



## 2023 TOP 25 HISTORIC HOTELS OF AMERICA® MOST HISTORIC GOLF COURSES

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### The 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses

Historic Hotels of America®, the official program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for promoting and celebrating authentic historic hotels, is proud to announce The 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America® Most Historic Golf Courses. This unique listing of historic resorts chronicles many of the most beautiful, prestigious, and iconic American golf courses that attract both leisure seekers and serious athletes. Many of these golf courses were designed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often referred to as the “Golden Age” of golf course architecture. The golf courses at Historic Hotels of America resorts were designed and renovated by legendary golf course architects—many of whom are World Golf Hall of Fame inductees—ranging from Golden Age architect Donald Ross to more recent visionaries such as Pete Dye. Scottish-born Donald Ross started his career in golf at the ancient St Andrews course in the 1890s but spent most of his career and life in the United States. He designed many of the country’s “Golden Age” courses, including some of the courses at Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina, The Omni Homestead Resort in Virginia, and The Broadmoor in Colorado. His influence on the game and its architecture continues to this day, both on his historic courses and on new courses his designs inspired. In addition to claiming famous architects, each course has earned a reputation, in part, based on the many famous people who have played on their greens: U.S. Presidents,

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world leaders, golf champions, film and entertainment celebrities, and famous inventors and industrialists. The golf courses named to the 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses list are some of the country's most historic and treasured spaces. Today, guests can make their own history when they stay and play where champions have played.

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**The Omni Homestead Resort (1766)** (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-omni-homestead-resort/golf.php>)  
*Hot Springs, Virginia*



Travelers are invited to tee off at the most historic first tee in continuous use in the United States at The Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Virginia. The Omni Homestead Resort was established in 1766, and its first tee is part of the aptly named Old Course, which opened in 1892 as a six-hole course. Extended to nine holes by 1898, the Old Course ultimately reached a full 18 holes during a 1913 expansion by famed golf course designer Donald Ross. The Old Course is long associated with U.S. presidents. William McKinley was the first U.S. President to play golf while in office (1897–1901), and he did so on the Old Course, teeing off at the Old Tee in 1899. Former President (1909–1913) and former U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice (1921–1930) William Howard Taft adored the Old Course, making time to play in the middle of a Virginia State Bar Association conference in 1908. Today, the presidential favorite is open to guests and members. The Omni Homestead Resort also offers travelers a fantastic game on The Cascades course. Celebrating 100 years in 2023, The Cascades course offers challenging links set against the backdrop of Virginia's breathtaking Allegheny Mountains. PGA Tour record-holder Sam Snead launched his career on this fabled Virginia mountain golf course. Designed by legendary course architect William S. Flynn in 1923, The Cascades uses its varied terrain to influence play rather than dictate it. Nationally ranked, The Cascades frequently tops lists of the best mountain courses, including *Golfweek* magazine's "Best Golf Courses You Can Play in Each State," where it earned the #1 spot in Virginia.

**Woodstock Inn & Resort** (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/woodstock-inn-and-resort/golf.php>) (1793)  
*Woodstock, Vermont*



Golf at the Woodstock Inn & Resort, founded in 1793 in Woodstock, Vermont, dates to 1895 when a distinguished guest lamented to the general manager about the lack of a golf course, as he had brought his clubs all the way from Boston. The inn obliged, and the first course was built that year. The resort's currently in-use golf course, the oldest public course in Vermont, dates to 1906. The 5th green is the only one on the course leftover from the original 1906 design. In the early 1960s, the course was redesigned by notable golf course architect Robert Trent Jones Sr., under the direction of the inn's new owner, Laurence S. Rockefeller. Rockefeller was a great fan of golf, and he and his wife, Woodstock-native Mary French, enjoyed playing the course together when they were in Vermont. Jones, a creative and prolific golf designer, oversaw the construction of other mid-century courses at Rockefeller's remarkable Mauna Kea Beach Hotel and burgeoning Colonial Williamsburg Resort around the same time. Today, surrounded by the lush Kedron Valley and featuring stunning views of Mount Peg, the Woodstock, Vermont golf course is a picturesque venue set amidst an unspoiled landscape. The 18-hole course boasts a par-70 layout that offers an unforgettable experience for golfers of all abilities.

