

How to Have a Lousy Golf Vacation

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But when you arrived, instead of being a dream getaway, your golf vacation turned into a nightmare. The rub is, you could have avoided this. All it would have taken was some forethought and planning.

Let's take a tongue-in-cheek look at how to plan a lousy golf vacation. Here are just one or more mistakes you can make to have a lousy golf vacation:

1. You Can't Get a Tee Time

You've come all this way to play this acclaimed course only to hear, "Sorry, Charlie." Why? Either you didn't check out the course's restrictions, or you didn't find out their rules for booking a tee time, they are closed for a tournament or the course is being overseeded.

For example, if the course is located at a resort, but you're not staying there, you may be barred from playing. Resorts often give preference or exclusive access to their guests. In addition, some world-renowned courses require a certain handicap and a letter of introduction to play.

Each course has its own rules for booking tee times. Before making vacation reservations, find out when you can reserve your time – how many days in advance, on which day(s) of the week and between what hours of the day. This applies even if you are staying at a golf resort.

2. You Chose a Course That Far Exceeds Your Skill

Is it really worth the frustration just to have bragging rights? Sand traps and water hazards that pose invigorating challenges to scratch golfers can spoil the day for those with high handicaps.

With some research, you can match your skill level to appropriate golf courses. Many of them have websites that provide the course difficulty rating, the score card, and detailed descriptions of each hole. You can also get this information by calling the golf course pro shop or an agent familiar with the golf courses in the area.

3. You Went at a Time When the Weather Is Terrible

What do you mean it's 120 degrees? Your image of the perfect golf vacation just wilted in the extreme desert heat. Or, depending on the location, maybe it got blown away by coastal winds, drenched by rain, or suffocated by humidity.

If you want predictable sunshine and pleasant temperatures, check out what the weather is like during the season you're going. And do this before you make your reservations. Many weather websites give extensive historic information about a location's daily temperatures, rainfall and seasonal changes.

If attractive off-season rates are important to you, be aware that you may encounter unfavorable weather, such as Florida's storms or the Southwest's windy season. If the golf destination has great area attractions, you can still enjoy your vacation on days when golf isn't possible.

4. Your Golf Vacation Companions Gripe and Complain

Here you are in your golf paradise and your companions are ruining your fun. Joe's complaining that the courses are too difficult for him. Jim's says they're too easy. And the person you picked up in the pro shop gets a call on his phone every other hole. And he stands talking in the phone during your backswing. You want to choose fun people to play with and have a laugh while recounting your round at the 19th hole.

When the vacation includes non-golfers, be sure to select a destination that offers a variety of activities and attractions that meet their interests, which will assuage any guilt you might have of taking five hours away from them. Everyone will be happier.

5. You waited to take advantage of the best deal-but there were none.

Although discount programs are becoming more and more popular, they do come with more and more restrictions. Many of the best deals can be found the day before the day you planned. However, they are seldom at the time you might want to play. Waiting until the last day, you may find they only thing available is at 6:00 am or not until after 4:30 pm when you can't possibly finish. Plan early, to get the tee time that works best for your schedule, not what the course has left over.

Again, whether it's for the best airfare, lodging rates or golf package, a little bit of research can save you a lot of money.

Avoiding these mistakes doesn't guarantee a great golf vacation, but it certainly ups the ante. All it takes is some planning and research.

Rohe Eshbaugh is the President of [Golf Guys.net](http://www.golfguys.net/) an easy way to find information about courses and how to reserve [San Diego tee times](http://www.golfguys.net/golf-courses/San_Diego) and [Las Vegas tee times](http://www.golfguys.net/golf-courses/San_Diego). A passionate golfer who has played some of the best golf courses around, he created GolfGuys.net to help people find courses that fit their challenging requirements or just happened to be close by in a strange town.

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