



## Trip Report: Golf Vancouver Island

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### Ginella's Journey Visits Golf Vancouver Island - Orcas, Craft Beer, Olympic View



After venturing out to Wisconsin for an amazing golf trip at **Sand Valley Golf Resort**

(<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/blog/2018/08/13/sand-valley-mammoth-dunes/>) this past summer, we had the opportunity to take an autumn golf trip closer to home. This time, our destination is on Vancouver Island, where 13 championship golf courses are featured on the **Vancouver Island Golf Trail** (<https://golfvancouverisland.ca/golf-packages/by-destination/vancouver-island-golf-trail/>).

The Vancouver Island Golf Trail spans 250 kilometres (155 miles) from **Olympic View Golf Club**

([https://www.golfbc.com/courses/olympic\\_view](https://www.golfbc.com/courses/olympic_view)) in the South to **Quadra Island Golf Club** (<https://www.quadragolf.com/>) to the North. As previously seen on **Morning Drive** (<https://www.golfchannel.com/tv/morning-drive/>) on the Golf Channel, host **Matt Ginella**

([https://www.instagram.com/matt\\_ginella/](https://www.instagram.com/matt_ginella/)) shows that there are not only great golf to be played on Vancouver Island but there are plenty of other activities.



(<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Golf-Vancouver-Island.jpg>)

Matt's itinerary started in the South at **Olympic View Golf Club** ([https://www.golfbc.com/courses/olympic\\_view](https://www.golfbc.com/courses/olympic_view)), where Tiger Woods once played in a high school tournament (and he won, of course). He then traveled North and visited the **Nicklaus designed Bear Mountain** (<https://bearmountain.ca/recreation/golf/>) and ended the trip at **Crown Isle** (<https://www.crownisle.com/>) in Courtenay. This is where we pick up from Matt as we begin our trip at Crown Isle and make our way North on the Vancouver Island Golf Trail!

Ginella's Journey Visits Golf Vancouver Island - Floatplanes, Fishing, a...



## Day 1

### Highlights:

- *Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community*
- *Crown Isle Golf Course*

To get to Vancouver Island, we took a short 30-minute flight from Vancouver International Airport (YVR) to **Comox Valley Airport (YQQ)**. From there, it was only a 6 kilometre (3.7 miles) drive to **Crown Isle Resort & Golf Community** (<https://www.crownisle.com/>). Crown Isle is located in the heart of the Comox Valley and features a 48,000 square foot resort centre on 831 acres of property. Its championship golf course was designed by Graham Cooke and it is the host facility of the **Mackenzie Tour / PGA Tour Canada Qualifying School**.

Having proven itself as a tremendous test for professional players aspiring to reach the **Web.com** (<http://Web.com>) Tour and onward, the golf course at Crown Isle still maintain its playability for its resort guests and the average golfer. The golf course offers a dynamic set of tees and weaves through villas at Crown Isle (available for nightly accommodation) as well as the surrounding neighbourhood. The beautiful views are highlighted with its twelve lakes, which come into play on some holes, as well as the Beaufort Mountains and the Comox Glacier.



Although there are many memorable holes, the hole that sticks out the most in our minds was the par-3 16th. The par 3 plays 183 yards from the back tees and demands a shot to carry the water if the pin is on the left side. However, the most unique aspect of this hole is the island green in the middle of the lake! As seen in the video above, Matt Ginella and his friend took a crack at hitting this mini island green and it's definitely a lot of fun to test your accuracy. So make sure to bring a few extra golf balls that you don't mind losing and see if you can hit this mini green yourself!



After our round, we had dinner at the **TimberRoom Bar and Grill** before retreating back to our accommodations on site at the Crown Isle resort. For this stay, our room was located in the **Folkestone** building and it is just a short walk from the first tee and the clubhouse. With two queen-sized beds and a small kitchen, it is certainly more than enough space for one person and makes it ideal for a couples retreat or a buddies' trip.

