

BONUS SUPPLEMENT: GOLF & THE BUSINESS LIFE

BusinessWeek

Golf Digest

WINTER 2006

Smart, new places to retire

INSIDE

- GOLF'S ENTREPRENEURS: A RISKY BUSINESS
- HOW TO BE A SAVVY GOLF COLLECTOR

ASPEN GLEN, IN CARBONDALE, COLO.

RED SKY RANCH, NEAR VAIL, COLO.
INSET: SEVEN CANYONS GOLF CLUB,
IN SEDONA, ARIZ.

ATTENTION GOLFERS:

18

new places to retire

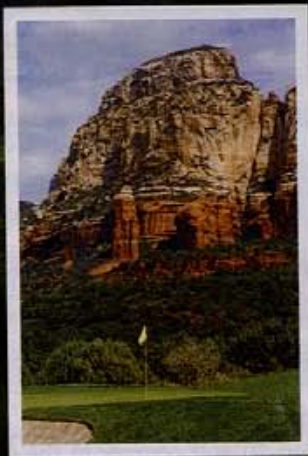


TOM HEAD HAS BEEN LIVING IN Boca Raton, Fla., for 35 years. Within a short drive of his house are dozens of golf courses. Being an avid golfer pushing 60, you'd think Tom was in the ideal spot for retirement, but he and his wife, Rita, think they've found something better.

"In addition to golf, we also like to ski, so we visited Red Sky Ranch [near Vail, Colo.] a few winters back," says Tom, of the 700-acre golf course community set in a valley alongside the Rocky Mountains west of Denver. "You couldn't even see the golf course that day because of the snow, but we knew this was where we wanted to be. It was so much more quiet and peaceful, and we were surprised to find a lot of quality golf out here. It made more sense than living in Boca year-round."

Tom and Rita did not know it then, but they were setting the trend when they chose Colorado ski country for their second/retirement home. The Glenwood Springs-Breckenridge area of Colorado, which includes famous resort towns Vail and Aspen, is No. 1 on Golf Digest/BusinessWeek's 2006 ranking of the 18 hottest retirement destinations for golfers. The ranking was compiled with the help of the Longitudes Group, a market research and consulting company in Omaha, specializing in sports, travel and leisure. The ranking takes into consideration the number of golf courses built since 2000, as well as new courses in the planning or construction stages. That data is then coupled with such quality-of-life statistics as safety, weather (playable golf days), culture, healthcare and airport access.

While many retirees are still flocking to traditional places such as Scottsdale, Palm Springs, Myrtle Beach and Naples, Fla., to get their golf fix, many others are



» We reveal the emerging areas to spend the best years of your life
By Ron Kaspriske

