

APPENDIX 7: GOLF

Top 100 Playable Golf Courses in the United States

Order	Course	State	Date	Score
1	The Lodge at Ventana Canyon	AZ	2-27-2000	87
2	The Links at Spanish Bay	CA	7-9-2000	99
3	Pebble Beach	CA	7-9-2000	95
4	Spyglass Hill	CA	7-10-2000	92
5	Troon North—Monument	AZ	7-19-2000	96
6	Laquinta—Mountain	CA	7-29-2000	96
7	Pelican Hill—North	CA	9-2-2000	96
8	Kapalua—Plantation	HI	9-12-2000	84
9	Princeville—Prince	HI	9-14-2000	91
10	Kauai Lagoons—Kiele	HI	9-16-2000	87
11	Troon North—Pinnacle	AZ	10-25-2000	91
12	The Boulders—South	AZ	10-25-2000	89
13	Grand Cypress—New Course	FL	12-9-2000	90
14	Pelican Hill—South	CA	1-21-2001	90
15	Four Seasons—Aviara	CA	2-19-2001	88
16	Emerald Dunes	SC	3-3-2001	86

17	Primm Valley—Lakes	NV	3-17-2001	96
18	Nemacolin Woodlands—Mystic Rock	PA	4-1-2001	86
19	Torrey Pines—South	CA	5-29-2001	93
20	Legend Trail	AZ	6-29-2001	89
21	Grayhawk—Raptor	AZ	6-30-2001	101
22	The Westin—Innisbrook	FL	7-29-2001	89
23	The Challenge at Manele	HI	10-8-2001	87
24	The Koolau	HI	10-12-2001	88
25	Fowler's Mill	OH	6-16-2002	83
26	Treetops Sylvan—Rick Smith	MI	7-11-2002	91
27	Treetops Sylvan—Tom Fazio	MI	7-11-2002	91
28	Bay Harbor	MI	7-12-2002	88
29	Boyne Highlands—Heather	MI	7-13-2002	95
30	Pasatiempo	CA	9-13-2002	91
31	The Raven—Sabino Springs	AZ	11-24-2002	91
32	World Woods—Rolling Oaks	FL	2-2-2003	97
33	World Woods—Pine Barrens	FL	2-2-2003	91
34	PGA West—TPC Stadium	CA	2-24-2003	96
35	Shadow Creek	NV	4-28-2003	92
36	Wolf Creek	NV	4-27-2003	93
37	Pacific Dunes	OR	5-17-2003	85
38	Bandon Dunes	OR	5-18-2003	91
39	Mauna Lani—North	HI	7-4-2003	90

40	Mauna Kea—Beach	HI	7-6-2003	94
41	Tullymore	MI	7-23-2003	84
42	Pilgrim's Run	MI	7-24-2003	85
43	High Pointe	MI	7-28-2003	92
44	Coeur D'Alene	ID	5-29-2004	83
45	Beechtree	MD	7-11-2004	87
46	Bulle Rock	MD	7-11-2004	96
47	Blue Heron	NJ	7-16-2004	91
48	Cog Hill—#4	IL	8-2-2004	93
49	Kemper Lakes	IL	8-3-2004	85
50	Castle Pines North	CO	8-15-2004	93
51	Pine Hill	NJ	8-27-2004	92
52	Cantigny—Woodside/Lakeside	IL	10-8-2004	87
53	The Glen Club	IL	10-9-2004	85
54	We-Ko-Pa	AZ	1-7-2005	84
55	Grayhawk (Talon)	AZ	1-8-2005	91
56	The Experience at Keole	HI	3-1-2005	84
57	Longaberger	OH	4-29-2005	89
58	Talking Stick (North)	AZ	5-16-2005	79
59	Edgewood Tahoe	NV	6-24-2005	86
60	Lost Canyons (Sky)	CA	8-12-2005	91
61	Whistling Straits	WI	9-5-2005	97
62	Whistling Straits (Irish)	WI	9-5-2005	94

