

## A Trek Down the Vancouver Island Golf Trail

by Golf Is Mental • June 14, 2017 • 1 Comment

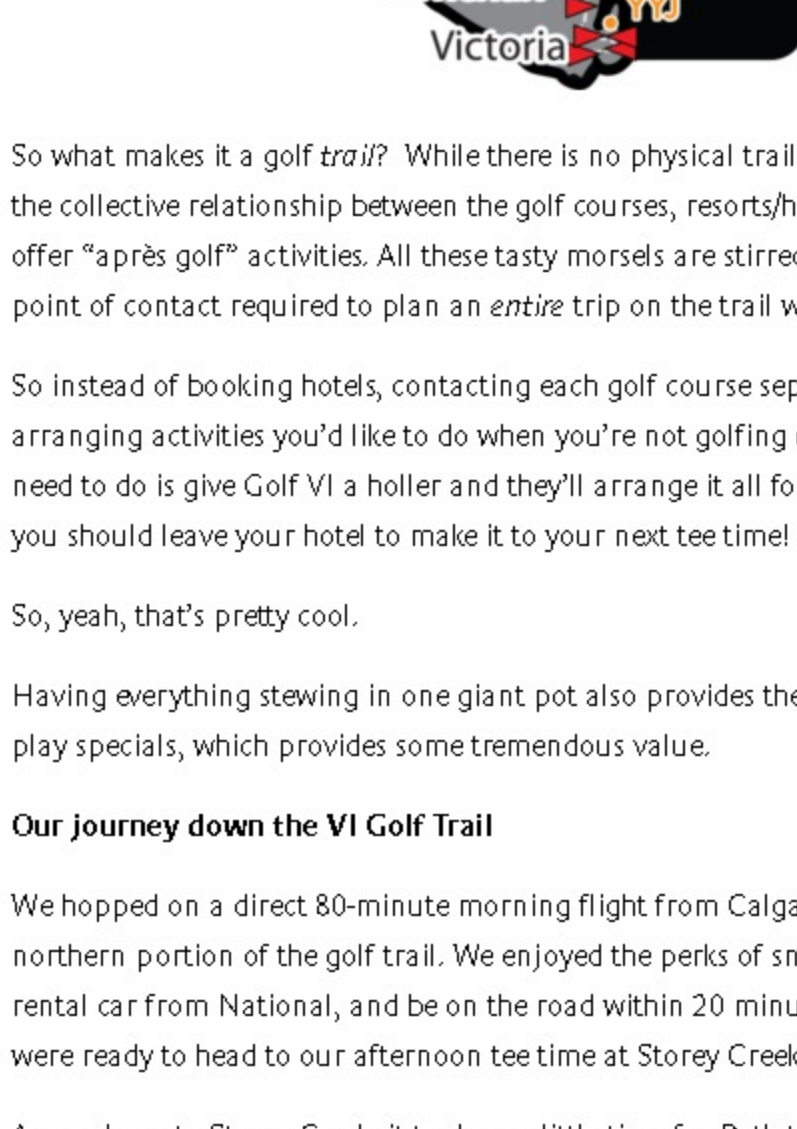
The first time I visited Vancouver Island I was young enough that I don't even remember how old I was. All I recall from the trip was going to the beach and catching miniature crabs from under rocks and putting them in a bucket. I'm not exactly sure what the point was, but I remember being fascinated by the ocean and those tiny little crabs. The overall experience, while blurred and sporadic in my memory, still stands out as a pleasant and lasting experience from my childhood.

My most recent trip to Vancouver Island was a little different.

Beth and I set out on a 5-night, 6-day excursion to see what the Vancouver Island Golf Trail (more commonly referred to as the VI Golf Trail) was all about. Although I was still fascinated by all the tiny little crabs hiding under rocks on the beach, this time it was the golf, scenery, and food that'll have me coming back for more.

### What is the VI Golf Trail?

The VI Golf Trail consists of 13 golf courses and 12 accommodation options spanning from Quadra Island Golf Club at the north end down to Olympic View Golf Club in Victoria at the south end. To drive from end-to-end of the golf trail would take approximately 3.5 hours.



So what makes it a golf trail? While there is no physical trail which you are forced to follow, what makes it unique is the collective relationship between the golf courses, resorts/hotels, rental car companies, and other partners who offer "après golf" activities. All these tasty morsels are stirred in a pot by Golf Vancouver Island, who is the only point of contact required to plan an entire trip on the trail with every ingredient tailored to your tastes.

So instead of booking hotels, contacting each golf course separately for tee times, sorting out a rental car and arranging activities you'd like to do when you're not golfing (i.e. whale watching, wine tasting, kayaking, etc), all you need to do is give Golf VI a holler and they'll arrange it all for you. Including telling you in your itinerary what time you should leave your hotel to make it to your next tee time!

So, yeah, that's pretty cool.

Having everything stewing in one giant pot also provides the opportunity to take advantage of packaged stay-and-play specials, which provides some tremendous value.

### Our Journey down the VI Golf Trail

We hopped on a direct 80-minute morning flight from Calgary to the small and humble Comox Airport at the northern portion of the golf trail. We enjoyed the perks of small airport vibes and were able to fetch our clubs, snag a rental car from National, and be on the road within 20 minutes of landing. With our golf clothes already on, we were ready to head to our afternoon tee time at Storey Creek to start our adventure.

