

The Gasparilla Inn & Club's Pete Dye course is 4,873 yards from the front tees.

TRAVEL

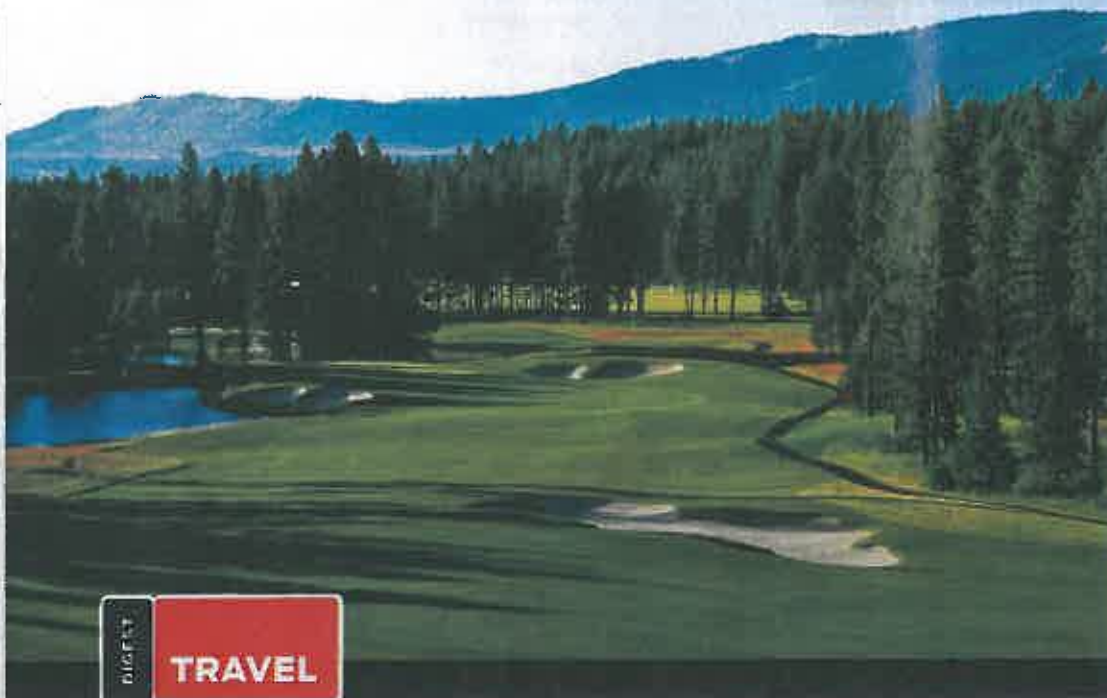
DIGEST



AMERICA'S TOP 50

COURSES FOR WOMEN / 2013

IT'S GREAT TO WALK into a golf shop and be greeted by a welcoming staff and a sea of stylish women's apparel and gear. But for a course to be Top-50 material, we need to see great programs for women, flexible playing options (nine-hole loops, or even shorter) and a progressive-design philosophy that treats women golfers as more than an afterthought. ✨ Our panel of 100-plus women who evaluate courses for this ranking pay special attention to tee options and design. Each layout on our Top 50 has at least one set of tees less than 5,300 yards, two sets with Slope and Course Ratings for women, and minimal or no forced carries from the forward tees. ✨ The ideal layout challenges long hitters yet ➔



delivers a fun round for average players. Quality course conditions are important, too, and it's a plus to have lots of amenities. ✨ This year we welcome eight newcomers. It's not that we don't love the others, but more and more courses are embracing the "tee it forward" and "time for nine" zeitgeist. As they've added shorter tees (typically about 4,700 yards), the ones with forward tees closer to 5,300 yards aren't as appealing. ✨ Read on to learn about all the courses on our list, and swing by as many as you can. They're expecting you. —SUSAN C. DAVIS

1. PINE NEEDLES LODGE & GOLF CLUB, Southern Pines, N.C., pineneedles-mkpinelines.com
 ☛ Add a Golfari clinic to your bucket list, or at least a tee time at this historic venue.

2. SEA ISLAND GOLF CLUB (SEASIDE), St. Simons Island, Ga., seaisland.com
 ☛ The new 5,444-yard silver tees make this luxurious resort even more golden.

3. THE BOULDERS (SOUTH), Carefree, Ariz., theboulders.com
 ☛ New tees (2,362 yards) and its Fore Ladies program are the perfect intro to desert golf.

4. BANDON DUNES GOLF RESORT (OLD MACDONALD), Bandon, Ore., bandondunes.com
 ☛ A new par-3 course and events for women add to the allure of this jaw-dropping beauty.

5. ARNOLD PALMER SIGNATURE COURSE AT RUNNING Y RANCH, Klamath Falls, Ore., runningy.com
 ☛ Plush greens, no carries and one of Palmer's favorite designs. Stay and play for best deals.

