



The Ocean City hotel skyline is prominent on the par-4 10th hole, but it's the service at Bayside Resort Golf Club that's likely to bring back golfers a second time.

# 18 to savor

*At Bayside, golf is grand at the course that Jack built*

BY BRAD MYERS || PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT NATHAN

There are less expensive options than Bayside Resort Golf Club for a summer round of golf at the Delaware beaches. But there isn't a better one.

Bayside justifies its triple-digit green fees with outstanding service, immaculate course conditions and the only Jack Nicklaus Signature design in

the state open for public play. You pay a lot, you receive a lot.

"We have a lot of people play and book their next tee time here at the end of their round," said Bob Crowther, Bayside's head professional. "That's when we know we've succeeded. From the guys at the bag drop to the people who check you in, to the

people who drive the beverage carts around the course, we want to have a relaxed atmosphere and make you feel at home."

The course, less than 10 minutes from Fenwick Island, meanders through forests and salt marshes that bring Myrtle Beach, the South Carolina golf haven, to mind.

A Nicklaus Signature design means the legendary player and golf course architect was actually on site often during construction, not just lending his name to market a project. Nicklaus also came to play the opening round at Bayside on Aug. 8, 2005. At the age of 65, he still shot even par.

**"What you see here is exactly what Jack Nicklaus thought a golf course should be here."**

"He was here eight times during the construction. And the day that he played the course, he left some more suggestions that we implemented," Crowther said. "What you see here is exactly what Jack Nicklaus thought a golf course should be here."

Nicklaus envisioned a course that would be extraordinarily difficult for top players, yet playable for everyone smart enough to choose the correct set of tees. The par-72 layout can stretch to a mind-numbing 7,545 yards, but there are four far more reasonable options, down to 5,168 yards.

The first hole is a perfect example. Any ideas you may have of playing from the back tees will be dispelled after seeing a 440-yard par-4 with a 235-yard carry over water off the tee, plus eight fairway bunkers and three more bunkers around the green. The water and bunkers are still in play from the other tees, but they're a lot easier to avoid.

The scenic par-3 third offers teeing options from 127 to 227 yards, with Roy's Creek and your first view of the Ocean City hotels across the bay in the background. The fifth may be the toughest hole on the front nine, a long par-4 where cutting the corner over a fairway bunker is risky, but not cutting the corner leaves a 190-yard approach.

The hotels come back into view along the marshy 10th and 11th holes, a reminder that you're at the beach. But Crowther's favorite hole is the 13th, a short par-3 that



Roy's Creek frames the green on the scenic par-3 third hole and offers a distant view of Ocean City.

plays across wetlands to a raised green, with skinny pines as a backdrop.

Crowther believes the par-4 18th, which can stretch as long as 483 yards with water in play all the way, is the hardest par on the course. But he said the biggest numbers come on the 15th, a long par-3 over water to an L-shaped green of subtle slopes.

So don't expect to shoot a career best at Bayside, but do

expect to have a great time. Don McCleary, of Glen Mills, Pa., is a typical Bayside golfer, one of a group of eight who included the course in a weeklong Ocean City golf package in May. He was playing Bayside for the first time but said it wouldn't be his last.

"I loved it. I will play it again, definitely," McCleary said. "It's in great shape. The fairways are great, the greens are perfect, the rough isn't too high, and the people here are some of the nicest I've seen at any course. It's a hard course, but I think we've all had a good time."

That is just what Crowther wants to hear. He said Bayside will be even better for McCleary when he returns.

"The first time people play the course, they think it's pretty difficult. But it gets easier when you learn where to hit it and where not to hit it," Crowther said. "There is more room off the tee than you think, and there is such variety to the holes. No two are the same."

Bayside has 190 members, but is open for public play seven days a week. Crowther said the course does about 20,000 rounds per year (a busy public course easily does twice that many), so – unlike most things at the beach through the summer – it is rarely crowded. Of Bayside's many positives, that may be the best of all.

**Bayside Resort Golf Club**

**Where:** Off Del. 54 at the intersection of Del. 20, near Selbyville

**Course:** Par 72, five sets of tees ranging from 5,168 to 7,545 yards

**Green fees:** Monday-Thursday, \$119 before 11 a.m., \$99 after 11. Friday-Sunday, \$179 before 11 a.m., \$139 after 11.

**Tee times:** Call 436-3400, ext. 1

**Online:** [www.golfbayside.com](http://www.golfbayside.com)



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Less than 10 minutes from Fenwick Island, along the quiet waters of Assawoman Bay, you'll discover a new way to live at the beach. Away from the crowds, but full of life. Bayside is brimming with unspoiled natural beauty and endless ways to enjoy it with your friends and family—from a Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course, to miles of recreational trails, pools, tennis and fitness. Sail, canoe and kayak from Bayside's pier, watch the kids delight with our very own carousel, or spend the afternoon browsing the shops on Fenwick Island. You can enjoy another day at the beach knowing that your home at Bayside gives you the best of all worlds to share with the people who matter most.

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