As we drove to Storey Creek, it took very little time for Beth to notice giant bald eagles soaring overhead, "the eagles are SO big here. Bigger than the eagles in Calgary. Probably because they get to eat seafood all day", Beth said enviously.

If you like getting your outdoorsy vibe on, you'll love playing golf on Vancouver Island.

It took us approximately two hours to encounter grazing deer under the towering pine trees of Storey Creek Golf Club, and the eagles continued to soar, although not on the scorecard unfortunately.



The towering trees of Storey Creek Golf Club (18th tee pictured)

When we checked into the Crown Isle Resort that night for our first of three different lodging stays and realized our room was a 45 second walk away from the first tee of Crown Isle Golf Course, I thought, *I could just stay here all week.*

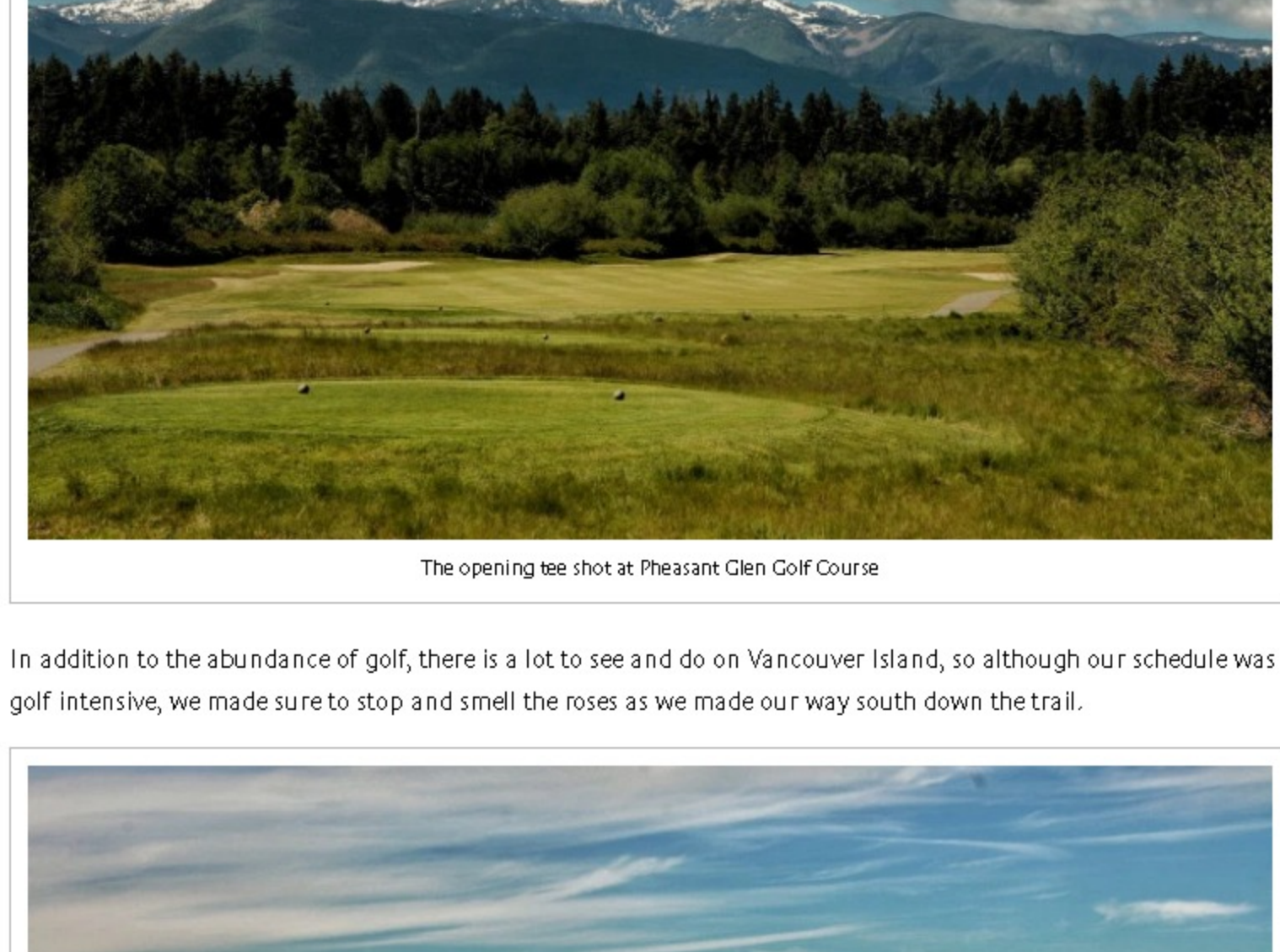


The 18th green at Crown Isle Resort and Golf Community

Although it was tough to pack up and leave after a couple of nights there, we were greeted by other fantastic locales down the road as we made our way south.

