

Dove Valley Ranch opens

CAREFREE, Ariz. — The upscale Dove Valley Ranch Golf Course opened here Nov. 18.

The Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed course features an abundance of saguaro cacti, mesquite trees and a variety of desert wildlife as well as 6.3 acres of lakes.

A special aspect of Dove Valley Ranch's construction involved RBI Golf's effort to revegetate one-third of the golf course which used to be an old berm. All existing vegetation on the site was moved to this and other undisturbed areas of the course.

PALM DESERT, Calif. — The Desert Willow Resort's much-anticipated second golf course, Mountain View, opened in October and is being billed as a kinder, gentler golf experience than the existing Firecliff layout.

Hurdzan/Fry designed the 6,913 yard Mountain View course along with PGA Tour professional and design consultant,

Desert Willow opens 2nd

John Cook. Their goal with Mountain View was to create a "companion course" for Firecliff which is a decidedly tougher desert golf course.

With that in mind, the Mountain View course uses the desert as more of a backdrop than a prominent design feature.

This allows for wider fairways

and makes the course more accessible to the high handicap golfer.

The course, which has spectacular views of the Santa Rosa mountains, also has a couple of unique design features.

On the 6th and 9th holes, there are several rock elements, some over 20 feet high, which were

created from casts to form replicas of the ancient Indian Canyons.

The course finishes in dramatic fashion at the 18th, a dogleg, 538-yard, par 5 which features a green flanked by a waterfall and a stream.

Desert Willows Resort is a public golf facility owned by the City of Palm Desert and managed by Kemper Sports Management.

Dyes in Dominican

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But four months later, all the leaves are back."

The Dyes are familiar with the effects of hurricanes, having designed the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island, S.C., which was in the direct path of Hurricane Hugo during construction in 1989. "We never got the instant regrowth there that we got here. We had to nurture those trees. They were so badly salt-burned, they just wanted to die," Dye remembered.

Altos de Chevon sits on 200- to 300-foot bluffs overlooking the river. One nine leads south toward the river, with vistas of the sea in the background.

The second nine turns north, affording views upriver toward the inland mountains. "It's an absolutely magnificent piece of ground," Dye said.

The major construction challenges have been removing rock and obtaining topsoil, Dye explained. "There is no topsoil on 50 percent of the site, so you have to take it from where it is to where it isn't," she said. "This whole country has plenty of rock. The rocks range in size from a thimble to a baseball, but there are so many of them."

Special permits were required to cut any trees since simply removing trees is illegal. "They don't want to make the same mistake Haiti did, cutting down all the trees and having mud slides," Dye said.

Plans are to use paspalum as the major grass on greens and fairways, making it possible to use salt water for irrigation, Dye said. "That [using paspalum] will revolutionize this entire area," she said. "Obtaining irrigation water is a major problem throughout the Caribbean."

The Dyes' younger son, P.B., is designing a course farther east in Punta Cana. "Oscar de la Renta and Julio Iglesias are involved in that one," she said.

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