**Omni Bedford Springs Resort (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/omni-bedford-springs-resort/golf.php>) (1806)**

*Bedford, Pennsylvania*



The Omni Bedford Springs Resort was established in 1806 and, naturally, was an early adopter of golf in the United States. The resort is home to one of the nation's first golf courses, with 18 holes—considered very large for a golf course at that time—first designed by Spencer Oldham in 1895. Aptly named, the Bedford Springs Old Course was redesigned by A.W. Tillinghast in 1912 and reimagined by the renowned golf course architect Donald Ross in 1923. Giants of the Golden Age of golf course architecture, both Tillinghast and Ross are honored by the World Golf Hall of Fame. Ross had trained at St Andrews in the 1890s and then spent most of his career and life in the United States, where he designed many of the country's championship courses. Overlooking breathtaking views of the Allegheny Mountains and Cumberland Valley, this remarkable course spans the work of three golf architectural masters. Renovated in 2007 by architect Ron Forse, early 20th-century documentation of the Bedford Springs Old Course was used to restore lost holes and other historical features contributed by Oldham, Tillinghast, and Ross. Preserved and updated, this remarkable palimpsest course can be enjoyed today by 21st-century players eager to experience the game as it was designed by leading architects of the game's Golden Age.

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**French Lick Springs Hotel (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/french-lick-springs-hotel/golf.php>) (1845) and West Baden Springs Hotel (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/west-baden-springs-hotel/golf.php>) (1902)**

*French Lick Springs and West Baden, Indiana*



Golf and history enthusiasts are in for a treat at French Lick Resort in French Lick, Indiana, which boasts three courses designed by three greats of 20th-century golf course design. Notably, the resort's most historic golf course—on account of its age, closeness to the original form, and the distinction of its designer—is The Donald Ross Course. Designed in 1917 by Donald Ross, who is considered one of the greatest and most influential course architects of the game's Golden Age, this namesake course was an immediate success. The resort first hosted the PGA Championship in 1924, won by Walter Hagen. Hagen played a major role in popularizing the game as a professional sport and was the first golfer to become a millionaire playing the game. In the years since, the course has also gone on to host LPGA championships and Senior PGA events. Along with the greats of the game, world-class golf has attracted scores of celebrities to French Lick over the years, including singer Bing Crosby, comedian Bob Hope, business magnate Howard Hughes, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and professional football player Peyton Manning. Before he became basketball's "Larry Legend," French Lick native Larry Bird worked and played on the French Lick golf course in his youth. The French Lick Resort encompasses two historic hotels, The French Lick Hotel (1845) and the West Baden Springs Hotel (1902), where guests have access to The Donald Ross Course, as well as courses designed by Pete Dye (2009) and Tom Bendelow (1907).

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**Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/grand-hotel-golf-resort-spa/golf.php>) (1847)**

*Point Clear, Alabama*



Golf course architect Perry Maxwell designed an 18-hole championship golf course for the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa in Point Clear, Alabama, in 1947—just in time for the Grand Hotel's centennial, as it was established in 1847. After World War II, a long-awaited retreat to the Mobile Bay resort offered weary Americans a chance to play Maxwell's brand-new 7,104 yards of oak-lined links. Unsurprisingly, it was a grand success. Another nine holes were added, first in 1967 and again in 1983. Today, there are two 18-hole golf courses at the resort's Lakewood Club: The Dogwood Course and the Azalea Course. Since 1947, the Lakewood Club has hosted former President Gerald Ford, European royalty, movie stars, and sports legends, along with legions of local and visiting golfers. The Kenny Stabler Charity Golf Classic was held at the Lakewood Club for several years and hosted a who's-who of professional football players and other celebrities. It also played host to the U.S. Senior Women's Amateur championship in 2021, 1986, and 1974, one of 14 championship tournaments run by the United States Golf Association. Despite its impressive age, the Dogwood Course is well-kept and cared for. It was renovated in 2005 by the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Team and again in 2018, all to give it a fresh and modern feel while retaining Maxwell's vision for the course.

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**Mohonk Mountain House (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/mohonk-mountain-house/golf.php>) (1869)**

*New Paltz, New York*



On top of the beautiful Shawangunk Ridge, named one of "Earth's Last Great Places" by The Nature Conservancy, is the Mohonk Mountain House resort in New Paltz, New York, where nature-seekers can find golf, gardens, and peace. The resort was founded in 1869, and a historic nine-hole golf course (the Rest Course) was laid out by the resort's founder, Albert Smiley, in 1897 on an apple orchard at the Mountain Rest Dairy Farm. Scotsman Robert Pryde added Scottish golf course genius to the greens when he lengthened the course to 2,350 yards in 1911. In 1925, the course doubled in size to 18 holes, when a second nine-hole course (the Hillside Course) was added. Although the Hillside Course was eventually converted into a ski slope in 1963, golf is still featured at the historic resort. Today, the Mohonk Golf Course features undulating fairways and protects itself with blind tee shots and uneven lies. Its 19th-century design lays down a challenge for 21st-century equipment, making it a shot-maker's paradise and one of the best nine-hole golf courses in New York. Mohonk Mountain House was inducted into Historic Hotels of America in 1991 and has been recognized as a leader in hospitality and heritage tourism as a winner of Historic Hotels Awards of Excellence in 2017 and 2019.

