

Rees Jones Philosophy

Rio Secco Golf Club

If I were to summarize my Philosophy for golf course design, it would be this: to create an environment for the game of golf that is challenging, fair, and aesthetically pleasing. I would rather create a natural, classic course that blends with its surroundings, than a course full of unnecessary gimmicks which discourages the average golfer.



My style emphasizes definition. I work hard at giving the golfer a concept as he stands over the ball. I want him to see the intended target and be able to visualize the shot. To achieve this, I elevate the tees when possible, grade fairways and add bunkers, pockets and mounds and carefully crafted greens. The greens are surrounded by features that protect the surface. These natural-appearing features help to contain slightly errant shots and provide a variety of approach shots. Our Philosophy is to penalize a missed shot in keeping with the degree it is missed. Our courses are designed with so many subtleties that a new experience can be encountered on every round. We often emphasize position and risks off the tee to improve the approach to the green. I make each hole more distinctive by using a mix of design elements which I call a “multi-theme” approach.

I believe graceful lines and greens which allow for multiple options for hole locations. A properly contoured and fortified green, more than any other feature, is the place where par is presented as a standard of excellence.

The selection of a site for the course is crucial. It serves as the canvas for the creation of the design, I consider myself as a “hands on” architect with an emphasis on quality over quantity. Frequent visits to the site are essential to oversee construction and create design details.

My approach to remodeling a classic existing course is not unlike an art restorer with an old painting. After a careful study, I strip away the accumulated effects of years of wear and tear. The result is to return the course to the original design intent while bearing in mind the abilities and equipment of today’s golfers.

The ultimate measure of success is building uncontrived courses that have enough variety and character to retain the golfer’s interest round after round. I strive to build my courses to stand the test of time.

-Rees Jones