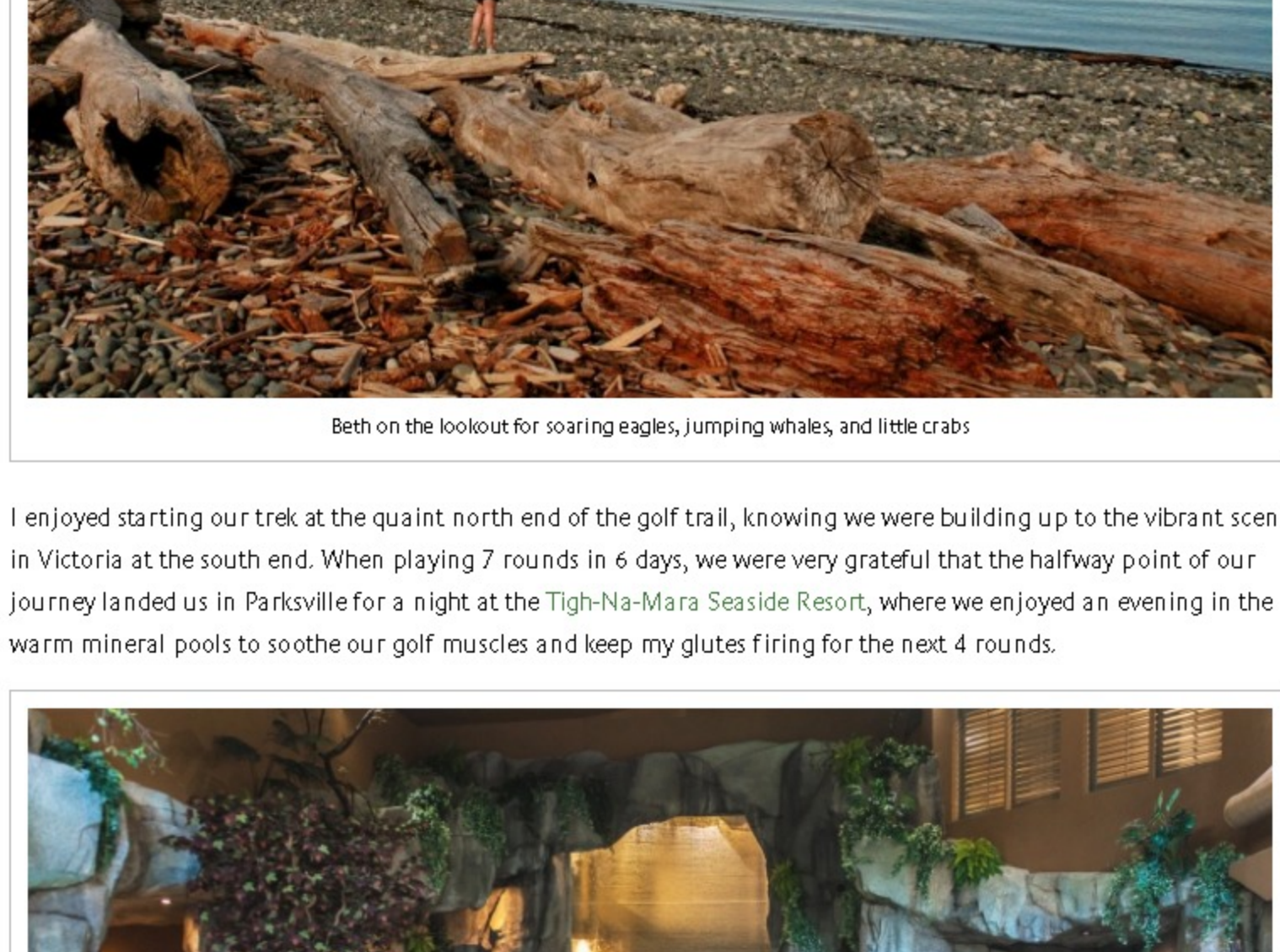
Being able to play 7 of the 13 golf courses gave us a good taste of the uniqueness and diversity offered along the VI Golf Trail. From resort experiences at Bear Mountain and Crown Isle, to hidden gems and great value plays such as Pheasant Glen, there is something for every taste and budget.

The list of courses we played included Storey Creek, Crown Isle Resort, Pheasant Glen, Fairwinds, 36 holes at Bear Mountain Resort (Mountain and Valley Courses), and Olympic View (stay tuned for course reviews to be published in the near future).