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**The Sagamore Resort (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-sagamore/golf.php>) (1883)**

*Bolton Landing, New York*



The championship Sagamore Golf Course at The Sagamore Resort in Bolton Landing, New York, features fairways that are lush, narrow, and lined with hardwood, with deep bunkers surrounding undulating greens. The Sagamore Resort was established in 1883, and “Golden Age” architect Donald Ross designed a golf course adjacent to the resort in 1928. The resort purchased it a year later—at a discount due to the harsh economic effects wrought from the onset of the Great Depression. Most of the money used to obtain Ross’ course came from a wealthy entrepreneur who regularly vacationed at the resort. Ross’ beautiful series of fairways attracted countless guests from both New York City and Boston, and all who arrived found its beautiful 18-hole, par-70 greens to be absolutely astounding. Contemporary players should look up when they reach the first hole; Ross designed it with the view in mind. While the resort hotel is on an exclusive island on Lake George, the golf course is located directly across the water on the mainland. The location gives guests access to a championship course with stunning views of Lake George and the Adirondack mountains, while the course uses the natural environment to give each hole its challenge and beauty, thanks to Ross’s careful design.

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**Jekyll Island Club Resort (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/jekyll-island-club-resort/golf.php>) (1886)**

*Jekyll Island, Georgia*



The Jekyll Island Club Resort on Jekyll Island, Georgia, began as an exclusive Gilded Age private retreat for America’s wealthiest families in 1886. Today, the barrier island resort community is open to all and welcomes golfers to play on its four grassy, windswept courses as they have for over 120 years. The first golf course at Jekyll Island Club was constructed in 1898. The most historic golf course still in play on the island is the nine-hole, par-36 Great Dunes Course designed by Walter “Old Man” Travis in 1926. Travis was a championship amateur golfer, an Australian immigrant to the United States who worked as a writer between winning British, U.S., and Cuban tournaments. Summoned to the Island by some of the nation’s most elite families during the Club Era, Travis created the best course money could buy. In golf history, along with hosting notable figures and golf championships, Jekyll Island is significant because the United States Golf Association chose it as the site for equipment testing. In 1924, the USGA tested new steel clubs against the traditional hickory clubs, as well as golf ball sizes and densities. These tests on Jekyll Island’s courses changed the game of golf.

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**Basin Harbor (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/basin-harbor-resort-boat-club/golf.php>) (1886)**

*Vergennes, Vermont*



The historic Basin Harbor golf course was installed at the Basin Harbor resort in Vergennes, Vermont, in 1927. The historic resort itself was founded over forty years earlier, in 1886. Designed by Alex 'Nipper' Campbell, a Scottish player most famous for his five top-10 finishes in the United States Open in the early 20th century, the course is the only lakeside course in the Green Mountain State. The course was redesigned twice after Campbell built the first nine holes: first by golf course architect William Mitchell in 1955, who expanded the course to 18 holes, and then again by world-renowned architect Geoffrey Cornish in the 1980s. Today, it retains a few of its original Campbell holes, and Basin Harbor's 18-hole championship course is a delight for any golfer with its rolling terrain, well-placed bunkers, beautiful trees, and contoured fairways. Notably, the course was the first in Vermont to become a sanctioned Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Golf Course, a program that is dedicated to preserving natural resources and enhancing wildlife habitats. While the golf course has seen many iterations in the past 100 years, it still maintains its Golden Age charm with gently rolling fairways and fescue-framed green complexes.

