



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Laura McMurchie, Vice President of Communications
Tel: 480-429-2253 / Fax: 480-421-9733
E-mail: lmcmurchie@scottsdalecvb.com

Tatum Luoma, Director of Public Relations
Tel: 480-889-2719 / Fax: 480-421-9733
E-mail: tluoma@scottsdalecvb.com
Visit us at www.scottsdalepressroom.com

Jerry Rose, VP of Communication Links
Tel: 480-348-7540
E-mail: jrose@commlinks.com

Swing into Scottsdale

Greetings from the World's Finest Golf Destination

Yes it's a bold claim, but we've got the numbers to back it up. Start with the 1,223 holes and 51 golf courses located within Scottsdale's city limits, and then mix in an additional 156 courses sprinkled across Scottsdale's Valley of the Sun neighbors. Now let's talk how 330 plus days of annual sunshine and a mere 7.7 inches of annual rainfall means Scottsdale area golfers enjoy more than 12 million rounds of golf every year. Add to that a year-round median average temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit and way-below-par humidity, and Scottsdale's scorecard is shaping up nicely.

Speaking of scorecards, Scottsdale is home to 11 of the "Top 25 golf courses in Arizona" and six of the "75 Best Golf Resorts" as determined by *Golf Digest*. Not to mention three courses listed on *Golf Magazine's* "Top 100 You Can Play." Finally, for those who'd rather watch the pros play, Scottsdale hosts the PGA TOUR's **Waste Management Phoenix Open**, the best attended golf tournament in the world, welcoming about 500,000 spectators a year.

DESERT GOLF GEMS

Scotland has its history and windswept links-style courses; California has its pebble beaches and ocean cliffs; and Augusta, Ga. has its pine trees, dogwoods and azaleas. However, no golfing landscape is as distinctive as Scottsdale's striking Sonoran Desert. Here, green fairways stretch across a starkly beautiful landscape brimming with billion-year-old rock formations, bottomless arroyos and towering saguaros. It's a sweeping, sun-drenched setting populated with little more than coyotes, roadrunners, rattlesnakes and the occasional beer cart.

An internationally renowned landmark that helped put desert golf on the map when it first opened in 1990, **Troon North Golf Club** (www.troonnorthgolf.com) now plays better than ever thanks to a reconfiguration and renovation. Overseen by Tom Weiskopf, original designer of Troon North's Pinnacle Course and co-designer of its Monument Course, both tracks were blended and re-sequenced in 2007 to create new layouts with improved playability. So what do the experts think? In its 2010 "Top 100 Courses You Can Play" rankings, *Golf Magazine* named the 'new' Pinnacle and Monument courses No. 21 and No. 44 in the nation, respectively, as well as the No. 1 and No. 4 courses in Arizona.

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Undoubtedly Scottsdale's most recognizable club, **TPC Scottsdale** (www.tpc.com/scottsdale) is a 36-hole jewel best known as the host of the aforementioned Waste Management Phoenix Open. Here you can attempt to replicate Tiger's hole-in-one on the Stadium Course's famed 16th hole, or try to carry the water right onto the 15th hole's island green. In-the-know locals, however, rave about TPC Scottsdale's lesser known but equally scenic Champions Course, which meanders across natural ravines and rolling terrain.

And there's nothing in golf that compares to the pageantry and spectacle of the **Waste Management Phoenix Open** (www.wastemanagementphoenixopen.com), a.k.a. "The Greatest Show on Grass." Held in early February, this fun-loving tournament welcomed more than 121,000 spectators in 2010 – on a single day! Come dusk, the golf event only turns up the heat as revelers stream across the street into the infamous Birds Nest, a temporary nightclub that annually transforms into the center of Scottsdale's entertainment universe.

Speaking of see-and-be-seen, not only is **Grayhawk Golf Club** (www.grayhawkgolf.com) a favorite of 2010 Masters champ Phil Mickelson, for whom the club's grillroom is named, but it also developed a reputation as one of Scottsdale's most stylish golf clubs. Not to say that Grayhawk's Talon and Raptor courses aren't superstars in their own right – highlighted by Talon's scenic back nine and Raptor's tournament history. In fact, Grayhawk hosted a variety of top-flight competitive events, including the Andersen Consulting World Championship of Golf, Williams World Challenge hosted by Tiger Woods, Tommy Bahama Challenge and, of course, the Frys.com Open, a PGA TOUR event held on the Raptor Course 2007-2009.

Hand-stitched into the wilds of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation bordering Scottsdale, **We-Ko-Pa Golf Club** (www.wekopa.com) offers a desert golf experience like no other. Golfers are completely immersed in the Sonoran Desert with no dwellings, roads or even out-of-bounds markers to distract them from the panoramic surroundings. *Sports Illustrated* named the Cholla Course among the "Top 10 New Golf Courses in the World" when it opened in 2001, and it's since become a fixture on *Golf Magazine's* list of the "Top 100 You Can Play in the U.S." In 2006, the Coore/Crenshaw-designed Saguaro Course debuted to national acclaim including being named one of *Golf Digest's* "Best New Public Courses." Most recently, We-Ko-Pa took two of the top four spots in *Golfweek's* 2010 Best State-by-State ranking, with the Saguaro Course taking the No. 1 spot while the Cholla Course settled for No. 4.

