



Pleasant Valley Golf Club ~ Northern Virginia Bliss

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pleas•ant- (Adj.) Giving a sense of happy satisfaction or enjoyment

Anyone who lives in the self-proclaimed “DMV” (District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia) sometimes finds the need to get in the car and drive up to an hour or more for relief from the hustle and bustle. You seldom find a peaceful golf sanctuary tucked away in the middle of one of the busiest places on the planet. I can probably count on my fingers the Northern Virginia golf courses that are totally void of any housing or building encroachments, but Pleasant Valley Golf Club, located near Dulles Airport in Chantilly, Virginia, numbers among those in this very rare category.



Tom Clark of Ault, Clark and Associates accomplished a masterful design job here incorporating the natural landscape that features rolling hills, hardwoods, and native grass meadows. The course was received extremely well after it opened in 1998 and remains one of the favorite plays in the region constantly receiving high grades

from *Golf Digest* and other local media outlets as well. The park setting at times makes me scratch my head as I play Pleasant Valley. I just find it hard to imagine that I’m strolling through golf course paradise in Fairfax County, one of the most active counties in the nation. The layout is so well buffered from the property lines that you would have to hit it sideways a couple times to find civilization! The par 72 plays just over 6900 yards from the tips, and three other sets of tees make it playable for all comers. A quick check of the scorecard and you will notice great diversity in the lengths of holes. Architect Clark was able to create a variety of shot-making opportunities within his design.

The front nine opens with two medium length par 4s that, if played correctly, can get your round off to a genial start. Avoid the large bunker



down the left side dogleg bend of the second hole. Holes three through five at Pleasant Valley probably represent the strongest stretch of holes on the entire course. The par 5 third’s tee shot that plays through a hallway of trees, and at nearly 600 yards requires three proper shots to achieve success.

Nothing quite compares following the toughest par 5 with the hardest par 3, but they did it here. The fourth measures 222 from the back tees and plays from an elevated tee to an elevated green. Hole five is this writers’ favorite on the outward nine with its very clever design with lots of options. Another par 5, it offers a bit of risk-reward played across a rolling hill with a fairway in two by a large tree. After the par 4 sixth, you come to the most memorable hole on the front side. The par 3 seventh plays entirely over water to a deep, narrow green. A couple of par 4s play back to the clubhouse, with number nine providing an excellent birdie prospect.

The back nine at Pleasant Valley starts with a reachable par 5 where you must avoid the water to the right of the putting surface. The par 3 eleventh features a most notable trait in its long and slender green. Hole twelve kicks off a pair of monster par 4s that play very fairly from the white tees on the inward side. At 479 yards, I had difficulty reaching the fairway. Always respect par here! The green on the par 5 thirteenth, another solid hole, is tucked away among trees. Plan accordingly for the best angle of attack, which lies up the right side of the fairway. After a final par 3, your round wraps up with four consecutive par 4s that are as different as night and day. The lengthy fifteenth has no bunkers, and the second





shot plays uphill to an undersized green surrounded by mounds. Who doesn't like a drivable, short par 4? Find Pleasant Valley's version on the sixteenth, a great hole where water to the right and a trio of bunkers protect the green, which may perplex your decision making from the tee. Seventeen features a unique split fairway with a large

bunker in the middle handling the duties in place of a directional flag. Eighteen plays back to the clubhouse with a large water feature to the right that runs the entire length of the fairway right up to the green. Your approach plays slightly uphill, so you may want to consider carrying an extra club. This awesome finishing hole encompasses all the superb, joyful qualities Pleasant Valley offers.

In 2016 Pleasant Valley added an outdoor pavilion that augments their capacity for hosting charity events and corporate outings. It makes for an ideal place to hold an after round meal or prize ceremony presentation. Pleasant Valley is owned and managed by Wingfield Golf Properties out of Greenville, South Carolina, and has a sister course located just over the county line.



Having a terrific Dan Maples' design, South Riding Golf Club in Loudoun County resides in the very successful South Riding residential community. Wingfield also manages four other courses in Virginia. A links-style course, Bristow Manor is graced by a 19th century Manor House and stretches across Prince William County's countryside. A wonderful, new Rees Jones masterpiece, The Club at Viniterra in New Kent has already achieved top ten status in the state, and the two Bowling Green Country Club courses near Front Royal have been legendary golf staples in the Shenandoah Valley for the past 30 years. All of these courses are included with an Associate Member Club membership, which grants tons of privileges. It's a terrific bargain if you like to play some of the best golf courses in the Commonwealth.

When you hear the words Northern Virginia, you normally think of a busy, hectic pace. Well, if you need to experience some golf bliss, Pleasant Valley Golf Club could become your go to place.

For more information visit pleasantvalleygpc.com

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