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**Grand Hotel (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/grand-hotel/golf.php>) (1887)**

*Mackinac Island, Michigan*



The Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Michigan, provides guests of "America's Summer Place" with a stunning 18-hole golf course. The Jewel, comprised of the Grand Nine and the Woods Nine, is the only course in the country with horse-drawn carriage rides between nines. The Grand Nine, located across from the hotel with views of the Straits of Mackinac, was designed in 1901 by golf links artist Tom Bendelow and then redesigned during Grand Hotel's centennial in 1987 by golf course architect Jerry Matthews. In 1994, Matthews enlarged the golf course with the Woods Nine, located in the interior of Mackinac Island, with views of the Mackinac Bridge and the Upper Peninsula. Among the many sports champions and notable figures who have played The Jewel include 1987 U.S. Open Championship winner Scott Simpson, sports announcer Jim Nantz, and former U.S. President Gerald Ford. Ford himself was fond of Mackinac Island throughout his life, with his first visit taking place all the way back during his youth in the 1920s. (He specifically served as an Eagle Scout at the Mackinac Island State Park Commission's Scout Service Camp.) As such, Ford returned frequently while on vacation, engaging in activities like sampling fresh candy at Mary's Fudge, touring Fort Mackinac, and playing a round or two at The Jewel.

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**Pinehurst Resort (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/pinehurst-resort/golf.php>)**

**(1895)**

*Pinehurst, North Carolina*



From humble beginnings as a pasture to one of the premier golf courses in the country, Pinehurst Resort is steeped in the sport's history and tradition. Historians and golfers today celebrate Pinehurst Resort for its role in popularizing golf and providing blueprints for what a golf course should look like during the Gilded Age. Pinehurst Resort's founder, James Walker Tufts, hired renowned golf course architect Donald Ross to oversee the day-to-day operations of its golfing services. Ross went on to design four of Pinehurst Resort's nine championship golf courses in play today, including its most famous course, Pinehurst No. 2, which was constructed in 1907. Pinehurst No. 2 has served as the site for more championship tournaments than any other golf course in the United States. Among the many well-known competitions held at Pinehurst No. 2 are the PGA Championship, the Ryder Cup, and the U.S. Open, as well as the North and South Open Championship. Dozens of famous professional golfers have graced its fairways, including Sam Snead, Ben Hogan, and Jack Nicklaus. The historic greens of Pinehurst No. 2 also saw the legendary duel between Payne Stewart and Phil Mickelson during the closing round of the 1999 U.S. Open. The two were neck-and-neck heading into the last two holes of the tournament. Stewart stuck his approach to four feet on 17 for birdie, then holed a dramatic 15-foot putt on the 72nd hole to win the championship, beating Mickelson by one shot.

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**Omni Mount Washington (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/omni-mount-washington-resort-bretton-woods/golf.php>) (1902)**

*Bretton Woods, New Hampshire*



Omni Mount Washington is located at the base of stunning Mount Washington: at 6,288 feet, the highest peak in the Northeast. The resort is surrounded by nearly 800,000 acres of the White Mountain National Forest and is home to Bretton Woods, New Hampshire's largest ski area. Omni Mount Washington offers two golf courses: the award-winning 18-hole Mount Washington Course and the challenging 9-hole Mount Pleasant Course. Meticulously restored to Donald Ross' original 1915 design, the 18-hole Mount Washington Course reopened in August 2008 and has been named New Hampshire's "Best Courses You Can Play" since 2009 by Golfweek magazine. It has played host to a number of prominent golf enthusiasts, including U.S. Pro Golfer Gilbert Nicholls, Golf Course Designer Alex Findlay, British Golf Champions Harry Vardon and J.W. Taylor, and U.S. Open Golf Champion Willie Anderson. The 9-hole Mount Pleasant Course, which opened in 1895, is a par 35 running 3,215 yards alongside the Ammonoosuc River amid gorgeous mountain views. The course was restored and upgraded by Cornish & Silva Golf Course Architects in 1989. The full-service Clubhouse features lessons, clinics, and merchandise, plus The Grille offers indoor and outdoor dining for lunch and libations. Open Seasonally.

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**The Otesaga Hotel (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-otesaga-hotel/golf.php>) (1909)**

*Cooperstown, New York*



Located in historic Cooperstown, New York, Leatherstocking Golf Course opened alongside The Otesaga Hotel resort in 1909 on the shores of scenic Otsego Lake. Featuring naturally contoured terrain, sweeping views, and diverse elevations, this championship par-72 course will inspire a player's best game. Among many standout features are two great finishing holes: #17 Par 3 playing up to 195 yards over water and #18 Par 5 with an island tee and the fairway along the lake. What began as a nine-hole course was transformed in 1919 by legendary golf architect Devereux Emmet, who expanded the course to 18 holes across 90 acres. This classic, Northeast-style course has changed little since then, though the late 1990s brought some upgrades, including expanded tee boxes, a state-of-the-art drainage system, restructured cart paths, and reshaped bunkers. With its location in Cooperstown, home of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, the course has played host to some of the legends of the game. In 1936, the inaugural class of inductees was enshrined, including Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, whose golf game that weekend started a long tradition of Hall of Famers playing Leatherstocking during Induction Weekend. Leatherstocking has also hosted the New York State Four Ball Championship, as well as the New York State Junior Championship. The award-winning course offers an unforgettable experience for both guests of The Otesaga and locals.

