

# GLV

THE GOOD LIFE IN VANCOUVER

March/April 2004



Featured in this issue:  
the best places to

# Golf

\$3.95





Links at Crowbush Cove on Prince Edward Island



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Scott Baechler is a man intent on living his dream. From the early days in his grandmother's kitchen where he piped roses on her cakes, Scott knew that a culinary career was his calling. Today, Scott is the executive chef for Vancouver's *Metropolitan Hotel* and oversees all operations for its acclaimed restaurant, *Diva at the Met*.

Peter Beck is the well-known financial expert who founded *Swift Trade Securities*, Canada's first day trading firm, in 1998. It is now the country's leader in direct-access trading. Beck has also co-authored a book on hedge funds, and frequently appears on television to offer commentary on the performance of the Canadian markets.

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Sarah Simpson is a communications specialist and freelance writer with a BFA from UBC and an MBA from York. When not promoting or writing about Vancouver's lively arts scene, she can often be found browsing through used bookstores for impossibly intellectual books that she'll never read. She is shocked and amazed daily that she is able to make a living doing something she actually enjoys.

Jim West is a public relations and marketing professional who writes on subjects ranging from finance to food. Over the span of a career that has encompassed everything from chef to bricklayer, he has travelled extensively throughout Vancouver in search of God Only Knows What.

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From the  
**publisher**

Spring is here! Golf season is on the way. Here in Vancouver we're enjoying an early spring. I keep telling everybody "if this is global warming, bring it on!" But then I look at the weather in the town where I was born, Halifax, and it's apparent the great weather has been reserved for the nicest city—Vancouver.

With this issue we've moved another step forward in our efforts to be the best magazine serving the best city. We've added some more contributors, cleaned up the look and brought on some sales folks. Not only here in Vancouver, but also in Calgary and Toronto, where we intend to have separate editions by summer.

This issue actually marks the first milestone for the magazine. It's our sixth issue and completes the first cycle; the next issue is our first anniversary issue. If you've been following our City Social feature through the previous issues it won't be a surprise that we're going to have a party.

Turn to the centre spread of this issue for the scoop on our last event. Thanks, to everyone who attended—their admission fees went to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of BC & the Yukon. Thanks, to all those who donated their time, energy and talent to make it happen—the bands were awesome. Vancouver has got some amazing young talent!

The details of our birthday party will remain secret for a little while. But there is little doubt we intend to have a great time. If you're keen to attend, it would probably be a good idea to be part of the first 100 folks booking tickets. See the spread for details. Be assured we're certain to take full advantage of the talent around us. Of course the Make-A-Wish Foundation will benefit as well.

Next issue we're going to take a look at boating. What could be more natural when you find yourself in Vancouver in May than to find yourself on a boat? Even if the Canucks are still banging, grinding and scoring. Make sure you get it. Look to the left. Look for you in May.

Terry Tremaine  
*Publisher*We welcome letters from readers at: [terry@investment.com](mailto:terry@investment.com)



# FAIRWAYS TO HEAVEN



*Where to tee it up across  
Canada this season*

BY BRIAN KENDALL

Top: Ontario's Legends on the Niagara.  
Bottom: Toronto's Angus Glen; the Okanagan Valley's Predator Ridge





Victoria's Bear Mountain



Banff Springs Golf Course

**D**oug Wood, the director of golf at the Banff Springs Golf Course, tells the story of the day about a decade ago when an ageing Bob Hope played six holes there before heavy winds chased him into the clubhouse. At a dinner party that evening, Hope insisted that Wood sit by his side. The two happily talked golf for the next three hours.

"He told me about all the joy he'd gotten from the game during his lifetime," Wood recalls. "Hope's old friend Bing Crosby had told him that Banff was one of the courses he had to play before he died."

Crosby was right to steer his pal north of the border into Canada. From Bear Mountain in Victoria to the Links at Crowbush Cove on Prince Edward Island, the country is filled with layouts that are attracting national and even world-wide attention. Presented here is a roundup of outstanding Canadian public courses every well-travelled golfer must play at least once or regret it forever.

It's no secret to Westerners that several of Canada's best courses are found on this side of the Rockies. The most talked about course opening in recent memory was last August's launch of Bear Mountain, a Jack Nicklaus design set in dramatic terrain about 15 minutes northwest of Victoria. Treacherously difficult, with a Slope Rating of 152 from the 7,212-yard back tees, Bear Mountain's routing includes a panoramic view of Juan de Fuca Strait with Victoria in the foreground and the snow-topped Olympic Mountains as a backdrop.

