
HISTORIC HOTELS of AMERICA

National Trust *for* Historic Preservation*

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The 2021 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses List Announced

Stay and Play Where Champions Have Made History.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – September 8, 2021, Historic Hotels of America® has a unique collection of the most beautiful, prestigious, and iconic golf courses where many champions have learned to play golf, competed, and made history. Many of these golf courses were designed in the late 19th and early 20th century, often referred to as the “Golden Age” of golf course architecture. These historic golf courses were designed and built by legendary golf course architects ranging from Scottish immigrant Donald Ross to Hall-of-Fame golf architect Pete Dye. Each course has earned its reputation, in part, based on the many famous people who have played including U.S. Presidents, world leaders, golf champions, film and entertainment celebrities, and famous inventors and industrialists. Many amateur and professional golfers can look back to their first lesson or first golf game played with a parent or grandparent on one or more of these legendary golf courses. The golf courses named to the 2021 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses list are some of America’s most historic greens. Today, guests can make their own history, stay and play where champions have played.

From the lowest elevation course in Death Valley and wind-swept greens on barrier islands, to courses that wind through the rugged terrain of the White Mountains, here are the 2021 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses:

[The Omni Homestead Resort](#) (1766) Hot Springs, Virginia

Travelers are invited to tee off at the oldest first tee in continuous use in the United States at the Omni Homestead Resort (1766) in Hot Springs, Virginia. The tee is part of the aptly named Old Course, which opened in 1892 as a six-hole course. The Old Course was expanded to nine holes by 1898, and famed golf course designer Donald Ross expanded the course to 18 holes in 1913. 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 greatest courses during the Golden Age of Golf. His influence on the game and its architecture continues to this day, on his historic courses and on new courses his designs inspired. 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 Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (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. Dwight D. Eisenhower visited the resort before he was elected President, again during his second term, and after retirement from office. He especially enjoyed

playing golf, which had been prescribed by his physicians as part of his rehabilitation from heart trouble. Today, the presidential favorite is open to guests and members.

[Tubac Golf Resort and Spa](#) (1789) Tubac, Arizona

The Tubac Golf Resort and Spa (1789), located on the Santa Cruz River in Tubac, Arizona, was founded in 1959 by a group of investors – including entertainer Bing Crosby – who purchased a historic Spanish-colonial ranch to be the site of a luxury resort hotel. Its first 18-hole golf course opened the same year. The mid-century course was designed by renowned golf course architect Robert ‘Red’ Lawrence. That original course has been hailed as the "Jewel of Southern Arizona Golf Courses." Red was a founding member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects and designed several famous courses throughout the country. The architectural beauty of the resort, set with a backdrop of the distant Santa Rita Mountains and the local cattle ranch, gives the game played there a unique charm. The Santa Cruz River provides a surprisingly lush landscape, with plenty of ponds and tall cottonwood trees. In 1996, its beauty was recognized by Hollywood as the setting for iconic scenes in Kevin Costner’s golf movie, *Tin Cup*. In 2006, the resort expanded to 36 holes in total. The historic 18-hole course transformed into three distinct nine-hole courses: The Otero, the Anza, and the Rancho. Today, the resort invites locals and travelers to play its three desert oasis courses. The design allows golfers to choose two nine-hole courses for an 18-hole game, for three different golfing experiences on the grounds of the historic course.

[Woodstock Inn & Resort](#) (1793) Woodstock, Vermont

Golf at the Woodstock Inn & Resort (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 dates to 1906 and it is the oldest public golf course in Vermont. 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 Vermont landscape. The 18-hole course boasts a par-70 layout that offers an unforgettable experience for golfers of all abilities.

[Omni Bedford Springs Resort & Spa](#) (1806) Bedford, Pennsylvania

The Omni Bedford Springs Resort & Spa (1806) was an early adopter of golf in the United States and the resort is home to one of the America’s first golf courses, with 18 holes originally designed by Spencer Oldham in 1895. It was a very large course for its day. Aptly named, the Bedford Springs Old Course was redesigned by A.W. Tillinghast in 1912 and again reimaged 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 continent's championship courses. His influence on the game and its architecture continues to this day, on his historic courses and on new courses his designs inspired. The Bedford Springs Old Course was renovated in 2007 by architect Ron Forse. Forse used documentation from the early 20th century 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.