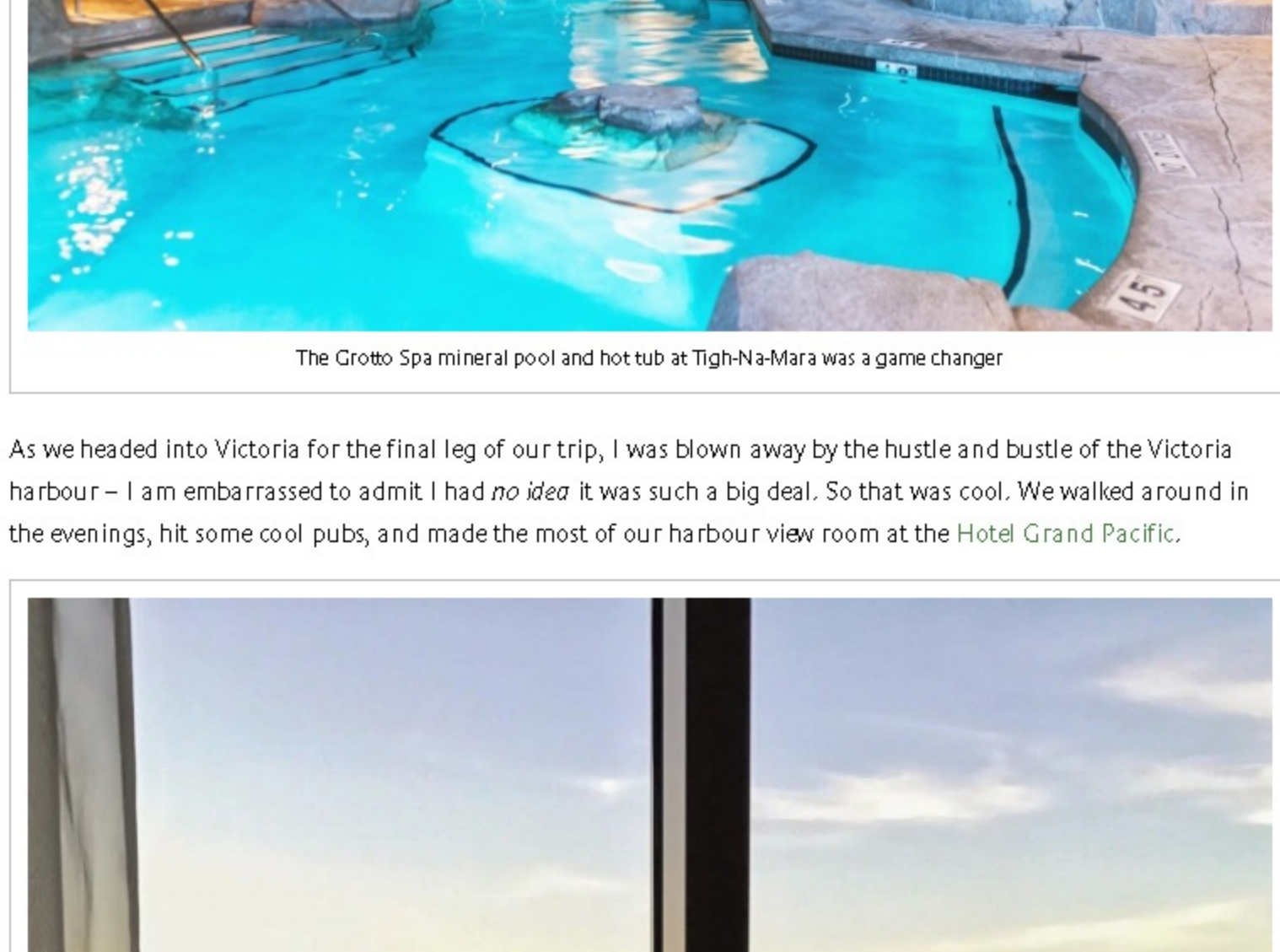
The opening tee shot at Pheasant Glen Golf Course

In addition to the abundance of golf, there is a lot to see and do on Vancouver Island, so although our schedule was golf intensive, we made sure to stop and smell the roses as we made our way south down the trail.



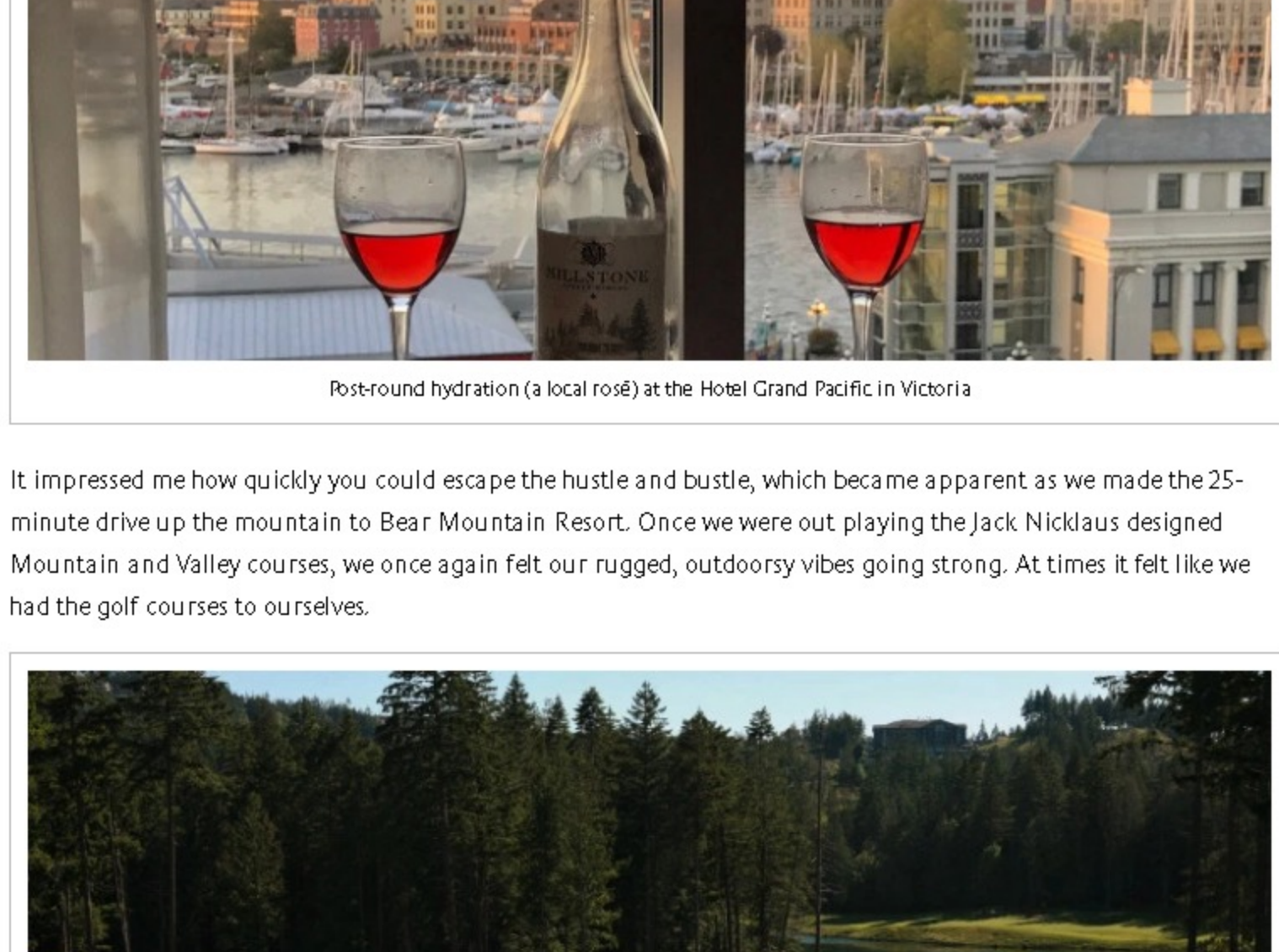
Beth on the lookout for soaring eagles, jumping whales, and little crabs

