

GOLF BRITISH COLUMBIA

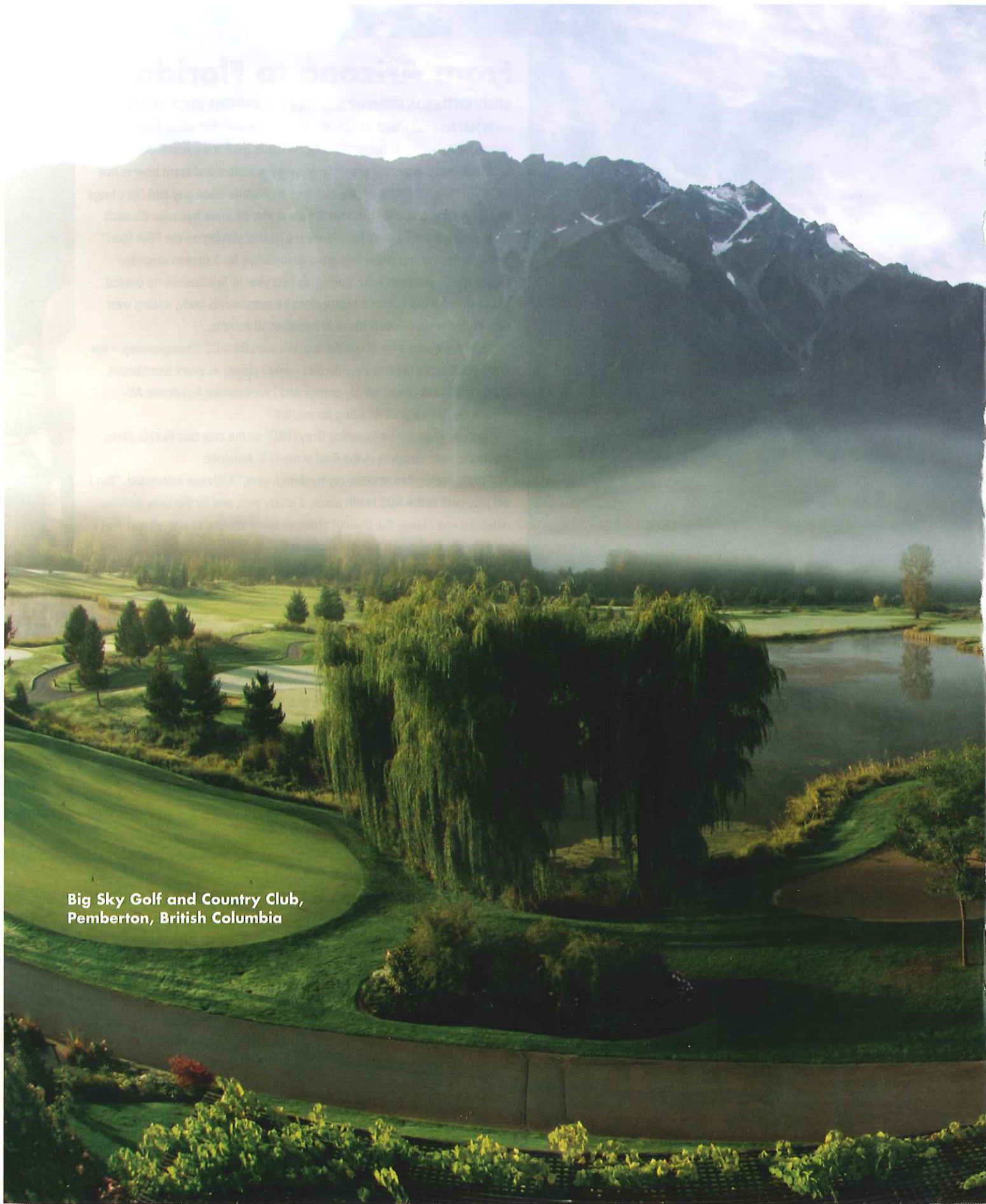
7:00 pm, mid July, 70 degrees.

The 14th at Furry Creek, British Columbia

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**Big Sky Golf and Country Club,
Pemberton, British Columbia**



A HOME FOR Great Golf

Vancouver might be known as a winter wonderland, but the home to the 2010 Winter Olympics is enhancing its reputation as an outstanding golf destination.

British Columbia is a golf paradise. As you descend into Vancouver Airport you can't help but notice the amazing blues and greens of the mountains, ocean and surrounding forests. As you descend further, the green of golf courses dotting the landscape can't be missed.

Thanks to a moderate climate, golf in BC is year-round activity enjoyed by many. Coastal areas have moderate temperatures – usually in the mid 70s in summer, while mountain courses at higher elevations are cooler. The selection of golf courses in BC is astounding and the variety of terrain provides for a diversity of courses. Parkland, ocean-side, mountain, forested and even desert courses can be found – often within a one-hour drive of each other.