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**Omni Grove Park Inn (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/omni-grove-park-inn/golf.php>) (1913)**

*Asheville, North Carolina*



The historic Grove Park Golf Course at Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina, has been described as the only rival to Pinehurst No. 2 in a ranking of the state's Donald Ross courses. The 18-hole, par-70, 6,400-yard course clears a bright green path through the rolling hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and elevated points give players spectacular views of the mountains and the magnificent Arts and Crafts-style historic hotel. The course opened in 1899 and was beautifully redesigned in 1926 by golf course architect Donald Ross, while the Grove Park Inn opened in 1913. Ross was a Scottish-born immigrant who trained as a young man with the great "Old" Tom Morris at St Andrews during the 1890s. He then spent much of his career and life in the United States, where he designed many of the world's championship courses during the Golden Age of golf course architecture. His iteration of the Grove Park Golf Course was a stop on the PGA (Professional Golf Association) Tour between 1933 and 1951. It was played by PGA stars Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan, and Jack Nicklaus, and more recently by former President Barack Obama—one of ten U.S. presidents to stay at the resort. The Grove Park course was updated in 2001 and retains master designer Donald Ross's vision.

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**The Broadmoor (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-broadmoor/golf.php>) (1918)**

*Colorado Springs, Colorado*



Known as the “Grand Dame of the Rockies,” The Broadmoor offers two historic and magnificent golf courses nestled in the Rocky Mountains: The East Course and the West Course, designed by Donald Ross and Robert Trent Jones Sr. Located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, golfers enjoy challenging terrain and amazing mountain vistas while surrounded by red rocks and white peaks in the Pike’s Peak region. The Broadmoor opened in 1918, and golf was part of its glamour from the very beginning. The resort’s original 18-hole course was designed by legendary golf course architect Donald Ross in 1916 at the behest of Spencer Penrose, who envisioned turning his new rough mountain getaway into a world-class resort. Ross, who had designed golf courses for several of the top clubs in the country (including Pinehurst No. 2, which opened in 1907), declared The Broadmoor’s golf course in Colorado Springs his best work. When The Broadmoor Golf Course opened for a Red Cross fundraiser on July 4, 1918, it was the highest golf course in the United States at 6,400 ft in elevation. The course was split into two, East Course and West Course, by renowned landscape architect Robert Trent Jones Sr. between 1952 and 1964. Today, both courses feature holes designed by both Jones and Ross. The Broadmoor has hosted many major golf tournaments, including the 1959 U.S. Amateur (Jack Nicklaus’ first major win), the 1967 U.S. Amateur, and the 1995 U.S. Women’s Open (Annika Sorenstam’s first major title). Today, guests are invited to play the courses and to visit the Broadmoor Golf Club’s Heritage Hallway, an exhibition of golf history in the Rockies.

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**The American Club (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-american-club/golf.php>)**  
**(1918)**

*Kohler, Wisconsin*



Guests at The American Club, which was established in 1918 in Kohler, Wisconsin, are invited to experience championship golf on any of the four Kohler courses, which have been rated among the world’s greatest. All designed by the legendary golf course architect Pete Dye in the 1980s and 1990s, these courses have hosted myriad championships, including two PGA championships, two U.S. Women’s Opens, and the 2020 Ryder Cup. Two courses were constructed at Blackwolf Run (The River and Meadow Valleys) and two at Whistling Straits® (The Straits and The Irish). At Blackwolf Run, the original 18 holes featured two nine-hole layouts, River and Valleys, that opened in 1988. They were both later expanded by an additional nine each. Each hole on both courses at Blackwolf Run is bestowed with a name that reflects the natural features of the glacier-carved land. The Sheboygan River separates the River and Meadow Valleys courses and cuts a seven-mile path that divides the resort. Whistling Straits opened in 1998. This wild, windswept coastal links-style course was sculpted along the grass-topped dunes of the Wisconsin coastline. In late September 2021, the 43rd Ryder Cup was held at Whistling Strait. It was the first public course in a quarter-century to host the Ryder Cup. The Blackwolf Run layouts are fun and remarkable for their unique characteristics, which include Pete Dye’s signature design features, especially on the River Course and two railroad car bridges found at Meadow Valleys.

