



Lakeview Golf Club ~ Fore Play

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The Shenandoah Valley is one of the most beautiful places on earth. Those who have lived here all of their lives know that, and those, like myself, who were transplanted there, have come to realize it as well. During my wonderful 30 years in Virginia I saw amazing growth in each and every town that dots the I-81 corridor. The city and suburbs of the Harrisonburg region have really exploded with James Madison College jumping to the university ranks and with the building boom of the 80s and 90s. Lakeview Golf Club also experienced a growth spurt during that same time, as the original nine holes were completely redesigned and a fourth nine was added to its 27-hole contingent. Lakeview is probably one of the most unique 36-hole facilities I have ever played with four different nines built by four different architects at four different times. Lakeview plays host to several large tournaments each year, and it is always recognized for its super conditioning and outstanding value. The club maintains a solid membership while still being able to court the daily fee player.

The Spring Nine, which came first, is paired with the newest of the litter, the Mountain Nine to make up one of the 18-hole circuits appropriately named Mountainview. If you have not played the Spring recently, you may get side-tracked. Head Professional Mike Gooden tells *The Golf Guide*™ that the nine has been rerouted for better playability and control. The most difficult hole on this nine is now the fourth, a long par 4 that plays through a beautiful, wooded section. You now end the Spring Nine on one of the signature holes at Lakeview. The 512-yard dogleg left par 5 plays from an elevated tee and dramatically tumbles down to the fairway below infiltrated by a ball hawking creek. From there, it's straight uphill to a small green which slopes sharply from back to front.



Although the Lester George-designed Mountain Nine is the newest and longest of the lot, having opened in 2002, it is radically different from its predecessors. This nine opens softly with an easy par 4, but the second hole is anything but easy. Also a par 4, it can

stretch to 490 yards from the nose bleeds. Three is a sweeping par 5 punctuated by raw beauty and dramatic bunkering. Playing in an open section of the property, both the par 3 fourth and par 4 fifth have lakes that will be formidable obstacles to your game. This is also where this 18 hole loop gets its name. The view of the Massanutten Peak in the background is pure eye-candy. The seventh is unique, because it features a split fairway where golfers must decide whether to take the more easily accessible high road or the more direct low side. The par 4 ninth can be played several different ways from the tee, but that will not change your approach from a fairway some 50 feet above the green.

The other 18-hole combo is made up of the Peak and Lake Nines and is simply called Lakeview. These two nicely configured nines make a great walking eighteen with tee boxes located close to adjacent greens. The Peak Nine presents some of the tightest driving holes and yet balances them very nicely with generous greens. Peak opens with three consecutive par 4s. The first two are gentle doglegs left, while the third is a lovely downhill that plays shorter than advertised. The par 3 fourth is the poster boy hole for the Peak, featuring a 50-foot drop from tee to green. The closer on this nine is a conventional three-shot par 5 that plays to a well bunkered green.



Most consider the Lakes Nine the easiest of the four, but several ponds and a spring-fed creek will keep you thinking throughout. The second and fifth holes are both par 5s that are very reachable and not just for the big hitters. A right to left shot off the tee on the second hole is optimal for your chance at glory, but any misfired second shots will most likely meet a watery grave in a pond short of the green. The latter par 5 plays over 75 feet downhill to an ample landing area. The putting surface is small and protected by sand traps, but even this writer has been over its green in two! The Lakes Nine wraps up with a terrific par 4 that plays uphill to a green handsomely decorated by a bulkheaded pond.

While the Mountainview course is the most challenging of the two courses, many prefer the Lakeview course for its nuances and playability. That's what makes Lakeview so rare. It gives a golfer four unique nines that actually blend together quite well. At Lakeview Golf Club, there's something "fore" everyone. 🏌️



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