63	Blackwolf Run—River	WI	9-6-2005	102
64	Blackwolf Run—Meadow Valley	WI	9-6-2005	96
65	The Wilds	MN	9-13-2005	85
66	Deacon's Lodge	MN	9-14-2005	88
67	La Purisma	CA	11-15-2005	87
68	Bay Hill	FL	1-7-2006	90
69	Reflection Bay	NV	1-10-2006	89
70	The Judge	AL	4-27-2006	94
71	Lighthouse Sound	MD	5-19-2006	88
72	The General	IL	6-11-2006	88
73	University Ridge	WI	6-12-2006	90
74	Bandon Trails	OR	1-20-2007	91
75	Rustic Canyon	CA	2-9-2007	89
76	Pinehurst No. 2	NC	3-1-2007	93
77	The Dunes	SC	2-17-2008	88
78	Hapuna	HI	6-1-2008	84
79	Hualalai	HI	6-3-2008	80
80	Trump National LA	CA	8-11-2008	94
81	The Bear	MI	6-21-2013	94
82	Tobacco Road	NC	7-14-2013	84
83	Old Macdonald	OR	8-4-2013	101
84	Atlantic City Country Club	NJ	7-21-2014	91
85	Bethpage Black	NY	8-1-2014	93

86	Trump National Doral	FL	3-19-2015	97
87	Brickyard Crossing	IN	4-6-2015	96
88	Streamsong Red	FL	12-5-2015	90
89	Streamsong Blue	FL	12-6-2015	98
90	Cascata	NV	1-16-2016	98
91	Prairie Club Dunes	NE	8-15-2016	93
92	Prairie Club Pines	NE	8-16-2016	101
93	Wynn Golf Club	NV	7-17-2017	90
94	Spring Creek	VA	4-5-2018	88
95	Pine Valley	NJ	6-5-2018	102

Here are a few of my favorite golf experiences, listed in the order in which played.

1. Ventana Canyon, Mountain Course: February 27, 2000. I was in Arizona for a speaking gig and snuck this in the day before my gig. Beautiful resort at the Lodge in Arizona, and the course was impeccably groomed and fairly designed. This was a great course to start the journey, and a score of eighty-seven made it all the sweeter. My only complaint was being out there without friends to share the experience, but it was a solid reminder that this would be the case with several if I were to have a shot at completing one hundred.
2. The Links at Spanish Bay: July 9, 2000. A golf vacation weekend at one of the prized golf destinations, with great friends and spouses—doesn't get much better than that! While I had previously played all three of these world-class courses, in order to qualify for the Top 100 bucket list, they

had to be replayed beginning in the year 2000. Rick Iovine came out from the East Coast and joined in on the fun with Mark Moses and Pete MacDonald rounding out the foursome. Not only is the Monterey, California, area a mecca for golf, but it is packed with world-class culinary and art experiences. As such, our spouses joined us in those pursuits as we made our way around the links. Two rounds played this day, here in the morning and Pebble Beach in the afternoon. Course conditions and layout were superb, but the winds can play havoc with your ball flight. I fell victim to those winds, carding a fat ninety-nine. The highlight was Pete holing out a 170-yard shot for an eagle on number nine. A favorite here is making it back for the sunset bagpipe player, as we toasted all of us with great wine over the firepit adjacent to the course.

3. Pebble Beach: July 9, 2000. I fared better here, carding a ninety-five. While playing this tract is always special, in my opinion there are seven extraordinary golf holes here, while the other eleven are merely so-so. Those extraordinary holes of six, seven, eight, nine, ten, fourteen, and eighteen more than make up for the rest. Best advice I can ever give is to be sure to walk this beauty and take a caddie. This course deserves that special treatment. I've never made it through a round here without taking several photos!
4. Spyglass Hill: July 10, 2000. Same group of friends on this amazing tract. When I finished playing it, I went into the pro shop and had them custom embroider a hat that said, "This is where God lives." The course opens with a par five, with a long shot from the tee box. The first five holes work their way with ocean views; then the course heads back into a more

“tree’d” experience. Another description might be *tight*. Of the three courses played this weekend with good friends, this was my favorite and continues to be through today. Bonus was my score of ninety-two.

