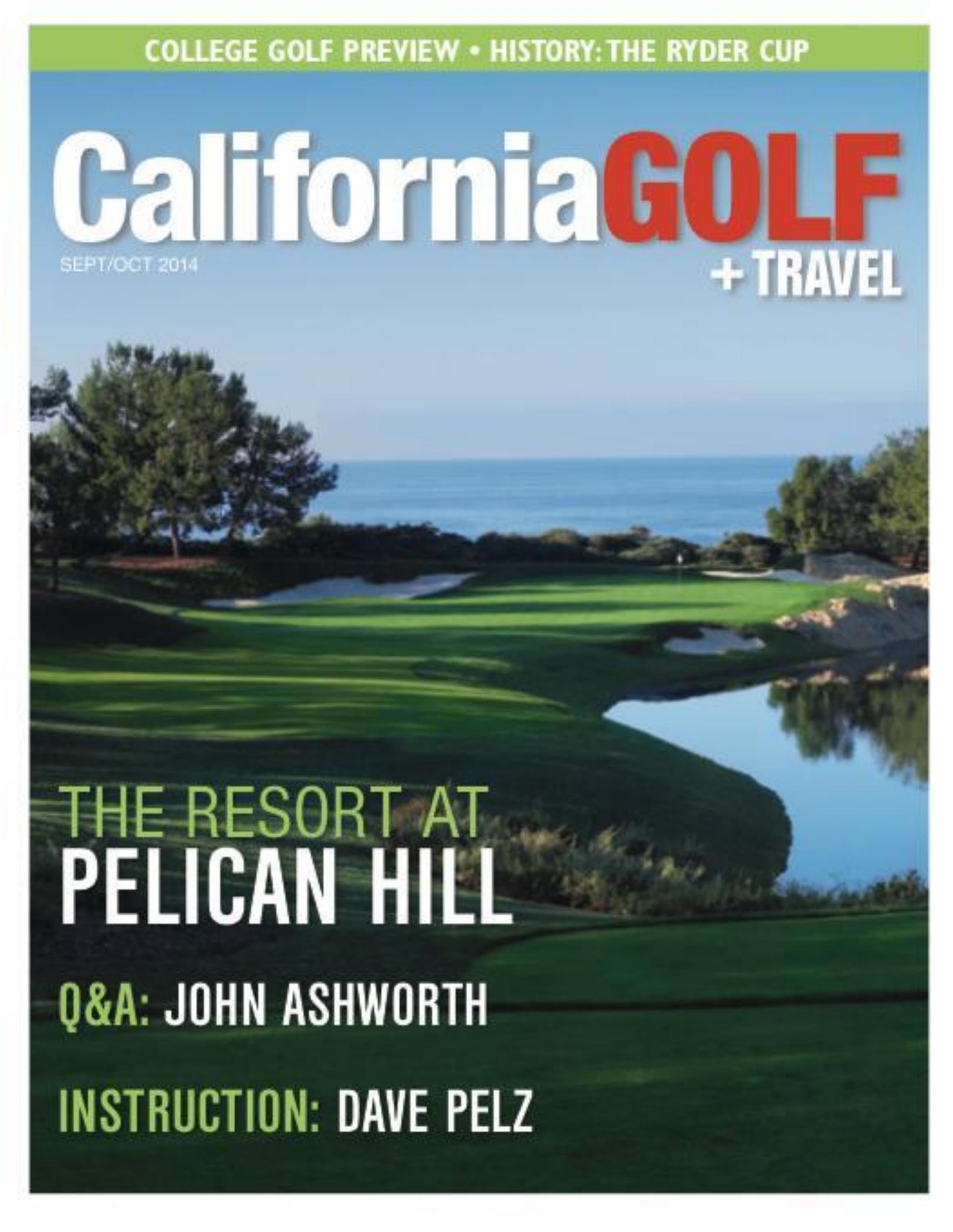


COLLEGE GOLF PREVIEW • HISTORY: THE RYDER CUP

# California**GOLF**

SEPT/OCT 2014

**+ TRAVEL**



## THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL

**Q&A: JOHN ASHWORTH**

**INSTRUCTION: DAVE PELZ**

# THE POSSIBILITY



*World-class service and  
Newport Coast scenery  
make The Resort  
at Pelican Hill a  
destination to remember*

**T**he steps taken by The Resort at Pelican Hill to provide what it calls “the possibility of perfection” for guests and visitors are as impressive as the world-class facility itself.