[French Lick Springs Hotel](#) (1845) French Lick Springs, Indiana

[West Baden Springs Hotel](#) (1902) 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, course was an immediate success. It 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. The course has hosted LPGA championships and Senior PGA events in the years since. 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).

[The Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection](#) (1847) Point Clear, Alabama

Golf course architect Perry Maxwell designed an 18-hole championship golf course for the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection (1847) in Point Clear, Alabama, in 1947. The retreat to the Mobile Bay resort offered war-weary Americans a chance to play Maxwell's brand-new 7,104 yards of oak-lined links. 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. 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. In 2021, the Dogwood Course was the site of the U.S. Senior Women's Amateur championship, one of 14 championship tournaments run by the United States Golf Association.

[The Sagamore Resort](#) (1883) Bolton Landing, New York

The championship Sagamore Golf Course at The Sagamore Resort (1883) in Bolton Landing, New York, features fairways that are lush, narrow, and lined with hardwood, with deep bunkers surrounding undulating greens. Donald Ross, legendary golf course architect, designed the golf course in 1928 and the resort purchased it a year later at a discount due to the harsh economic effects wrought from the onset of the Great Depression. In fact, 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. 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. The course uses the natural environment to give each hole its challenge and beauty, thanks to Ross's careful design.

[Basin Harbor](#) (1886) Vergennes, Vermont

The historic Basin Harbor golf course was installed at the Basin Harbor (1886) resort in Vergennes, Vermont, in 1927. 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. 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 gentle rolling fairways and fescue framed green complexes.

[Jekyll Island Club Resort](#) (1887) Jekyll Island, Georgia

The Jekyll Island Club Resort (1886) on Jekyll Island, Georgia, began as an exclusive Gilded Age private retreat for America's wealthiest families, but today the barrier island resort community is open to all and welcomes golfers to play on its four grassy, wind-swept courses as they have for over 120 years. The first golf course at Jekyll Island Club was constructed in 1898. The oldest 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. The Association also tested golf ball sizes and densities. These tests on Jekyll Island's courses changed the game of golf.

[Grand Hotel](#) (1887) Mackinac Island, Michigan

The Grand Hotel (1887) on Mackinac Island, Michigan, provides guests of the Lake Michigan luxury resort 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 redesigned in 1987 by golf course architect Jerry Matthews. In 1994, Matthews designed 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. President 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, President 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.

[Lodge at the Presidio](#) (1894) San Francisco, California

[Inn at the Presidio](#) (1903) San Francisco, California

Located within the Presidio of San Francisco, California, the Presidio Golf Course dates to 1895, when John Lawson designed nine holes for military officers to play. Lawson noted, "God shaped this land to be a golf course. I simply followed nature." The course is known for its spectacular forest setting, as well as its challenging play. Golf course architect Robert Wood Johnstone expanded the Presidio Golf Course to 18 holes in 1910. The Presidio Golf Course has hosted some of the world's greatest athletes, celebrities, and famous artists of the 20th century: baseball Hall of Famers Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio, comedian Bob Hope, crooner Bing Crosby, and cartoonist Charles Schulz all played the Scottish game at the Presidio. The course is also notable for its environmentally sensitive management practices and has been recognized as a leader in environmentally sensitive golf course management. The Presidio is managed by a private-public partnership between the National Park Service, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and the Presidio Trust. Heritage travelers interested in playing the public golf course can find fine accommodation at the historic The Lodge at the Presidio (1894) or the Inn at the Presidio (1903).

[Pinehurst Resort](#) (1895) Pinehurst, North Carolina

From humble beginnings as a pasture to one of the premier golf courses in the country, Pinehurst Resort (1895) 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 the renowned golf course architect Donald Ross to oversee the day-to-day operations of its golfing services. Ross went on to design five 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. Recently, the historic greens of

Pinehurst No. 2 saw the legendary duel between Patrick Payne and Phil Mickelson during the closing round of the 1999 U.S. Open. The two were neck-in-neck heading into the last two holes of the tournament. Stewart sunk a putt from four feet out on Pinehurst No. 2's 17th hole, only for Mickelson to hit the hole from six feet away. But Stewart finally overcame Mickelson by one stroke on the following hole, in which he made an astounding 15-foot putt.

