



The 217-yard par-3 13th hole at Avondale Golf Club.

WINTER DESTINATION

Avondale Golf Club

BY LEONARD FINKEL

A PACIFIC NORTHWEST WINTER, often wet and cold, isn't ideal for golfers.

Southwestern states present many destinations that satisfy a golf appetite. Numerous short, direct, flights from Portland, Seattle and Vancouver make California's Palm Springs area ideal for golfers. And many of those travelers put down roots at Avondale Golf Club in Palm Desert.

Why Avondale? Numerous interviews with members revealed the answer: the people and the golf course. This might be the friendliest, most welcoming group of golfers in the world.

"The compelling reason for us to join Avondale was the people most of all and secondly, the golf course," said John Coonce, who is from Seattle and has been a member at Avondale since 2007. "It wasn't the typical desert course with target golf. It had a lot of grass and trees. We played it one day and signed up the next. It's a golf course you just don't get tired of playing."

Jon Woodson related, "The winter weather in the Northwest is hideous. We wound up at Avondale because the course reminded us a lot of our course in Portland, but without the rain and cold. It was perfect for us." Woodson has been a member at Avondale since 2000.

Avondale is a club where you go out on the driving range and members recognize

that you're new and come up and introduce themselves, then set up a game or have lunch with you.

Avondale's traditional par-72 course is known for its beautiful setting and impeccable conditioning. More than 2,000 trees line fairways with dog-legs left and right. A spectacular four-component practice facility consists of a 290-yard all-grass driving range with natural turf-only tees; massive putting green; chipping greens with three hole locations and a separate bunker area. Members love the fact that the driving range faces the beautiful desert mountains. Avondale prides itself as a club where it's impossible not to find a golf game on course and enjoy drinks or cards afterwards.

A Coachella Valley gathering point and top layout since 1969, Avondale is in the midst of an exciting revival. San Diego-based JC Resorts was retained as its management company and the results have been very encouraging. In 2011, Avondale sold more memberships than any other private club in the Valley. Former club president Bill Challenger confirms, "Another benefit is that we're managed by a professional organization that knows what they're doing. They've kept costs under control." Major recent improvements include revamped men's and women's locker rooms, fitness center, new Lookout Dining Room and the refurbished Garden Dining Room.



Discover Avondale

Avondale is for the person focused on golf. For people traveling from cold-weather states who want to be part of a community, this club delivers an experience you can't get from public golf. Economically, reasonably priced memberships make a lot of sense. Flex memberships even allow you to choose the specific months you would like to be a member. For example, some members join only November, February and March because they're out of town January and February. A 60-round limited play membership is perfect for folks in the desert for an extended period but don't play on a daily basis. Rounds can be divided between a member and their spouse over the course of 12 months.

Free Discovery Tour at Avondale

A free, personalized Avondale Discovery Tour includes a tour of the entire facility, a round of golf and lunch in the Garden Dining Room. Avondale pairs prospective members with members they'll share interests with. If you are from Seattle or other Northwest cities, they'll try to find members from your city. If you are a bit younger, you'll be paired with younger members.

To set up your personal Discovery Tour, contact Shaun Mingus at smingus@jcrests.com or 760.345.2727. For more information on Avondale, visit www.avondalegolfclub.com.