



Raspberry Golf Trail ~ Enjoy the Journey, Reap the Rewards!

Nick Ciattei

I first remember hearing about [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) from its creator. The head of Raspberry Golf Management, Bob Swiger, invited me to a brainstorming session along with one of his partners, Steve Clark. This meeting took place in 2006, and shortly thereafter The Raspberry Golf Trail started out with the three original courses—[Raspberry Falls](#), [Old Hickory](#), and [Cannon Ridge](#). Swiger believed that if you were a public course golfer who didn't want to invest both time and money in private courses, you would still enjoy a similar member-for-a-day expedition. He extended this opportunity to golfers for years at [Raspberry Falls](#) and thought dedicated golfers would take advantage of the chance to play the better golf courses if other courses followed his lead. Some eight years later, [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) now unites some of the best upscale daily-fee golf courses that the mid-Atlantic offers. Each course has been handpicked to represent the trail because it offers great conditions, excellent service, and a complete and memorable golf experience.



A really simple concept makes [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) unique. Pay a one-time-only five dollar membership fee, then just pay to play at three different trail courses, any of three you desire, and you get a fourth round free at any of those three courses. All course credits you attain carry over year to year.

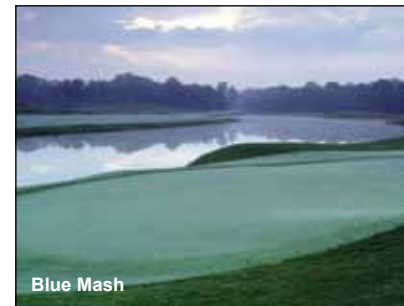


This year [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) added three new courses bringing their total to 16 golf clubs and 18 courses crossing three states. All three new courses are located in Pennsylvania, making the trail card even more appealing to folks in South Central. [Iron Valley Golf Club](#), a P.B. Dye thrill ride in Lebanon, plays across expansive vistas and extreme

elevation changes. Be prepared to be challenged as Dye always turns things up a bit, making Iron Valley a golf course like no other. Regional golf design legend Jim Blaukovitch built [Golden Oaks Golf Club](#), a club always near the top of everyone's must-play list, in Fleetwood. Readers of *Berks County Living Magazine* voted Golden Oaks as "Best Public Golf Course." The



Golf Course Owner's Association named [Broad Run Golfer's Club](#) in West Chester, the trail's third new course, the Pennsylvania Golf Course of the Year in 2014. Designed by U.S. Open Doctor Rees Jones, [Broad Run](#) offers an incredible golf experience to players of all skill levels. Well represented in the Quaker State, [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) includes [Inniscrone Golf Club](#) in Avondale, which ranks in the "Top 100 Modern Courses in America" in *Golfweek Magazine*. This spectacular layout was originally designed as a private club. Pennsylvania's newest public course, [Royal Manchester Golf Links](#), an inspiring links-style course in York, features rolling hills and generous fairways and greens. The wispy native grasses of [Royal Manchester](#) make you feel like you are across the pond rather than on the banks of the Susquehanna River. A one-of-a-kind confrontation awaits you at golf's Gettysburg address, [The Links at Gettysburg](#). You must venture to this trail course just to see Lindsay Ervin and Steve Klein's unique design. The 36-hole tag team at [Penn National Golf Club and Inn](#) in Mt. Alto is about as good as it can get. Both the Founders and Iron Forge courses have earned 4-star ratings from *Golf Digest*.



Five courses in Maryland comprise part of [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#). World-class architect Arthur Hills designed both [Blue Mash Golf Course](#) in Laytonsville and [Waverly Woods Golf Club](#) in Marriottsville. [Blue Mash](#) features a quality mix of links-style and parkland wooded holes and boasts being the premier public golf location in the Rockville area. [Waverly Woods](#)

portrays great modern golf with five sets of tees making play enjoyable for all. PG County's real gem, [Lake Presidential Golf Club](#), resides in Upper Marlboro. Created by the folks that brought you Kiawah Island, [Lake Presidential's](#) 18 super holes distinguish it as one of the top ten courses in



the Free State. On the banks of the Chester River on Maryland's Eastern Shore, [Queenstown Harbor](#) presents two championship courses. The must-play River Course is recognized as one of the most beautiful in the region with boundless shoreline scenery. The Lakes course is lauded as a Top 50 Course in America for Women to Play.

The four courses run by Raspberry Golf Management anchor the courses representing the trail in the Commonwealth. [Raspberry Golf and Hunt Club](#) stands as one of the forefathers of the Northern Virginia upscale golf boom. The Gary Player design only gets better with age and remains a golf go-to! Picture perfect partners [Augustine Golf Club](#) in Stafford, [Bull Run Golf Club](#) in Haymarket, and [Old Hickory Golf Club](#) in Woodbridge have all been




recognized for their outstanding conditions and service. Rick Jacobson designed the first two, while Tim Freeland created the later. Don't forget the Shenandoah Valley's entry into the trail. Tom Clark shaped the eye catching [Blue Ridge Shadows](#) in Front Royal. Two distinct, memorable nines form this award winner.

Once again this year, trail card holders will get the opportunity to participate in [The Raspberry Golf Trail Ambassador Pro-Am Invitational](#). Six of the trail courses will host this year's events. The schedule gets started at [Queenstown Harbor](#) on May 19. On June 9, [Royal Manchester](#) plays host. Then on July 21, the series moves to [Lake Presidential](#).

Pennsylvania is the next stop with [Iron Valley](#) as the event site on August 11. [Blue Ridge Shadows](#) gets the nod on September 15, and the series wraps up at [Raspberry Falls](#) on October 27.

The trail creators have always worked under the philosophy of "crawl before you walk, walk before you run." The methodical, well thought out growth of [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) sets them apart from other regional golf reward programs. Managing partner LaMott Smith notes that since the trail got started, residual use is extremely high. "Because the program rolls over year to year, our players continue to reap the rewards of playing on the trail. Sure, they can consider one of the courses their home course, but they love the opportunity to play other great courses each year," Smith added.

One thing has stayed with me since that meeting with Misters Swiger and Clark years ago. [The Raspberry Golf Trail](#) can never be confused with a golf discount card. Think of it as a passport to some of the signature courses in our region, and take time for the journey to those memorable golf experiences! 

For more information visit raspberrygolftrail.com

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