

TRAVEL: THE COACHELLA VALLEY • OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

# GOLF NEWS California | Nevada | Arizona & TRAVEL

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011

**CHOOSE  
THE RIGHT  
BALL FOR  
YOUR GAME**

**WHO KEPT  
THEIR TOUR  
CARDS —  
AND WHO  
DIDN'T**

**BILL CLINTON  
LEADS THE  
WAY FOR THE  
PGA TOUR'S  
DESERT STOP**

## DESERT GEM

**ESCENA GOLF CLUB  
IS A SPARKLING  
PALM SPRINGS  
DESTINATION**

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# COURSE REVIEW ESCENA GOLF CLUB

BY JOEL BEERS



## A DESERT GEM

The road Escena Golf Club has taken to becoming one of the Coachella Valley's most popular golf courses hasn't been the most direct. Opened in 2005 as the first public course located in the city of Palm Springs in 20 years, the course closed in 2007 due to the bursting of the housing bubble.

However, the club re-opened in late 2009 and since then has become known as one of "the most eminently playable courses in the desert," according to its managing director John Fitzpatrick.

There are several key reasons for the course's popularity, Fitzpatrick said: a classic Palm Springs layout designed by the Nicklaus Design Group, a clubhouse restaurant that has become a destination in itself and gorgeous views of the San Jacinto Mountains.

All are important, but it's the player-friendly design of the course where its real strength resides. At 7,173 yards from the tips, the course has enough length to challenge the best golfers, but even from the championship tees, "it's wide open with a lot of turf," said Fitzpatrick. "It's not target golf by any stretch, there are no forced carries and you don't spend a lot of time looking for balls or three-putting on the greens."

That player friendliness translates into making it a great course for couples. "We get more couples than any course I've ever seen," Fitzpatrick said, due to the course being set up to accommodate players of all skill levels.

Another incentive for couples is the Escena Grill, the clubhouse restaurant that "has become a destination restau-

rant, almost independent of the course," according to Fitzpatrick. "It still provides an integral function for the golf experience, however a lot of customers come for the great food and ambiance."

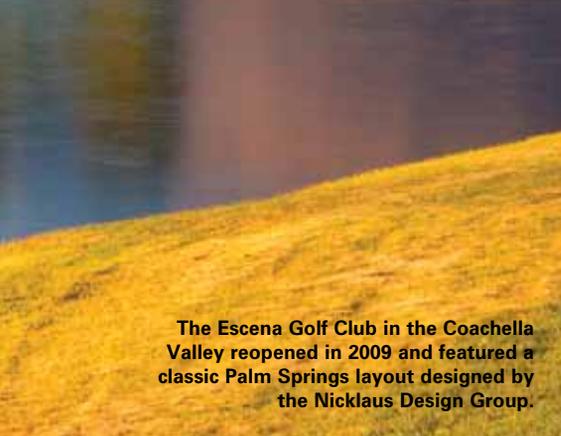
Located in the facility's mid-20th Century modern-style clubhouse, the restaurant is flanked by huge floor-to-ceiling windows that afford sterling views of Mt. San Jacinto.

The restaurant is open daily for breakfast and dinner Tuesday through Saturdays, with live entertainment offered Tuesday through Friday. It boasts one of the best Sunday brunches in the desert, Fitzpatrick said, and the course offers a package food and golf deal: nine holes and a full dinner range from \$55-\$60 per person.

While snowbirds from Canada and colder regions of the U.S. converge on the Coachella Valley in the winter, Fitzpatrick



**Escena Golf Club  
combines great  
golf with  
exceptional  
dining for a  
sparkling Palm  
Springs  
experience**



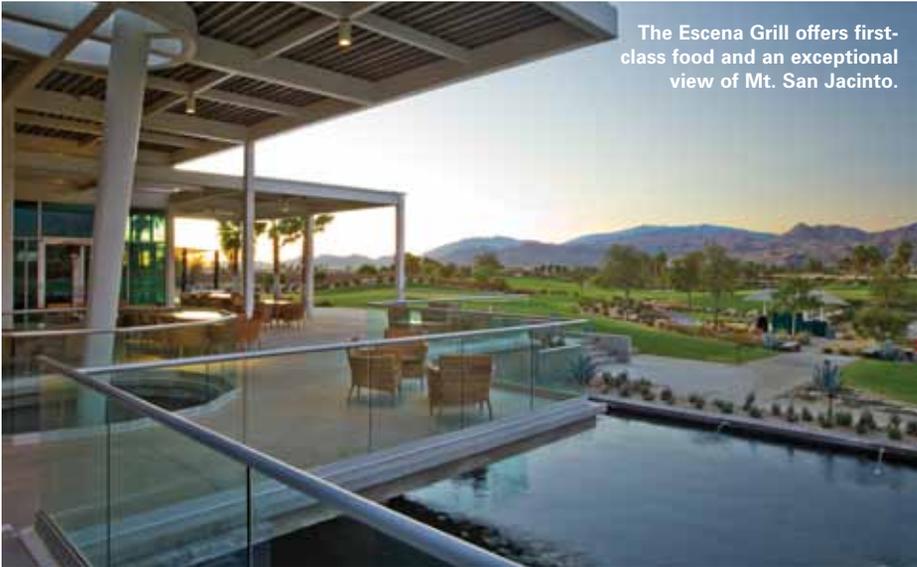
**The Escena Golf Club in the Coachella Valley reopened in 2009 and featured a classic Palm Springs layout designed by the Nicklaus Design Group.**

said a great deal of Escena's customers come from Orange and Los Angeles Counties, due to its relative proximity to those areas. Located in the western part of the Coachella Valley, just east of the Palm Springs International Airport, "you don't have to drive to Palm Springs to get here," Fitzpatrick said.

"We're a good complement to some of the great properties in the desert," he said. "We have different views, a much different clubhouse and restaurant than you get at other places, and the course has never been in better condition."

Peak season rates range from \$95 to \$110 and Escena offers a loyalty program that allows golfers to play for \$60 to \$65 with a \$229 annual membership.

For more information, call (760) 778-2737 or visit [www.escenagolf.com](http://www.escenagolf.com). **CGN**



The Escena Grill offers first-class food and an exceptional view of Mt. San Jacinto.



Even though it's in the desert, you'll still find plenty of water at Escena.