Thanks to Nicklaus's considerable reputation as an architect, Bear Mountain became one of Canada's must-play courses the moment it opened. Another British Columbia layout that received immediate raves was Greywolf Golf Course, which Golf Digest named Canada's best new course of 1999.

Tucked in the Purcell mountain range near the town of Invermere, Greywolf stretches 7,140 yards from the tips, bentgrass all the way, with tree-lined fairways, mountain views on every hole and almost 500 feet of elevation change. The Doug Carrick-designed track also features one of the most ballyhooed par threes in the land, Cliffhanger, the aptly named sixth hole.

Anyone who plays Cliffhanger will never forget the experience. The tee shot requires a long gut-churning carry over the sheer drop of Hopeful Canyon to a green perched along the edges of vertical rock cliffs. Rugged peaks tower in every direction, evergreens strain toward the sky, and from the green, golfers can see for kilometres down an incredibly beautiful mountain valley.

Though only a few years old, Greywolf is already home to one of the most unique traditions in Canadian golf. Locals and visitors alike have taken to joyously howling like a wolf after a particularly good shot, especially at the signature hole.

No survey of British Columbia golf can neglect to mention Whistler, where high-end layouts designed by leading golf architects have opened in dizzying succession over the past 20 years. Jack Nicklaus set his Nicklaus North on the shores of



*Clockwise from above: Jasper Park Lodge Golf Course; Delta St. Eugene Mission near Cranbrook; Invermere's Greywolf*

Green Lake. Arnold Palmer's Whistler Golf Club is surrounded by majestic peaks. And Robert Cupp's Big Sky Golf and Country Club in nearby Pemberton offers a one-two punch of stunning scenery and playability.

But it's Robert Trent Jones Jr.'s Chateau Whistler Golf Club that is the town's crown jewel. Blasted out of the mountainside, the course offers thrilling elevation changes and a half-dozen or more holes that linger in the golfer's memory.

British Columbia is also the setting for what must surely rank as Canada's most novel golf resort. The new Delta St. Eugene Mission, located on a spectacular piece of property between Kimberley and Cranbrook, was once a residential school for aboriginal children run by the Catholic church.

Owned by the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council, which is counting on golf to ensure the band's future prosperity, the resort features a casino and a championship golf course designed by Canmore-based architect Les Furber that offers panoramic views of the Rocky Mountains and the surging St. Mary River.

Les Furber is also the design talent behind the 27-hole Predator Ridge Golf Resort, set on 1,200 rolling acres in the Okanagan Valley. Predator Ridge's twisting layout features vistas of lakes, streams, wheatgrass meadows and forests of Ponderosa Pine. The landscape presents two distinct faces of nature. One face is the rolling meadows and wheatgrass covered hillsides where there is an authentic links feel. The other features tree-clad and exposed bedrock ridges where the holes snake through narrow valleys.

Moving east into Alberta, the golfing traveller comes to the Fairmont Banff Springs and Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge courses, which have been the twin symbols of Canadian golf ever since they opened in the 1920s. Both are the handiwork of Canadian architect Stanley Thompson, whom knowledgeable students of the game rank alongside A.W. Tillinghast, Alister Mackenzie and Donald Ross as one of the premier designers of the 1920s and '30s, the so-called golden age of golf.

Thompson's accomplishments in Banff and Jasper have yet to be surpassed among mountain courses. Wherever he could, the architect left nature alone, taking his routing through tunnels of fir trees. Thompson startled the golf world by clearing gaps through the forest to point golfers toward greens aligned with distant mountains, and by whimsically patterning his bunkers after the snow formations on their peaks.

Another essential Alberta stop is the Kananaskis Country Golf Course, an hour west of Calgary. "It's the best natural setting I've ever been given to work with," marvelled its legendary designer, Robert Trent Jones Sr., when he first saw the site.

Trent Jones's two 18-hole layouts, named Mount Lorette and Mount Kidd after the nearby peaks that soar 2,900 metres above sea level, unfold alongside the Kananaskis River Valley, with more than 6.5 hectares of rivers, streams and ponds, and 142 strategically placed sand bunkers.

Moving ever eastward, many of Canada's top courses are inevitably found in heavily populated Ontario, where Toronto alone boasts more than 200 courses within an hour's drive of City Hall. Golfers are actually starting to look forward to their business trips to the Big Smoke, packing their clubs and sneaking the time to play such top local layouts as Glen Abbey (site of the 2004 Canadian Open) and Angus Glen (host of the 2002 Canadian Open).

