



## Rocky Gap Casino Resort ~ Hit the Jackpot

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My memories of one of the most beautiful sections of the free state go all the way back to my radio days when Rocky Gap State Park would host an annual music festival, and the radio station I worked for would take listeners on a fun-filled bus trip to the concert. Today, that same park in the Appalachian Mountains of Maryland now lies adjacent to a year-round festival of sorts, Rocky Gap Casino Resort. This terrific facility boasts being home to the only Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course in Maryland.



The Golden Bear met some challenges laying out the design because some areas were environmentally protected and had to be kept intact. After all was said and done, Nicklaus was able to create a masterpiece at Rocky Gap Casino Resort that blends and intersects with undulating hills effortlessly. The front nine is carved from a mountainous, tree lined terrain with several dramatic elevation variations, while the back nine spreads across expansive, gently rolling meadows. Rocky Gap employs five sets of tees ranging from 5100 from the reds to over 7000 yards from the blacks. Remember when playing here, you are standing about 1,200 feet above sea level, so expect your ball to travel farther.



Hole 5 Par 5

The outward nine at Rocky Gap starts out with a straight forward par 4 that has an inviting green that yearns for a winning score to kickoff your round. Tee shots play to an elevated fairway on the short par 4 second hole. The third hole tips out at more than 470 yards and rates as the most difficult one on the entire course. Accept par here as a prize. Four, an "au natural" par 3, is set among hardwoods. Two holes really stand

out on the front, the par 5 fifth followed by the par 3 sixth. Both have stunning vistas and high drama from the tee boxes. A split fairway on the previous sets up many risk/reward options, but beware because the hole gets very narrow as you approach the green making club selection critical. At this elevation, the later plays a club or two shorter than normal. One of the more thought provoking par 4s is the seventh. The farther left you can keep your tee ball the better your angle will be on the approach to a green set close to a creek. A premium on accuracy is called



Hole 7 Par 4

for on the narrow, tree lined par 5 eighth that plays straight uphill. Nine requires one of the more taxing tee shots to reach the raised fairway on this 4 par.

The back nine at Rocky Gap has the rare feature of having three of each par. So count on scoring windfalls. The straight par 5 tenth tempts you to get home in two, but you will face a precarious shot over a stone fortified creek. The par 4 eleventh plays slightly longer as you gradually work your way uphill from tee to green. Pin placements on the front of the par 3 twelfth normally draw shots toward the hole that sits in a bowl on the green. The sweeping par 5 thirteenth plays downhill into the prevailing wind. Enjoy the view of much of the golf course from the tee. Smart play calls for a fairway wood or hybrid to avoid the wetlands off the tee on the fourteenth. Danger always looms on the narrow par 5 fifteenth where finding the green surrounded by misfortune is a bonanza. The last three holes at Rocky Gap give players the chance to make up a shot. Back to back par 3s at sixteen and seventeen and the uphill closing par 4 all put forth decent scoring opportunities.



Hole 10 Par 5



Hole 18 Par 4



The Rocky Gap Casino Resort offers plenty of pleasures for golfers when off the course. The casino has all the latest video slots as well as thrilling table games. Make sure to check their calendar for the dates you will be there for specials and any entertainment scheduled in the Event Center. Five dining options cater to casual travelers. Signatures is a sports bar and grill where you can check out a game, while the Lakeside Restaurant has a full menu with a splendid lake view. What would a getaway be without some pampering? No place is better than the Spa at Rocky Gap Casino Resort with a wide variety of services for all. The whole family will find a wealth of enjoyment on the lake. They have a variety of boating options as well as fishing, and the adjacent Rocky Gap State Park requires a small admission for some beach and swim time. If you have a larger group of golfers, say 20, contact the resort to see if you might qualify for some promotions.

Rocky Gap Casino Resort offers so much for the exploring golfer. After a comfortable drive from the Baltimore-Washington metro out I-70 onto I-68, you'll feel like you're a million miles away and have already hit the jackpot. 🏌️

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