I enjoyed starting our trek at the quaint north end of the golf trail, knowing we were building up to the vibrant scene in Victoria at the south end. When playing 7 rounds in 6 days, we were very grateful that the halfway point of our journey landed us in Parksville for a night at the Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Resort, where we enjoyed an evening in the warm mineral pools to soothe our golf muscles and keep my glutes firing for the next 4 rounds.



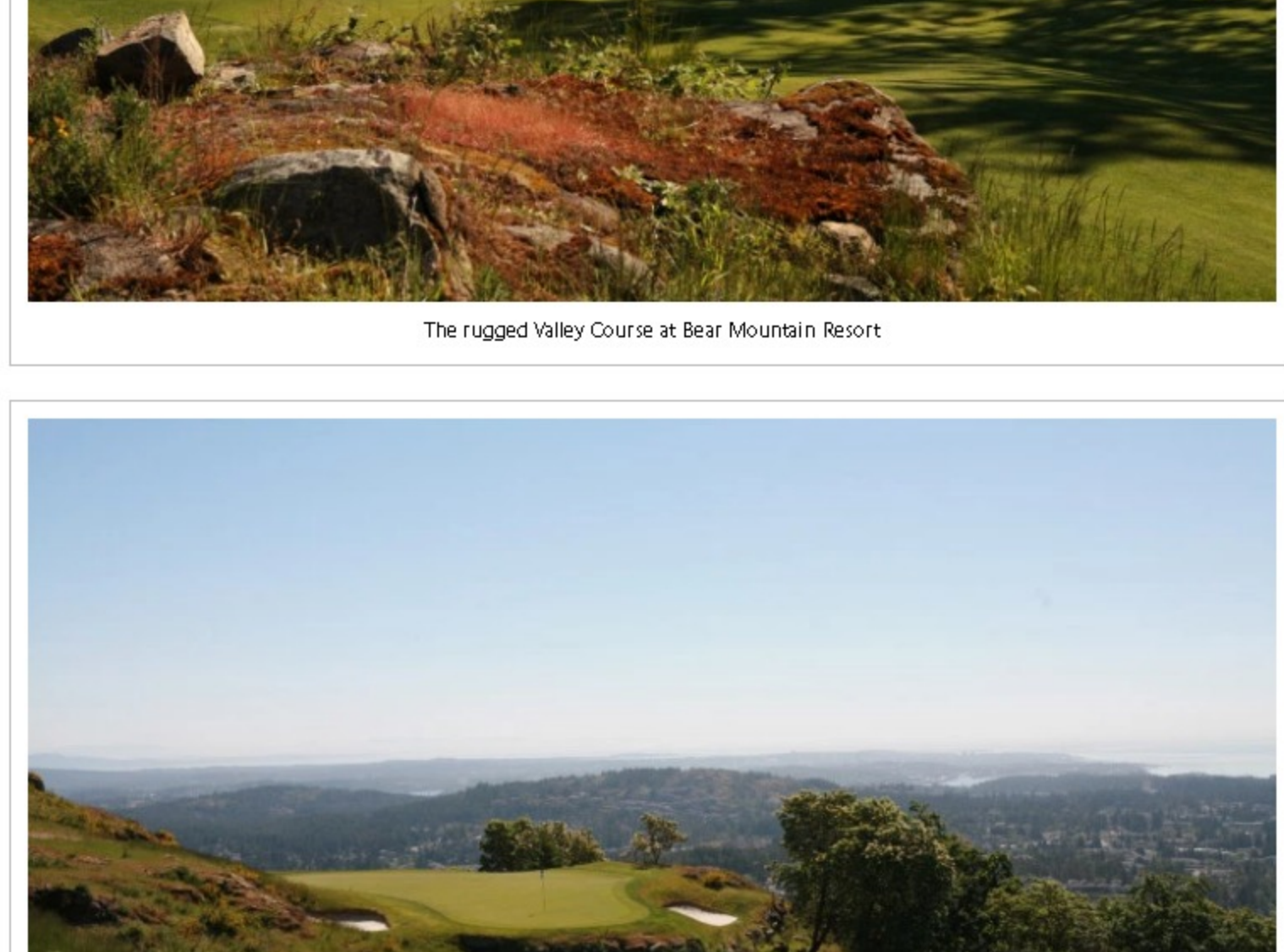
The Groms Spa mineral pool and hot tub at Tigh-Na-Mara was a game changer