5. Kapalua Plantation: September 12, 2000. I just now skipped several terrific courses, which was bound to happen when trying to highlight a few from a list of the Top 100. This is one of my all-time-favorite courses, always in impeccable condition and with unending views. While the course has real teeth in terms of difficulty, there is enough room with resort-style fairways to generally keep the ball on the short hairs. I was beyond thrilled with my eighty-four, including a front nine four over par! One of my favorites is to bring friends out for their first round here and see their facial expressions for holes seventeen and eighteen. Priceless.
6. The Prince Course: September 12, 2000. Justifiably rated as the number one course in the state of Hawaii. Be careful in picking the time of year because this side of Kauai can be rain soaked. This Robert Trent Jones–designed course will bring all the challenges a golfer could ever want and then some! While I had played this one prior to working on the Top 100 list, this time I was better prepared for the beast and happily recorded my ninety-one. Simply stated, not to be missed.
7. The Challenge at Manele: October 8, 2001. This is truly a beauty on the little island of Lanai off the coast of Maui in Hawaii. This Jack Nicklaus–designed course is a target-style desert links layout, while every hole provides an expansive view of the brilliant blue sea. Volcanic slopes, lava rock formations, and mesmerizing scenery all come into play. The

front nine is a mere “warm-up” for what’s to come on the back. While hole twelve is the signature hole and deservedly so, the seventeenth probably requires Hawaii’s most demanding shot. I felt good with my eighty-eight and played several times during my stay at the resort. On subsequent trips to Maui, I always squeeze in a ferry ride over to Lanai to once again tee it up.

8. Koolau: October 12, 2001. For many golfers, this would not make the highlights section, but it for sure is a personal favorite of mine. At the time I played it (and have been back several more times since then), it was ranked as the hardest course in the United States. Back tee slope was 162, and the white tee box was even rated 132 over 6,406. Hole eighteen is rated as the hardest hole on the course, and the tee box has a sign stating, “You are about to play the hardest hole on the hardest course in the United States.” However, playing those shorter tees will allow the golfer to skip many of the two hundred-plus carries over barrancas from the tees. This monster is carved out of a rainforest some fifteen miles outside of Honolulu, often referred to as *King Kong in a skirt!* The pro shop recommendation is to bring at a minimum the number of balls equivalent to your handicap/index. A successful day is any when you finish and do not lose all those. As such I was pretty happy with my eighty-eight, losing four balls for the day. Bring your camera and a buddy; it’s like playing in Jurassic Park.
9. Bay Harbor Golf Club: July 12, 2002. Based in Boyne, Michigan, and home to several Top 100 courses, this twenty-seven-hole beauty premiered on the list at number eight! I

was fortunate to play all three nines, and each are uniquely different from the others. The combo of the links and quarry nines are what brought the course to fame, but for sure don't overlook the preserve nine. The links is incredibly scenic, very reminiscent of Hawaii courses, while overlooking Little Traverse Bay. It is sometimes referred to as the "Pebble Beach of the Midwest." Once you have played it, you will have difficulty choosing which two nines for a replay. Happy with my eight-eight.

10. Pasatiempo: September 13, 2002. The only course on the Top 100 designed by the legendary Scottish designer Dr. Alister MacKenzie is an often-overlooked tract in Santa Cruz, just north of the Pebble Beach gang. If that name sounds familiar, think Cypress Point and Augusta National. Good friend Gerry Layo turned me on to this classic beauty, and we shared the round together on our way to "the Pebble Beach gang." In the year 2000 it was ranked number seventeen, and it's every bit of that!
11. PGA West TPC Stadium: February 24, 2003. Here is what the developers instructed architect Pete Dye: "Build us the hardest golf course in the world." This course more than any other is known for sending pros in the opposite direction and for good reason. Witness 250,000 gorse-like shrubs, eight lakes trimmed with rough-cut boulders, and deep and lengthy bunkers everywhere you look—just some of the distractions. Located near Palm Springs, my good friend and business partner Mark Moses joined me for a day in what we called the "house of pain." Bragging rights for me with a birdie on number two and a par on the legendary "Alcatraz" seventeenth.

