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RESORT REVIEW

Crown Isle on Vancouver Island: A pure golf resort where you least expect it

By [Chris Baldwin](#), Senior Writer



Courtesy Vancouver Island Golf Trail

You come to Crown Isle to play its golf course - often.

COURTENAY, British Columbia - Pull into the driveway of **Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community** with a view of the golf course stretching out behind the main building and you'll be surprised. Step into your king Jacuzzi unit and you might be stunned.

You don't expect to find a golf resort this plush in Courtenay - a Vancouver Island spot that's long been known as a sleepy fishing community.

Sure, the retirees seeking something different have steadily moved in. WestJet flies in direct from Calgary too (with hopes of a Seattle route to come). The Comox Airport is only about a 10-minute drive from Crown Isle.

But still ...

This isn't one of those "up-and-coming" golf resorts where you can see the charm - and plenty of room for needed improvement. Crown Isle is already set to knock your golf shoes off.

If you're on any type of group vacation, and sometimes even if you're not, [Concierge/Guest Relations Specialist Andrew MacMillan](#) will meet you at check in, ready to show you to your rooms, deliver all kinds of suggestions for meals and activities and just add a sense of old world service charm.



Chris Baldwin WorldGolf.com
Crown Isle's in-room Jacuzzi might make your man's man golf trip.

Then you swing open the door to your room and find it more huge plush condo than hotel room. Make that a gleaming condo where everything seems new and cleaner than at the Pope's house. The Jacuzzi looks big enough to fit an NFL offensive lineman and a bevy of lovelies. Or just you and your lovely wife.

There is a full kitchen, a big living room area, DVD players and even complimentary umbrellas in the closet.

Crown Isle is about as pure a golf resort as you're going to find anywhere. It was built with one purpose in mind and one purpose only: To provide a satisfying golf escape. You will not find a bunch of activities for kids (though MacMillan did direct a few families there during this visit to a pool right across the street) or even non-golfing spouses.



Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community
399 Clubhouse Drive
Courtenay, B.C.
Vancouver Island golf packages:
(888)-465-3229
www.golfvancouverisland.ca

the golf shop.

And if that's not enough testosterone for you, there's even an old car museum (all

You come to Crown Isle to play the 7,025-yard Graham Cooke resort course several times (and likely nearby [Storey Creek](#) too). You come to be a man's man. Crown Isle boasts a high-end steakhouse complete with a water effect entranceway and a popular cigar lounge (FYI: Cubans are legal in Canada).

It even has a camera mounted in a tree on its 18th hole filming every group that comes in, so you can make fun of your buddies' flubs later watching a replay in

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from the owner's personal collection) for you to walk around right on site.

If Crown Isle Resort was a person, it would be Arnold Schwarzenegger from his steroids days. Everything's bigger and more manly.

The course plays right into that with a closing stretch that's great for adding drama to the day's bets. Not that golfers bet.

"Nah, we're just a bunch of teetotalers," Crown Isle Director of Golf Jason Andrew said.

This is a place where you have all the stores you need just down the hill. There's a big supermarket, a big box store (the Real Canadian Superstar, Canada's competitor to Wal-Mart, which is also prevalent on Vancouver Island) and some charming restaurants right on the water. Yet, a lot of guests end up never leaving Crown Isle's grounds.



Crown Isle's golf course is right outside your room past the trees.

"We try to encourage our guests to see other parts of the surrounding communities," Crown Isle Marketing Coordinator Mia Heitland said. "But yes, sometimes they're just very happy and content staying on the resort grounds."

You're here for that golf trip. Who needs to fuss over things like groceries?

One of the great joys of Crown Isle is being able to wake up and stroll right over to the first tee. This isn't one of those resorts where the golf course is a shuttle bus ride away. Instead it's right out your window, right off your back deck. The first hole goes down from a raised tee box, flanked by trees, near a section of the resort. Right near the giant statue of a driver.



Crown Isle tends to bring out dedicated golfers who play no matter what.

Crown Isle was designed for the greatest golfing ease possible.

"We'd like to think that if you love golf, you'll love Crown Isle," Andrew said.

Golfers do tend to linger at Crown Isle. And not just the ones who are staying there. Members congregate after their rounds too, mix right in with the visitors from the states and wherever else.

Of course, it's even sweeter when you've got that Jacuzzi to go back

too.

Crown Isle's location shouldn't intimidate

The majority of Crown Isle's guests come from Western Canada, particularly Calgary and Alberta, areas where there are easy flights in. If you come into Victoria, Vancouver Island's largest and most happening city, you shouldn't be scared off by Crown Isle's spot on the map.

The entire [Vancouver Island Golf Trail](#) stretches less than a three-hour drive from end to end and coming to Crown Isle from Victoria gives you a much better feel for the entire island. You can even stop and see the goats on the roof (no kidding, they graze and eat grass on the roof as tourists snap pictures) at the Coombs Old Country Market.

You'd better visit those roof top goats *before* checking in to Crown Isle though. Once they're at Crown, golfers find it hard to leave.

June 9, 2008

Any opinions expressed above are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of the management. The information in this story was accurate at the time of publication. All contact information, directions and prices should be confirmed directly with the golf course or resort before making reservations and/or travel plans.



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