## Day 2

### Highlights:

- Storey Creek Golf Club
- Painter's Lodge
- Guided Salmon Fishing
- Oceanfront Dining at Legends Dining Room

On day 2, we continue North on the Vancouver Island Golf Trail as we make our way up to Campbell River to play **Storey Creek Golf Club** (<https://storeycreek.bc.ca/golf-course/>). The drive from Crown Isle was approximately 35 kilometres (22 miles) and took around 30-40 minutes. Storey Creek Golf Club prides itself as being "**A Course in Nature**" and they weren't wrong. In contrast to Crown Isle, there was not a single house in sight at Storey Creek.

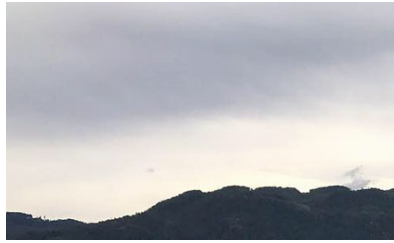
Set amidst the old-growth and second-growth forest, Storey Creek offers a challenging golf course that features many risk and reward holes. Doglegs encourages a golfer to put away the driver and play for position while the picturesque par 3s framed by the tall pine trees require precision. Whether you play well or not, you can't help but feel the tranquility of being out in the beautiful natural surroundings of Vancouver Island when you're playing Storey Creek.



After our round, we drove further North, approximately 21 kilometres (13 miles) to **Painter's Lodge** (<https://www.painterslodge.com/>), where we would be staying the next two nights. Painter's Lodge is a resort that specializes in offering its guests an unique Campbell River experience. From wildlife and nature tours that includes a grizzly bear tour or a whale-watching expedition, there is plenty to do. It was difficult to choose but the temptation of experiencing a **guided world-class salmon fishing trip** was too good to pass up.

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Unfortunately for us, we came back on shore empty handed but that did not stop us from enjoying a salmon dinner at the **Legends Dining Room** in Painter's Lodge. The oceanfront view provided us a spectacular view during our dinner and we would be remiss if we did not mention the **maple-caramel-whiskey glaze** that came with the salmon. It was ridiculously delicious and our group could not stop talking about it the rest of the trip. Only question is, when will Painter's Lodge bottle up all that goodness for sale?

## Day 3

*Highlights:*

- Campbell River Golf & Country Club
- Raft and Snorkel with Salmon
- Velocity Lounge & Driving Range

### Campbell River Golf & Country Club



On the final day of our trip on the Vancouver Island Golf Trail, we played a morning round at the **Campbell River Golf and Country Club** (<https://crgolf.ca/>). Although the property has been a golf course since 1959, a complete redesign of the golf course was done in May 2017 after it was purchased by the Mailman family in February 2017. It is the **first new golf course in BC (British Columbia)**, Canada since 2011 and in record setting time, the new Campbell River Golf and Country Club opened on August 9, 2018.

Although the golf course only plays 6,141 yards from the tips, it offers plenty of challenges that's highlighted by its bent grass greens. Despite Campbell River G&CC being a new course, its greens were rolling unbelievably smooth and pure. Overall, the conditions of the course was immaculate and it is definitely on par with the conditions of a private course. From the practice facilities that provides bright yellow **Callaway SuperHot 55 range balls** to its **Top Tracer technology** (<https://www.toptracer.com/>) in the **Velocity Lounge and Driving Range** (<https://crgolf.ca/velocityloungedrivingrange/>), one can tell that no expenses were spared when they set foot on the property.



Campbell River Golf and Country Club is far from a finished product though. Even though the clubhouse looks newly renovated, there are plans to tear it down and rebuild a new clubhouse that will also feature a new restaurant as well as a 4-stars, 100-room hotel. In addition, an event centre and a spa will also be built, with construction slated to start in 2019. With all these future plans in the works, we are sure the property will be completely different when we return in the future.