12. Shadow Creek: April 28, 2003. Steve Wynn instructed legendary architect Pete Dye to build a “mature” golf course on a flat piece of desert just outside of Las Vegas. My partner Gerry Layo gifted me this experience, and what a gift, as at the time, a round of golf was a princely \$1,000. On opening day Pete Dye addressed an audience to declare the course was open for play. In his remarks he indicated that Steve Wynn gave him an unlimited budget to build the course, and “he exceeded the budget.” This course is a miracle project of perfection, including the clubhouse and practice area. In fact, each foursome is provided its own private tee boxes separate from any other groups. The course was not listed in the year 2000, as the fee was categorized as too expensive to be included in a list of *playable*. That was amended in 2002, as it was listed number seven, and if cameras were allowed, I suspect as many photos would have been shot as my ninety-two strokes. Gerry, a seven-index golfer, carded an eighty-four. The scorecard just didn't seem to matter, as the experience alone was enough to raise your heartbeat. Oh, and the yardage book was a coffee table-like photobook of 125 pages!
13. Wolf Creek: April 27, 2003. Opened in the year 2000, it premiered on the Top 100 in 2002 in position number forty-eight. This unique tract located about an hour and a half outside of Vegas in Mesquite, Nevada, is a definite golfer must. I've flown to Vegas from Southern California when golfer friends are due to visit Vegas just to see their faces on arrival at Wolf Creek. Gerry Layo and I tackled this one the day prior to Shadow Creek, making for one memorable golfing visit. Stunning white bunkers seem to be everywhere,

and the pristine fairways demand target golf. No matter what tee box level you choose, be sure to climb to the “tips” on number two and try to even guess your target landing area. By far this was the most visually dramatic golf course I have ever played.

14. Pacific Dunes: May 17, 2003. Located in Bend, Oregon, this is my favorite golf destination. A collection of world-class golf, with additional courses being added regularly. Gerry Layo and I arrived to play in a two-man best ball tourney. We led the tourney from start until the last day, where we went on to fold and finish “out of the money.” Built in 2001, and in 2002 premiering on the Top 100 list in the number two spot, this was my favorite course in the world until 2018. The resort courses are pure links courses, walking only with literally hundreds of caddies to choose from. For me, Pacific Dunes is the ultimate golf experience sitting on the coast of Oregon. Winds that will haunt you well beyond the round, shore pines to sixty-foot sand dunes, and gorse seemingly everywhere, this is the proverbial man-versus-nature experience. Other than hole sixteen, I’d put any of the others up against most any golf holes out there. Consider this a must visit, including the practice area, which includes a one-acre putting green!
15. Bandon Dunes: May 18, 2003. Sister course to Pacific Dunes and ranked number nine in 2002, this is, as proclaimed, “golf as it was meant to be,” with the spirit of Scotland’s ancient links, with ocean views on nearly every hole. Many would argue this tract outdoes Pacific Dunes, and it would be hard to argue otherwise. *Golfweek* said it best: “Picture a cross

between Pebble Beach and Carnoustie—with a pinch of Pine Valley for good measure—and you have Bandon Dunes.”

16. Coeur D'Alene: May 29, 2004. I played this beauty twice on Memorial Day weekend and squeezed in running a marathon in between in my quest for a marathon in all fifty states. Both days my front nine cards were in the thirties, only to blow up on the back, shooting eighty-three and eighty-five. You can certainly find tougher tracks but none more beautiful and impeccably maintained. Sure, other courses have their signature hole but none as unique and famous as number fourteen, par three, sporting the world's first and only moveable floating green! The green is repositioned daily and can be 100 yards one day and 175 the next. A boat ride from mainland to the green is the only way to get there, and special gifts are in store for pars, birdies, and aces. Not to be missed.
17. Bulle Rock: July 11, 2004. The second of two Top 100 courses played in one day in the state of Maryland. The overwhelming consensus of our foursome was this was one of the toughest courses we had ever played. Longtime friend Bruce Nosse, fellow entrepreneur friend Jim Kenefick, and brother-in-law Craig Nicholls posted scores of 101, 97, 103, and 96 to lend evidence to the statement. It is ranked by many as the number one must-play course in the state of Maryland; come prepared with “game.” It was ranked number twenty-five on the 2002 list. We all left with great memories despite the high scores. My memory was best of all, as on the thirty-sixth hole of the day, I holed a sixty-foot putt for all the money!
18. Pine Hill: August 27, 2004. Ranked number thirty-one on the 2002 Top 100 list, this beast of a tract is located just two

miles from the world-legendary Pine Valley Golf Club. Named often as the most challenging course in New Jersey, it brought memories of my visit to Bulle Rock. The course was built atop a former ski slope, so flat lies are rare, and the thick woods and sharp drop-offs serve up plenty of opportunities for penalty shots to accumulate. Lifelong best friend Rick Iovine joined me for a fun day, Rick carding an eighty-seven and me a ninety-two.