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**The Vinoy Resort & Golf Club, Autograph Collection (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-vinoy-resort-and-golf-club/golf.php>)** (1925)

*St. Petersburg, Florida*



The Vinoy Resort & Golf Club, Autograph Collection emerged in the early 1920s following a golf bet made during a house party. A wealthy businessman named Aymer Vinoy Laughner hosted parties to entertain his friends and community, including famed professional golfer Walter Hagen. During a party at Laughner's St. Petersburg home, the business magnate engaged in a good-natured dispute with Hagen over the power of his drive. According to one story, Laughner attested that Hagen's swing—while powerful—had no chance of damaging the crystal within his pocket watch. The haggling reached its crescendo when Hagen wagered a bet of \$170,000 that he could, indeed, smash its glass casing. Placing the watch firmly on the ground, Hagen proceeded to forcefully launch golf balls several dozen yards away on a distant neighbor's lawn. But much to the golfer's surprise, the watch had somehow survived the contest unscathed. Honorably, Hagen surrendered the money to Laughner. (Hagen could afford it: considered one of the greatest golfers of the 20th century and a leader in the growth of professional golf in the 1910s and 1920s, he was the first player to make a million dollars at the game.) Party guests mused that Laughner ought to use that money to build a spectacular holiday destination in downtown St. Petersburg—and that is what he did. The hotel's golf club opened in 1927, and guests played the game on the 18-hole Snell Isle Golf Course, designed by landscape architect John R. Van Kleeck. In 1992, the championship Vinoy Golf Course was redesigned by Ron Garl. Garl designed courses with the philosophy that a golf course should "sit softly on the land," and the Vinoy Resort & Golf Club, Autograph Collection course at Snell Island is a beautiful testament to that concept.

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**Ojai Valley Inn (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/ojai-valley-inn-and-spa/golf.php>)**

**(1923)**

*Ojai, California*



The Ojai Valley Inn, in Ojai, California, provides guests with the opportunity to play golf on a historic, award-winning, 18-hole par-70 championship golf course that actually predates the inn itself. Glass industrialist Edward Drummond Libbey began constructing a country club and an 18-hole golf course near the resort in 1923; the two-story inn was completed in 1934. The golf course was part of Libbey's decades-long effort to improve the appearance of the town of Ojai as a prominent resort community. Libbey supposedly gave landscape architect George C. Thomas free reign to design the course in whatever way he liked, instructing the engineer to "Go ahead and build me the finest course that can be built . . . and use whatever land you wish. Give me the best. Money will be no object." Upon its completion, the press described the fairways as some of the most beautiful in the state. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the golf course's geography was "designed to look as if it had been there forever." The course was hailed as a marvel of golfing architecture and was one of the first great golf courses in Southern California. Over the last century, the course at Ojai has hosted seven Senior PGA Tour events, including players Arnold Palmer and Gary Player, and its proximity to Los Angeles has made the course a favorite of Hollywood celebrities.

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**The Inn at Death Valley (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-inn-at-death-valley/golf.php>)**

**(1927)**

*Death Valley, California*



Experience a round of golf at the lowest elevation golf course in the world during a stay at The Inn at Death Valley. Located 214 feet below sea level within the vast desert of Death Valley National Park, the resort's Furnace Creek Golf Course features palm and tamarisk trees framing the fairways. The high peaks of the Sierra Nevada range are visible from all areas of this 18-hole, par-70 course. The Pacific Coast Borax Company built the Furnace Creek Inn in 1927, hoping to attract business to its Death Valley Railroad. The railroad was in dire need of additional revenue and began running passenger trains for tourists who wanted to experience the natural beauty of Death Valley at the comfortable new inn. Golf at Death Valley dates to the same year, when a date palm caretaker set up a three-hole golf course for local Borax miners. In 1931, a nine-hole course was developed around the ranch land and date palm orchards. It was the first grass golf course in the California desert. In 1968, noted designer William F. Bell expanded the course to 18 holes. Golf course designer Perry Dye reworked the course in 1997, and a state-of-the-art irrigation system was installed to allow it to remain open all year. Athletes familiar with the course include basketball champion Bill Walton and Australian golf champion Steve Elkington—who played the course for his TV show, *Secret Golf*. Future golf champion Phil Mickelson received his first set of clubs at the Furnace Creek Pro Shop, purchased for him by his father. To young Mickelson's delight, the shop sold clubs for left-handed players. He went on to win six major PGA Tour championships, including three Masters titles, two PGA Championships, and one Open Championship.

