



This report is based on information collected through a collaborative effort between the National Golf Foundation (NGF), Golf Tourism Solutions (GTS), Myrtle Beach Area Golf Course Owners Association (MBAGCOA), and research completed for the State of South Carolina by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) for the South Carolina Golf Course Owners Association (SCGCOA) in April 2025.

General

This economic impact report focuses on the contribution of golf facilities to the economy of the Myrtle Beach area golf market, recognized throughout as The Golf Capital of the World®. With a focus on the impact of golf facilities, this report does not address additional impacts that can be derived from real estate, off-course golf retail, golf equipment manufacturing and/or distribution, golf association, golf tournaments or the total charitable impact.

Every reasonable effort has been exerted in order that the data contained in the written report reflects the most accurate and timely information possible and is believed to be reliable. However, no responsibility will be assumed for inaccuracies in reporting by sources used to collect data from golf facilities, associations and other data sources used in preparing the report.

Custom Facility Survey - 2025

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, with support of the South Carolina Golf Course Owners Association, conducted a survey among golf course operators to measure the impact of golf in the state. Data collection took place in early 2025 to gather inputs for calendar year 2024 that would assist in the quantification of golf's economic impact in the state. Key survey questions centered around operational data like rounds played, revenues and expenses, as well as capital expenditures, information on employment/staffing and charitable events.

With the support of a cooperative effort between GTS, MBAGCOA, and the NGF, a sample of golf facilities in the Myrtle Beach area golf market were isolated for the purpose of measuring the economic impact of The Golf Capital of the World®. Of the 69 golf facilities in the Myrtle Beach area golf market, a total of 42 surveys were submitted for a response rate of 61%. Survey responses were reviewed and weighted by type (public/private, number of holes, etc.) to properly match and be representative of the mix of golf facilities in the region. Due to a limited response in some of the facility segments, additional data from NGF's national economic impact survey were used to augment the regional sample and add statistical confidence to the estimates.

IMPLAN Economic Modeling

The IMPLAN economic modeling system was used to derive estimates of several direct and secondary economic impacts (including value added, employment, and labor income). The methodology and calculations were prepared and reviewed for soundness and accuracy by Dr. Terry L. Clower, the Northern Virginia Chair and Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University and Director of GMU's Center for Regional Analysis.

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by National Golf Foundation Consulting, Inc. in agreement with GTS and the MBGCOA. The study was conducted by David Lorentz, Richard Singer, Clark Brown, Bill Golden and Jodi Reilly at NGF, with support from Dr. Terry L. Clower.

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OVERVIEW

The Myrtle Beach area golf market is recognized as the Golf Capital of the World - a title earned through nearly a century of sustained investment, national exposure, and community passion for the game.

Spanning South Carolina's Horry and Georgetown counties and extending northward into Brunswick County, North Carolina, the region is home to 69 golf facilities making it one of the most concentrated and accessible golf destinations in the U.S..

The Myrtle Beach area's temperate climate, accessibility, accommodations, hospitality, beautiful beaches, and diverse golf offerings draw enthusiasts and beginners from across the country and around the world. These public access facilities not only provide year round recreation but have served as a catalyst for economic development, helping to transform the region from a seasonal beach community into a thriving, four season destination. The steady influx of golf travelers, particularly during shoulder and off-peak seasons, has balanced seasonal swings, extended employment opportunities, and driven investment in the region.

Unlike many golf destinations with narrow appeal or limited playing windows, The Myrtle Beach area golf market has built an entire tourism identity around the game. One that attracts families, tournament players, buddy trips, retirees, and aspiring professionals alike. Beyond the course, a robust network of golf related businesses, media platforms, event producers, and charitable foundations further amplifies golf's regional influence.

Critically, the region isn't just about quantity, it's about quality. The Golf Capital of the World® consistently places multiple courses in national rankings from Golf Digest, Golfweek, and Golf Magazine, with layouts such as Caledonia Golf & Fish Club, The Dunes Golf & Beach Club, True Blue, Tidewater, and Barefoot Resort's Dye and Love courses frequently appearing on "Top 100 You Can Play" and "Best Public Courses" lists. These accolades attract discerning golf travelers and solidify the region's standing as a bucket list destination for serious players.