19. We-Ko-Pa: January 7, 2005. I flew to Phoenix, Arizona, to knock down two Top 100s, followed by running my seventh state marathon in my quest of fifty states. Bonnie joined me for the weekend, which began on a bad foot with the airlines losing my golf clubs for a day. The club set me up with new shoes and a rental set, whereupon I fell in love with the Cleveland Launcher and added it to my permanent set. Club matched me up with two pros from Canada, and Bonnie joined in for a ride along. Ranked number thirty-eight on the 2004 list, it deserved its ranking. Great layout, no houses on the course, and gorgeous views. Playing alongside the pros sure helped my game—eighty-four for the day!
20. Edgewood Tahoe: June 24, 2005. My birthday treat to business partner Gerry Layo at one of my most favorite spots in the world—Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Ranked number sixty-nine on the year 2000 Top 100, the tree-lined fairways backdropped by snow-frosted mountains stretching along a bluer-than-blue alpine lake make for a feast for the eyes. This Fazio-designed beauty is impeccably manicured, and the closing holes alone are worth the price of admission. Only fitting on his birthday, Gerry took home a prized shirt from the gift shop, his eighty-one beating my eighty-six handily.

21. Whistling Straits: September 5, 2005. Ranked number eight on the 2002 Top 100 list, this course is an architectural wonder in Kohler, Wisconsin. Two foursomes of friends over two days, packing in this beauty along with three other Top 100s, made for a fun-filled weekend. Included in the group were both Rick Iovine and Gerry Layo, who have joined me on several of my Top 100 excursions. My only complaint for this outing was my arrival with my back out, resulting in too many poor shots and big scores. Next to the Bandon and Pebble resorts, this is my go-to golf resort. For those who have enjoyed Ballybunion in Ireland, Whistling Straits comes with a similar feeling. Outsized mounds and bunkers, this is a picturesque tract on the shores of Lake Michigan. With open, rugged, and windswept terrain, Pete Dye created a true masterpiece here.
22. Blackwolf Run—River: September 6, 2005. Ranked number three on the 2000 Top 100 list, the River tract requires the golfer to be skilled with every club in the bag. It is noted as the most intimidating course in the Midwest, and I could make the case that such a designation could cover a much larger area than that! Giant grassy mounds, vast waste bunkers, kettle-like pot bunkers, split-level fairways, and perched greens defended by huge swales make for all the challenge one could ever ask for. Regardless of the tee boxes played, plan to leave your egos at home. A genuine treat to share with great friends.
23. Bandon Trails: January 20, 2007. The third of the Bandon courses opened in 2005 and regularly ranked in the top twenty. Starts and finishes with massive sand dunes and, in between,

weaves through gorgeous meadows and coastal forests. This tract is quite different than the previous two Bandon courses, and I've heard from many this is their favorite, but I prefer the others. Regardless, it's a great playing experience.

24. Hualalai: June 3, 2008. Racing the Honu 70.3 Ironman brought me to the Big Island, and I was first tee off as a single on this Four Seasons beauty. Generous bright-green fairways, matched against black lava and nestled along a bright-blue Pacific Ocean, sure made for a visual feast. Manicured conditions. My eighty that morning sure made for a great experience.
25. Trump National LA: August 11, 2008. Best friend Rick Iovine and former business partner Brett Dillenberg joined me on this one. Known to be one of the most expensive golf courses ever built at more than \$250 million, this Pete Dye–designed beauty is just that! Amazing playing conditions, brilliant white sands, and magnificent ocean views are all part of the experience here. Accuracy is advised, as balls hit off the fairways are most often lost, and penalties mount up quickly. Witness Rick and me at ninety-four and Brett at ninety-six. Regardless, a real *wow* experience.
26. Tobacco Road: July 14, 2013. Built out of the sand hills of North Carolina, here you will find plenty of sandy waste areas. Nonetheless, plenty of safe green fairways set up the player for an enjoyable round. Many will take issue with this assessment; however, I found this course more visually enjoyable than legendary Pinehurst No. 2. Carded an eighty-four that day, adding to my enjoyment.