Golf is also booming southwest of Toronto in Niagara Falls, where Legends on the Niagara opened to considerable fanfare in 2002. Built around a historic War of 1812 battlefield, the 45-hole facility (which includes 18-hole courses designed by Tom McBroom and Doug Carrick) cost almost \$27-million, making it one of Canada's most expensive golf complexes.

But what really has everyone talking is the blossoming of Ontario's Muskoka tourist district into one of North America's hottest golf destinations. Located about 200 kilometres north of Toronto, Muskoka enjoys an enduring bond with Canada's largest city similar to the relationship that exists between





Clockwise from top: New Brunswick's Algonquin Golf Course; Quebec's Le Manoir Richelieu Golf Club; Ontario's Bigwin Island Golf Club; Nova Scotia's Highlands Links

Vancouver and Whistler or New York and the Hamptons—a rocky, woodsy retreat from the workaday grind with hundreds of resorts, more than 600 lakes and more than a dozen golf courses.

As certain as the wildflowers of spring, Muskoka has unveiled at least one new course each of the past several golf seasons. Bigwin Island Golf Club, a gorgeous Doug Carrick design, was named the country's best new course of 2002 by Golf Digest. Another Muskoka layout, The Lake Joseph Club, won the same prestigious award in 1997. Other outstanding Muskoka layouts include Taboo Golf Course (Mike Weir's home course), the Mark O'Meara Course at Grandview Resort, and Deerhurst Highlands Golf Course.

Just as Whistler and Muskoka have added golf to their tourism mix, Quebec's Mont-Tremblant has opened a steady succession of memorable courses over the past decade. Le Diable, Le Géant, La Bête and Le Maître are helping fill the hotel rooms of a resort which once resembled a ghost town when ski season ended.

Another Quebec property that has leapt to the forefront of Canadian golf is the Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu Golf Club, which sprawls over 212 acres at the edge of the mighty St. Lawrence River, 152 kilometres east of Quebec City. Nine spectacular new holes, many of them affording commanding views of the St. Lawrence, have been added as part of a \$14-million expansion program that will see the layout grow to 27 holes.

Next door in New Brunswick, the picturesque town of St. Andrews-by-the-Sea is home to the redesigned Algonquin Golf Course. Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, which operates the course's famous sister resort, and the New Brunswick government have spent millions building a new 18-hole layout over a classic but worn-out 1920s track originally designed by American Donald Ross. The new Tom McBroom design features a dynamic blend of oceanside and forested holes, many of them offering sweeping views across Passamaquoddy Bay to the state of Maine.

Having marvelled at his courses in Banff and Jasper, fans of the immortal Stanley Thompson, who dominated the Canadian golfing landscape from the 1920s to his death in 1953, won't

want to miss his two Nova Scotian masterworks.

The Pines Golf Course in the town of Digby has long been one of the best-kept secrets in Canadian golf. Opened in 1931 and bought by the Nova Scotia government in 1966, a course once regarded as one of the crown jewels of Canadian golf grew ragged from lack of attention through the years. But a recent restoration has fully restored the lustre of a classically designed layout featuring tight fairways and small, subtly undulating greens. What's most striking about the 6,222-yard design is Thompson's uncanny ability to make every hole, one through 18, stand out in the golfer's memory. Like all his most famous courses, each hole at the Pines has an appearance and personality entirely its own.

An even more startling transformation has taken place at Highlands Links, located oceanside on Cape Breton Island at the province's northern tip. The superb but long-neglected track shot to national prominence in the 1990s thanks to a \$4-million restoration that saw the course's beauty and character fully restored.

Not a few architects and historians rank Highlands Links as Thompson's greatest achievement, better even than his Banff and Jasper courses. Golfers are dazzled by one of the most perfectly suited natural settings ever given to a Canadian golf course. Nova Scotia's largest mountains loom over rough-and-tumble terrain ranging from a pine-edged valley floor cut by the charging Clyburn River to rocky outcrops and seaside marshes.

One final must-play course lies across the Confederation Bridge in Prince Edward Island, which despite its diminutive size has emerged as a major player in Canadian golf, having opened more than 14 new courses over the past decade.

The catalyst for Prince Edward Island's success was the 1993 launch of the Links at Crowbush Cove, a demanding Tom McBroom design offering a traditional links experience unmatched in all of Canada. Set beside the rolling dunes of a white-sand beach, Crowbush Cove features nine water holes, eight holes near the dunes, undulating fairways, and fast and tricky greens.

So many great Canadian courses, so little time. ■