 $\label{eq:theorem} \mbox{The Golf Capital of the World}^{\otimes}$

Myrtle Beach -A Golf Destination

Myrtle Beach has also long been at the forefront of golf destination marketing, serving as a national model for how cooperative branding, storytelling, and technology can transform a region into a global golf powerhouse. This was the first community to launch a golf marketing cooperative at scale, aligning courses, accommodations, and community stakeholders under a unified vision to stimulate demand and elevate the golf experience. That innovative spirit continues, with Myrtle Beach leading advancements in tee time technology, golf packaging, golf retail, and digital golf media engagement. The region's prominence is further reinforced by the caliber of events it attracts. Myrtle Beach is home to the Play Golf Myrtle Beach World Amateur Championship, the largest amateur tournament in the world. Most recently, the area welcomed the ONEFlight Myrtle Beach Classic, a PGA TOUR event that debuted in 2024, elevating the destination's competitive pedigree and drawing new national attention to The Golf Capital of the World®.

Looking Forward -100th Anniversary

As the area looks ahead to 2027, it approaches a landmark moment: the 100th anniversary of golf in Myrtle Beach. This upcoming centennial celebration is a generational milestone that underscores the sport's long standing impact on the region's economy, brand, and way of life. Planning is already underway for this historic occasion, creating opportunities to reflect on golf's enduring legacy while laying the groundwork for the next era of innovation and growth.

This economic impact study aims to quantify golf's influence across the region. Through an in-depth analysis of rounds played, visitor activity, employment, capital investment, and business output, this report offers a clear picture of the industry's importance. It serves as both a benchmark and a call to action; to promote, elevate and advance The Golf Capital of World® as it enters its second century.







HIGHLIGHTS

The Golf Capital of the World's Total Economic Contribution

In 2024, The Golf Capital of the World's direct economic impact was approximately \$1.10 billion, while the NGF estimates that the industry contributed just over \$1.6 billion (direct, indirect and induced) to the region's economy in 2024. The Myrtle Beach golf market supports more than 13,300 jobs with \$483 million of wage income and more than \$134 million in state and local taxes.

\$1.615B

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (DIRECT, INDIRECT & INDUCED)





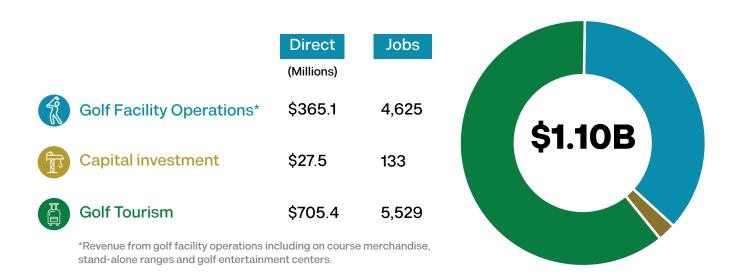




\$1.10B 13,340_{Jobs}

\$482.9M \$134.8M

The Golf Capital of the World's Direct Economic Contribution



Indirect and Induced: IMPLAN (acronym for IMpact analysis for PLANning), is software used for economic impact analysis that helps users understand how economic activity ripples through industries, households, and government entities. IMPLAN is widely accepted for understanding indirect effects that result from the supply chain activity generated by direct activity, and induced effects that are derived from the additional economic activity driven by spending from wages earned by workers in the direct and indirect stages. Employees' spending on goods, services, and housing contributes to these effects.



The Myrtle Beach area golf market includes 78 golf courses at 69 traditional "green grass" golf facilities, of which 16 are in North Carolina. These facilities hosted an estimated 3.02 million rounds of golf, or approximately 37,000 rounds per 18 holes. (43,754 per facility).

The region also has 10 other "off-course" facilities like stand-alone driving ranges, golf entertainment centers and indoor simulators.

CORE INDUSTRIES

\$365.1M

Golf Facility Operations

Total consumer spending at golf facilities in the region for items including initiation fees, member/passholder dues, green fees, cart fees, range fees, golf shop merchandise and food/ beverage sales, exceeded \$365.1 million in 2024, and directly employed more than 4,625 jobs (both part-time and full-time) and supported an additional 1,217 jobs (5,842 total jobs supported by golf facilities).