6. OMNI AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION RESORT (OCEAN LINKS), Amelia Island, Fla., omnihotels.com
 ☛ Pete Dye course takes scenic turns through the dunes and five ocean holes.

7. LPGA INTERNATIONAL (CHAMPIONS), Daytona Beach, lpgainternational.com
 ☛ Open off the tee, testy around the greens. A good round here will make you feel like a pro.

8. ROPE RIDER GOLF COURSE AT SUNCADIA RESORT, Cle Elum, Wash., suncadiaresort.com
 ☛ Forward-thinking design philosophy makes this new course fun for all.

9. KEYSTONE RESORT (RIVER), Keystone, Colo., golfkeystone.com
 ☛ With added shorter tees at the River and Keystone Ranch courses, this mountain duo is better than ever.

10. GRAND CYPRESS GOLF CLUB (EAST/NORTH), Orlando, grandcypress.com
 ☛ Hone your skills at golf schools led by former LPGA Tour pros Barb Mucha and Mary Bryan.

11. KIAWAH ISLAND GOLF RESORT (OSPREY POINT), Kiawah Island, S.C., kiawahresort.com
 ☛ Golf Digest Best Young Teacher Abby Welch leads instructional programs at this sumptuous resort.

12. BRASADA CANYONS, Bend, Ore., brasada.com
 ☛ A high-desert beauty with expansive mountain vistas. It's playable year-round.

13. KINGSMILL RESORT (PLANTATION), Williamsburg, Va., kingsmill.com
 ☛ Plan your visit around the LPGA Tour's Kingsmill Championship in May.

14. CELEBRATION GOLF CLUB, Celebration, Fla., celebrationgolf.com
 ☛ This favorite among discerning locals offers programs for women and juniors.

15. REYNOLDS PLANTATION (OCONEE), Greensboro, Ga., reynoldsplantation.com
 ☛ A luxury of choices, with a Ritz-Carlton, a spa and five championship courses.

16. SOUTHWOOD GOLF CLUB, Tallahassee, Fla., southwoodgolf.com
 ☛ Great value, good conditioning, no carries and a hub for women's leagues and collegiate events.

22. NEMACOLIN WOODLANDS RESORT (MYSTIC ROCK), Farmington, Pa., nemacolin.com
 ☛ An eclectic mix of French chateau and vintage Pete Dye golf.

23. LA QUINTA RESORT & CLUB (DUNES), La Quinta, Calif., laquintaresort.com
 ☛ Not nearly as much trouble off the tee and around the greens as the other courses here.

24. THE GREENBRIER (MEADOWS), White Sulphur Springs, W.Va., greenbrier.com
 ☛ A worthy splurge for traditionalists looking for genteel times and the aura of Sam Snead.

MAKE THAT COMBO

Courses with big yardage gaps between tees

don't rank high on our list. That's one reason Silverado Resort and Spa and the Coeur d'Alene Resort caught our eye. About three years ago, Coeur d'Alene created two sets of "combo" tees that have golfers play from, say, the red markers on some holes and the whites on others. The course, whose scorecard lists the combo ratings, was "designed to be fun," says head golf professional Andy Mackimmie, "and a lot of people shoot their best scores here." At Silverado's North Course, a recent renovation reduced its forward tees to 5,187 yards and created a combo set at 5,530 to bridge the gap to the 5,868-yard golds. Says Tim Geesey, director of golf: "The flexibility gives our regular players a fresh perspective, like they're playing a whole different course and offers everyone the ability to find a comfortable distance." —S.C.D.

25. THE LODGE AT VENTANA CANYON (MOUNTAIN), Tucson, thelodgeatventanacanyon.com
☛ A parkland course in a lush desert setting with a truly thrilling par 3.

26. PINEHURST RESORT (NO. 4), Pinehurst, N.C., pinehurst.com ☛ The U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open will be played on No. 2 in 2014.

27. SILVERADO RESORT AND SPA (NORTH), Napa, Calif., silveradorestaurant.com ☛ Idyllic wine-country setting amid 300-year-old oaks.

28. TREETOPS RESORT (SIGNATURE), Gaylord, Mich., treetops.com ☛ Its women's golf academy offers nine sessions a summer, plus there's a new couples event.

29. TURNING STONE RESORT CASINO (SHENENDOAH), Verona, N.Y., turningstone.com
☛ A huge golf dome makes this upstate resort (72 holes) a year-round golf destination.

30. STOWE MOUNTAIN CLUB, Stowe, Vt., summer.stowe.com
☛ Recently switched the nines to create a walkable front side and five-hole loops.

31. BLUE RIDGE SHADOWS GOLF CLUB, Front Royal, Va., blueridgeshadows.com
☛ Holds two women's invitational events annually plus family-friendly golf activities.

32. MONARCH DUNES GOLF CLUB (OLD), Nipomo, Calif., monarchdunes.com
☛ Innovative instructional programs, including personal-par golf and power training.

