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The Best of Public Golf 2011

Best Overall Golf Club • Luxury Priced (\$150 and up peak season rates)

1. Troon North Golf Club, Monument Course
2. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Cholla Course
3. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Saguaro Course
4. TPC Scottsdale, Stadium Course
5. Grayhawk Golf Club, Raptor Course
6. The Boulders Resort, South Course
7. Kierland Golf Club, Acacia/Ironwood
8. Grayhawk Golf Club, Talon Course
9. Eagle Mountain Golf Club
10. Legend Trail Golf Club

This category took into account course layout, conditions, clubhouse, practice facilities and service among those high-end golf courses. Seems Troon North was the place to golf in 2011. The Monument Course is a dazzling Tom Weiskopf/Jay Morrish design that features arroyos, cacti, immaculate conditions and gigantic boulder formations, including one that's in the fairway at the third hole. This year, the Monument Course celebrated its 20th birthday. What better way to celebrate than by notching the top spot in this category. We-Ko-Pa has got all that you need for your golfing pleasure – two outstanding layouts in the Cholla and Saguaro, a worthy clubhouse and foyer to hang out

after the round, a long practice range to warm up or hone your swing, a short game area and two putting greens. Oh, and they've got the glorious Radisson Fort McDowell Resort that's adjacent to We-Ko-Pa's entrance for stay-and-play options. The Stadium Course at TPC Scottsdale gets high marks for being the site of the PGA Tour's Waste Management Phoenix Open and for having a grand practice area (you know it's great when Tour pros rave about it). Like so many on this list, Grayhawk is one of the better two-course clubs in town. The Raptor gets our nod for being the best course at Grayhawk, but no matter if you're playing that or the Talon, you'll love the club's white-glove service and its awesome pro shop.

The South Course at The Boulders moved up four spots from last year. Credit that to the resort's devotion to offering an exceptional golfing experience. Plus, there are very few courses as unique as the South Course. The Acacia/Ironwood combo at Kierland dazzles because of its conditions and scenery. It doesn't hurt that the good people at Kierland take care of you with air-conditioned golf carts and cool Segway golf transporters. Eagle Mountain has the most topsy-turvy layout of those on this list, and some would say it also has the best-looking cart girls around. Legend Trail might have something to say about that, since their gals also are incredibly hot. But this north Scottsdale club also ranks among the best for its service and Rees Jones design.



We-Ko-Pa Golf Club

Top-10 Overall Golf Courses

1. Troon North Golf Club, Pinnacle Course
2. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Cholla Course
3. We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Saguaro Course
4. Troon North Golf Club, Monument Course
5. TPC Scottsdale, Stadium Course
6. Gold Canyon Golf Resort, Dinosaur Mountain Course
7. Grayhawk Golf Club, Raptor Course
8. The Boulders Resort, South Course
9. Southern Dunes Golf Club
- T10. Eagle Mountain Golf Club
- T10. Grayhawk Golf Club, Talon Course
- T10. Talking Stick Resort, North Course

There was something about the Pinnacle Course that caught the eye of our raters this year. Was it the splendid Tom Weiskopf classic desert design? Or maybe it was the pristine course conditions found here throughout the year, or the inspiring views? Whatever the case, the Pinnacle Course is pure ecstasy for your golf senses. Like so many great golf clubs throughout our fair burg, We-Ko-Pa offers two superb tracks. Only none of those clubs have as strong of a lineup as We-Ko-Pa. In some ways, the Cholla and Saguaro courses are very similar to one another; although their differences are more glaring. The Cholla is a target-style golf course while the Saguaro is more of a traditional layout. Scott Miller designed the Cholla Course, while Bill Coore created Saguaro. Troon North's Monument Course might have lost the top spot in this and the Best Overall categories, but seeing its sibling win the honors is the next best thing. Site of the Waste Management Phoenix Open, the Stadium Course at TPC Scottsdale is a favorite of locals, snowbirds and everyone else teeing it up in this area. There might not be a more exciting finish in town than Nos. 15-18 on the Stadium Course.

If you enjoy awe-inspiring views and don't mind getting challenged, then the Dinosaur Mountain Course at Gold Canyon should be on your must-play list. Dinosaur Mountain plays up, down and around the mountainous terrain, and the panoramic vistas and views of the nearby Superstition Mountains are spectacular. It's hard to fathom that Grayhawk's first entrant into this top-10 is all the way at seventh. That's how great the golf is in this



area. Put the dramatic Tom Fazio-designed Raptor Course in any other market, and it's No. 1 with a bullet. The South Course at The Boulders Resort is the newbie on this list. This par-71 gem will dazzle with its desert views and massive rock outcroppings. Its signature hole, the fifth, features a green shaded by a dramatic rock. Located south of town in Maricopa, Southern Dunes continues to captivate many golfers with its unique links-style design. Once a private all-male club, Southern Dunes is now open for play to all golfers ... if they can handle it. Rounding out the top-10 are three top-notch layouts. Better be sure the carts at Eagle Mountain have good brakes, because you'll traverse up, down and around several mountains, which makes for glorious views at this Scott Miller design. Plus, bobcats and coyotes are known to hang out just beyond the fairways here. The Talon Course at Grayhawk is just as worthy as the Raptor Course, and features a sensational par-3, the 11th, that incorporates a swinging bridge to the tee boxes. The North Course at Talking Stick is a superb Ben Crenshaw/Bill Coore links-style design that should get even more play thanks to the 15-story hotel that recently opened at the resort.

Best Cart Girls

1. Legend Trail Golf Club
2. Vistal Golf Club
3. Eagle Mountain Golf Club
4. The Legacy Golf Resort
5. Trilogy Golf Club at Vistancia

Whenever you go to Legend Trail, you can expect at least two things – that you'll have a fabulous golfing experience and that an amazingly hot cart girl will be motoring around the golf course all day long. Last year's Cart Girl of the Year, Brittany Paul, came from Legend Trail, and she still works there. Who will be this year's CGOY? Based on letters we've received, the front-runner appears to be Kari Hartman at Vistal. Like so many gals at Vistal, her smile will turn any frown upside-down. Eagle Mountain also boasts some exceptionally gorgeous cart girls who also like to have a good time, as does The Legacy and Trilogy at Vistancia. In fact, every area golf course should have beautiful cart girls. There's no excuse. Arizona State is home to the hottest co-eds, and the other colleges around town have no shortage of bombshells and stunners. **AG**