\$27.5M

Capital Investment

In 2024, golf facilities in the region **invested close to \$27.5** million in capital improvements for golf course renovations, enhancements, structure replacements, new equipment, supporting 194 additional jobs (133 directly). An estimated 62.3% of golf facilities in the region began or continued large-scale capital projects in 2024 that were not included in regular operating expenses.

ENABLED INDUSTRY

\$705.4M

Golf Tourism

Play Golf Myrtle Beach™ is the primary consumer facing golf centric destination marketing brand for the region. NGF estimated that 759,000 golfers traveled more than 50 miles to play at one of the region's golf courses in 2024, adding as many as 1.4 million rounds to the total. These traveling golfers are estimated to have contributed \$705.4 million to the Myrtle Beach area golf market economy (excluding direct spending at golf facilities already counted). When considering the total spend at golf facilities, The Golf Capital of the World® travel market was at least \$886.2 million in 2024. These visitors supported 7,304 jobs from induced and indirect activity such as transportation, lodging, meals and other entertainment.



91%

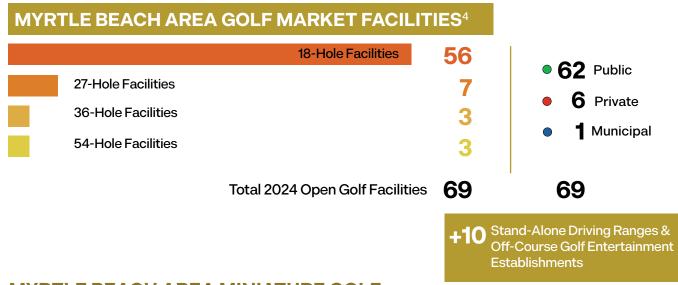
Over 91% of golf facilities in The Golf Capital of the World® are public, compared to 74% for the total U.S.

Myrtle Beach is a resort city on the East Coast of the United States located at the center of a long and continuous 60 mile stretch of beach known colloquially as "The Grand Strand." The city's year-round population was 35,682 (2020 census), making it the 13th most populous city in South Carolina. Myrtle Beach is one of the major centers of tourism in South Carolina and the U.S. The region's warm subtropical climate, miles of beaches, numerous golf courses, abundant attractions and plentiful lodging & hospitality attract over 18 million visitors each year, making the Myrtle Beach area one of the most visited destinations in the country.²

While the Myrtle Beach area is known for its tourism appeal, the region is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country, with an estimated total population of 397,478 in 2023. More than 104,000 people moved to the area over the last eight years, representing a nearly 28% growth in population.³

The Myrtle Beach area golf market, The Golf Capital of the World®, includes South Carolina's Horry and Georgetown counties, and extends northward into Brunswick County, North Carolina.

At year end 2024, there were 78 golf courses at 63 public golf facilities and 6 private golf clubs in operation, for a total of 69 facilities in this defined geographic region. In addition, there were 10 other "off-course" facilities that included one TopGolf facility, one PopStroke facility, four stand-alone driving ranges and four other golf "entertainment" locations (simulators, launch monitors, screens, etc.).



MYRTLE BEACH AREA MINIATURE GOLF

"The golf journey begins with a club in their hand"

\$29.4 Million*

The Myrtle Beach area is home to 33 miniature golf venues featuring at least 53 different 18-hole courses. These mini golf courses generated as much as \$29.4 million in total revenue in 2024 from golf fees, retail sales and concessions.

- 2 Myrtle Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau Industry Research (2024)
- 3 Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Population: 2020-2023. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (2024)
- 4 Proprietary Research, National Golf Foundation 2024

^{*} Based on U.S. IRS filings estimates. Miniature golf course revenues are NOT included in estimated economic impact findings.



What is Measured

Golf Facility revenue includes all receipts generated from green fees, cart fees, membership fees and initiation fees, as well as ancillary purchases at the golf course facility such as merchandise, food and beverage, banquets and other items. The revenue collected from all of these sources is assumed to be the basis for all expenditures required to operate the facility.

