

24 Travel Experts: Favorite Places to Play & Stay

FAIRWAYS+GREENS

LIFESTYLES OF THE TRAVELING GOLFER

COURSES



RESORTS



SPAS



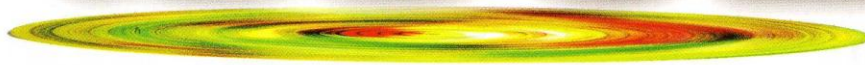
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Nichole Brophy

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FAVORITE COURSES

Turnberry (Ailsa), Scotland

Royal Porthcawl, South Wales

Half Moon Bay (Ocean), California [a]

Grayhawk (Raptor), Scottsdale, Ariz.

Pronghorn (Fazio), Bend, Ore.

Torrey Pines (South), La Jolla, Calif.

Southerndown, South Wales

Hualalai, Big Island, Hawaii
Hawaii's very first Nicklaus offering has figured out how to translate the island spirit into 18 unique holes along the rugged Kohala Coast. Integral to an enjoyable round in a tropical paradise is the ability to retreat to the 19th hole without feeling defeated. While challenging shot values and acres of black volcanic rock toy with perceptions, Hualalai aims to please most handicaps via safe escape shots throughout. Golfers who play the ball low (like me) are especially rewarded with approach shots to several of Hualalai's accessible greens. The color contrast of its emerald fairways, Pacific backdrop and age-old black rock make Hualalai one of the most visually stunning tracks I've encountered.

Bear Mountain (Mountain), Victoria, B.C.

FAVORITE PLACES TO STAY

Pelican Hill, Newport Coast, Calif. [b]
Luxurious linens, marble baths and sensational ocean views aside, Pelican Hill Resort beckons vacationers by way of a Mediterranean ambiance perched high above the Newport Coast. The resort's pièce de resistance comes in the form of its Coliseum Pool, a million-mosaic-tile masterpiece reminiscent of its famed Roman counterpart. An amphitheater-style pool deck lined with private cabanas allows for entire days to be spent gaining poolside R&R. Pelican Hill completes its sense-of-place experience with several on-site dining options serving Italian-inspired fare. In fact, Pelican Hill is so well-versed in Italian culinary arts that every pasta dish served on property is born from its in-house, temperature-controlled pasta room — an amenity that'll make you wonder how you ever lived without.

Ritz-Carlton Half Moon Bay, California [c]

St. Regis Princeville, Kauai, Hawaii

Fairmont Chateau Whistler, British Columbia

Four Seasons Hualalai, Big Island, Hawaii

The Arrabelle at Vail Square, Colorado

Pronghorn Residence Suites, Bend, Ore.

Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, Dana Point, Calif.

Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, Arizona



Ron Montesano

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FAVORITE COURSES

Bethpage (Black), Farmingdale, N.Y.

Bandon Trails, Bandon, Ore.
Certainly I'm in the minority, but most visionaries are. Bandon Trails is my favorite of the three Bandon Dunes course I've played thus far. To be fair, I haven't see Old Macdonald yet, so the jury must remain out until I again journey to the West. What I like most about Bandon Trails are the risks that Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw took with their short holes, the best at the resort. No. 2 recalls Ireland's finest dells, while No. 5 is a breathtaking pitch across a barranca to a green dug from the side of a hill. No. 12 is a wonderful par 3½ into a wide meadow that demands an accurate strike with a longer club. Finally, No. 17 is a downhill mid-iron to a putting surface framed by Mother Nature.

Whistling Straits (Straits), Kohler, Wis.

Arcadia Bluffs, Michigan

St. Andrews (Old Course), Scotland

Leatherstocking, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Currituck Club, Corolla, N.C.

Tobacco Road, Sanford, N.C.

Golden Horseshoe (Gold), Williamsburg, Va.

FAVORITE PLACES TO STAY

The American Club, Kohler, Wis.
My stay at The American Club was brief, over a Memorial Day weekend some five years ago, but I recall it easily at every turn. I remember the mattress, both soft and firm, that comforted my worn-out limbs after two days of 36 holes. I recollect the pillows that cradled a head laden with thoughts of ancient links and modern courses. I reminisce about the fitness facility, where one can tone, strengthen, stretch and massage every inch of tired or energized physique, before or after (or even during) a long day of memorable golf. I revive the taste of the ice cream served in the Craverie Chocolatier Café with an enormous smile on my face. Although the days I spent at Koehler were rainy and cool, the images and sensations that return to me are warm and heartening.

Turning Stone Resort, Verona, N.Y.

Wyndham Governor's Green, Virginia

The Carolina, Pinehurst, N.C.

Bristol Harbour, Canandaigua, N.Y.

Crystal Mountain, Thompsonville, Mich.

Bandon Inn, Bandon, Ore.

Shanty Creek, Bellaire, Mich.

Boyne Highlands, Harbor Springs, Mich.