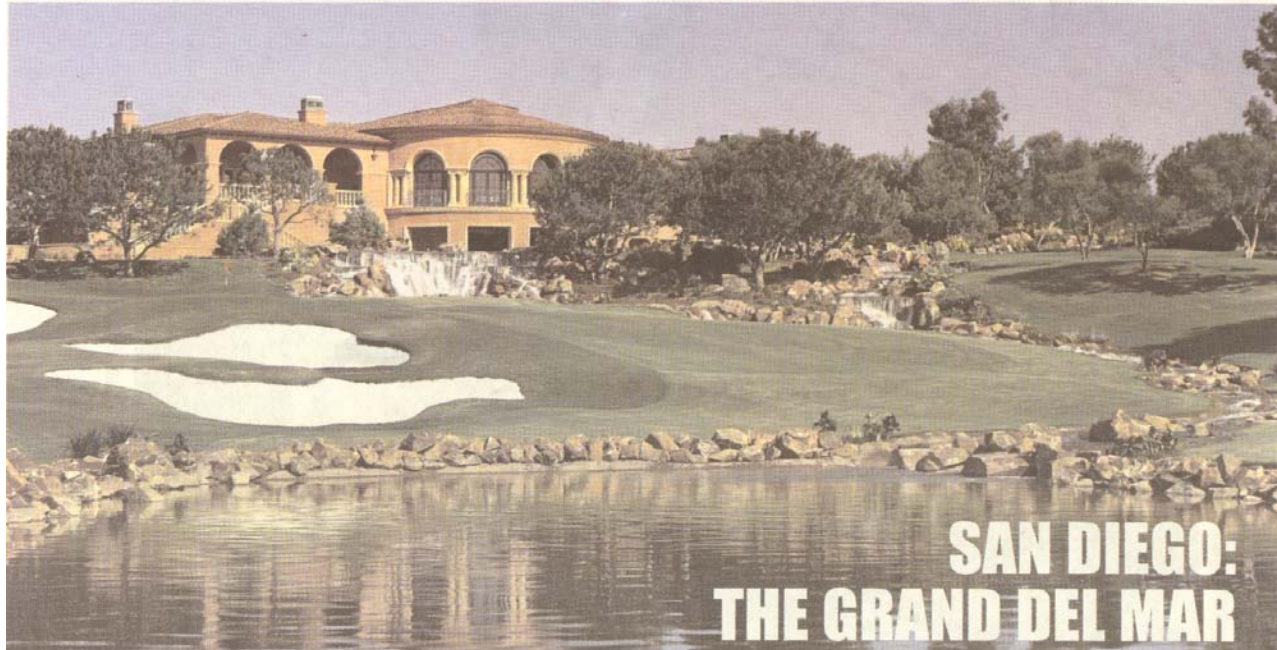


JUNE 2008 Texas Golfer

TRAVEL



SAN DIEGO: THE GRAND DEL MAR

In an area boasting 300-plus days of sunshine, plenty of historic and upscale resorts and lots of top notch public golf offerings, including this month's U.S. Open at city-owned Torrey Pines, it's not like San Diego was desperate for another all-encompassing golf resort.

But the addition of The Grand Del Mar, which opened last fall, promises to raise the bar even higher, with the biggest winner the luxury golf and resort-loving travelers.

Perhaps never has a newly opened West Coast resort more aptly fitted its name than this one.

Local developer Douglas Manchester poured a reported \$300 million dollars into the 249-room European-styled temple of vacationing pleasure, with enough polished marble and elaborate furnishings to make an Arab sheik jealous.

Add an existing Tom Fazio golf course, greatly enhanced with Manchester's millions, and you have a great new entry into the San Diego

golf scene already chock full of great places to play and stay.