Two acclaimed Tom Fazio-designed golf courses, which attracted rave reviews and players from around the world after Pelican Hill Golf Club opened in the early 1990s, were closed from late 2005 through late 2007. The total closures of both the Ocean North and Ocean South courses enabled Fazio to “re-perfect” the 36 holes along the spectacular Newport Coast, Calif. location.

While casual observers may have seen the closure as somewhat risky – shutting down two award-winning, popular, successful courses for more than 24 months – the long-term vision of owner The Irvine Company for the entire property made it necessary. At nearly the same time the courses were closed for

# OF PERFECTION



COURTESY OF PELICAN HILL

Fazio to make his improvements, The Irvine Company broke ground on the The Resort at Pelican Hill, intended to bring the essence of an elegant, luxurious seaside Italian village to the terraced hillsides of coastal Orange County.

“It made perfect sense to shut (the golf courses) down and let Tom Fazio re-perfect them and make them even better than they were to parallel the five-star resort being built next to them,” Pelican Hill Vice President-Golf Steve Friedlander said. “The Irvine Company made a huge commitment to the entire property, and the work done on the golf courses over those two years was

required to match the overall vision of the Resort.”

That vision of the Resort included a stunning attention to detail, from the more than one million hand-cut mosaic tiles adorning the Coliseum Pool, to the amount of time and effort undertaken by The Irvine Company to fill the 1,000 jobs created by the Resort. More than 20,000 candidates were interviewed overall, resulting in a staff uniformly focused on delivering unparalleled service.

“Our culture is to provide unprecedented experiences for our guests,” Friedlander said. “To do that, our employees have to meet our standard

of doing everything possible to achieve perfection for each guest on his or her own level; to ensure that possibility of perfection.”

When The Resort at Pelican Hill opened in November, 2008, the acclaim for the Renaissance architecture-inspired bungalows, villas, suites, restaurants, and scenic grounds was immediate. Within a year of opening, The Resort at Pelican Hill earned a Five Diamond Rating from AAA, and later the Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star Award. While the picturesque location and Tuscan village feel of the Resort certainly played a part in those acco-



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lades, the level of service at Pelican Hill was a key factor. Resort staff goes to great lengths in pre-planning a guest's stay, discovering in advance their specific preferences and desires. A team of guest experience staff plan and arrange every aspect and detail of the upcoming visit, from pre-shipping golf clubs to the Resort to stocking accommodations with gluten-free snacks, if that's a guest's preference.

"The primary question we ask our guests before they arrive is 'what can we do for you?' and then make it happen," Friedlander said.

Regardless of whether a guest stays in one of the 128 Villas or any of the 204 Bungalow Guest Rooms & Suites, the extraordinary service continues beyond the pre-planning, as once guests arrive, highly-skilled staff -- ranging from butlers to concierges to chefs to create personal meals -- completely customize the experience and create a one-of-a-kind stay at the Resort. The dedicated service standards have brought continued commendations from visitors and the travel media, including a 2012 rating as

the World's Top Golf Resort by Conde Nast Traveler. Just this month, Golf Magazine recognized Pelican Hill on its elite Top 100 Courses You Can Play 2014 list.

And, while the Resort's service and expansive ocean views certainly draw many visitors, the golf at Pelican Hill is a primary draw. Set among more than 400 acres of deep canyons and rugged cliffs with panoramic view of the Pacific, the challenges of the Fazio designs at Pelican Hill Golf Club attract elite players from around the world -- and the ocean views from each of the 36 holes bring in many novices as well.

