

Pennsylvania

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This is America's "keystone state". Grab your clubs and unlock the door to some of North America's finest golfing territory, with Presidents, chocolate bars and Arnold Palmer all part of the journey through mountains, rivers and valleys

Play presidential golf at
Carroll Valley, five
miles from Camp David



Hershey Country Club, much tougher than taking candy from a baby

This North Eastern state is the foundation stone of modern American nationhood. The Declaration of Independence was signed and read at Philadelphia in 1776 and the American Civil War turned on the fields of Gettysburg. It's also where the first McDonald's Big Mac was made – dramatic influences on modern American culture – but this is a state whose golfing history is a boast in itself.

With over 500-courses including Oakmont Country Club, venue for the 2007 US Open, and Merion – one of the world's Top-10 courses and scene of Ben Hogan's iconic championship winning one-iron shot to the 18th at the 1953 US Open – Pennsylvania is a rich and established American golf destination.

No less an ambassador than Arnold Palmer, the man who popularised the modern professional game, is Pennsylvania born and raised. He has demonstrated his affection for the state by remaining the touring professional for Laurel Valley Golf Club in Ligonier, where the 1975 Ryder Cup was staged, since the 1950s.

Reachable from the UK in under seven hours' flying time and serviced by two major airlines

into Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is a great fly-drive destination.

There's no better place to start than the region where Arnold Palmer was born. As well as being home to the tiny Arnold Palmer regional airport in Latrobe, the Laurel Highlands region is one of the best places to enjoy challenging golf amidst breathtaking mountain scenery.

The Nemacolin Woodlands Resort and Spa is just 61 miles from the "Steel City" of Pittsburgh, a rejuvenated industrial metropolis. With 355 rooms and 36 holes of championship golf including Mystic Rock – home of

the PGA Tour's 84 Lumber Classic of Pennsylvania – this is a golfing resort without rival in the region.

The brainchild of Lumber magnate Joe Hardy, Nemacolin is a luxury retreat for which the Pete Dye-designed Mystic Rock takes centre stage. At 7,329 yards and par 72, this course is visually magnificent and fuses canyons, lakes and precipices with terrific Dye golf course design.

Excellent use is made of natural features and multiple teeing grounds, in what Dye describes as "possibly my best yet." Mystic Rock is an appropriate name as there's an other-worldly feel to the place, especially when played early in the morning when dew lies fresh on the smooth-running greens.

You tackle your first canyon at the 435-yard par-4 2nd hole, where the drive is easier than it looks but conquering your nerves is a different matter altogether.

Danger is ever-present on the front nine, but the course truly reaches its stride at the 11th and 12th holes. Dye follows a dramatic par-5 with a deceptively short par-3, where a quick sloping green is guarded by a lake, boulders



WHERE TO PLAY

Laurel Highlands

Mystic Rock at Nemacolin Woodlands Resort and Spa
7,329 yards, par 72
\$130-\$150
Contact: 00-1-724-329-8555
nemacolin.com
A wicked Pete Dye creation cut through canyons and lakes

Tom's Run at Chestnut Ridge GC

6,812 yards, par 72
\$69
Contact: 00-1-724-459-7188
chestnutridgeresort.com
A pleasant rolling course with sensational mountain views

Central Pennsylvania

Carroll Valley Resort
6,688 yards, par 71
\$33-\$42
Contact: 00-1-717-642 8252
carrollvalley.com

A fun, enjoyable course set beneath impressive hillsides

Hershey Country Club

East Course: 7,061 yards, par 71
\$65-\$150
Contact: 00-1-717-533-2360
golfhershey.com
Hershey's East goes up and down and offers fantastic quality golf

Pocono Mountains

Skytop Lodge
6,656 yards, par 72
\$65-\$85
Contact: 00-1-570-595-7401
skytop.com
A gentle course in a panoramic setting with a magnificent Lodge

Great Bear Golf & Country Club

7,025 yards, par 71
\$67-\$85
Contact: 00-1-570-223-2000
greatbeargolf.com

A steamy giant. Great Bear has long tight holes and devilish greens

Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort

27 holes: 6,589-6,800 yards, par 72
\$50-\$70
Contact: 00-1-570-424-4000
shawneeinn.com
A remarkable setting for a course, 24 of the 27-holes are on an island that bridges New Jersey and Delaware

WHERE TO STAY

Nemacolin Woodlands Resort and Spa

Contact: 00-1-724-329-8555
nemacolin.com

Hershey Hotel

Contact: 00-1-717-533-2360

Hershey Park

Contact: 00-1-570-595-7401

Skytop Lodge

Contact: 00-1-570-595-7401

Skytop.com

Hershey Country Club



HERSHEY COUNTRY CLUB



Hillside views at Carroll Valley

CARROLL VALLEY GOLF RESORT

and a gushing waterfall. A three feels like a two every time.

