



Spring Golf Insider: A Tantalizing Trio of Surprisingly Awesome Golf Resorts

Central New York, Western Pennsylvania and the U.S. Virgin Islands may not be tip-of-your-tongue golf destinations. Yet, for the most discriminating golf aficionado, each offers a resort experience — one located in a quintessentially American town renowned as baseball’s birthplace; one set upon 2,000 acres in the Allegheny Mountains; one the oldest family-run resort in the Caribbean — worthy of exploration this spring.

Nearly 300,000 people a year make the pilgrimage to Cooperstown, N.Y., to pay homage to the heroes of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. Many also discover that the baseball capital of the world has far more to offer — including world-class golf.

[The Otesaga Resort Hotel](#) sweeps along the shimmering, western shoreline of Lake Otsego — the “Glimmerglass,” made famous in James Fenimore Cooper’s novels of the area. Circa 1909, this elegantly luxurious, Federal-style hotel offers the charm and gracious hospitality of a genteel, bygone era, yet with a wealth of modern amenities. The majestic Upstate New York hotel is a short walk to iconic local attractions, including the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Fenimore Art Museum, The Farmers’ Museum and the enchanting Village of Cooperstown.

But don’t forget your golf clubs.

The acclaimed Leatherstocking Golf Course, No. 3 among Golfweek’s “Best Courses You Can Play” in New York, was designed by Devereux Emmet in 1909 and received an upgrade several years ago overseen by Bob Cupp. A prolific course designer in the early 1900s, Emmet also designed former U.S. Open site Congressional Country Club.

Emmet manicured Leatherstocking Golf Course on the area’s picturesque, natural terrain and constructed narrow fairways, deep bunkers and small, fast greens. Leatherstocking offers breathtaking views of Cooperstown and Otsego, and wraps up with a pair of memorable finishing holes: No. 17 is a par-3 that plays up to 195 yards over water, while No. 18 is a lovely par-5 with an island tee and a fairway set along the lake.

There is a golf revival ongoing at the [Nemacolin Woodlands Resort](#). Situated on nearly 2,000 acres in Farmington, Penn., just 70 miles south of Pittsburgh, Nemacolin was founded by 84 Lumber creator Joe Hardy and is now owned by his daughter, Maggie. The resort played host to the PGA Tour’s 84 Lumber Classic from 2003-06.

Nemacolin recently opened a new golf layout, Shepherd’s Rock, becoming the resort’s second Pete Dye-designed signature course. Dye and his design team, headed by Tim Liddy, took advantage of the rolling, bucolic terrain that makes Shepherd’s Rock an ideal complement to the resort’s lauded Mystic Rock course. Both Dye designs at Nemacolin Woodlands have received national recognition. GOLF Magazine featured Shepherd’s Rock among its 2017 “Best New Course You Can Play” honorees. Golfweek tabbed Mystic Rock No. 1 among Pennsylvania’s “Best Courses You Can Play” and Golf Digest ranked Mystic Rock in the top-60 of “America’s 100 Greatest Public Courses.” The

resort also received the coveted “Editors’ Choice Award” from Golf Digest in the “Best Golf Resorts in the Americas” category.

Meanwhile, the state-of-the-art Nemaocolin Golf Academy is one of the country’s premier destinations to improve your game. Offering top-notch instruction led by PGA Professional Eric Johnson, a Golf Digest “Top 100 Teacher,” the world-class facility is highlighted by the TrackMan® Golf Radar Solution, SAM Putt Lab, V1 Video System, BodiTracks as well as one-, two- and three-day golf schools. The Golf Academy also offers expert club fitting for custom-made equipment ideal for everyday golf aficionados and junior players as well as professionals. The latest technology is used to accurately analyze individual swings and build the perfect clubs for consistent, enjoyable golf.

In St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, [The Buccaneer](#) is the oldest family-run resort in the Caribbean and this year is celebrating its 70th anniversary. Owned and managed by the third generation of the Armstrong family, The Buccaneer is set on 340 tropical acres along the eastern end of St. Croix, less than a five-minute drive from the sightseeing, shopping and dining found in the historic town of Christiansted.

Countless guests — including actors, musicians, athletes and politicians — have made The Buccaneer their tropical home or part of their family vacation memories for more than four generations. There is a reason The Buccaneer was rated among the “Top 25 Resorts in the Caribbean” in the 2016 Condé Nast Traveler’s Readers’ Choice Award and “Best Family Resorts” by Forbes.com. Recent resort renovations include a new pool area and beachfront restaurant. Among The Buccaneer’s numerous amenities are eight tennis courts, three beaches, two pools, a water sports center, full service spa, fitness center, three restaurants, banquet and meeting spaces, and shopping arcade with fine boutiques.

There is also outstanding golf.

A par-70, 18-hole golf course encompassing 5,810 yards with spectacular views of the Caribbean Sea from 13 holes, The Buccaneer Golf Course was designed in 1973 by Bob Joyce. Challenging yet enjoyably playable, The Buccaneer is an ideal resort course — rounds of less than four hours and fun for all types of golfers. If The Buccaneer Golf Course isn’t enough, the pro shop features the only golf simulator in the U.S. Virgin Islands offering more than 90 courses from which to choose.

Planning spring golf travel? Don’t forget this trio of tantalizing resorts.

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