As we headed into Victoria for the final leg of our trip, I was blown away by the hustle and bustle of the Victoria harbour – I am embarrassed to admit I had no idea it was such a big deal. So that was cool. We walked around in the evenings, hit some cool pubs, and made the most of our harbour view room at the Hotel Grand Pacific.

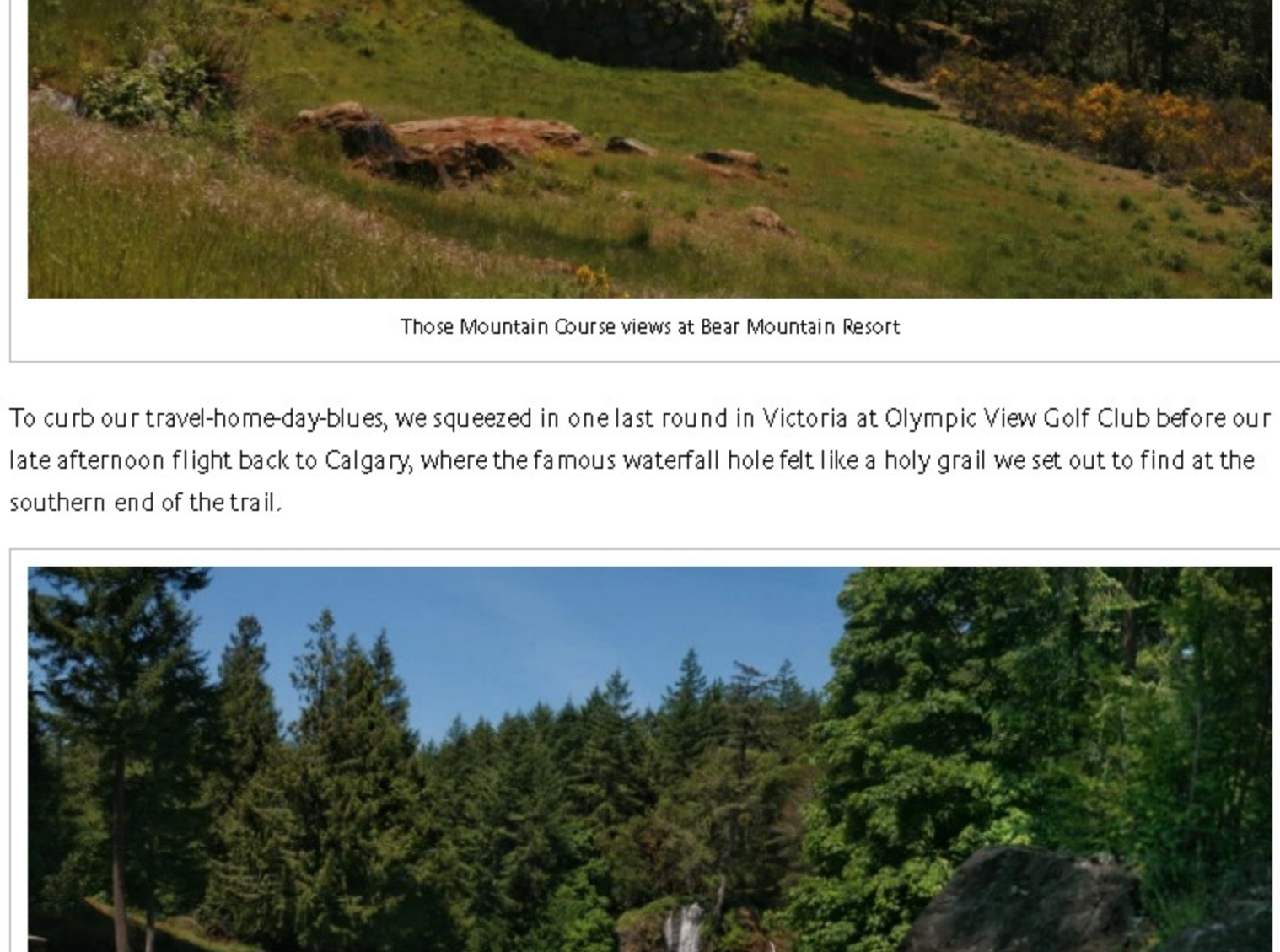


Postround hydration (a local rosé) at the Hotel Grand Pacific in Victoria

It impressed me how quickly you could escape the hustle and bustle, which became apparent as we made the 25-minute drive up the mountain to Bear Mountain Resort. Once we were out playing the Jack Nicklaus designed Mountain and Valley courses, we once again felt our rugged, outdoorsy vibes going strong. At times it felt like we had the golf courses to ourselves.