How it's Measured

Golf facility revenue data comes from the 2024 golf facility survey (n=42) conducted by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (and augmented with other surveys of golf facilities in the South Atlantic Region conducted by NGF in 2023). This data was scrutinized to account for outliers, with golf facilities showing extraordinary revenues and performance that were excluded from average calculations and re-introduced as unique records for final calculations.

FINDING



The golf facility is at the core of the overall golf economy. The golf facility economy includes all revenues generated from green fees, cart fees, membership fees and initiation fees, as well as ancillary golf course purchases such as merchandise, food and beverage, banquets and other revenue. The revenue collected from all of these sources is assumed to be the basis for all expenditures required to operate the facility, and golf facility operators are subject to the same inflationary pressures as any other small business, especially as it relates to the cost of labor.

The NGF also found that 59 of the 69 golf facilities (86%) have a driving range with at least 10 tee stations, and the Myrtle Beach area golf market also has 10 other "off-course" facilities like stand-alone driving ranges, golf entertainment centers and indoor simulators that are a mix of large and small operations with revenues ranging from around \$50,000 to as high as \$15.0 million (TopGolf) in any one location. Utilizing these findings, The Golf Capital of the World revenue from direct golf facility operations is estimated on the following page.

All revenue estimates are rounded to the nearest \$1,000.
*Source: State of South Carolina survey of facilities 2024 (n=42)⁵ – augmented by NGF survey of facilities in South Atlantic Region (2024).



GOLF FACILITY REVENUE AVG. BY FACILITY TYPE

Direct NGF research into the performance of Myrtle Beach area golf market facilities in 2024 shows average revenue by type of facility as follows:

NO. OF TOTAL FACILITIES 2024 AVG. REVENUE* (MILLIONS)

17 \$2.214 18-hole Public (Value)

33 \$4.198 18-hole Public (Premium)

13 \$7.780

6 \$9.250
18-hole Private

⁵ The Economic Impact of Golf in South Carolina (April 2025). Facilities from the defined Myrtle Beach Region (South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Dudley Jackson, Research Director)

\$365.1M

Golf Facility Total Revenue in 2024

	2024	% of Total
Golf Playing Fees	\$187.0	51.2%
Membership Dues	\$52.3	14.3%
Retail Sales*	\$28.1	7.7%
Restaurant*	\$72.5	19.9%
Other (events, lessons, etc.)	\$12.9	3.5%
Driving Ranges**	\$12.3	3.4%

Includes revenue from stand-alone ranges + golf entertainment centers (PopStroke, TopGolf, etc.).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The \$365.1 million in total golf facility revenue in 2024 represents \$4.62 million per facility across all segments (including on-course and off-course facilities).
- The 69 green grass golf course facilities generated an average of \$4.9 million per facility in 2024.
- Golf entertainment facilities and stand-alone ranges accounted for an estimated \$25.5 million in total gross revenue in 2024, with \$10.4 million from golf fees and another \$15 million from other spending at the facility (food, beverage, retail, etc.). This total spending amounted to about 7% of the \$365.1 million in total golf facility revenue in 2024.
- Myrtle Beach area golf market facilities employed an estimated 4,625 persons in 2024 (2,997 part-time and 1,628 full-time).

Driving Ranges - How it's Measured

The revenues generated from driving ranges was applied to only those golf facilities that had a driving range with at least 10 tee stations on site (59 of the 69 facilities), plus additional revenue assumed for 10 off-course ranges, simulators and other golf entertainment locations in the State. Several facilities were identified as having unique performance in golf entertainment, retail and/ or food-beverage performance excluded from and were average calculations and reintroduced as unique records for final calculations (TopGolf and PopStroke).

^{**}Includes revenue from stand-alone ranges and golf simulators.

⁶ The Economic Impact of Golf in South Carolina (April 2025). Facilities from the defined Grand Strand Region (South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Dudley Jackson, Research Director)



What is Measured

Capital investments are major improvements outside of normal maintenance and operating expenditures by golf facilities for turf maintenance and grounds upkeep. Golf facilities periodically make major investments to improve greens and tees, renovate clubhouses and other buildings, and purchase turf maintenance equipment and irrigation systems. In addition to capital investments by existing facilities, construction of new golf courses constitutes the other major type of capital investment.