Vancouver is gearing up for the 2010 Winter Olympics. It's a cosmopolitan city regarded as one of the best places in the world to live. Fine dining, luxury hotels and top-notch shopping make it a world-class city. Sitting on the ocean and

surrounded by mountains, you can see why Vancouver is one of the world's most beautiful cities.

The region personifies the laid-back lifestyle of the west coast, where visitors can ski in the morning and play golf in the afternoon. There are nearly 100 golf courses within two hours of downtown and many of the top-rated courses are public and easily accessible. There are two mountain courses: Furry Creek, an hour north from downtown on the way to Whistler, and Westwood Plateau, about an hour east of the downtown core. Both offer exceptional service with views to match.

The other top public courses in Vancouver are parkland courses set in the Fraser Valley. Redwoods Golf Course and Northview (home of the Air Canada PGA Tour event) are carved from towering forests, while Meadow Gardens, Morgan Creek and Mayfair Lakes make use of numerous creeks and ponds to define their layouts.

Whistler, one of the world's best ski resorts and home to the sliding events in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, boasts four award-winning golf courses. Within walking distance of the Village, the

Whistler Golf Club — Arnold Palmer's first Canadian design, winds through ancient cedars and majestic fir trees, meandering streams and nine lakes. Close to several luxury hotels, the Fairmont Chateau Whistler Golf Club, a Robert Trent Jones Jr. design, lies on benchland above the main Village. A little further up the highway, experience Nicklaus North (designed by who else?) on the shores of glacier-fed Green Lake — home to the 2006 Telus Skins game. Big Sky, 35 minutes north of Whistler, is a Robert Cupp design that lies snug-up against the mountains and offers some spectacular views. Taking full advantage of the rugged surroundings, these golf courses have helped make Whistler famous for challenging play and spectacular scenery.

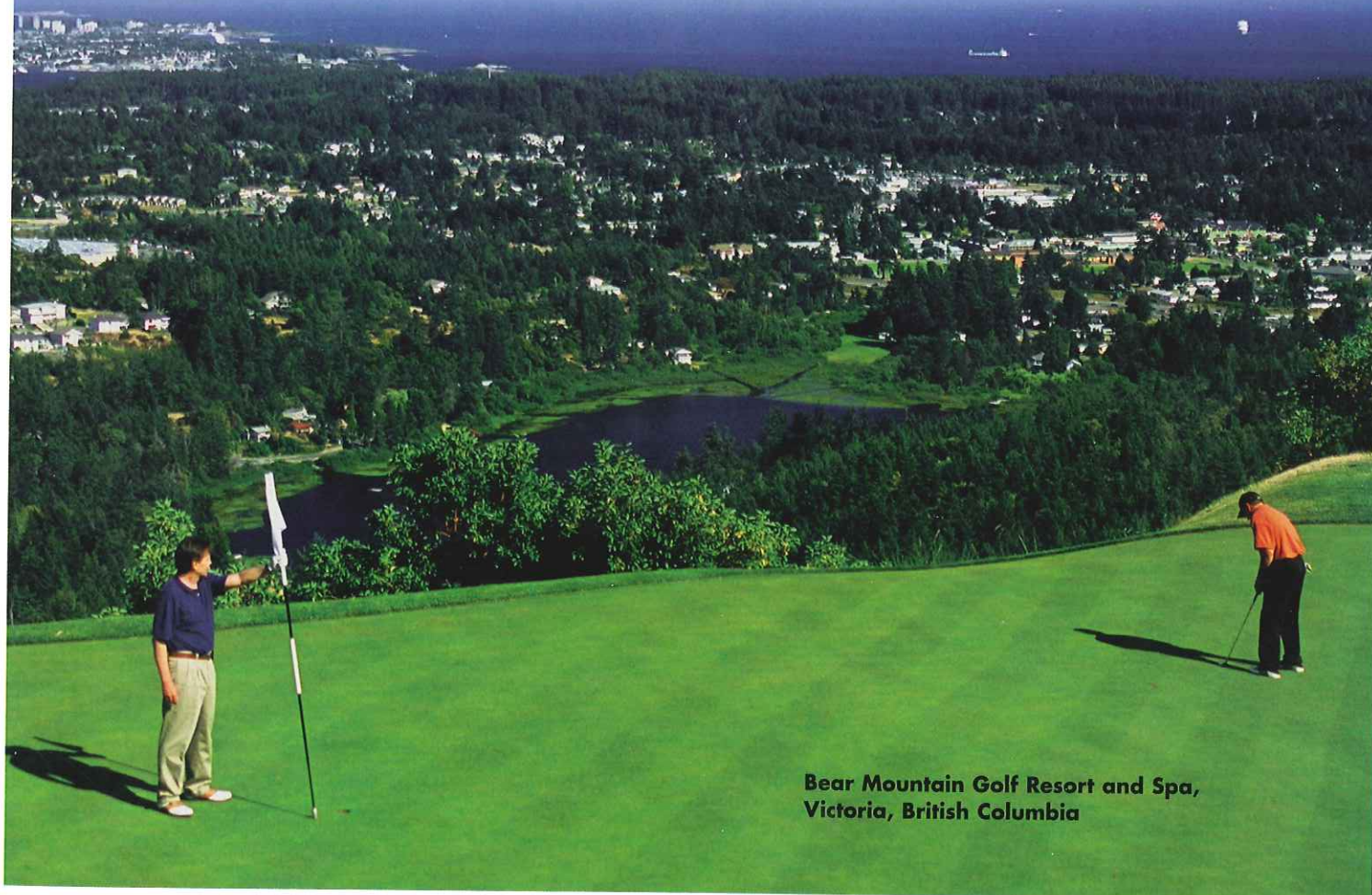
Vancouver Island lies to the west of Vancouver and can be reached easily by

