



If You Build It...

A Grand Opportunity

The Grand Del Mar, already popular with local residents, is likely to make more new friends during the U.S. Open. The hotel is offering packages — with and without lodging — that include coveted tickets for the sold-out match. The Grand Royale Package includes a one-night stay at the resort, two tickets to the Open, access to the Manchester Pavilion Hospitality Tent on the 10th fairway, meals and cocktails in the pavilion, preferred parking, and more. The VIP View Package includes everything listed above without the lodging. The Grand Access Package includes one night in a Grand guestroom and two tickets to the Open. The weeklong rental of a five-bedroom house and daily admission for ten fans are featured in the Residence Package. (858/314-2055, www.thegrandedelmar.com)

“You had a vision; it was a grand vision. And you had the persistence to make it happen. This is not a small achievement.”

With these words in 2002, Mayor Dick Murphy acknowledged the efforts of Jay Rains and the Friends of Torrey Pines. This group of 28 local donors contributed \$3.4 million to renovate the South Course at Torrey Pines in 2001 and bring the 2008 U.S. Open Championship to San Diego.

When Rains and friend Jim Brown started collecting (golf-loving comrades were asked to contribute a minimum of \$100,000), there was no assurance that the newly-minted course would meet the approval of the USGA. However, they hedged their bet by hiring course architect Rees Jones to make the alterations. Jones, known as the “Open Doctor,” had previously performed a remarkable transformation at Bethpage

State Park in New York — the only other public course to host the legendary tournament.

Torrey Pines
North Course

At Torrey Pines, Jones shaped the South Course long and narrow — in fact, at 7,607 yards, it will be the longest Open course ever. According to Mark Woodward, golf operations manager for the City of San Diego, “he turned a good golf course into a world-class course.”

During the tournament, the North Course will be home to a 40,000-square-foot merchandise tent, corporate tents, a media center for 3,500 journalists, concession stands, a driving range, and practice area.

It’s not surprising that anyone even remotely connected to San Diego’s tourist industry is ecstatic about the exposure the city will receive during the event. Golf stars Tiger Woods and Ranch resident Phil Mickelson are both »



Tiger Woods

« playing, and for the 22nd year in a row, tickets directly from the USGA are sold out. Tickets can still be obtained from “secondary markets” such as San Diego Golf Reservations (866/701-4653, www.sandiegogolf.com) and a few Corporate Hospitality Packages are available from the USGA. (www.usga.org)

More than 42,000 spectators a day will park at Qualcomm Stadium and access Torrey Pines via free shuttles. While The Lodge at Torrey Pines and the La Jolla Hilton Torrey Pines will be in the spotlight, the whole city will feel the economic impact. “It’s like hosting several Super Bowls in one week,” Woodward claims.

“We expect to be mobbed for dinner,” predicts a representative from JRDN in Mission Beach. Her sentiments are



Torrey Pines South Course

What’s Happening

June 5–8: Main Merchandise Pavilion open 10am–6pm. No ticket required.

June 9–11: Practice rounds. Gates open 6am–7pm. Ticket required.

June 12–13: Championship rounds 1 and 2. Gates open 6am–7pm. Ticket required.

June 14–15: Championship rounds 3 and 4. Gates open 7am–7pm. Ticket required.

June 16: Play-off (if required)

June 18: South Course open to the public if no playoff.

June 19: South Course open to the public if playoff.

July 1: North course open to the public for nine-hole play.

Sept. 1: North course open to the public for 18-hole play.

echoed by restaurateurs up and down the coast. For the ticketless, plenty of watering holes, including Azul in La Jolla, the Del Mar Brigantine, and the lobby lounge at Four Seasons Resort Aviara will have their TVs tuned to the tournament. The Grand Del Mar will be featuring golf-themed cocktails in the lobby bar, such as Punch Shot Martinis, Match Play Margaritas, and U.S. Open Ocean Breezes.

In addition to spectators, the courses will be crawling with volunteers — more than 6,000 working “outside the ropes,” with 2,000 more on a waiting list. La Jolla Country Club will marshal the 16th hole and Rancho Santa Fe Golf Club will marshal the 14th.

Apparently, “if you build, it they will come” doesn’t just apply to baseball.

— Elizabeth Hansen, photos courtesy of The Lodge at Torrey Pines