Nemacolin's facilities are second to none. Golf carts come equipped with global positioning satellites that relay your exact yardage as you drive to your ball. Falling Rock, a 42-room deluxe hotel overlooking Mystic Rock's 18th green, was opened in August 2004 and offers butler service in every room. It's further proof of Hardy's desire to make Nemacolin the most talked about golf resort on the East Coast.

After the rigours of Mystic Rock, you could try Nemacolin's Links course, which at 6,814 yards is less taxing. Or alternatively, head to one of the many fine public courses in Laurel Highlands, like Tom's Run at the Chestnut Ridge Golf Club.

Situated in the foothills of the Highlands, Tom's Run measures 6,812 yards and offers panoramic mountain views that can't fail to impress. The early holes are most interesting, with both the 3rd and 4th requiring tee-shots through a chute of trees over natural wetlands and creeks to fairways and greens set amidst mature woodland.

If you're in need of a rest day, the nearby

Ohiopyle recreation area is great for white water rafting, hiking and biking.

Choosing a Pennsylvania region and making camp for a few days is the best way to enjoy golfing in a state that has 67 counties and covers 45,888 square miles. After the fresh mountain surrounds of the Laurel Highlands, head east along the historic route 30—Lincoln Highway—which was once the longest and oldest coast to coast highway in the US.

Stop at Gettysburg near the border with Maryland. This historic town saw the pivotal battle of the American civil war won by the Union army in July 1863 and, while commercialised, is an interesting aside to golf. If you're keen to get back on the course, then Carroll Valley Resort—just eight miles from Gettysburg in Fairfield—should be the next stop.

Despite its homely clubhouse and modest appeal, Carroll Valley's course has hosted some of the world's big hitters, including former president Bill Clinton. Just five miles away, as the crow flies, is Camp David—the famous Summit meeting place—used by incumbent presidents for international diplomacy.

An equally short distance away, cut into a

mountainside, is Site R—the underground Pentagon and emergency seat of government used by vice president Dick Cheney in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Nestled beneath the Catocin Mountains, the course was built in 1968 and has matured into a thrilling test of parkland golf. Water comes into play on eight of the holes at this 6,688-yard, par-71 course, and most memorably on the signature, par-5 12th.

From an elevated tee you hit down to a fairway that cambers severely from left to right. Once on the short grass you have to juggle the temptation to try and hit your second over the picturesque stream and rock boulders that front the green or lay up short and play it is as a three-shotter.

Carroll Valley bursts with risk-reward golf, yet balances difficult holes with playable par-4s. For an easier fare, head to the resort's second course at Mountain View.

Even more quizzical is Hershey, a town built for chocolate but home to some of the best golf in the entire state. Just 10 miles from Pennsylvania state capital Harrisburg, Hershey was built in 1903 by candy magnate Milton S Hershey to house a chocolate factory. Now, alongside four-star Hotel Hershey, Chocolate World and the Hersheypark theme park, an award-winning golf resort takes centre stage.

The Hershey Country Club opened in 1930 and since then some of golf's greats have graced the fairways, among them Ben Hogan, who was club professional from 1941-1951.

The course planner includes the kitsch phrase "at Hershey not every chip is chocolate," but if you're not straight with your irons, you'll be hitting plenty of them on the 7,061-yard East Course.

Designed by George Fazio and built in 1970, the East is a tough test of championship golf and hosts the annual Reese's Cup on the



Nationwide Tour. The course features man-made lakes and over 100 bunkers.

The 18th hole symbolizes the interesting fusion between golf and chocolate money. The approach shot is hit over water to a green in front of the clubhouse, its flat roof and cream-flecked brick making it look like a giant praline-chip Hershey bar.

Around three hours' drive north of Hershey on interstates 81 and 80, are the Pocono Mountains and Lehigh Valley region, close to the Delaware Water Gap separating Pennsylvania from Delaware. It's the perfect mountain retreat to end your golf break.

Golf in the region is of the highest standard. There are over 30 courses catering for all abilities, from the benign-but-enjoyable course at Skytop Lodge to the testing Jack Nicklaus-designed Great Bear course near Stroudsburg.

