

## America's Second 100 Greatest Golf Courses

It's never been tougher to crack our rankings. Eleven courses built within the last three years are new additions onto Golf Digest's America's 100 Greatest and Second 100 Greatest lists, which means some mainstays got pushed out this year. The margins are tighter than ever. Four courses missed out on making our top 200 by less than a tenth of a decimal point:

Grandfather Golf and Country Club, Karsten Creek (which just underwent a full-scale renovation), Dismal River's Red course and Tradition Golf Club. Grandfather, a masterpiece mountain design by Ellis Maples, fell out of this ranking for the first time since we started ranking 200 courses in 2013. It missed out by less than two hundredths of a decimal point.

There are more new courses waiting in the wings. The Omni PGA Frisco's East course by Gil Hanse and Jim Wagner fell three tenths of a point shy of debuting on this list. Black Desert Resort, one of Tom Weiskopf's last designs and a host to both PGA Tour and LPGA Tour events, missed by the same margin. As both venues get more exposure, it's possible they enter our top 200.

If you're a club that just missed making this list, you may return next time. But you'll also face more contenders in two years as the golf industry continues to see a boom in creative and unique golf course construction. The competition is a great thing for golfers, but tough for the fringe clubs on this ranking.

### T-137. Clear Creek Tahoe

Carson City, NV

#### Previous rank: 131

One gets the feeling Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw looked long and hard at this mountain property on the east side of Lake Tahoe before agreeing to take the job. On one hand, the site is gorgeous, an elevated evergreen forest with views of the surrounding Sierra Nevadas and distant valleys. On the other, it was far more rugged than they preferred and would prove challenging to link up 18 well-connected holes on such vast terrain. Ultimately, beauty won out and they were able to find enough calm ground—especially from holes 10 through 15—to make the journey around it seem meditative and not a lurching, adrenaline-filled rush. The boulder-strewn site recalls parts of Rock Creek Cattle Company in western Montana, currently 65th on

America's 100 Greatest Courses, and the off-site views and the way fairways and greens blend into the native grasses and conifers bring to mind Gozzer Ranch, ranked No. 43. Pretty good company.

## 151. Martis Camp

Truckee, CA

### **Previous rank: 134**

Back in the 1960s, a forest south of Truckee, Calif., served as a location for the filming of the popular TV western "Bonanza." Now, the area near Lake Tahoe is a gold mine for impressive golf experiences, with a half-dozen high-end public courses, including PGA Tour host site Old Greenwood, and a couple of private gems. And in terms of gold, the standard for golf-and-ski living in all of America is Martis Camp. We say that emphatically because nowhere else can residents and their visitors play a mountainous and challenging Tom Fazio layout—Scottie Scheffler won the U.S. Junior Am here—and when winter arrives, take a quick shuttle from home to a private ski lift for the slopes at Northstar. Fazio has called this site one of the finest natural pieces of property on which he's ever created a golf course. It has pines, firs, hemlocks and rocky outcroppings on nearly every hole, particularly the 18th, where the clubhouse sits atop a 70-foot-high wall of granite behind the green. Fairways are broad, though hazarded by squiggly bunkers in certain spots, and some greens have trunks of tall Ponderosa pines uncomfortably close. So gorgeous is Martis Camp that one critic called it "a private-gated national park experience." The many amenities feel both natural for the setting and fanciful at the same time. The 18-hole putting course, now popular among high-end resorts, is among the best of its kind, winding through the multi-million-dollar properties. There is an 18,000-square-foot Family Barn that hosts activities all year long—the Beach Boys have played there—along with bike and walking trails, a private beach and dining options on the shores of north Lake Tahoe. Three restaurants on site, including one for fine dining, can keep you on the property for days, and there's even a cool "Lost Library," a cozy cabin tucked in the woods, replete with relaxing porch swings, that offers a quiet escape. Bonanza? Martis Camp fits that bill.

## 195. Panther National

Palm Beach Gardens, FL

**From Golf Digest architecture editor Derek Duncan:**

We may look back and realize that Panther National was the final new course built in the south Florida counties of Palm Beach, Broward or Dade. One of the most golf dense regions in the world, the counties are hemmed in by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and nature preserves and the Everglades to the west, and there's almost no more land available upon which to construct a 200-plus acre, 18-hole course.

Several years ago, Swiss businessman Dominik Senn acquired what may end up being the last remaining buildable golf parcel, roughly 400 acres northwest of Palm Beach Gardens bordering a vast wildlife preserve where black panthers are often seen. The Jack Nicklaus/Nicklaus Design golf course—the centerpiece of a luxury residential.