TRADITIONAL TRACKS

Although desert golf is associated with the typical golf experience in Scottsdale, the city features several outstanding courses that provide a traditional look and feel. **McCormick Ranch Golf Club** (www.mccormickranchgolf.com) offers 36 holes that unfold around sprawling water hazards and along fairways of mature pine, eucalyptus and palm trees that compliment the wide open spaces of the Scottsdale's desert tracks to the north. At **Camelback Golf Club** (www.camelbackgolf.com), play through lush tree-lined fairways, gently sloping contours and sparkling water hazards with magnificent mountain backdrops. Test your skills on the Indian Bend Course, a traditional American links-style course, or the Padre Course that was designed by world-renowned golf course architect Arthur Hills. Both McCormick Ranch and Camelback golf clubs opened decades ago and have since undergone the occasional renovation to maintain high standards of conditions and integrity of the original designs.

STAY & PLAY SUPERSTARS

Enjoy world-class resort golf at **The Boulders Resort & Golden Door Spa** (www.theboulders.com), where the top-flight North and South courses wind around and over the property's namesake rock formations. In 2007, The Boulders Resort was named the nation's No. 9 "Top Golf Resort" by *Travel & Leisure Golf*. *Golf Magazine* deemed the resort a Gold Medal award-winner in 2010, while *Golf Digest* ranked the resort No. 40 in its 2009 list of the "75 Best Golf Resorts in North America."

Ranked 73rd in *Golf Digest's* list of the "75 Best Golf Resorts in North America" in 2009, **The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa** (www.kierlandresort.com) offers three, picturesque nine-hole layouts, allowing golfers to mix and match to create a variety of playing experiences. **Kierland Golf Club** was one of first in the world to feature the G2 climate-control device that changes the air temperature in and around golf carts by more than 40 degrees – keeping golfers warm in the winter and refreshed all summer long. The Westin Kierland also pays homage to the Scottish immigrants who helped develop Arizona's railroads, mines and towns by offering the *Scottish Golf Experience* where golfers don rented kilts and sample Johnnie Walker beverages while perfecting their swing on the course. Afterward, walk next door to the open-air shopping promenade **Kierland Commons** (www.kierlandcommons.com) for some of Scottsdale's finest shopping, dining and nightlife.

FINE TUNE YOUR GAME

If smoothing out your swing is on your vacation checklist, here's a quick rundown of Scottsdale's finest golf academies and custom club-fitting facilities.

Official golf instruction partner of the PGA TOUR, the **TOUR Academy at TPC Scottsdale** (www.touracademy.com) lets attendees refine their game on the home course of the Waste Management Phoenix Open. Stan Utley, named "The Hottest Instructor in Golf" by *Golf Digest*, (www.stanutleygolf.com) teaches his short-game magic at Grayhawk Golf Club. Headquartered at the Orange Tree Golf Resort, **Golf Schools of Scottsdale** (www.azgolfschool.com) specializes in teaching the technical side as well as the mental side of the game. The Westin Kierland's *Fore-Max Training System* blends traditional golf instruction with fitness and nutrition. At the **Callaway Performance Centre at Troon North Golf Club**, guests have access to the same club fitting technology used by the world's top touring professionals. And Scottsdale's **Hot Stix Golf** (www.hotstixgolf.com) and **Cool Clubs** (www.coolclubs.com) identify, recommend and custom build golf equipment that suits each golfer's individual swing.

PLAYING FROM THE LADIES' TEE

The Boulders Resort's Fore Ladies program offers comprehensive instruction specifically designed to help ladies of all skill levels better understand the game. LGPA professional Jean Ashley Crawford revamped the resort's golf program for women and combines three days of instruction with social activities in a non-intimidating setting. At **Kierland Golf Club**, female golfers receive instruction from Sandy LaBauve as part of her women-friendly program recognized by the Executive Women's Golf Association. The **TPC Scottsdale's Practice to Pamper** package provides instruction followed by a relaxing golf massage at **Willow Stream – The Spa at Fairmont Scottsdale** (www.scottsdaleprincess.com).

BEYOND THE 19TH HOLE

The **Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North** (www.fourseasons.com/scottsdale) offers a *Golf Specialty Massage*, which combines stretching with therapeutic massage using heated golf balls to ease tension. Improve balance and swing rotation with the *Golf Performance Treatment Massage* at **Willow Stream**, a muscle-noodling blend of massage, stretching and acupressure. Stay in the game by keeping your muscles fit at the **Centre for Well-Being at The Phoenician** (www.thephoenician.com). The spa's *Clinical Sports Massage* is ideal for golfers looking to relieve sore muscles, increase flexibility and gain a speedy recovery. You'll even increase game performance with the treatment's stretching, compression and range of motion techniques.

FAMILY GOLF

The new **Junior Golf Academy at Troon North Golf Club** focuses on the most important aspect of the game, fun! Young golfers learn important skills needed to improve, from driving the ball and hitting iron shots, to short game and rules of the game. **Kierland Golf Club** rolled out a family golf program that allows families to play and practice together. Juniors learn the fundamentals of putting, chipping and full swings, as well as golf etiquette and history of the game. The *Family Tee* program at **TPC Scottsdale** makes golf more enjoyable for kids and newbie adults by turning the Champions Course into a shorter, more playable venue.

GOLF IS FOR LOVERS

Offered at both **The Boulders Resort** and **The Phoenician** (www.thephoenician.com), Tee Box dinners are a romantic sunset dining experience set on one of the resort golf course's most scenic locations. Just prior to sunset, guests are delivered via a golf cart to an elevated tee box bedecked with fine china, crystal, linens and candles, as well as offered musical accompaniment and elaborate custom desserts upon request.

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