

## Pittsburgh, PA



Mystic Rock

It's no exaggeration to call Pittsburgh a city of champions. The Steelers have won six Super Bowls, the Penguins have hoisted the Stanley Cup four times, including 2016, and the Pirates have captured the World Series on five occasions.

However those combined fifteen championships pale in comparison to the incredible number of golf championships contested at venerable **Oakmont**, one of the most revered (and feared) tests in professional golf. There have been nineteen important championships held at Oakmont, including nine U.S. Opens, the most recent in 2016, five U.S. Amateurs, a trio of PGA Championships, and a pair of U.S. Women's Opens.

While not as impossible-to-access as places like Augusta National and Cypress Point, Oakmont is a very prestigious private club, and not easily accessible to the traveling golfer. Fortunately Pittsburgh offers

numerous worthy public options for those traveling to or through the ‘Steel City.’ Pennsylvania has more courses per capita than any other state, and fully 500 out of the 700 are open to the public. So it’s no wonder that Golf Digest once named Pittsburgh the second-best city in the nation for public golf.



Mystic Rock

Though it’s seventy miles to the east, [Mystic Rock](#) at the Nemaquin Woodlands Resort is a must-play for those willing to take a reasonably short drive in their National Rental Car. Mystic Rock features broad driving boulevards, blinding-white bunkering, large, often elevated greens with mostly soft contours. It’s a plush resort course full of niceties—larger-than-life statues of Vijay Singh, Gene Sarazen, and John Daly dot the property. There are fountains, even a waterfall. The full service, state-of-the-art halfway house with wraparound deck is both larger and nicer than many clubhouses in the golf universe. It’s a true pampering experience, with lots of polish.



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There are lots of solid holes, but the par-5 holes on the inward nine are the most eye-catching. The eleventh is a sweeping, downhill dogleg with an expansive lake menacing the entire right side. The tee shot on sixteen must be launched over a boulder field the size of a small quarry, with water pinching the green. Visitors are often blissfully unaware of the original nature of the terrain. “I’ve often been asked how much it cost to truck in all the boulders,” once said founder Joe Hardy, shaking his head gleefully. “They barely believe me when I tell them that to build the golf course we buried ninety percent of the rocks that were here when we started!” All in all, Mystic Rock is a handsome, solid test, with the unique presence of the boulder fields, endless stone walls, precipice tee boxes and micro-size pot bunkers. It’s even been PGA Tour-worthy, as evidenced by its former status as the home of the 84 Lumber Classic, which had a five-year run at the property.



Quicksilver Golf Club

Another good option much closer to the city is [Quicksilver Golf Club](#), just ten minutes from the airport and half-an-hour from downtown. Conditioning is considered on par with many of the area’s private clubs, and many patrons appreciate the relatively benign nature of the greens, considering much of western P-A is ‘Billy goat territory.’ The rolling terrain and the occasionally fescue-framed fairways offer both challenge and a pastoral setting. The eighth and eighteenth are

considered highlights, the former a water-laden par-3, the finale a straightforward, uphill par-4 to the clubhouse.

Haute Cuisine and Pittsburgh don't necessarily go hand-in-hand. That said, there are some unforgettable dining experiences to be had, beginning with [Primanti Brothers](#), specifically their 'almost famous' sandwich. Known as an edible Pittsburgh institution, it can be served with salami, turkey or roast beef. But despite the meat chosen, each one comes with a generous serving of crunchy, tart coleslaw and crisp French Fries piled high on top of soft Italian bread. You literally need a big mouth to take a hearty bite out of this one-of-a-kind. There's truth in advertising at the highly regarded gastropub called [Meat and Potatoes](#), centrally located in the cultural district. There's plenty of each on the menu; ribeye, pot roast and lamb for the former, fried taters, fingerlings and Yukon gold for the latter. But in addition there's a fine selection of salads, interesting veggies, and a brunch menu so popular it draws diners from not only the city and nearby 'burbs, but from the further reaches of western Pennsylvania.