"Not everyone who comes to the Resort plays golf at a high level, but we get many guests who stay in a room overlooking one of the courses and they look out, see the beauty of the course and how it flows with the surroundings, and say 'I'm not much of a golfer, but I need to play that course,'" Friedlander said. "And we've got multiple sets of tees, so both courses can be enjoyed by players of all abilities."

Fazio's "re-perfecting" of the cours-

**The luxurious, 44,000-square foot clubhouse at Pelican Hill Golf Club, inspired by the work of renowned Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio, overlooks both the Ocean North and Ocean South courses.**

es in 2005-2007 featured a series of thoughtful enhancements to the aesthetics, turf quality and playing conditions. Improvements included re-turfing the fairways and tees with Tifway II hybrid bermuda to achieve a consistent look, texture and playing surface year-round, while also eliminating the need for annual overseeding. In addition, 25 new bunkers were added and bunkers were adjusted on many holes to enhance strategy or aesthetics, and a sophisticated water-quality system to conserve and recycle water from both the courses and the Resort was installed.

The Ocean North Course, opened in 1993, is a par-71, nearly 7,000 yard layout featuring ocean views from every tee. Several holes run along the edge of coastal cliffs, and the North Course traverses through open canyons and ele-



COURTESY OF PELICAN HILL

vated plateaus. Ocean South, the older of the two courses (opened in 1991), is shorter at 6,580 yards and is a par-70. Several holes permit 270 degree views of the Pacific, and several greens adjoin the ocean. The 13th hole at Ocean South features two greens, giving players an option from the tee on which flag to shoot at.

The practice facility includes an expansive and picturesque driving range that plays uphill, as well as a complete practice tee – with a fairway, bunkers and green – that mimics playing an actual hole. The state-of-the-art Pelican Hill Golf Academy is guided by Instruction Director Glenn Deck, one of Golf Magazines' Top 100 Teachers in America.

Pelican Hill Golf Club is open to the public, and many local players take advantage of the popular "Preferred Program," featuring reduced green fees for the program member and up to three guests on an annual basis. Program members only have to play six times during a year to break even on the enrollment fee, and can play as often as

they'd like throughout the year.

"Autumn is one of the ideal times to play Pelican Hill, and the sunsets during the fall are spectacular," Friedlander said. "We sell a lot of the Preferred Program cards in autumn when people see one of those sunsets out on the course and realize what a great holiday gift the card makes."

Dining at The Resort at Pelican Hill offers multiple options, from the elegant Andrea Ristorante, featuring Tuscan-inspired Northern Italian cuisine, to the Pelican Grill's Tasting Table, the Resort's newest epicurean experience. At Tasting Table, diners are seated right next to the restaurant's open-concept kitchen in the main dining room. This interactive, chef-led dining experience presents guests with exclusive daily dishes featuring fresh seasonal ingredients and creative presentations, paired with fine California wines. Pelican Grill chefs converse with diners who watch as the chefs prepare the day's selection of prix fixe specialties, then pass each course over the kitchen counter to the adjacent rustic,

The saltwater Coliseum Pool at The Resort at Pelican Hill is perfectly circular and 136 feet in diameter, with terraced decks featuring private cabanas, sunbathing areas and a separate children's area.

wooden table set for up to 10 guests.

Whether guests travel internationally into LAX or just cruise down PCH from their Southern California homes to reach The Resort at Pelican Hill, they'll end up at a tranquil, relaxed destination featuring world class service and amenities. Whether they come for the boutique shopping, spa treatments, weekend festivals, Camp Pelican for kids, kayaking, hiking, epicurean experiences, or, of course, golf, each visitor will find an inviting atmosphere everywhere at the Resort.

"There's so much for our guests to do, or, some choose to just sit back, relax, and do nothing at all," Friedlander said. "Either way, for someone looking to experience and enjoy the Southern California lifestyle, there's no better place on the planet than right here at The Resort at Pelican Hill."