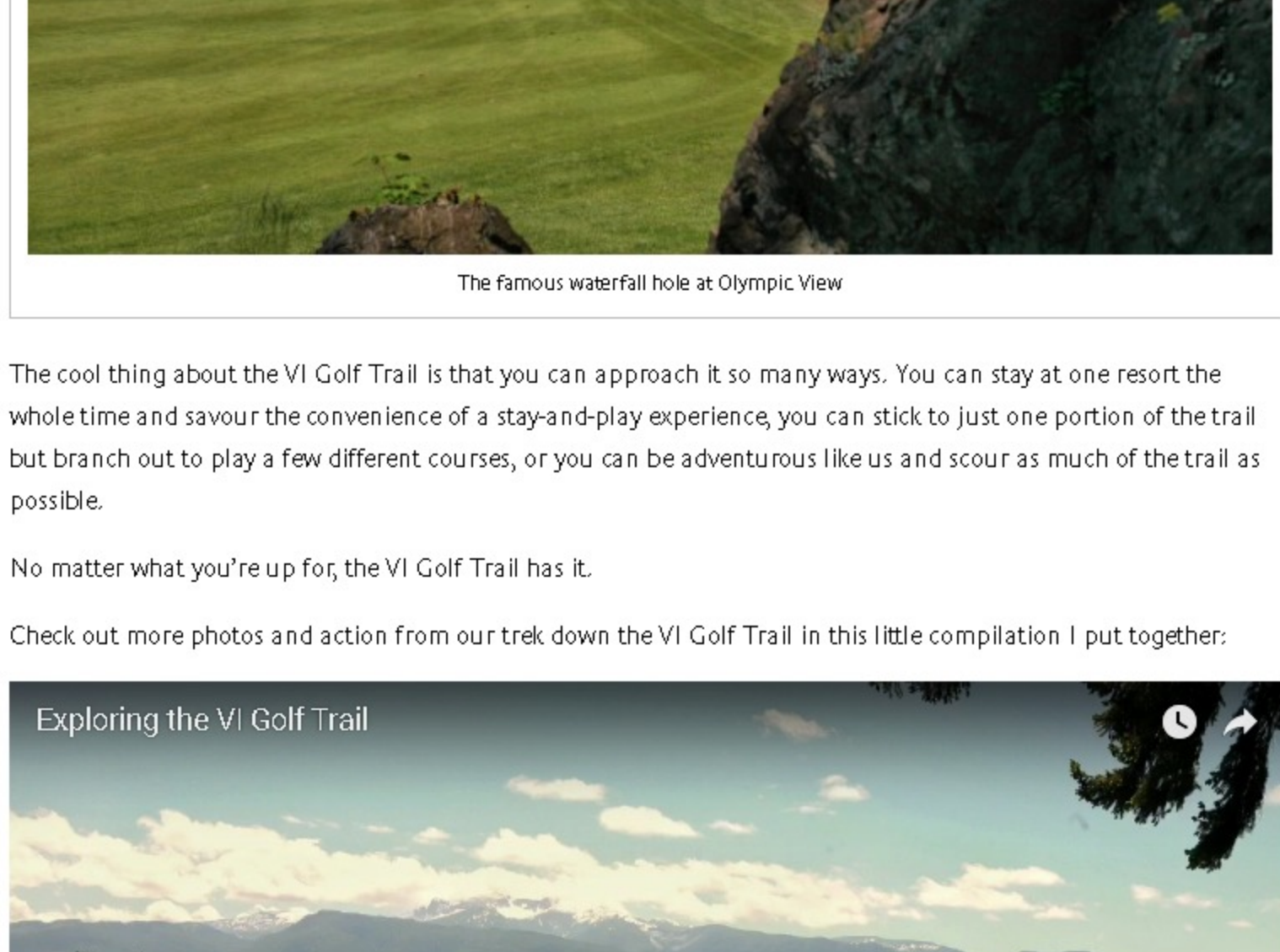


The rugged Valley Course at Bear Mountain Resort



Those Mountain Course views at Bear Mountain Resort

To curb our travel-home-day-blues, we squeezed in one last round in Victoria at Olympic View Golf Club before our late afternoon flight back to Calgary, where the famous waterfall hole felt like a holy grail we set out to find at the southern end of the trail.