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**The Wigwam (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-wigwam/golf.php>) (1929)**

*Litchfield Park, Arizona*



Travelers to The Wigwam in Litchfield, Arizona, are invited to step onto its historic emerald fairways and experience a golf resort built for golfers. This Litchfield tradition began in 1930 when Scottish gardener Jacques Phillip designed and dug the resort's original nine holes. The resort had opened a year earlier and was first operated by the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, which had created the complex as a vacation destination for its high-ranking executives. Phillip knew that Goodyear executives enjoyed the game, so he used his tractor to build them a course. The tee boxes, fairways, and greens were all made of sand with thick oil on the greens to keep the sand from blowing away. The original course design was lost in the 20th century when three new courses emerged in the 1960s and 1972: the Blue and Gold courses (named for the colors of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company logo) designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. and the Red Course designed by Robert "Red" Lawrence. The Wigwam's notable Gold Course opened for play in 1965. The first foursome to play the original design in the early 1940s included professional golfers Jimmy Thomson, Horton Smith, Lawson Little, and Vernon Oren Allen. Little won the U.S. Open in 1940, and Smith won the first Masters tournament in 1934 (and again in 1936). Other notable players at The Wigwam include actor Clint Eastwood, and professional golf stars Brooks Koepka, Justin Thomas, and Bryson DeChambeau.

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**The Hotel Hershey® (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-hotel-hershey/golf.php>)**

**(1933)**

*Hershey, Pennsylvania*



Guests at The Hotel Hershey® in Hershey, Pennsylvania, enjoy access to the nearby West Course, a golf course built with support from chocolate magnate and philanthropist Milton S. Hershey in 1930 for the brand-new Hershey Country Club. This par 73 course was designed by golf course architect Maurice McCarthy. McCarthy was an active golf course designer in the 1920s and 1930s, primarily working in the mid-Atlantic region. In 1934, Henry Picard was hired as Head Golf Professional. Nicknamed the "Hershey Hurricane" and "Chocolate Soldier," his on-course skills led to 26 wins on the PGA Tour, including the 1936-1937 Hershey Open, 1938 Masters, and the 1939 PGA Championship. After Picard, legendary professional golfer Ben Hogan—considered one of the greatest players of all time—served as Head Golf Professional at Hershey. Of his 63 tournament wins, 52 occurred during his tenure as Hershey's golf professional, including six majors. Since its founding, numerous national tournaments have been held at the Hershey Country Club, and individuals, including players Arnold Palmer and Jan Stevenson and former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, have walked its greens. In 2023, The Hotel Hershey® celebrates 90 years.

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**Williamsburg Inn (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/williamsburg-inn/golf.php>)**  
**(1937)**

*Williamsburg, Virginia*



In addition to its immersive historical experiences in Virginia's colonial capital, Colonial Williamsburg Resorts and Hotels has offered world-class golf to guests since 1947. That year, a 9-hole course designed by Fred Findlay opened for guests at the Williamsburg Inn, which had opened ten years earlier in 1937. Soon, Colonial Williamsburg leadership decided to upgrade the golf offering by commissioning the world-renowned architect, Robert Trent Jones, Sr., to design an 18-hole course as well. In 1963, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club opened to rave reviews. The name "Golden Horseshoe Golf Club" comes from the gift given by Colonial Governor Alexander Spotswood to the men who went with him on an exploratory mission across the Appalachian Mountains and Shenandoah Valley in 1716. Upon their return, Spotswood gave them each a jeweled, golden horseshoe. During the golf boom of the 1990s, Colonial Williamsburg built a second 18-hole course and selected Rees Jones, the son of the Gold Course architect, to design the Green Course. The Gold Course has undergone two restorations to keep the conditions pristine, the most recent being conducted by Rees Jones in 2017. Both the Gold and the Green Course are cut through mature hardwoods and pines on a rolling topography that is undisturbed by housing or development. To wit, Robert Trent Jones, Sr. remarked that "the Gold Course is a natural arboretum upon which a great golf course has been built."

