

Area golf courses

Antrim County

A-Ga-Ming: Overlooking Torch Lake, this is one of the most picturesque courses in the state. Located 10 miles north of Elk Rapids off U.S. 31 North. 264-5081.

Antrim Dells: This 18-hole championship course was designed by Jerry Matthews. Plays to 6,670 yards from championship tees. Located 35 miles N of Traverse City on U.S. 31. 599-2679.

Bellaire Golf Club: This 18-hole course has been face-lifted over the last few years. It's slightly rolling with a new back nine. Located 2 miles south of Bellaire on M-88. 533-8942.

Elk Rapids Golf Club: The course offers a view of Elk Lake and some of the holes have been re-designed over the past few years. 264-8891.

Centennial Farm Golf Club: The front nine features rolling hills and the back nine plays through hardwoods. It is located near Bellaire and close to several other Antrim County courses. 533-6886.

Hawk's Eye: Designed by John Robinson, the architect on the companion course, The Chief. This player-friendly course has earned rave reviews for its imaginative layout that utilizes the hilly terrain around Lake Bellaire. 533-4295.

Lakes of the North: An 18-hole layout with a 71 par. From championship tees, the course plays to 6,922 yards. Located on County Road 38, 10 miles W of Old 27. 585-6800.

Schuss Mountain Golf Club: The 18-hole course, cut out of Antrim County forest, has sand traps and five water hazards to add to the difficulty. The

course has a driving range available. Four miles W of Mancelona on M-88. 800-678-4111.

Cedar River Golf Club: The new Tom Weiskopf designed course opened a few years ago at Shanty Creek to rave reviews. The course plays to 6,989 yards from the back tees and 6,528 from the blue, 5,963 from the white and 5,315 from the red. 800-678-4111.

Summit Golf Club: This hilly, 18-hole course of 6,559 yards features sand traps on each hole. The greens are lightning fast. Located off M-88 near Bellaire. 800-678-4111.

The Chief Golf Course: Bellaire's newest 18-hole championship course was designed by John Robinson and it plays from 4,708 to 6,541 yards. All carts feature GPS. The Chief is located on Shanty Creek Road, 200 feet east of the entrance to Shanty Creek. 888-483-5465.

The Legend Golf Club: Designed by Arnold Palmer and plays to 6,764 yards, the combination of heavily-treed fairways, sand traps and water hazards create difficult shots on a tight course. Three ponds are formed by the headwaters of Shanty Creek, which winds through numerous other holes. 800-678-4111.

Windmill Farms: One of two par-3 courses in the area, Windmill Farms of Mancelona not only offers nine holes of golf, but a fine restaurant as well. 587-5258.

Benzie County

Champion Hill: Located on 350 acres of the highest land in Benzie County, this course offers scenic, open, rolling and heather-lined fairways, and picturesque views of four lakes. The 18-hole, par-72 course plays to 6,887 yards. Located 2.5 miles south of U.S. 31 on

Marshall Road, just west of Honor. 882-9200.

Crystal Downs: This private course is recognized as one of the finest in the United States. Located near Frankfort.

Crystal Lake Golf Club: The 18-hole layout takes golfers through heather, orchards and hardwoods. It overlooks Crystal Lake and features a practice facility. Located one-half mile north of Beulah on U.S. 31. 882-4061.

Crystal Mountain: The year-round resort on M-115 near Thompsonville offers 36 championship holes cut out of Benzie County woods. Crystal features the Mountain Ridge course and the Betsie Valley course. Driving range available. 378-2911.

Frankfort Golf Club: The nine-hole course plays to 2,552 yards with a par of 34. Located two miles north of Frankfort on M-22. 352-4101.

Mistwood Golf Course: The 27-hole championship course features a multiple tee set-up. Located at 7568 Sweet Lake Rd. in Lake Ann, 13 miles west of Traverse City. 275-5500.

Pinecroft Golf Plantation: This 18-hole championship course was awarded a 3.5 star rating by Golf Digest's 1998-99 Places To Play. Located one-half mile east of Beulah off U.S. 31 on Narrow Gauge Road. 882-9100.

Charlevoix County

Beaver Island Golf Course: This nine-hole course plays to 3,260 yards on the island. Par is 35. 448-2301.

Belvedere Golf Club: This challenging course features strategically placed bunkers, slightly rolling fairways and small, well-manicured greens. Located on Marion Center Road, near the M-66 and U.S. 31 junction. 547-2611.

Boyne Mountain Monument: The Monument is famous for its island



Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

Local golfers began the season at Mitchell Creek Golf Course.

green on the 18th hole. The course begins at an elevation of 1,100 feet and works its way down through wooded, hilly fairways. 549-6028.

Boyne Mountain Alpine: The Alpine course has water in play on 6 holes. Like the Monument, it starts at an elevation of 1,100 feet, working down. 549-6028.

Charlevoix Country Club: This 18-hole course was designed by Jerry Matthews. It plays to 6,600 yards from the back tees. 547-1922.

City of Charlevoix Golf Course: This is a unique, nine-hole course that features two trips across U.S. 31 during your round. It's a par 36 that plays to 3,001 yards. 547-3268.

Dunmaglas Golf Course: Designed by Larry Mancour, a member of the Senior PGA Tour, this course offers views of

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Mecca

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Northern Lower Peninsula as a group rather than individually," said Garland Resort GM Barry Owens. "We put our individual personalities aside and came together as a group in 1987. The concept works because we've kept it that way."

The Mecca is a voucher-run business just like Myrtle Beach, said Beachnau.

"The concept works because the golfers are able to book their lodging

and rounds at the same time they make their reservations," he said. "When they book the lodging, the lodging property books the tee times. The golfers take a voucher to the golf course with them and no individual payments are needed. It's very easy for all involved, including the golfers. Myrtle Beach has been using that concept since the 1960s."

The golfers love it because of the variety of courses from which they have to choose, said Scott Head, head pro for Treetops four 18-hole golf courses.

"We still get lots of

groups of guys coming up to golf during the summer, and they like variety," he said. "The voucher system makes it easy for them to book the rounds at multiple courses if they wish."

Those who like to stay put can book at either Garland or Treetops and have a choice of four courses to play at either resort.

Others have a choice of staying at the smaller resorts like Otsego Club, Michaywe and Thunder Bay Resort with each offering two courses, or choosing from a variety of motel and hotel accommodations in the Gaylord area and

daytripping to their course of choice.

"One call books it all and even meals can be included," emphasized Beachnau. "That's what makes it work, the simplicity."

In 2003, the Gaylord Golf Mecca booked nearly 350,000 18-hole rounds of golf, bringing in over \$18 million in golf sales to the five-county area.

Over \$2 million in food and beverage sales were booked through the system.

"Over 1,000 people are employed in our five-county area through the golf business, which is a direct result of the success of the

Gaylord Golf Mecca," Beachnau said. "The annual payroll for all of our golf partners is over \$15 million. As far as an industry in northern Michigan, that's pretty impressive."

And the future looks bright for the Mecca, added Beachnau.

"Myrtle Beach has been at this for nearly 50 years, and they seem to be still going strong," he said. "We've been at it for 17 years, and continuing to improve."

For more information on the Mecca and its participating properties, visit www.gaylordgolfmecca.com or call (800) 345-8621.