

The Definition of Luxury

The true representation of a “golf club,” Coyote Ridge offers a five-star experience that extends well beyond the fairways and greens BY TRAVIS MEASLEY

If you asked 100 people about what they look for in their golfing experience, you would probably get 100 different answers. Some want tree-lined fairways, while some demand perfect greens or finely manicured tee boxes. There would be golfers looking for the ideal practice facility or a course they could easily walk. Some would want a great price or the best food or a place to hang out after the round; and still others would say a friendly staff or high-class amenities are their top priority.

But, deep down, what all golfers really want in a club is a great experience. You want to leave the course with a smile, knowing you had a great time whether you spent \$20 or \$200, or shot 65 or 95. When it boils

down to it, we all want to be treated right, pampered and shown a great time. We want a reason to come back and play again.

If you are like many of the Metroplex golfers seeking the perfect package without the country club price tag, look no further than Coyote Ridge Golf Club. Located just east of Interstate 35E and north of State Highway 121 in Carrollton, Coyote Ridge is the ultimate embodiment of luxury and the high-end golf club experience without putting too much stress on your wallet. Since the Moon family (founders of Sam Moon Trading Co.) bought the club in 2005 and brought in general manager Alan Sun to head it up, Coyote Ridge has grown from a rundown track (under the previous

owners) to the ultimate all-you-could-ask-for golf experience.

From a pro shop stocked with the latest golf apparel – including Puma, Nike, adidas and Ashworth – and the hottest golf equipment (seriously, the pro shop is like a miniature stand-alone golf store) to the upscale Grill 19 to the staff that greets you at your car every day of the week to load your clubs on your cart and offer you a warm or cool towel, Coyote Ridge has put a premium on all the details.

“Our goal and mission is to provide the golfer the best overall golf experience that is second to none in DFW, with the best course conditions, high end luxury amenities such as our clubhouse, restaurant, pro shop,



A Round at Coyote Ridge Golf Club

Address: 1640 West Hebron Pkwy.

Carrollton, TX 75010

Phone number: 972-395-0786

Website: www.coyoteridgegolfclub.com

Designer: George Williams

Year opened: 1999

Par/Yardage: 72/7,003 yards (Black tees);

6,344 (Blue tees); 5,861 (White tees);

5,096 (Red tees)

Greens: Bermuda

Rates: Monday-Thursday \$55,

Friday-Sunday \$75. Rates are for peak hours and include cart.

Toughest hole: No. 9 – If there is a tougher hole in Dallas/Fort Worth, we don't want to play it, because the par-4 ninth is hard enough for us. While 437 yards from the back tees isn't long by today's standards, the hole plays dead into the prevailing wind, which always seems to ramp up as you step onto the elevated tee with absolutely no tree protection. A large lake runs down the left side and juts into the fairway near the 150-yard post, forcing a layup short of the lake or a perfect drive into a small section of fairway on the right side. Watch out for out-of-bounds right, as the white stakes run along the cart path. Your approach shot will likely come from 170-200 yards (into that strengthening wind), and now you must navigate a pond right of the green, as well as the large lake to the left. Good luck.

Most intriguing hole: No. 15 – This par-5 measures only 501 yards from the back tee, and provides a much-needed dose of relief from the difficult stretch that is Nos. 9-14. The hole usually plays into the wind, but a good drive still leaves you a relatively manageable chance at reaching the elevated green in two. A large bunker guards the left part of the fairway near the green, but it's not a bad place to be after your second shot. There is out-of-bounds right of the cart path down the length of the hole, but it's wide open to the left on your second shot, so hook away. For most players this should be a driver-fairway wood-pitch shot for a good birdie chance.

banquets and our service," Sun said, "giving our golfers the feel that they are in a private country club without the country club fees. This is what our brand represents."

Led by Sun and two high-caliber executive chefs, Grill 19 rivals the restaurant dining areas of any of the top-flight private courses in Dallas/Fort Worth. The extensive menu features dozens of premium appetizers, salads, sandwiches and main course meals, not to mention a secondary menu of only Asian dishes. Some of our favorite items include the Pot Stickers, Sliders, Prime Rib Sandwich, Hawaiian Salmon and the Tilapia Creole.

The restaurant area is a state-of-the-art facility with five 70-inch LED televisions,

wireless Internet, a full bar, private dining and a ballroom for events. The clubhouse as a whole – a \$6.5-million project built from the ground up – is a 27,000-square foot Taj Mahal, fit with meeting rooms and conference areas, along with a fully stocked wine room.

