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Valley Course great addition to Westin Bear Mountain Golf Resort & Spa on Vancouver Island, Canada

Tuesday June 16, 2009 | 09:48:59 pm 287 words, 1442 views

On my first trip to the Westin Bear Mountain Resort & Spa near Victoria, British Columbia, [Canada](#), this week, I played the newly opened Valley Golf Course there first. (I'll be posting a review soon on the Valley Course.)

The resort, which is where I wrapped up my [Vancouver Island Golf](#) Trip today, boasts 36 holes designed by Jack Nicklaus. It's the only resort in North America with 36 holes designed by Nicklaus, although I was told Steve Nicklaus was primarily behind the new course. Had I already played the established [Mountain Course](#) first, I would have understood why the folks at Bear Mountain told me the Valley Course was without a doubt the easier of the two .

But since I played the Valley Course first, I couldn't make a comparison initially. On its own, the Valley Course, which has plenty of elevated tees, panoramic views and big, heavily undulated greens, is a fair test of golf. If you spray it, you can get in trouble. It's by no means easy.

But after I played the Mountain Course, I understood. Officials told me that until the Valley Course opened this month, they played down the difficulty of the Mountain Course, which has a slope/rating of 75.1/152 from the back tips, making it one of the most difficult courses in Canada. Now, with the Valley Course offered, that's no longer as much of an issue because resort guests have another more relaxed option.

Together it's a terrific combination. And while it would be a shame not to venture out to other parts of Victoria Island to play golf, a trip to Bear Mountain, with its luxurious [accommodations](#), outstanding restaurants and spa and recreational facilities, is a [destination](#) on its own.

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The Accidental Golfer

The Accidental Golfer (AKA Mike Bailey) has spent more than 15 years writing about the game that has brought him unbridled joy and temporary bouts of insanity. Now on staff at WorldGolf.com, Bailey is a former senior editor for *PGA Magazine*, senior writer for *Golfweek's SuperNEWS* and *Turfnet* magazines and past president of the [Texas Golf Writers Association](#). He has covered every facet of golf, including the PGA and LPGA [Tours](#), equipment and course architecture, as well as the bane of his golfing existence: instruction. The last has led to at least 30 different golf swings, which all feel different but appear to his playing companions to be the same.

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