



**Believe or not**, there is a championship golf course in Florida that doesn't have any alligators living on its premises! Really? It's because there are no water hazards located on the course – no lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, creeks, canals, or a lagoons. It's been that way since it opened in 1947. It is the West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course (formerly the West Palm Beach Country Club) in West Palm Beach. But, this course -- designed by golf course architect Dick Wilson -- features plenty of sand and a steady breeze! If you keep your ball 'off the beach' and below the wind, you will excel here, the site of the old West Palm Beach Open Invitational, a former PGA Tour stop in the 1950s.

The West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course, ranked as one of the "Top Ten" public golf courses in the U.S. in the 1980s, was reconfigured over the years into a course that left golfers yearning for yesteryear. Solution: 10-time PGA Tour winner/golf course architect Mark McCumber was hired to return this course to its original design. In early 2009, the renovations began. Seven months later, the West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course ([www.wpalmbeachgc.com](http://www.wpalmbeachgc.com)) was re-opened. To add prestige to the moment, Arnold Palmer, the winner of the 1959 West Palm Beach Open Invitational, was invited to hit the ceremonial first tee shot.

He accepted the invitation. And, Arnie's Army came, too.

Since then, many golfers have played this course and many more should include this layout on their list of 'must play' courses. While courses such as Doral, PGA National, and Bay Hill may be some of the most well-known golfing venues in Florida, the West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course – where the public is always welcome! -- will challenge any golfer who feels he or

## Where Golfers Gather

she 'has game.' When you set foot on the West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course, be prepared to hit every club in your bag. If you are consistent off the tee, you will take the waste bunkers out of play. Once you negotiate the tee shots, finding the greens in regulation is no easy chore since bunkers surround every putting surface and the wind influences club selection.

This venue is easy to walk, since the distances from the greens to the tees are minimal. There are five different tees, ranging from the silver tees (5,023 yards) to the black tees (7,002 yards). When going from the 9th green to the 10th tee, there is one 'obstacle:' the Snack Shack. It has a covered patio where you can eat a hot dog or enjoy a

beverage before tackling the back nine.

This practice area includes an all-grass driving range, an 8,000 square-foot putting green and a second green to practice chip shots. One weekly event which puts this course in a special category is the Friday Pro Am, the "Oldest Game in Town." Every week, for more than 50 years, it has attracted professionals and amateurs who want to compete in this popular points game.

To play the historic West Palm Beach Municipal Golf Course, call the pro shop: 561-822-1591. If it was once good enough for the PGA Tour, then it remains good enough for you – January through December. Remember, the public is always welcome! 🏌️