[Omni Mount Washington Resort, Bretton Woods](#) (1902) Bretton Woods, New Hampshire
History can be found everywhere in the hotel and on the golf courses at the Omni Mount Washington Resort, Bretton Woods (1902) in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. The resort has offered luxury accommodation and golf adventures in the hills west of the magnificent Presidential Mountain Range for over 100 years. The resort's earliest course is the Mount Pleasant Course, which opened in the region in 1895. It was designed by Scottish golf course architect Alex Findlay, who also spent some time competing as a professional player. The Mount Pleasant Course has nine holes – par 35 and just over 3,000 yards of green – that have been played by guests and champions alike, including U.S. Pro Golfer Gilbert Nicholls, British Golf Champions Harry Vardon and J.W. Taylor, and U.S. Open Golf Champion Willie Anderson. The course was updated by Cornish & Silva Golf Course Architects, with advice from world-renowned golfers Gene Sarazen and Ken Venturi in 1989. The second historic course at Bretton Woods is the Mount Washington Course: an 18-hole, par 72, 7,004-yard-course that was designed by legendary golf course architect Donald Ross, who completed the project in 1915. Since opening, it has hosted four New Hampshire Opens and, recently, the New England Open Championship. It was renovated in 2008 by architect Brian Silva, who updated the course and restored it to its original 1915 design.

[The Otesaga Resort Hotel](#) (1909) Cooperstown, New York
Considered one of the mid-Atlantic region's most scenic and challenging golf courses, the historic Leatherstocking Golf Course at The Otesaga Resort Hotel (1909) in Cooperstown, New York, sweeps along the southern shore of Lake Otsego. Designed by golf course architect Devereux Emmet, the Leatherstocking Course opened in 1909 and retains Emmet's original design. Emmet designed as many as 150 golf courses in his career and was an award-winning amateur player, as well. While many of Emmet's designs have been lost over the years, a round on Leatherstocking offers a chance to play on one of his finest. The course is also recognized for environmental excellence as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. Cooperstown is home to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and the course hosts a golf tournament for the Hall of Famers annually during the Hall of Fame induction weekend. Baseball Hall of Famers including Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, who famously enjoyed the game as a hobby, have played the course.

[The Omni Grove Park Inn](#) (1913) Asheville, North Carolina
The historic Grove Park Golf Course at The Omni Grove Park Inn (1913) 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 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, feel, and look

[The Broadmoor](#) (1918) Colorado Springs, Colorado

Known as the *Grand Dame* of the Rockies, The Broadmoor (1918) 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 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 feet in elevation. The course was split into two, East Course and West Course, by renowned landscape architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr., between 1952-1964. 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.

[Ojai Valley Inn](#) (1923) Ojai, California

The Ojai Valley Inn (1923), in Ojai, California, provides guests with the opportunity to play golf on a historic, award-winning, 18-hole par-70 championship golf course that dates to the same year the resort opened. Glass industrialist Edward Drummond Libbey began constructing a country club and an 18-hole golf course near the resort in 1923. 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.

[Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort & Golf Club](#) (1925) St Petersburg, Florida

The Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort & Golf Club (1925) 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 the 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 an 18-hole Snell Isle Golf Course, designed by landscape architect John R. Van Kleek. 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 course at Snell Island is a beautiful testament to that concept.

[The Inn at Death Valley](#) (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 (1927). 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 wanted to experience the natural beauty of Death Valley at the comfortable new inn. Golf at Death Valley dates to the same year, 1927, 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 a full 18 holes. Golf course designer Perry Dye reworked the course in 1997, and a state-of-the-art irrigation system was installed to allow the course 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, which were three Masters titles, two PGA Championships, and one Open Championship.

[Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa](#) (1927) Sonoma, California

Guests of the Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa (1927) are invited to play on a historic 18-hole, 7,103-yard championship golf course nestled at the foot of the Sonoma Mountain Range

and secluded by bordering vineyards. It was designed under the auspices of Sonoma Mission Inn in 1928 by landscape architect Sam Whiting, and the Sonoma course is one of several he designed during the Golden Age that are still playable in California. There is a distinctive set of par-3's that offer a great diversity of aesthetic beauty and personal challenge. Three of them are over 200 yards from the back tees. The finishing hole demands that players navigate a stretched dogleg with a prominent fairway bunker to a green guarded by huge oaks and fronted by a small creek. Over the years, many famous golfers have tested their skills against Whiting's venerable design. Among them were Sam Snead, Byron Nelson, Ken Venturi, and Tom Watson. The illustrious course was home to the Champions Tour season ending Charles Schwab Cup Championship over the years 2003 – 2009. The championship moved to another Whiting-designed golf course, the TPC Harding Park in San Francisco, in 2010.

[The Wigwam](#) (1929) Litchfield Park, Arizona

Travelers to The Wigwam (1929) 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 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 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 PGA TOUR stars Brooks Koepka, Justin Thomas, and Bryson DeChambeau.

[The Hotel Hershey®](#) (1933) Hershey, Pennsylvania

Guests at The Hotel Hershey (1933) 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. The West Course hosted the Hershey Professional Invitational Golf Tournament in 1933 and 1934, then hosted the Hershey Open sporadically until World War II. In 1940, the West Course hosted the

23rd PGA Championship, where Byron Nelson beat Sam Snead during one of his 11-straight PGA Tour victories. The West Course later hosted the Ladies' PGA Lady Keystone Open between 1978 and 1994.

[Williamsburg Inn](#) (1937) Williamsburg, Virginia

[Williamsburg Lodge, Autograph Collection, and Colonial Houses](#) (1750) Williamsburg, Virginia
Guests at any Colonial Williamsburg Resort hotel in Williamsburg, Virginia, are invited to play golf at the historic mid-century Gold Course of the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club. Two of the resort's hotels have been inducted into Historic Hotels of America: Williamsburg Inn (1937) and Williamsburg Lodge, Autograph Collection, and Colonial Houses (1750). The game of golf at Colonial Williamsburg Resorts dates at least to 1947, when a nine-hole course entertained guests of the Williamsburg Inn. In 1963, with an investment from the Rockefeller family, prolific golf course architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr., updated that course—creating the nine-hole Spotswood Course—and added a new 18-hole championship Gold Course. Robert Trent Jones, Sr.'s son, Rees Jones designed the acclaimed Green Course nearly 30 years later. Jones also directed the renovation of his father's Gold Course, which re-opened July 2017. Tees have been re-leveled, resurfaced, and reimagined, and the club's three golf courses offer cultural heritage travelers 45 holes spread out through quiet hills, creeks, and ponds of the Gold Course, the Green Course, and the Spotswood Course. Both the Gold and Green courses have hosted minor USGA Men's and Women's championships. The Gold Course hosted the NCAA Division I Men's Golf Championship in 2007.

[The Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort](#) (1946) Solvang, California

Guests at the Alisal Guest Ranch and Resort (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. 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. The Ranch Course opened in 1955 as a private course for club members and resort guests. The Ranch Course is played along the Alisal Creek in the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains, and 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, opened 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 tee times to guests, the courses host local championships and charity events.

[Mauna Kea Beach Hotel](#) (1965) Hawaii Island, Hawaii

The award-winning championship Mauna Kea Golf Course at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel (1965) in Kohala Coast, Hawaii, has led the way in golf course beauty and design in Hawaii since its debut in December 1964. In a made-for-television event, the course was debuted by golf's "Big Three," Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Gary Player. Since that premier, the course has welcomed celebrities, professionals, and amateur golfers who recognize it as a

“bucket list,” must-play course. The Mauna Kea Golf Course was the first resort golf course on the island of Hawaii and the first course to be built on an ancient lava flow. Golf course architect Robert Trent Jones, Sr., designed the course and developed a new technique that transformed the rocky surface into soil. The course was updated in 2008 by his son, Rees Jones. 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 par 3 over-the-ocean hole #3 is among the most daunting, photographed and awarded par 3 holes in the world. It is a stunning, over-the-ocean tee shot of 272 yards from the championship box to the green.