It's certainly not for the bargain basement, Motel 6 crowd, but for those looking to soak up the sunny Southern California vibes once the Texas heat and humidity stage their annual assault, this isn't a bad place to do it. Already the word about the newest resort on the well-heeled block is getting out. Texas Rangers and Dallas Stars owner Tom Hicks is a member of The Grand Golf Club, and a regular visitor here along with his family. NBC Sports will lodge its talent here during the Open this month and recently, Boston Celtics GM Danny Ainge stopped for a weekend stay and a round of golf en route to scouting the Pac-10 tournament in Los Angeles.

The Fazio course, the only one in San Diego, was first built here in 1999 when it was known as Meadows Del Mar, a pleasant enough public layout among the canyons, but with little else there.

When Manchester and his experienced team decided this hilltop location, six miles east of the Pacific Ocean, was a prime spot for a new resort, they did plenty of work on the par 72

golf layout.

With Fazio's blessing, they added some new tees and trees, toughening the course and enhancing its beauty. The biggest change by far was the addition of a multi-million dollar waterfall which thunders down from just right of the 18th green and cuts across the 18th fairway.

The Grand Director of Golf Shawn Cox, a 15-year veteran of the local golf scene, who got his start at Torrey Pines, toured every Fazio water feature in Southern California and Palm Springs, then designed much of the waterfall himself and had his golf superintendent and operations staff build it last summer.

Not one to cut corners or budget in any way, not a faux rock is anywhere to be found in this waterfall. Manchester also had the original 10,000 square foot clubhouse stripped to its foundation and replaced with a 50,000 square foot expansive monument to golf and the money it can attract.

It's more marble, hand-carved wood and flat screen TVs at every turn along with a new, highly praised restaurant, Addison's, open to

offers sweeping views of the canyons and the resort below. There are enough forced carries and large bunkers to keep your attention, but not so much punishment that the course isn't a pleasure to play 2-3 times during your stay.

Cox and his staff are also building an extensive practice and teaching facility which includes a short game school, a full swing video analysis and a unique PutterLab to straighten out any misses on Fazio's bent grass greens.

While gilded edged, golden frames surrounding jumbo-sized, flat screen TVs may not be part of your daily routine, a trip to The Grand to see just such a sight in your room is quite the summer diversion.

In June, when you're watching Tiger and his pals slog through the tough Torrey Pines conditions to win the U.S. Open, you can retreat to your nearby vacation oasis where everything is just, to borrow a term, Grand.

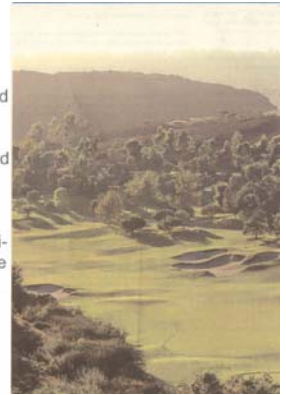
anyone for dinner only and offering stunning views of the canyons and the stars, those outside and those happily eating inside.

The clubhouse is split between facilities for the hotel resort guests and the private club members, the only people now allowed to play the course.

The Grand Spa offers a variety of treatments for male and female visitors including some especially suited for golfers just returning from the Fazio course.

With his newly upgraded golf facility, 7,106 yards from the back or Grand tees, Fazio proves once again his layouts can be scenic and charming without being over challenging or penal.

At least half the holes on the par 36 back nine and a few on the front



Know Before You Go

Location: The Grand Del Mar Resort, San Diego, California.

Transportation: Excellent multiple airline connections from all parts of Texas to nearby San Diego or Orange County airport. Los Angeles can be a cheaper, but further option.

Weather: Great year-around golf climate. Mostly sunny and no humidity, with cool nights, a cool breeze and sometimes fog from the ocean.

Attractions: Newly opened palatial resort operating under independent owners. 18-hole Tom Fazio designed golf course, 249 luxury rooms and a top notch spa, pools and wedding chapel.

Best Nearby Golf: City-owned Torrey Pines, site of the 2008 U.S. Open, nearby resorts La Costa and Four Seasons Golf Clubs.

More information www.thegrandgolfclub.com;
www.thegradndelmar.com