A closer look: The top 18

Ranking	Region	Metro area	Major cities	Golf & non-golf total score	Real-estate dev. courses	High-quality private courses	Public courses rated 3.5+	Access: Golfers per 18 holes	Real-estate dev. score (12.5)	High-quality private score (5)	Public courses score (10)	Access score (12.5)	Playable days (10)	Golf total score (50)	Cost of living (7.14)	Crime (7.14)	Competition (7.14)	Arts & culture (7.14)	Medical access (7.14)	Scenic & recreation (7.14)	Airport access (7.14)	Non-golf total score (90)
1	MW	Glenwood Springs/Breckenridge, Colo.	Includes Vail, Aspen	83.5	10	10	11	704	12.5	4.5	10	9.0	6.2	42.2	4.1	7.1	7.1	5.6	6.5	7.1	3.8	41.3
2	W	Hawaii (Big Island)	Kona	78.8	8	3	11	714	11.5	2.4	10	8.9	10	42.8	2.5	6.3	6.9	6.8	3.4	7.1	3.0	36.0
3	SW	Hill Country, Tex.	W. Austin, Bee Cave, Marble Falls, Llano	76.0	15½	11	5	2,159	12.5	5.0	6.3	4.6	8.6	37.0	6.0	5.4	3.0	7.1	6.1	5.5	5.9	39.0
4	NE	Plymouth County, Mass.	Plymouth	73.7	9	10	8	1,396	12.0	4.5	8.1	6.5	5.5	36.6	2.5	5.5	3.5	6.6	7.0	6.1	5.9	37.1
5	SW	Montgomery County, Tex.	Conroe, The Woodlands	73.2	20	8	4	1,763	12.5	3.9	5.6	2.5	9.0	33.5	5.0	4.1	3.3	7.1	6.6	6.5	7.1	39.7
6	MW	Douglas County, Colo.	Castle Rock	73.1	8	6	6	2,676	11.4	3.3	6.9	3.3	6.4	31.3	3.9	6.7	5.2	6.3	6.6	7.1	6.0	41.8
7	MW	Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	Coeur d'Alene	71.7	8	1	4	999	11.5	1.0	5.6	7.5	5.1	30.7	6.9	5.1	5.4	4.9	6.2	7.0	5.5	41.0
8	FLA	Fort Walton Beach/Panama City, Fla.	Includes Destin, Niceville	70.4	21½	1	10	872	12.5	1.0	9.4	8.3	9.0	40.2	7.1	4.0	4.5	3.4	4.3	3.5	3.4	30.2
19	SE	Greene, Morgan, Putnam Counties, Ga.	Greensboro (Reynolds Plantation)	70.2	8½	2	8	1,422	11.8	2.1	8.1	6.5	7.9	36.4	5.4	3.1	5.8	4.9	5.3	4.4	4.9	33.8

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8 emerging golf retirement regions

Ranking	Region	Major places	Golf & nongolf total score	Real-estate div. courses	High-quality private courses	*Public courses rated 3.5+	Access: Golfers per 18 holes	Real-estate div. score (12.5)	High-quality private score (5)	Public courses score (10)	Access score (12.5)	Playable days (10)	Golf total score (50)	Cost of living (7.14)	Crime (7.14)	Conspicuity (7.14)	Arts & culture (7.14)	Medical access (7.14)	Science & recreation (7.14)	Airport access (7.14)	Nongolf total score (50)
9	MW	St. George, Utah/Mesquite, Nev.	70.2	8	1	5	721	11.5	1.0	6.3	8.9	6.6	34.3	6.3	7.0	6.0	3.1	3.4	6.6	3.5	35.9
11	MW	NW Arkansas/Branson, Mo.	68.2	20	3	4	1,147	12.5	2.4	5.6	7.0	7.3	34.8	6.5	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.1	5.5	3.8	33.4
12	W	N. Arizona	67.9	16½	7	3	475	12.5	3.6	5.0	10.5	6.0	37.6	4.0	5.0	5.8	2.5	2.8	7.1	3.1	30.3
13	SE	Coastal Southeast Georgia	67.0	8½	3	6	710	11.8	2.4	6.9	9.0	8.6	38.7	6.8	3.2	3.6	2.9	3.1	4.2	4.5	28.3
14	SW	Richmond, Va.	66.9	8½	5	4	2,318	11.8	3.0	5.6	4.2	7.9	32.5	4.4	3.0	3.4	6.5	6.5	4.0	6.6	34.4
15	W	Plumas County, Calif.	64.7	7	1	3	529	11.0	1.0	5.0	9.9	5.7	32.6	4.0	6.5	7.1	2.0	2.5	5.5	4.5	32.1
16	FLA	Palm Coast, Fla.	62.1	7	3	3	2,628	11.0	2.4	5.0	3.3	8.8	30.5	6.5	5.0	4.5	3.5	3.5	4.6	4.0	31.6
17	MW	Park City, Utah	61.2	3	4	0	1,167	7.5	2.7	0.0	7.0	6.3	23.5	4.1	4.3	7.0	6.0	4.5	7.1	4.7	37.7
18	MW	Dane County, Wis.	60.2	5	6	4	2,109	9.3	3.3	5.6	5.0	5.1	28.3	4.8	3.3	3.5	6.5	6.5	3.5	3.8	31.9

Ranking is based on an equal weighting of golf and nongolf (quality of life) factors. Maximum points for each criterion listed in parentheses.
 *Golf Digest's Best Places to Play

Source: The Longitudes Group

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in Johnson. Shadow Valley is part of a master-planned community with three-bedroom condos for less than \$300,000, and Blessings is a 7,500-yard monster.