“Many guests tell me they have a first golf tee, golf ball, scorecard, or other souvenir from the first time they played at one of these iconic golf courses,” said Lawrence Horwitz, Executive Vice President Historic Hotels of America and Historic Hotels Worldwide. “As a youngster, I traveled with my uncle, an avid golf fan and most patient golf teacher, to view championship golf tournaments played on these historic golf courses and to eagerly collect autographs from champions such as Arnold Palmer, Sam Snead, Hale Irwin, Ben Crenshaw, Johnny Miller, and numerous celebrities and film stars. A fond memory is some of my own son’s first golf lessons he had at The Omni Homestead and Pinehurst. Congratulations to the golf courses named to the 2021 Top 25 Historic Hotels of America Most Historic Golf Courses list. Has anyone played at all 25 of these Historic Hotels of America legendary golf courses?”

HONORABLE MENTIONS

[Inn at Perry Cabin](#) (1816) St. Michaels, Maryland

The Links at Perry Cabin golf course at the historic Inn at Perry Cabin (1816) in St. Michaels, Maryland, is a future historic golf course and a notable contemporary masterpiece. Pete Dye, one of the greatest golf course architects in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, collaborated with his wife, Alice, and their son, P.B., to design the Links at Perry Cabin in the 2010s. The course plays through stunning topography and vistas of Maryland’s iconic Eastern shore. Before the Links at Perry Cabin opened in 2018, guests at the resort had access to another golf course on the same land with a connection to the Dye family. Nearly 50 years earlier, in the late 1960s, Pete Dye and his brother, Roy Dye, started work at the site of the future Links course. They were never paid for their efforts when the development plan fell through and the course was finished without them. Roy passed away in 1995 but Pete lived to see the Dye family’s vision for the course take form through the Links in the 2010s. It was Pete Dye’s final golf course design that had his input on every hole. His son, P.B., can be credited with ensuring his father’s ideas were brought to fruition.

[Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa](#) (1865) Whitefield, New Hampshire

The historic Mountain View Grand Golf Course at the Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa (1865) in Whitefield, New Hampshire, offers nine holes of challenging mountain terrain for guests and the public to enjoy. The Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa’s historic golf course, named one of the “Top 25 Golf Courses in New England” by *Links* magazine, dates to 1900. The current design was created in 1938 by Ralph Barton, a golf course architect and a mathematics professor at Dartmouth College. Barton’s other courses can be played at Yale, the island nation of Bermuda, and across the state of New Hampshire, including in Dartmouth, New Hampshire,

where he taught. The hotel underwent a \$20 million renovation at the turn of the 21st century that updated the golf course's beauty and its challenging hazards. Today, as the name suggests, the nine-hole, par-35 hillside course's unique draw is the stunning 360-degree view. From the first hole, players can marvel at the grandeur of the White Mountains.

[Eagle Mountain House & Golf Club](#) (1879) Jackson, New Hampshire

Located within the nearly 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest, the Eagle Mountain Golf Links course provides travelers with spectacular mountain views from every hole. This charming golf club is perched above the quaint village of Jackson, New Hampshire and is widely regarded as one of the prettiest in all the White Mountains. Converted from a former pasture used by grazing livestock through the 1920s, the par-32 course at Eagle Mountain House & Golf Club (1879) winds its way along the Wildcat River and is framed by breathtaking mountain views from every tee. But the actual game of golf at Eagle Mountain dates back earlier to the late 1880s, when the original owners of the Eagle Mountain House – still a working farm at the time – built a small golf course for overnight guests. In 1931, Arthur Gale, son of Eagle Mountain House's original owners and the architect of the historic hotel, transformed the farmland and cow pasture in front of the inn into the nine-hole Eagle Mountain House Golf Links. Today, the Eagle Mountain House Golf Club leases the course from local ownership and is responsible for maintenance and operation during the golf season (May through October). In the winter, the historic golf course serves as a vital section of the nationally acclaimed Jackson Ski Touring Foundation's extensive cross-country trail network.

[The Gasparilla Inn & Club](#) (1913) Boca Grande, Florida

The Gasparilla Inn & Club (1913) in Boca Grande, Florida, welcomes guests to stay and play on its Pete Dye-designed, par 72, 18-hole island course on Charlotte Harbor. Golf at the Gasparilla Inn & Club dates to the founding of the hotel in the 1910s, when guests were able to play on a nine-hole golf course on a nearby U.S. military reserve through the resort's lease agreement with the federal government. In the 1930s, new management established the first 18-hole golf course at the resort. In the early 2000s, the owners of the Gasparilla Inn & Club hired Pete Dye to update and redesign the golf course. After months of renovation, the Dye course reopened to great local acclaim in 2004. Dye himself adored his work on the Gasparilla Inn Golf Course, taking particular interest in the views of hole #15. The course retains much of its original charm, as gentle ocean breezes blow in from the surrounding waters of the scenic Charlotte Harbor and the Gulf of Mexico.

