

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER
19TH ANNUAL



BEST

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS:
DINING · ENTERTAINMENT · OUTDOORS
PLACES · SHOPPING & SERVICES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2012

\$4.95 U.S.

OCREGISTER.COM/BEST

BEST **GOLF**COURSE



The 17th hole at The Resort at Pelican Hill offers a seaside experience.

1 Pelican Hill Golf Club

22701 Pelican Hill Road South,
Newport Coast
949-467-6800
pelicanhill.com/golf

- Both of Pelican Hill's immaculately conditioned 18-hole courses, Ocean South and Ocean North, are rated among Golf Digest's 100 greatest public courses in America.
- Each group is accompanied by a forecaddie, an extremely rare experience for a golfer playing a public course. The forecaddies are included in the greens fees, and their local knowledge really comes in handy on the greens, whose subtle breaks are deceptively influenced by the Pacific Ocean.

Claim to fame: Pelican Hill is a true

ocean-view golf experience. "We have ocean views from virtually every hole on both courses," said Steve Friedlander, vice president of golf at Pelican Hill. Fees are \$245 for resort guests and \$280 for others, including valet parking but not counting gratuity for the forecaddie.

Did you know? When the courses were rebuilt in 2006 and 2007, an irrigation system was constructed to keep contaminants from getting into the ocean and to recycle rain water. The irrigation system allows the course to save about 50 million gallons of water per year.

Michael Lev

2 Tustin Ranch Golf Club

12442 Tustin Ranch Road, Tustin
714-730-1611
tustinranchgolf.com

- Tustin Ranch ranks among the top 100 Play Golf America facilities. Its award-winning golf school features five full-time Class A PGA professionals, including Erik Horve, the reigning SCPGA Teacher of the Year. Players can take private, semiprivate or group lessons.
- Claim to fame:** Tustin Ranch is not, as Mark Twain once said of golf, "a good walk spoiled." It's actually a great walking course. "We promote your health, too," said Steve Plummer, the longtime general manager at Tustin Ranch. "We don't have big, long stretches and major hills to climb. ... We promote walking."

3 Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club

26772 Avery Parkway, Mission Viejo
949-305-5100
arroyotrabuco.com

- The par-72 course features five sets of tees, taking its total yardage from 5,045 yards to 7,011. It also has bent-grass greens, a rarity in Orange County. The course's signature hole is No. 13, a challenging par-3 that plays over a lake.

Claim to fame: Arroyo Trabuco might offer the best bang for your golfing buck in Orange County. For non-members, greens fees range from \$101 on weekends to as little as \$40 for super-twilight play.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

BY DAMIAN DOTTRE
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER



PAUL RODRIGUEZ, THE REGISTER

Coyote Hills Golf Club

1440 E. Bastanchury Road,
Fullerton
714-672-6800
coyotehillsgc.com

Tucked away in the rolling hills of Fullerton, twisting around oil wells and houses at the corner of Bastanchury Road and Brea Boulevard, is part of the legacy left by a U.S. Open champion.

In the 1990s, Payne Stewart, then a two-time major championship winner, came to Fullerton to team with Cal Olson and build Coyote

Hills Golf Course, a sprawling 250-acre public course that has a distinct country-club feel. It opened in 1996.

The 3,000-square-foot events pavilion that offers picturesque views of the waterfall behind the 18th hole is named after Stewart.

Greens fees range from \$125 for weekends to \$39 for a weekday super-twilight round. You can sometimes find discounted late-afternoon rates on golfzing.com for \$25, which makes this one of the best golfing values in the county.