33. PURGATORY GOLF CLUB, Noblesville, Ind., purgatorygolf.com
☛ Two new sets of combo tees help all golfers "tee it forward."

34. HAMMOCK BEACH RESORT (OCEAN), Palm Coast, Fla., hammockbeach.com
☛ This Jack Nicklaus design is fun and easy on a calm day. Run the ball up on just about every green.

35. LAKEWOOD GOLF CLUB (DOGWOOD), Point Clear, Ala., rtfgolf.com ☛ With three tees at less than 5,900 yards, a resort and spa, this RTJ Golf Trail course is tops for women.

36. GENEVA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB (PLAYER), Lake Geneva, Wis., genevanationalresort.com
☛ A memorable mix of designs, both on the course and in the well-stocked golf shop.

37. TURNBERRY ISLE RESORT & CLUB (MILLER), Aventura, Fla., turnberryislemiami.com
☛ Resort golf at the top of its game, with plush conditions and lots to do après-golf.

38. GROVE PARK INN GOLF CLUB, Asheville, N.C., groveparkinn.com
☛ Updated classic has a Donald Ross course, charming historic inn and deluxe spa.

39. PANTHER RUN GOLF CLUB, Ave Maria, Fla., pantherungolfclub.com
☛ Those in the know give a nod to quality conditions and great value at this Troon property.

40. WAILEA GOLF CLUB (EMERALD), Wailea, Maui, Hawaii, waileagolf.com
☛ A perennial favorite among women for its forgiving design, panoramas and top amenities.

41. THE GASPARILLA INN & CLUB, Boca Grande, Fla., gasparilla.com
☛ Old Florida feel emanates from this Pete Dye design and inn.

42. HALF MOON BAY GOLF LINKS (OCEAN), Half Moon Bay, Calif., halfmoonbaygolf.com
☛ A taste of Scotland on California's rugged coast at this upscale daily fee.

43. QUEENSTOWN HARBOR (LAKES), Queenstown, Md., mdgolf.com/queenstown
☛ Newly restored historic River House makes an ideal golf getaway for eight to 14 guests.

44. WILLIAMSBURG NATIONAL GOLF CLUB (YORKTOWN), Williamsburg, Va., wngc.com
☛ Gorgeous scenery with few frills adds up to an all-America treat.

45. BARTON CREEK RESORT & SPA (FAZIO FOOTHILLS), Austin, bartoncreek.com
☛ New golf boot camps take a holistic approach to getting fit, firmed and mentally tough.

46. SUNRIVER RESORT (MEADOWS), Sunriver, Ore., sunriver-resort.com
☛ A mecca for foodies, with golf and culinary events like the Ghost Tree Invitational.

47. OAK CREEK GOLF CLUB, Irvine, Calif., oakcreekgolfclub.com
☛ A Cool Clubs fitting center and a fun, walkable Tom Fazio design with big greens.

48. WHISTLING STRAITS (IRISH), Haven, Wis., whistlingstraits.com
☛ No forced carries and easier than the Straits course, plus lake views and grazing sheep.

49. INDIAN WELLS GOLF RESORT (PLAYERS), Indian Wells, Calif., indianwellsgolfresort.com
☛ This desert oasis has two exceptionally pretty courses within walking distance of four hotels.

50. DESERT WILLOW GOLF RESORT (MOUNTAIN VIEW), Palm Desert, Calif., desertwillow.com ☛ Lovely outdoor patio and top conditions. You'll say: "I can't believe this is a municipal course."



HAVE AN EVENTFUL STAY

The "we want you here" attitude is a big plus, so it's great to see courses hosting tournaments for women. Sardon Dunes Golf Resort appeals to women with its Ladies Links Championship, a 36-hole event that includes an awards dinner, breakfast and a massage. The inaugural event, played in May, had 40 participants. Alabama's Lakewood Golf Club hosts the two-day Grand Southern Invitational Ladies Golf Tournament every fall, attracting about 120 players. New to Michigan's Treetops Resort is a 27-hole Couples Tournament, and a women's golf triad in August. Virginia's Blue Ridge Shadows Golf Club has a women's four-ball event in October and a Mom and Me nine-hole tournament in June. And there's a reason Pine Needles in North Carolina is still at the top of the ranking: The Couples Jamboree, hosted by the legendary Peggy Kirk Bell, marks its 47th year this November. —S.C.D.

Clockwise from left: The Rope Rider at Suncadia Resort in Washington; Oak Creek Golf Club in Southern California; and the Silverado Resort's North course in Napa, Calif.



Golf Digest

THINK YOUNG / PLAY HARD



6 SCARY SHOTS & HOW TO PLAY 'EM

BREAK 80 THIS SUMMER!

TOP 50 COURSES FOR WOMEN

COOL TIPS

SHORT GAME BASICS

by Adam Scott

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