Golf season is about nine months, and the entertainment options in Branson rival anything short of Las Vegas. The resort town is a hotbed for country-music acts, and its only real drawback is the lack of a major airport accessible from many major cities. Fayetteville has a regional airport, and Branson is opening one in 2008.

Northern Arizona

FROM THE INFAMOUS DESERT RED ROCK of Sedona to the pine forests of Flagstaff, the varied climate and topography of Northern Arizona has been stealing 50-somethings from traditional Arizona retirement spots Scottsdale and Mesa for some time. But golfers started paying even more attention to Prescott, Sedona and Flagstaff in recent years as 108 new holes have been built since the start of 2000.

The three newest additions to the region worth noting are Seven Canyons in Sedona, Pine Canyon Club and Flagstaff Ranch in Flagstaff and Talking Rock Ranch in Prescott. All four are private real-estate developments with homes starting in the \$500,000 range. Seven Canyons, a Tom Weiskopf design, is the most striking with a 6,746-yard routing through the infamous red rocks that make the area famous. Weiskopf, who is not someone to gush over anything, said the property "took my breath away" when he first saw it. Pine Canyon, which opened in 2004, and Talking Rock Ranch (2002) were designed by Jay Morrish, whose previous work in Arizona includes Forest Highlands in Flagstaff, whose Canyon course is ranked No. 1 in the state by Golf Digest, and TPC of Scottsdale (home of the PGA Tour's FBR Open). Talking Rock ranks 19th in Arizona. Flagstaff Ranch, a Jerry Pate design, opened in 2004.

While private clubs are sprouting rapidly, the area also has a lot of public courses, including two in the tourist town of Sedona—Sedona Golf Resort (4½ stars in Golf Digest's *Best Places to Play*) and Oakcreek Country Club (4 stars).

Aside from the golf, Arizona is an adult play-



A CABIN LIVING ROOM AT GRIZZLY RANCH, IN PORTOLA, CALIF.

ground with the Grand Canyon less than an hour from Flagstaff, and Las Vegas, the Hoover Dam and Lake Mead National Recreation Area only a few hours away. While Sedona offers incredible views of red rock buttes, as well as a bohemian artist community, Flagstaff is more of a pioneer town with bearskin rugs covering the floors of log-cabin homes. It snows in Flagstaff in the winter, but all it takes is an hour drive south down Interstate 17 to get back into warm, golfable weather.

Plumas County, Calif.

LOCATED IN NORTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA, WHERE THE Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountain ranges meet, Plumas County has more than 100 lakes, and 1,000 miles of rivers and streams with more than a million acres of national forest. Retirees, starting to discover this area in greater numbers, describe Plumas as Lake Tahoe without the traffic. It's 90 miles from South Lake Tahoe and roughly an hour from Reno, but far from either in terms of congestion. It's small, idyllic and rapidly expanding its golf options.

At the top of the list is Whitehawk Ranch Golf Club (4½ stars, Golf Digest's *Best Places to Play*) near the town of Graeagle. This mountainside course, designed by Dick Bailey, is a hot spot for potential retirees, not just for the scenery and quality of golf but also for home values. Northern California real estate is among the highest in the nation, but a three-bedroom house on the golf course at Whitehawk was recently listed at \$569,000. The only private club in the area—Grizzly Ranch in Portola—is also growing in popularity. Architect Bob Cupp designed the course in a valley alongside the surrounding mountains. There are a few other public courses in the area as well, including Plumas Pines Golf Resort (3½ stars). Less than an hour away in Truckee, Calif., which is the gateway to the Tahoe/Reno region, is Lahontan Golf Club (No. 15 in California), a private course, and Coyote Moon, an excellent public course.