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**Alisal Ranch (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/the-alisal-guest-ranch-and-resort/golf.php>)**  
**(1946)**

*Solvang, California*



Guests at the Alisal Ranch, which was founded in 1946 in Solvang, California, can experience the pleasure of playing the resort's historic mid-century par-72, 18-hole championship golf course: The Ranch Course. The ancient oaks, manicured fairways and greens, and spectacular panoramic views of the Santa Ynez River and nearby Santa Ynez Mountains make the course a favorite among golf aficionados. Opened in 1955 as a private course for club members and resort guests, the Ranch Course was designed by golf course architect William F. Bell Jr.—son of golf course architect William Park Bell—in the 1950s. Bell and his father are well known for their work designing award-winning championship golf courses across the west coast and southwest, especially in California, Arizona, and Nevada. Eminently picturesque, the Ranch Course runs along Alisal Creek in the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Players looking for a scenic round of golf should not miss its featured hole 5: It offers spectacular views of the city of Solvang and the Santa Ynez River. The resort's second golf course, the River Course, debuted in 1992, and it is open to the public. Both courses have hosted Southern California PGA and Southern California Golf Association golf tournaments over the decades. Along with providing guests with tee times, the courses host local championships and charity events.

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**Rancho Bernardo Inn (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/rancho-bernardo-inn/golf.php>) (1963)**

*San Diego, California*



The Rancho Bernardo Inn in San Diego, California, opened its doors to guests in 1963. Within a year, along with a place to stay, the retreat also offered travelers a chance to experience a championship golf course on 6,631 yards of rolling green hills. The course at Rancho Bernardo Inn was designed in 1964 by William F. Bell Jr., son of golf course architect William Park Bell. Bell and his father are well known for their work designing award-winning championship golf courses across the west coast and southwest, especially in California, Arizona, and Nevada. The course at Rancho Bernardo Inn has hosted events sponsored by the Professional Golf Association (PGA), starting with the San Diego Open in 1964. Art Wall Jr. won the resort's inaugural tournament, beating both Tony Lema and Bob Rosburg by two strokes each. The LPGA then hosted the Honda Civic Classic at the Rancho Bernardo Inn from 1978 to 1980. Golfing legend JoAnne Carner won two of the three competitions, further solidifying her status as one of the foremost athletes within professional golf. Her three different career USGA wins place her on par with the likes of Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, and Tiger Woods.

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**Mauna Kea Beach Hotel (<https://www.historichotels.org/us/hotels-resorts/mauna-kea-beach-hotel/golf.php>) (1965)**

*Hawaii Island, Hawaii*



The Mauna Kea Golf Course was the first resort golf course on the island of Hawaii and the first course built on an ancient lava flow. This award-winning championship golf course at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel, in Kohala Coast, Hawaii, has led the way in golf course beauty and design in Hawaii since its debut in December 1964—just before the hotel officially opened in 1965. In a made-for-television event, the course was debuted by golf's "Big Three:" Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Gary Player. Since that premiere, the course has welcomed celebrities, professionals, and amateur golfers who recognize it as a "bucket list," must-play course. Specifically, guests and locals continue to come back to this course just to see the epic over-the-ocean third hole. Golf course architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr. designed the course and developed a new technique that transformed the rocky surface into soil. The course features high-efficiency ultra-dwarf Tifeagle Bermuda Grass on the greens and Tifway 419 hybrid Bermuda Grass on the tees, fairways, and roughs. Rees Jones, son of Robert Trent Jones, Sr., has continued to upgrade the course to ensure it offers challenging, memorable play to all player levels. The course's 99 bunkers and undulating greens present a challenge for the most seasoned golfers and a memorable day of play for leisurely golfers. Its signature over-the-ocean par-3 Hole 3 is among the most daunting, photographed and awarded par-3 holes in the world. It is a stunning tee shot of 272 yards from the championship box to the green. For something different, Mauna Kea Beach Hotel was the first resort on the Big Island to secure their own fleet of "GolfBoards," designed to make golfers feel like they are "Surfing the Earth."

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"Congratulations to the golf courses named to the 2023 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses list. These courses are beautiful historic sites where visitors can play a game they love, teach someone the game, or view championship golf tournaments—history in the making. Families gather on them to make their own memories," said Lawrence Horwitz, Executive Vice President Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. "Historic Hotels of America offers golf destinations in desert oases, on tropical islands, between mountain peaks, along vineyards, and parallel sandy coastlines. Travelers will be eager to take home a golf tee, golf ball, scorecard, or other souvenir from the first time they played at any of these iconic golf courses."

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