

Golfweek

Carlsbad: The Silicon Valley of golf offers plenty of courses and diversions near San Diego

CARLSBAD, Calif. – It's been dubbed the Silicon Valley of golf and compared to Detroit for the auto industry or to Akron, Ohio, the rubber capital of the world. Over the last 30 years, Carlsbad, this sleepy little beach town and agricultural community located 35 miles north of San Diego, has exploded into the golf equipment epicenter. And not surprisingly, a haven for golfers too.

Carlsbad rises from ocean to hills. A pioneering speculator dug a well there in 1883, discovered mineral water believed to restore health and earned the city its name after the spa town of Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) in the Czech Republic. Health seekers and sun worshipers have been coming in droves ever since for the fine, uncrowded beaches, and, of course, the water.

Park Hyatt Aviara Resort Golf Club and Spa



Park Hyatt Aviara Resort Golf Club and Spa (Courtesy of Park Hyatt Aviara Resort/Brian Oar)

Since 2013, the LPGA visits in March for the Kia Classic at the Park Hyatt Aviara Resort Golf Club and Spa, a swanky 200-acre golf resort and luxury five-story Spanish colonial-style hotel. It recently became even swankier. Aviara wrapped up a \$50 million resort-wide transformation in the fall, which included bringing the ocean view directly into the lobby by creating a Mediterranean “outdoor living room” and developing a new grand staircase that descends into outdoor event space.

The Arnold Palmer-designed course opened in 1991 with views of Batiquitos Lagoon, a three-mile stretch of inland water ranked among the finest private wilderness preserves in the country. With its botanical garden setting, forest of eucalyptus trees, cascading waterfalls and large undulating greens, Aviara rolls and tumbles across coastal hills adjoining the lagoon and is considered one of the best Palmer designs.