If you can pull yourself away from the magnificent clubhouse, Coyote Ridge has a pretty darn good golf facility as well. The driving range – located just steps outside the back of the clubhouse – features one of the larger and cleaner hitting areas in the Metroplex, and a large putting green sits just adjacent to the first tee, making practice before your round quite convenient.

If there is any knock to the course, it's the



fact that the tract was built through a neighborhood, but Sun and his staff (who can't do anything about the homes) have planted hundreds of trees over the past decade, many on the front nine, to minimize the visual presence of nearby homes as much as possible. A month ago, the club put in 55 more trees, including 18 on the ninth hole alone, making a difficult hole that much more visually appealing (and intimidating – see sidebar).

The course is a true test for golfers of all skill levels, and for those that want to tackle the back tees at 7,003 yards, it can be downright difficult. The track starts with two relatively simple holes, including the par-5 second, which measures 536 yards from the back tees with a relatively wide open fairway (one of the widest on the course). It's the best opportunity for a birdie on the front side, so take advantage.

Take a breath before stepping up to the

par-3 third hole, which, when stretched out, can be as long as 259 yards from the back tees. With water all along the right side and houses and out-of-bounds creeping on the left, the tee shot is quite intimidating. Bogey is your friend on the third, a trend that holds true for all four par 3s at Coyote Ridge.

The three-hole stretch at Nos. 5, 6 and 7 can also prove to be quite a test, as all three run due south into the prevailing wind. The seventh hole is a pretty par-3 where the player hits from an elevated tee box down to a green that is heavily protected by water and out-of-bounds. You may think that the elevation makes the hole play shorter than the yardage, but the usually stiff breeze out of the south makes this hole much more difficult than first glance. Flight the ball down here, if you can, and take an extra club to ensure you carry the water in front of the green.

The ninth hole – a 437-yard par-4 – is by far the most difficult on the course and arguably one of the hardest holes in the area (see sidebar). The constantly windy conditions, coupled with copious amounts of water and out-of-bounds, make this hole one mean son-of-a-gun. If you walk away with bogey, hold your head up; if you make par, brag to everyone you can.

As you make the turn to No. 10, make sure and stop near the driving range and get a cool towel from one of the staffers who hands them out. It's another small perk the club provides that you won't find anywhere else, and it can come in handy when the afternoon sun is beating down on you.

To say the two nines at Coyote Ridge are visually different would be an understatement. Dug out through an old quarry, the back nine is more densely populated with thick trees, overgrown areas, and undulation both on the fairways and the



greens. There are houses present on a few of the holes, but they are set back further away from the fairway, hidden by the natural growth of the terrain. The transition makes for a fun round and a visually pleasing back nine.

The 13th hole is one of our personal favorites and a sort of overlooked gem on the back side of the course. It's one of the farthest holes from the clubhouse, and it appears to be cut directly through a grove of trees. At 376 yards from the back tees, you only need a long iron or hybrid off the tee, but hitting the fairway is a must, as trees line both sides, waiting to grab your ball.

The second shot plays sharply uphill to a long, skinny green hidden by the elevation change. If you hit your tee shot to the right side of the fairway, overhanging trees by the green may block your view of the flag as well, especially if it is in the back portion of the green. While it may not seem much as first glance, the 13th is an entertaining hole that gives you a lot of options off the tee and for your second shot, but demands quality strikes and the precise yardage.

The par-5 15th hole is your best chance for birdie on the back nine – at 501 yards it can be reached by most players, even though it plays into the wind. Beware of the right side, however, as trees and out-of-bounds creeps up close to the cart path. The green sits up on a bit of a tabletop, so any shot offline will bound far from the hole – if you have to miss, short or left in the large bunker are the best places to be, as right is death with the trees and OB.

The other good chance for birdie comes at

No. 17, a downhill, dogleg-left, short par-4. A long iron off the tee should leave you no more than 120 yards to the green, which is fairly large and receptive, and slopes from back to front. Throw your second shot past the flag and bring it back toward the hole. If you are feeling really daring, hit your tee shot with a hard draw up the left side to catch a small slope that runs toward the green. Longer hitters may be able to reach the hole with the perfect shot, and are rewarded with an easy birdie.

As you finish on No. 18, if you didn't have a meal at Grill 19 before your round (or even if you did), make sure you stop in,

relax and enjoy some food and a cold drink while chatting with the friendly staff. We constantly hear that Coyote Ridge has some of the nicest, most personable employees in DFW, another point of pride for Sun and his team.

At Coyote Ridge Golf Club, the mission is not just about providing great golf, it's about providing a great *experience*. Over the past decade, the Moon family, Sun and his talented staff have put in the work and paid attention to the details that make their club one of the most luxurious public courses in the Metroplex.

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