[The American Club Resort Hotel](#) (1918) Kohler, Wisconsin

Guests at The American Club Resort Hotel (1918) in Kohler, Wisconsin, are invited to experience championship golf on any of the four Kohler courses that 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 and two U.S. Women's Opens. Two courses were constructed at Blackwolf Run (The River and Meadow Valleys) and two at Whistling Straits® (The Straits and The Irish). In late September 2021, several years after its victory in Paris, Team Europe will defend its title upon these fantastic fairways for the 2020 Ryder Cup. The 43rd Ryder Cup will be held at Whistling Straits on September 24 to 26, 2021. Team Europe is the reigning cup holder after its 17½–10½ victory over Team USA in 2018 at Le Golf National in Paris, France. The 24 best in the world will play

The Straits course at Whistling Straits – the first public course in a quarter century to host the Ryder Cup.

[The King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort](#) (1935) St. Simons Island, Georgia

The King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort (1935) on St. Simons Island, Georgia, one of the “Golden Isles” of the larger chain of Sea Islands, has welcomed travelers to play the award-winning King and Prince Golf Course since it opened in 1989. Nestled in forests and salt marshes, just south of the Hampton River, the course was designed by golf course architect Joe Lee, who planned 18 holes, par 72, around towering oaks, over dunes, and across lakes and lagoons. Today, golfers travel along 800-feet of elevated, marsh-traversing cart bridges to experience play on four spectacular holes gently carved from the marsh islands. While these four signature holes highlight play on the King and Prince Golf Course's back nine, the entire 18-hole, Par 72 course combines for an experience that always finds it on golf's "must-play" lists on the Florida to Myrtle Beach circuit.

[Rancho Bernardo Inn](#) (1963) San Diego, California

The Rancho Bernardo Inn in San Diego, California, opened its doors to guests in 1963 and, within a year, the retreat 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 that year. 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, as well. Golfing legend JoAnne Carner won two of the three competitions, which further solidified her status as one of the foremost athletes within professional golf. Her three different career USGA wins places her on par with the likes of Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, and Tiger Woods.

[Omni La Costa Resort & Spa](#) (1965) Carlsbad, California

Omni La Costa Resort & Spa in Carlsbad, California, maintains 36 holes of golf across two green championship courses: the links-style Champions Course and the parkland-style Legends Course. When La Costa opened in 1965, its Champions Course was an immediate star attraction. The resort's planners had invited architect Dick Wilson to design a 72-par, 7,200-yard golf course over 215 acres. The project had taken two years to complete at the massive cost of \$1.5 million. Nevertheless, La Costa's course quickly developed a great reputation for its year-round playability, prompting CBS to select the venue for its “CBS Golf Classic” competition. The greatest professional golfers of their day would eventually grace the links, too, including Sam Snead, Ray Floyd, Arnold Palmer, Bobby Nichols, Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, Gary Player, Tom Watson, Phil Mickelson, and Tiger Woods. The upper crust of Hollywood's elite was drawn to the Legends Course as well. Stars like crooners Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, and entertainer Bob Hope all regularly visited the golf course throughout the 1970s. In 1999, the World Golf Championships were played on the original course layout. The five-day televised event raised more than \$500,000 for local charities.

About Historic Hotels of America®

Historic Hotels of America is the official program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for recognizing and celebrating the finest Historic Hotels. Historic Hotels of America has more than 300 historic hotels that have all faithfully maintained their authenticity, sense of place, and architectural integrity in the United States of America, including 44 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Historic Hotels of America is comprised of mostly independently owned and operated properties. More than 30 of the world's finest hospitality brands, chains, and collections are represented in Historic Hotels of America. To be nominated and selected for membership into this prestigious program, a hotel must be at least 50 years old; has been designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as a National Historic Landmark or listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; and recognized as having historic significance. To learn more, please visit [HistoricHotels.org](https://www.HistoricHotels.org).

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