air, float plane, helicopter or ferry. The ferry trip takes an hour and a half and is an attraction in itself — you may be lucky enough to catch a pod of Killer Whales playing in the waves. Vancouver Island is ranked as the top North American island by Conde Nast Traveler Magazine. Victoria, the largest city on the island, is the starting point for the Vancouver Island Golf Trail — 175 miles and 11 golf courses between Victoria and Campbell River make this excursion sheer golfing heaven. From the breathtaking beauty of Canada's only 36-hole, Nicklaus design at Bear Mountain Resort in Victoria, to the opulence and luxury of Crown Isle Resort in the North, Vancouver Island is "one of the continent's best values" according to Golf Magazine.

The Okanagan Valley is located about a four-hour drive east (45 minutes by air) of Vancouver. Although accessible by air

from Calgary, Vancouver or Seattle, the drive east is worthwhile as the new highway crosses scenic mountain passes. Best known for its orchards and wineries, the Okanagan is also developing a reputation as one of Canada's best golf destinations.

One of the most interesting courses is the Harvest, carved from a working orchard and in season, you can just help yourself. A mile or so further east is Gallaghers Canyon, aptly named as several holes play alongside a dramatic canyon backdrop. Close to the airport, the two courses at the Okanagan Golf Club — the Bear (by Jack) and the Quail (by Les Furber) wind through pine forests with challenging elevation changes, but then level out through adjacent meadowlands. Forty-five minutes north is Predator Ridge, one of



**Bear Mountain Golf Resort and Spa,
Victoria, British Columbia**

Canada's top-rated golf resorts. Currently 27 holes, it is expanding to 36 and offers luxury accommodation in suites and chalets.

Kamloops lies a little further north than Kelowna, and is also about a four-hour drive from Vancouver. It is becoming known as Canada's hottest new golf destination.

The stunning terrain and arid climate make for great golf courses and two new ones in particular have created quite a stir in Canada's golf industry. Tobiano, on the banks of Kamloops Lake, drew noted Canadian designer Thomas McBroom to create a challenging course that makes use of the arroyos, cliffs and valleys overlooking the lake.

Tobiano was named best new course in Canada by *Golf Digest* in 2008. The other new course is Talking Rock on the shore of Little Shuswap Lake. These two join Sun Rivers (also a Best New Canadian course in 2006), The Dunes, Rivershore and Sun Peaks. There are many accommodation options in the area, including city hotels in Kamloops and resort hotels at Sun Peaks.

The Columbia Valley can be found in the eastern part of British Columbia, close to the Alberta border. It's accessible by air through Cranbrook Airport; however, many golfers from the United States prefer to fly into Calgary Airport to take advantage of the scenic three-hour drive to the areathrough the Rockies. The region is noted for its warm weather, long days and the spectacular scenery. Greywolf has been voted one of the top 100 courses in Canada. 'Cliffhanger' (the name says it all), Greywolf's sixth hole, is truly one of North America's 'must plays.'

Eagle Ranch makes use of its diverse terrain to create elevation changes on nearly every hole and has great vistas of the Selkirk Mountains. The 45 holes at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort offer something for everyone, but the most exciting course is Riverside, winding around and over the Columbia River,



Above: Crown Isle Resort and Golf Community, Courtenay, British Columbia

which, thankfully at this point, isn't nearly as wide as it is further south. The new course at Copper Point, which joins the existing 18, the 36 holes available at Radium Resort and Windermere Golf Club, contribute even further to the golf options available in the region.

For the Arizona golfer, British Columbia offers a moderate climate and provides a tremendous diversity of golf. Even though many of the regions can get quite warm in summer, the green surroundings and blue mountains always make it seem cool. Generally under \$100, most rounds are priced very competitively - particularly with the current exchange rate. It's an ideal summer escape. ●

FAST FACTS:

Air connections: US Airways has direct flights to Vancouver from Phoenix, with other airlines connecting through Los Angeles, San Francisco or Seattle. Direct flights are about three hours.

TOURISM INFORMATION:
www.hellobc.com

GOLF INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS:
www.golfbritishcolumbia.org
or (877) 322-1223

CURRENCY:
The Canadian dollar is currently at about a 20 percent discount to the U.S. dollar.