



Pete Dye, Tom Fazio, Davis Love III and Greg Norman designed courses at the sprawling Barefoot Resort. Dye's course (above) has all the pratfalls golfers have come to expect from the acclaimed architect.

Known by the locals as Golftown, U.S.A., Myrtle Beach is home to more than 100 golf courses sprinkled along the Grand Strand, the 100-kilometre curve of sand that stretches from Little River in the north to Georgetown in the south. Almost all of the golf is good and a lot of it is terrific, with some layouts ranked in the top 100 public courses in the United States.

The Strand is divided into north and south sections. The north is heavier on the golf and nightlife, while the south is a little quieter and more refined. In the north, check out the Barefoot Resort, which features designs by Greg Norman, Tom Fazio, Pete Dye and Davis Love III. (Barefoot also offers villa accommodations with all the essentials for a week devoted to golf - lots of space to stash clubs and travel bags, a fridge big enough to hold a couple of cases of beer, a medicine cabinet wide enough to hold a row of anti-inflammatory pill bottles and boxes of Band-Aids and a television with a cable connection that allows you to pick up the NHL playoffs.)

Another group of courses in the north Strand worth playing are The Witch, The Wizard and Man O' War, all of which were designed by Dan Maples. A native of Pinehurst, N.C., Maples' family has been in the golf business since 1895 and his great-grandfather was a right hand man for Donald Ross. The best of the three courses is The Witch, which sprawls across a 500-acre wilderness preserve.

The granddaddy of Myrtle Beach courses is Pine Lakes, which was designed by Scotsman Robert White in 1927. The early clientele was heavy on the blueblood, including the Rockefellers. In the early 1950s, *Time Magazine* magnate Henry Luce sent his top brass to Pine Lakes for a brainstorming session where they came up with the idea for *Sports Illustrated* magazine. After years of gentle decline, in 2009 new management spent \$15 million on a major nip and tuck on the clubhouse and course, returning Pine Lakes to its Old World glory.

The south end of the Strand also boasts a strong lineup of courses including True Blue, Caledonia, The Heritage and The Tradition and Pawley's Plantation Country Club, a Jack Nicklaus Signature Course. The Plantation's history stretches back to the American Revolution and visitors here have ranged from George Washington to Winston Churchill.

Dining

Man can't live by golf alone and most times buddy trips are as much about a great dinner as they are about a great round. For a top-flight meal, try Greg Norman's Australian Grille, which peaks out over the Intracoastal Waterway and has earned awards of excellence from *Wine Spectator* magazine.

Hungry in the middle of the night? The Strand is home to three Waffle Houses so you can scarf down a bulging plate of bacon, eggs and yes waffles at 2 a.m.

Tired of looking at your foursome? The Strand features three Hooters locations. If you want an Old World variation, try the Tilted Kilt. It opened last summer and boasts 50 big-screen televisions and over 40 types of draft beer. Another sports hangout is Broadway Louie's, which owns a massive, 27-foot projection screen.

Accommodations

There are dozens of hotels, condos and villas along the Strand that we use for our stay and play packages. A springtime package with four nights of accommodation and five rounds of golf including ones at the highly ranked Grand Dunes and Pine Lakes starts \$593 per person.



Off-course Activities

If you and your group are into live music then head to the House of Blues or the Alabama Theater. The other spot to go is the impressive Broadway at the Beach. It's packed with more than 20 restaurants and another dozen or so bars. Add attractions such as WonderWorks and Ripley's Aquarium into the mix and an entire day can be spent there. Myrtle Beach is also home to countless mini-putt courses, which are a great place to conduct extra holes if a match is halved after 18