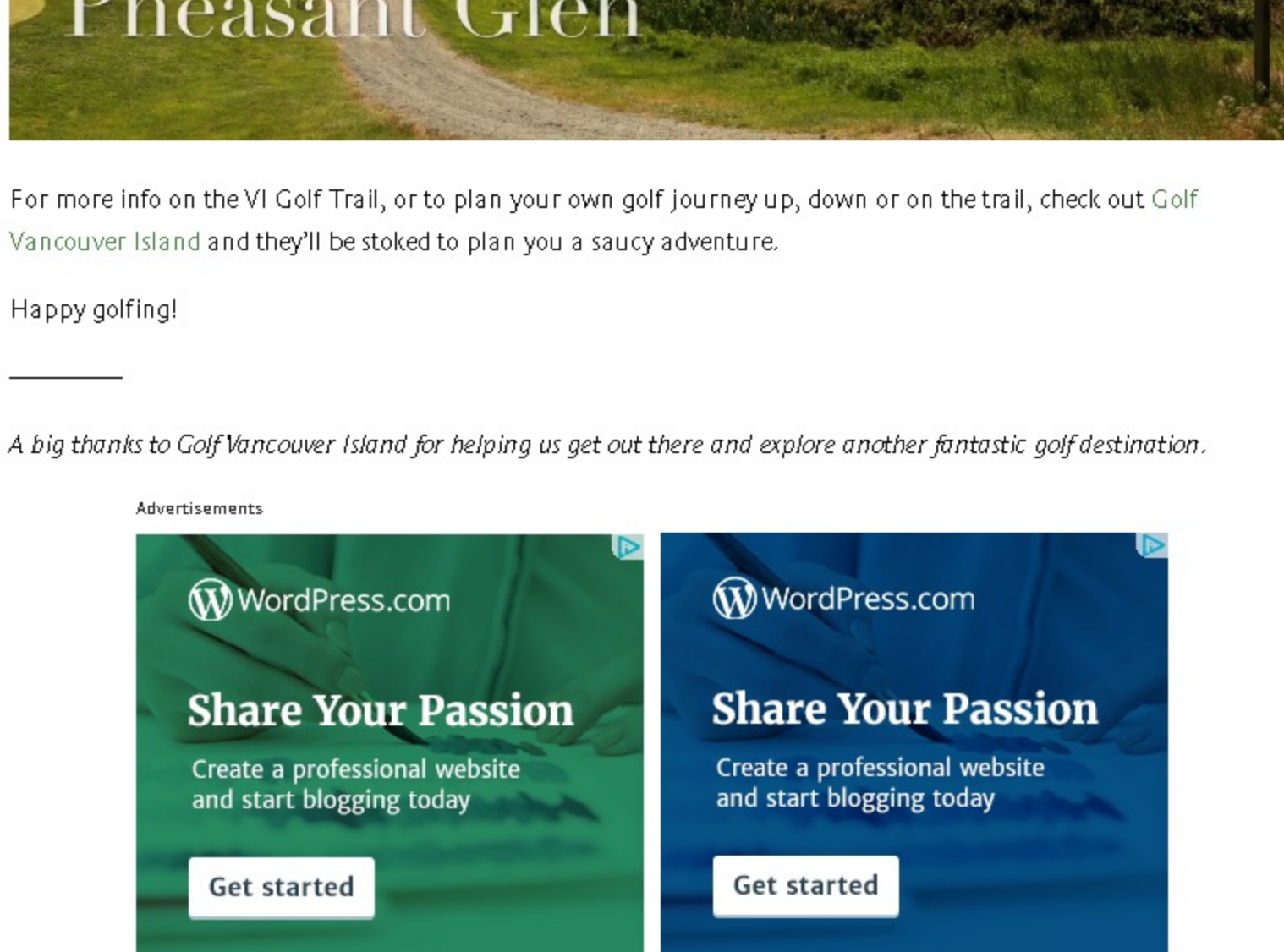


The famous waterfall hole at Olympic View

The cool thing about the VI Golf Trail is that you can approach it so many ways. You can stay at one resort the whole time and savour the convenience of a stay-and-play experience, you can stick to just one portion of the trail but branch out to play a few different courses, or you can be adventurous like us and scour as much of the trail as possible.

No matter what you're up for, the VI Golf Trail has it.

Check out more photos and action from our trek down the VI Golf Trail in this little compilation I put together:



For more info on the VI Golf Trail, or to plan your own golf journey up, down or on the trail, check out Golf Vancouver Island and they'll be stoked to plan you a saucy adventure.

Happy golfing!

A big thanks to Golf Vancouver Island for helping us get out there and explore another fantastic golf destination.

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Tags: Golf Vancouver Island, Travel, VI Golf Trail.

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1 comment for "A Trek Down the Vancouver Island Golf Trail". Comment by Mike Johnny: Where to start? An excellent post, engaging and informative. Sounds like a trip you won't soon forget. An awesome itinerary too. I had no idea Golf Vancouver Island offered such service support for a golf trip. I am familiar with Golf PEI offering something similar and it's exciting to see the left coast offering seemingly the same. As for the courses, and the pictures (that new camera got a nice workout)... excellent! And a golf clap for the videos. I love your posts Joeh, they continue to share information in fun, informative and exciting ways. I look forward to reading the reviews as they come out and hope that you're able to get back there again...heck who am I kidding, I hope I get to go there and share a similar experience. Wishing you all the best for the golf season, thanks for sharing. Mike.

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Tweet 1: Golf Is Mental @golffmental Bump 4m.

Tweet 2: Golf Is Mental @golffmental Rickie out here playing Erin Hills like it's TPC Deere Run #USOpen 13m.

Tweet 3: Golf Is Mental @golffmental A diverse golf scene, great food, wineries, craft beer, scenery and outdoorsy vibes. Our trek down the @VI\_GolfTrail: golffmentalblog.com/2017/06/14/a-1... 13 Jun.

Tweet 4: Golf Is Mental @golffmental Any player "happy" to see them cutting back the grass on certain holes is probably in no condition to win the #USOpen anyway. Non-factor. 13 Jun.

Tweet 5: Golf Is Mental @golffmental Kown Ha spotted getting some late evening practice in at Erin Hills. #USOpen 13 Jun.

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