHORN** Palm Desert A desert mecca with high-profile events. Perks to residents include private jet service and a doctor-in-residence. Originally developed by Westinghouse. GOLF: 36 holes (Arthur Hills, Tom Fazio). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.9 million to \$7.9 million. CONTACT: 888-551-5577 or [bighornqolf.com](http://bighornqolf.com).

**THE BRIDGES AT RANCHO SANTA FE** Rancho Santa Fe Set on 540 acres, this community offers a top-notch concierge and spa services. There's even a community property in Cabo San Lucas available for rent. GOLF: 18 holes (Robert Trent Jones Jr.). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$2 million to \$7 million. CONTACT: 858-756-8700 or [thebridgesrsf.com](http://thebridgesrsf.com).

**THE CROSBY AT RANCHO SANTA FE** Rancho Santa Fe Planned for 443 residences, all tucked behind a magnificent entrance featuring a 340-foot bridge over the San Dieguito River. GOLF: 18 holes (Fred Couples/Schmidt-Curley). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.2 million to \$5 million. CONTACT: 858-759-7220 or [thecrosby.com](http://thecrosby.com).

**THE HIDEAWAY** La Quinta Two fine desert courses here serve a Discovery Land Company

community of fewer than five hundred homes. A massive clubhouse with full-service spa, fitness center, dining and a roster of activities. GOLF: 36 holes (Clive Clark, Pete Dye). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.7 million to \$4.2 million. CONTACT: 760-777-7400 or [hideawaygolfclub.com](http://hideawaygolfclub.com).

**LAHONTAN** Truckee Famed trout-fishing grounds and high-country golf in North Lake Tahoe. Developed by DBM/Highlands Group. GOLF: 27 holes (Tom Weiskopf). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.6 million to \$4.7 million. CONTACT: 800-582-9919 or [lahontanrealty.com](http://lahontanrealty.com).

**4 MAYACAMA** Santa Rosa Golf purism (a walking-only course) and upscale oenophilia (wine collections in a club-managed cellar) set this Sonoma County community apart. The developer and principal owner is industry veteran David Wilhelm. GOLF: 18 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS (LOTS ONLY): \$1 million to \$1.5 million. CONTACT: 866-393-1818 or [mayacama.com](http://mayacama.com).

**OLD GREENWOOD** Truckee Possibilities for home design and size of investment are manifold, with fractional and full-ownership options available. Villa ownership offers low-maintenance luxury as well as membership in Tahoe Mountain Club. Developed by East-West Partners. GOLF: 18 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.2 million to \$3.3 million. CONTACT: 800-754-3070 or [oldgreenwood.com](http://oldgreenwood.com).

**THE QUARRY** La Quinta Villas and Estates alike side up to the ten-hole add-on course, crafted in the same visual style Fazio used for the first eighteen. GOLF: 28 holes (Tom Fazio). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$2.1 million to \$4.7 million. CONTACT: 760-777-1100 OR [quarryinfo.com](http://quarryinfo.com).

**3 SANTA LUCIA PRESERVE** Carmel As environmentally ambitious as a golf development could be, with vast conservation easements, one hundred miles of hiking and horse trails, an eighteen-acre lake and superior culinary experiences. GOLF: 18 holes (Tom Fazio). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$3.7 million to \$5.5 million. CONTACT: 877-626-8200 or [santaluciapreserve.com](http://santaluciapreserve.com).

**SANTALUZ** San Diego Secluded homesites with large homes, yet the golf course, clubhouse, spa and village green draw residents together. DMB Associates teamed with the U.K.'s Taylor Woodrow. GOLF: 18 holes (Rees Jones). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.2 million to \$9 million. CONTACT: 858-759-3109 or [orsantaluz.com](http://orsantaluz.com).

**SHERWOOD** Thousand Oaks Founded by billionaire David Murdock, the layout is impressive, with a championship course plus a new par-three course. GOLF: 27 holes (Jack Nicklaus). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$3.6 million to \$15 million. CONTACT: 805-373-5992 or [sherwoodcc.com](http://sherwoodcc.com).

**TEHAMA** Carmel Nature-loving abounds at Clint Eastwood's development in the Carmel uplands with majestic views and just eighty-eight homesites. GOLF: 18 holes (Jay Morrish). RECENT HOME LISTINGS (LOTS ONLY): \$2.4 million to \$5 million. CONTACT: 831-625-2075 or [tehamagolfclub.com](http://tehamagolfclub.com).

**TRADITION** La Quinta Eucalyptus trees and ridgelines cosset the place Arnold Palmer makes his Western home. No resort-style amenities or commotion, just golf and good fellowship. GOLF: 27 holes (Arnold Palmer). RECENT HOME LISTINGS: \$1.9 million to \$6.8 million. CONTACT: 760-564-3355 or [traditiongolfclub.net](http://traditiongolfclub.net). >

# LastSHOT

## Seventh Heaven

Located in the Coachella Valley twenty-five minutes from Palm Springs, the Hideaway Golf Club's Clive Clark course offers breathtaking views of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Opened in 2002, the layout is covered with desert wildflowers and has water (including nine waterfalls) on fifteen holes. "We started with a perfectly flat piece of land, just pan flat," says Clark. "In the end we moved two and a quarter million cubic yards of dirt." The entire course is wildly photogenic, but

the 147-yard par-three seventh (pictured) is "the hole that loves the camera the most," he says. In addition to thirty-six holes (Pete Dye designed the other eighteen in 2003), Hideaway members enjoy a new fifty-thousand-square-foot clubhouse replete with a spa, a fitness center and an extensive wine cellar. Golf membership is limited to Hideaway residents; custom homesites, villas and bungalows are available. For more information, call 760-777-7400 or visit [hideawaygolfclub.com](http://hideawaygolfclub.com). •



Picture perfect: Hideaway's Clive Clark course