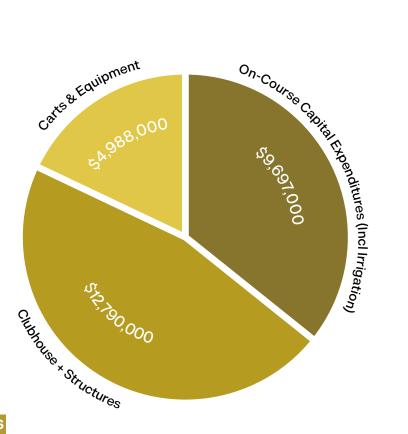
How it's Measured

Golf facility capital investment data comes from the 2024 The Grand Strand golf facility survey (n=42) conducted by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and augmented with other surveys of golf facilities in the South Atlantic Region conducted by NGF in 2023. For this study, NGF used reported average capital investment by facility type, with outliers removed, and applied the appropriate averages to the total golf facility census for the region. The unique outliers were then added back in as they represented significant individual projects.

In 2024, Myrtle Beach area golf market facilities invested nearly \$27.5 million in capital improvements for new buildings and renovations to greens, fairways, bunkers, infrastructure, equipment, and existing structures. In all, NGF research found that 62.3% of golf facilities in the region began or continued capital projects in 2024 (defined as new construction or major renovation to the course and/or related facilities) that were not funded directly from operating expenses.

FINDING





GOLF FACILITY CAPITAL INVESTMENTS (MILLIONS)

	No.	On-Course Capital	Unique Projects*	CH/ Structures Capital	Unique Projects*	Carts/ Equip.	Irrigation Systems	Unique Projects*
18H Pub (value)	17	\$1.03	\$.500	\$.400	\$2.10	\$.850	\$.180	\$.167
18H Pub (premium)	33	\$.880	\$0	\$.120	\$1.10	\$.230	\$.110	\$0
27+	13	\$2.18	\$2.00	\$.350	\$8.00	\$2.93	\$.260	\$.200
18H Prvt	6	\$1.83	\$0	\$.720	\$0	\$.980	\$.360	\$0
Total	69	\$5.92	\$2.50	\$1.59	\$11.20	\$4.99	\$.910	\$.367

^{*}There was no investment in any new green grass golf course facilities either in-planning or under construction in the Myrtle Beach area golf market in 2024.



What is Measured

The golf tourism industry segment estimates the golf-related travel expenditures in which a person travels 50 plus miles and plays golf as a key recreational activity while on business or leisure travel. Golf-related trips include both overnight and day trips.

How it's Measured

Data for this calculation comes from surveys and studies of visitors and visitor spending conducted or commissioned by the State of South Carolina, Visit Myrtle Beach, and the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce (various research reports). These research reports were a key resource and provided useful estimates of total visitor counts (by length of trip), activities undertaken while in the region and average spending per trip.

Golf tourism is a major component of the Myrtle Beach area golf market. The Golf Capital of the World is a popular golf destination and golf travelers to the region enhance the tourism industry through short trips, weekend getaways and extended vacations, with other NGF research has identified The Golf Capital of the World as one of the most, if not the most, popular golf destinations in the U.S.

The Myrtle Beach area golf market attracts everyone from the discerning golf traveler, to the golf curious beginner. The diverse offerings combined with authentic hospitality has solidified the region's standing as a bucket-list destination for all golfers. The region has also long been at the forefront of golf destination marketing, serving as a national model for how cooperative branding, storytelling, and technology can transform a region into a global golf powerhouse. In addition to golf, the Myrtle Beach region has become a top destination for beach fun, sports tourism, retail shopping, family vacations and all types of conventions.

IMPACT

\$705.4M

Tourism dollars golf generated

Tourism is one of the strongest economic drivers of the Myrtle Beach area, providing a valuable source of revenue and jobs. In its 2024 Report, the Myrtle Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau estimated the region had a record 18.2 million visitors spending over \$13.2 billion, with a total economic impact of nearly \$26 billion. Of these visitors, facts presented by Compass Longwoods International indicate that 73.2% of these visitors came to the area on an overnight trip while 26.8% came for a day trip.9

Golfers traveled 50+ miles

Rounds played

NGF estimated that 759,000 golfers traveled more than 50 miles to play golf in the Myrtle Beach golf market in 2024, adding as many as 1.4 million rounds of golf at the region's golf courses (almost 43% of all rounds played). These visiting golfers include both overnight and day trips and also consider visitors who book golf using one of many golf package providers, other visiting golfers using area lodging and part-time resident golfers staying at second homes or other non-hotel lodging.