27. Bethpage Black: August 1, 2014. A sign printed in big red letters is posted behind the first tee: "Warning: The Black Course is an extremely difficult golf course, which is recommended only for highly skilled golfers." This public tract opened in 1936 and has undergone several restorations. Host to several PGA tourneys, this is truly a monster. Tee times often require sleeping out at 4:00 a.m. in hopes of getting on this beast. I was fortunate to have a local friend, Matt Weiss, grab us a tee time without the hassle. (Thank you, Matt!) While our foursome was absent of any good golfers, the scores for the day spoke loudly: 134, 131, 102, and 93. While the numerous bunkers and tight fairways make for tough conditions, playing this classic is a must.
28. Streamsong Red & Blue: December 5–6, 2015. I played the Red as a solo and was joined the next day on the Blue with friend and client Riad Nizam. Located in Florida, about sixty miles out of Tampa, the word to describe these is *unexpected*. Florida courses are generally flat, but at Streamsong you quickly learn that is not the case. Tom Doak, Bill Coore, and Ben Crenshaw have brought that "Bandon Dunes feel" to Florida. Both regularly ranked in the top twenty, these Scottish links call out to be walked for the ideal experience. Undulating fairways, huge bunkers, towering sand dunes, and gnarly greenside pot bunkers are all present. All add up to a fun and challenging experience.
29. Cascata: January 16, 2016. I teamed up with Riad's brother Jamil for this world-class experience just outside of Las Vegas. Carved out of Red Mountain, this is truly target golf. A beautiful conditioned tract inclusive of a natural waterfall and streams throughout, this is a must play when visiting Vegas.

30. Pine Valley: June 5, 2018. Okay, so this amazing course is not actually on the Playable Top 100 Golf Courses in the United States, and I've played several private courses ranked in their own Top 100 and not included in my 100. But when you play the number one ranked course in the world, I feel you have to include it. (I get to make the rules; after all, it's life by design!) A CEO coach client, Tom Londres, found the way to get my best friend Rick and me out there for a truly magical experience. (Thanks, Tom!) He teamed us up with a business partner of his, Glenn Marvin, along with a member of the club. Open for play in 1919, the design can only be described as *scintillating*. Each hole is unique to itself, and rarely can you see another hole from the one you are playing. Located just outside of my birthplace, Philadelphia, in the sandy pine barrens, this tract is truly demanding. (If you ever get the opportunity, check out the drone video of hole-by-hole intro, as it will truly help with your survival on the day of play.) Relentless bunkers abound, waste bunkers seem to be everywhere, and not a rake is to be found on the course. Pine Valley requires a high degree of mental toughness—all the while you walk in a seeming sense of tranquility, yet *brutal* is a more apt description of the course. Throughout the day it seems as if each shot requires a controlled carry over sand and water. Rick carded a 98, and I posted a 102, and we both felt we played well that day! The club house is intentionally understated, and I suspect every visitor picks up their fair share of memory logo wear. We sure did!

In a cursory review of the list at the beginning of this appendix, you can see that by the year 2008, I had knocked down eighty of

the Top 100, keeping my pace for an initially desired completion in a ten-year period. However, it would be five years before I played another for number eighty-one. In 2007 I got bit by the Ironman triathlon bug, and squeezing in both sports along with business, travel, and home life demanded that something had to give. As such, it would take me eight years to pick up the next fifteen on my list. Life holds forth so many opportunities, but at the end of the day, we are all maxed at twenty-four hours a day. Accordingly, when designing one's life, it's about trade-offs. But remember—we get to decide! Given the choice, I would highly recommend this golf journey as a genuinely fun bucket list entry.

As mentioned earlier, it was my intent to play my “final five” the year before I wrote this book, but during the first half of 2020, I battled a severed quad tendon surgery and malignant melanoma surgery (proclaimed cancer-free), and the world challenged a pandemic. Be assured that my life design is calling out for one hundred!