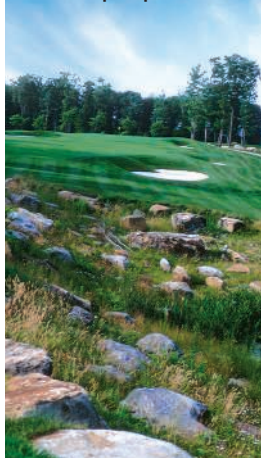
Skytop Lodge is the ideal base and attracts many over-worked corporate types from New York and Boston. The centrepiece of this 5,500 acre resort is the lodge itself, a grandiose stone building commanding lake and mountain views. The course is an easier test of golf than either Mystic Rock or Hershey's East Course. It's a perfect warm-up before you tackle the Pocono's tougher tracks, such as Great Bear and Shawnee Country Club.

Unlike the crisp air and wide open feel of Skytop, Great Bear and Shawnee are more akin to courses set among South American rainforests. Eerie mist rises from the trees that line every hole and humidity is high. It's easy to stay hydrated, however, as beverage cart attendants frequently roll up in carts that stock everything from Powerade to Philadelphia cheese steak sandwiches.

Pennsylvania has 16 domestic airports within the state if you prefer to fly around rather than drive. Few places on the North American continent offer such a combination of superb golf resorts with the remarkable experience of driving through tracts of wilderness and vast mountainous spaces. Pennsylvania has all of this and more.

"Beverage cart attendants frequently roll up in carts that stock everything from Powerade to Philadelphia cheese steak sandwiches"

Mystic Rock fuses canyons, lakes and precipices



Mystic Rock: other worldly, especially first thing in the morning



Pennsylvania Facts

GETTING THERE

US Airways operates daily flights from London Gatwick and Manchester to Philadelphia while **British Airways** flies daily from Gatwick to Philadelphia. (usairways.com, 0845-600-3300; ba.com, 0870-850-9-850)

KEY ATTRACTIONS

■ Pennsylvania is the birthplace of outlet shopping and it's tax-free, saving you between 20% and 70% on retail prices. Just outside Philadelphia's downtown area is **Franklin Mills**, one of the biggest malls in the US.

■ Philadelphia is home to America's most historic square mile. **The Independence National Historical Park** houses Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence was signed, and the Liberty Bell.

■ **The Gettysburg National Military Park** stands as the largest American Civil War battlefield shrine, with over 1,000 monuments along 40 miles of scenic avenues. Tours are available.

■ Visit the Amish in **Pennsylvania Dutch Country** near Lancaster and see life as it was lived in the 18th Century.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

■ **The Andy Warhol Museum** in Pittsburgh has six floors dedicated to the pop-art prince on the city's North side.

■ Pittsburgh Duck Boat Tour – see the sights on a converted **Second World War landing craft** touring the city by street and river.

■ Hersheypark – a world-class theme park with more than 60-rides including the new **Storm Runner rollercoaster**.

■ Hershey's Chocolate World – this free-to-visit chocolate heaven (America's best-known brand) might be the closest you'll get to a real **Willie Wonka's**.

■ The Spa at Hotel Hershey.

Adults can enjoy chocolate-inspired beauty treatments at this European-style spa.

■ Pretend to be Rocky by running up the steps of the Philadelphia Art Gallery mimicking the famous scene in **Rocky II**.

PENNSYLVANIA FACTS

■ PA lays claim to **America's first zoo**, radio station, newspaper, national league baseball game and the first Big Mac.

■ Allegheny County in Pittsburgh has **1,945 bridges**, more than any city in the world except Venice. Pennsylvania is also the "Covered Bridge Capital of the World" with 200 of the nation's 1,500 covered bridges in the state.

■ Pittsburgh is home to the largest art gallery dedicated to a single artist, at the **Andy Warhol Museum**.

■ The Amish communities in Lancaster do not use electricity and speak **Pennsylvania Dutch**, a dialect of German.

■ Crowds numbering as many as 30,000 visit Punxsutawney each year to see **Punxsutawney Phil**, a groundhog, leave his winter retreat and herald the start of spring. The town was setting for the hugely popular 1993 film, **Groundhog Day**.

GENERAL INFO

Time difference: GMT -5

Tourist Information: vistpacom
Brochure line: 0870-9031001

Climate: Summers are generally warm while spring and autumn are temperate and a great time to visit. Winters can be cold with snow, particularly in the mountains. But many courses are open year-round, weather permitting.

■ **For information on holiday packages to Pennsylvania, contact 3D Golf (08701-200-300; www.3dgold.com)**

Nemacolin is a golfing resort without rival in the region



PHOTOS NEMACOLIN WOODLANDS RESORT AND SPA