

the front nine



The tees at Bear Mountain are all named after different species of bear.

Rabbits and Tiger and Bear, Oh My

These courses will bring out the animal in your game By Jeff Wallach

GOLF IS FULL OF ANIMALS — and not just the ones you notice ducking for cover when you're addressing your ball. If you watch golf on television, you can catch the Golden Bear (Jack Nicklaus), the Walrus (Craig Stadler), the Great White Shark (Greg Norman), and, of course, Tiger. Or how about Tim Herron, Ian Baker-Finch, Jonathan Byrd, Ben Crane, and Steve Elkington? Here's our list of courses worthy of the variety of species attracted to the sport.

A Grizzly Round

With tees called Black, Golden, Grizzly, and Cinnamon, **Bear Mountain's** courses could only have been designed by — no, not Gentle Ben — Jack Nicklaus, who worked with his son Steve. Located outside **Vancouver**, British Columbia, the Mountain Course offers mountain, city, and ocean views from a muscular track set in lush forest. The Valley Course is

scheduled to open later this year. bearmountain.ca

Dancing Rabbit, Crouching Plumb-Bob

Whether or not you think a rabbit's foot is more auspicious than a dogleg, the Choctaw tribe's **Dancing Rabbit Golf Club**, about 100 miles from **Jackson**, Miss., offers opportunities to try your luck on two highly rated Tom Fazio/Jerry Pate courses: Oaks and Azaleas. "Fazio and Pate have joined forces to develop the state's greatest asset since Elvis came of age in nearby Tupelo," Brian McCallen wrote in *Golf* magazine. dancingrabbitgolf.com

Stripe a Few Great Drives

Just outside **Puerto Vallarta**, Mexico, **El Tigre Golf Club** prowls the Paradise Village Resort. Designed by Von Hagge, Smelek, and Baril, the 7,239-yard layout features water on 12 holes and three

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“beach” bunkers that run right down to the water. Tropical styling, all-Bermuda grass, and an island-green par-3 make this the perfect place for a Mexican standoff with your opponents. eltigregolf.com

German Engineering

A half day’s drive south of **Berlin** lies the rarely seen German Jaguar. The Jaguar Course is one of six 18-hole courses at the enormous **Hartl Golf Resort** in



Bad Griesbach. Three courses were designed by Bernhard Langer, and the resort also offers three nine-hole courses suitable for beginners as well as more skilled players. Don’t miss the renowned chewy pretzels in the clubhouse. hartl.de

A Mulligan at Mullett

Preceding the haircut of the same name by decades, **St. Maarten’s Mullett Bay Golf Club** was designed in 1971 by Joseph Lee. The layout may be short (6,300-yard), but it offers some of the island’s best scenery. The front nine rims Simpson Bay Lagoon, and the entire course features small greens that are tough to hit due to the frequent stiff breezes. stmaarten.golf.com

Wild Horses

Approximately 250 miles west of **Omaha**, in Gothenberg, Neb., **Wild Horse Golf Club** rears and bucks with a design that *Golfweek* called the best golf course in the United States with

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green fees under \$50. The 6,955 yards stretch across native grass prairies without trees or water, punctuated by natural sand blowouts that serve as bunkers. The high-horsepower greens (think fast!) may put a hitch in your giddyup. playwildhorse.com


Bucking a Trend

While many golfers wouldn't associate Donald Ross with Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains, the legendary Scottish golf architect created **Buck Hill Golf Club**, about 50 miles from **Allentown**, in the 1920s. Ross relied on his signatures — open, sloping greens and mounding around bunkers and putting surfaces — to make this course a delightful surprise. The stone clubhouse adds to the rustic, old-school feel. buckhillgolfclub.com

A Fish Named Wander

José Gancedo's **Costa Dorada Golf Club**, southwest of **Barcelona**, invites you to wander across open fairways, many of which are laid out on the side of a hill. Avoiding the occasional olive tree will make for an easier round. *Peugeot Golf Guide* has gushed, "In the family of golf courses for everyone, Costa Dorada is right up there with the best." golfcostadoradatarragona.com

In Sheep's Clothing

By the time you figure out that all the greens at **Wolf Creek Resort**, south of **Salt Lake City**, slope severely from back to front, you'll encounter one that doesn't. It's the perfect "gotcha" from architect Mark Ballif, who designed the course in 1963. wolfcreekresort.com 

Jeff Wallach is Continental's "Front Nine" columnist.

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