759k - 1.4M \$129/\$1,080

\$ per daytripper

\$ per overnight visitor

The NGF has estimated that traveling golfers to the Myrtle Beach area Golf Market spent \$129 per trip for day-trippers and \$1,080 per trip for overnight visitors (this excludes direct spending at golf facilities already counted in golf facility revenue). This estimate is based on spending data presented in the Travel USA Visitor Profile -Visit Myrtle Beach 2024 report9, augmented by golf travel spending estimated by NGF.



For 2024, NGF estimates that tourism expenditures stemming from travelers who trekked to The Golf Capital of the World specifically to play **golf generated \$705.4 million**.

GOLF TOURISM

\$705.4

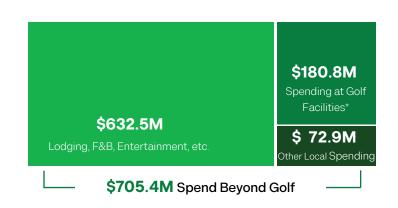
Average Spend per Visit

The NGF provided estimates of total spending per golf trip from the Travel USA Visitor Profile – Visit Myrtle Beach by Compass/Longwoods International 2024 report and the NGF 2019 Golf Travel Report, updated to reflect 2024. The NGF estimates¹ that day visitors spend a total of \$235 per trip, less \$105.75 to account for spending at the golf course and transportation to destination (= \$129.25) while the overnight visitors are assumed to spend a total of \$1,415 per trip, less \$335.00 (golf course and transportation to destination = \$1,080.00). The intent was to include spending on accommodation, local transportation, food and beverage, entertainment, gifts, etc.



FINDING





GOLF TOURISM

This analysis shows how significant golf tourism is in The Myrtle Beach area golf market. When the money spent at golf facilities is included, it shows that the Myrtle Beach area golf travel market involves 759,000 golf travelers spending at least \$886.2 million in 2024 (\$1,167.59 per golf traveler).

NOTE: the spending at golf facilities is included in Golf Facility Operations direct impact estimate. *NGF estimate based on 42.9% of total rounds played from golf travelers in 2024.

¹⁰ National Golf Foundation (2024) – Assumes 1.0 rounds per day trip and 2.0 rounds per overnight trip.

¹¹ Myrtle Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau Industry Research (2024)

¹² National Golf Foundation (2024) – Adjustment considers several factors including national NGF research and the Compass/Longwoods International (2024) study that estimated 3% for "golf trips" and 9% participation golf as a "sporting activity."

SUMMARY

\$1.615B

Total Economic Impact

\$1.098B

Total Direct Economic Impact

Total Facilities

Total Rounds Played 3.019.000

Total Rounds Per Facility

Total Rounds Per 18 holes 37.043



\$574.7M

Golf Facility Revenue

Direct: \$365.1M

Indirect/Induced: \$209.6M Total Jobs: 5,842 (4,625 Direct)



\$38.9M

Capital Investments

Direct: \$27.5M

Indirect/Induced: \$11.4M Total Jobs: 194 (133 Direct)



\$1,001.1M

Golf Tourism

Direct: \$705.4M

Indirect/Induced: \$295.7M Total Jobs: 7,304 (5,529 Direct)



Indirect and Induced: IMPLAN (acronym for IMpact analysis for PLANning), is software used for economic impact analysis that helps users understand how economic activity ripples through industries, households, and government entities. IMPLAN is widely accepted for understanding indirect effects that result from the supply chain activity generated by direct activity, and induced effects that are derived from the additional economic activity driven by spending from wages earned by workers in the direct and indirect stages. Employees' spending on goods, services, and housing contributes to these effects.

18 The Golf Capital of the World $^{\circ}$

Golf Capital of the WORLD!

