

Outside of Pinehurst, NC



It's long been said that Pinehurst is the American version of St Andrews, known universally as 'the home of golf.' The comparisons are apt. Scotland's ancient university town boasts seven public courses, including the Old Course, perhaps the most iconic (not to mention the original) golf grounds in the world. Pinehurst has nine resort courses, including famed #2, site of the 1999, 2005, and 2014 U.S. Opens. However the comparisons go further, beyond the fact that both locations, despite being nearly four thousand miles apart, live and breathe golf. Both regions offer numerous playing options besides the seven courses run by the St Andrews Links Trust, or the nine at Pinehurst Resort. In the UK venues like Crail, Lundin, Kingsbarns and even

famed Carnoustie are within easy reach of the 'Auld Grey Toon,' as it's known. Pinehurst has just as many fine options away from the historic resort.

Despite it's somewhat remote location in the North Carolina Sandhills region, Pinehurst is but 75 miles from the Raleigh-Durham airport, less than 100 from the Charlotte airport, and just 55 miles off of I-95. So grab your National rental car, and go enjoy any of these worthwhile golf options in and around Pinehurst, but not affiliated with the resort itself.



Bayonet at Puppy Creek

Bayonet at Puppy Creek is an oddly-named, unpretentious, somewhat out-of-the-way, but highly worthwhile golf detour on the very outskirts of the Sandhills. This meandering Willard Byrd design, making occasional use of its namesake creek, opened twenty years ago, in 1995. It was the brainchild of Joe Poole, owner of the nearby Carolina Turf Company. His goal was to build a quality course without the extravagance of an expensive country club, or grand clubhouse. It is an excellent venue, surprisingly so, given its somewhat remote location, to begin or end a visit to the Sandhills.



Tobacco Road

Tobacco Road was designed by the late Mike Strantz . He was truly an iconoclast, and of the handful of original designs he completed before his untimely death a decade ago at age fifty, nothing illustrates that sensibility more than Tobacco Road. The opening tee shot, downhill between two massive, shaggy dunes, is reminiscent of either Ireland's Ballybunion or Scotland's Cruden Bay. Strantz tucks greens down in glens and atop sand hills, some are more than hidden; the par-5 13th green belongs in the witness protection program. The ninth green is so far above the fairway a golfer is tempted to plant, not remove, a flag upon reaching the surface. The par-3 third roils and shimmies to the point that walking on it, never mind putting on it, requires a balancing act. Buy a yardage book and treat it like it's a survival manual. In many ways, it is.



Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club

Pine Needles is different than these other modern marvels. It dates from 1928, designed by Pinehurst's patron saint of golf course architecture, Scotsman Donald Ross. It's also a three-time host venue for the U.S. Women's Open. (Annika Sorenstam, Karrie Webb and Christie Kerr having laid claim to the titles.) Pine Needles is a rolling landscape dotted with maples, holly trees, azaleas, dogwood, blackjack oaks and loblolly pines. It is a straightforward, relatively simple test of golf, no bells, whistles or artifice, but its length, and upslope topography in the landing areas, which serves to kill the forward momentum of one's tee shots, provide plenty of challenges. One needn't play at the Pinehurst Resort, but eating around town is a great option. **Ironwood Café** is a handsome indoor/outdoor eatery just a few minutes from downtown Pinehurst specializes in casual fine dining. Salads, seafood, meats and desserts are all exceptionally prepared.

Elliotts on Linden offers eclectic cuisine, European technique, and southern hospitality all rolled into one. Located only a mile or so from downtown Pinehurst.

Ashten's in nearby Southern Pines offers global cuisine from a southern perspective, and does so in a charming series of rooms reminiscent of an old English manor house.