Before we return at night to fully experience the Velocity Lounge and Driving Range, we continue our Fins and Skins itinerary by setting out on an adventure that's very unique to Campbell River and Vancouver Island – **snorkeling with salmon!** Our outing was through **Destiny River Adventures** (<http://www.destinyriver.com/snorkel-salmon-adventures>), who took us on a 3-hour raft and snorkel tour in Campbell River.

Campbell River is internationally acclaimed as the “**Salmon Capital of the World**” and each year, thousands of salmon from all five species return to the river to spawn. This offers an opportunity for us to view the salmon in their natural habitat as we snorkel and float down the river. Aside from salmon, we were lucky enough to see other wildlife on our tour, such as harbour seals, sea lions and bald eagles.



*Images courtesy of Bryan Outram (BC Golf)*

After this exhilarating experience of snorkeling with salmon, we return to Painter's Lodge to rest before heading to Campbell River Golf and Country Club once again for the official opening of the Velocity Lounge and Driving Range. As previously mentioned, the Velocity Lounge and Driving Range features the **Top Tracer technology** (<https://www.toptracer.com/>). It is only **one of two facilities in Canada** that has this technology to date.



If you're a golfer, you can also play with this technology, where a computer tracks the ball flight of your shots. This can be seen on the two screens that are available in each of the eight bays. Aside from dialing in your distance in the **"What's in my Bag"** option, you may play mini games with your group of friends through Top Tracer.



Some of these games are **Closest to the Pin**, **Long-Drive**, or you may choose to play some of the world's most famous courses or holes. In addition to competing with your friends, the Top Tracer technology also allows you to compete with players from other ranges that features Top Tracer driving range. When you're not competing, there are spacious and comfortable couches for you to "loungue" in. You may enjoy a drink from the bar, some food from the kitchen or just relax watching your friends play or watch a sports event on one of the many TVs. All in all, Velocity Lounge and Driving Range is an ideal place for a night out with your friends and you may even work on your golf game while you're at it!

## Closing Thoughts

Our **Fins & Skins** itinerary on the North side of the Vancouver Island Golf Trail was action-packed. From playing golf on picturesque golf courses to salmon fishing and even snorkeling with the salmon, there was never a dull moment during our 3 days. Due to time constraint, we were unable to add nine more holes of golf at the **Quadra Island Golf Club** (<https://www.quadragolf.com/>). However, with a total of 13 championship golf courses on the Vancouver Island Golf Trail, we will be sure to return and explore other regions of the trail.

With so many more golf courses to be played and various other activities that can be combined with a trip out to Vancouver Island, there are many possible combinations you can put together for your next golfing adventure. With all these options, a packaged deal through **Golf Vancouver Island** (<https://golfvancouverisland.ca/golf-packages/by-destination/vancouver-island-golf-trail/>) may be a good idea. We know we'll be contacting them on our next trip out there and we can't wait already!

### Other Trip Reports:

- Sand Valley, Mammoth Dunes & The Sandbox (<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/blog/2018/08/13/sand-valley-mammoth-dunes/>)
- Cabot Links & Cabot Cliffs (<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/blog/2015/08/24/cabot-links-cabot-cliffs/>)
- Tobiano Golf Course (<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/blog/2016/09/19/review-tobiano-golf/>)
- Chambers Bay Golf Course (<http://www.eighteenunderpar.com/blog/2014/12/30/course-report-chambers-bay/>)

Source: **Golf Vancouver Island** (<https://golfvancouverisland.ca/golf-packages/specialty-packages/fins-and-skins/>)

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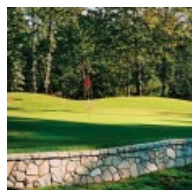
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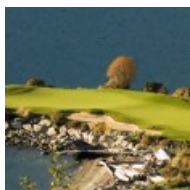
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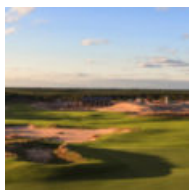
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