

Robb Report

The 12 Best Private Golf Clubs in the U.S., From California to South Carolina

World-class private facilities are emerging across the country, enticing a national member base drawn to the clubs' unique course layouts.



One of the biggest impacts of Covid on the golf world was the proliferation of new public golf clubs, which are still sprouting up like spring flowers due to increased demand for the sport. But there is also a growing list of new private facilities for individuals and families who don't want to sit on the waitlists of existing clubs. This trend is particularly noticeable in Hobe Sound, Florida, where eight clubs are either in construction or have recently been completed. In many instances, these are pure sporting clubs, offering golf and, of course, pickleball and tennis, but not, say, swimming pools.

Limited upscale lodging has also become common as these clubs are enticing members from around the country, rather than just locals, drawing high net-worth individuals who want to be part of a club that's steeped in a premium golf experience created by well-known golf architects.

Beyond Florida, we're also seeing new members-only courses in Texas, South Carolina, and even a new golf hot spot emerging near Omaha, Nebraska. Northern Michigan is also witnessing the renaissance of High Pointe, a remote private facility that went down during the Great Recession but is now coming back, its course larger and more intricate than before.

Here, in no particular order, are 12 of our favorites.

Crossroads at Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina



The dynamic golf architect duo Tad King and Rob Collins took land as flat as a pancake at the toney Palmetto Bluff to create Crossroads, a rollicking course full of contour and slope on a 54-acre site. Set to open early next year, the marvelous, reversible 9-hole course will be available to Palmetto Bluff Golf Club members, with usage available to other Palmetto Bluff Club members on a space-available basis. The design team moved a lot of earth to create faux dunes that border the fairways. They give dramatic vistas the community's inland waterway, which allows golfers to bring their own electric Duffy boats to the course. As with most of King-Collins' designs, the greens provide both a challenge and whimsy, testing the golfer's game via a near-endless variety of contours, with treacherous bunkers. Expect fun even as you make double-bogey.