

LILAC CITY GIVES SEATTLE A RUN FOR ITS MONEY

Ask just about any local golfer and they'll rave about the quality of the munis in the Seattle area — from the city tracks like West Seattle, Jefferson Park, Interbay and Jackson Park, to Everett's Legion Memorial, Walter Hall and others, we think we have it pretty good out here.

Then we go to Spokane.

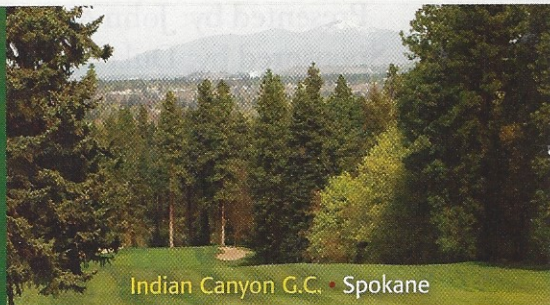
While the Huskies may regularly trounce the Cougars on the football field (hey, they're 70-32-6 all-time, with wins in six of the last seven years, by an average of 19.5 points each — it's just a statement of fact), our eastside brethren may well have the last laugh when it comes to outstanding munis. We have three or four over here — Spokane is home to no fewer than seven sweet municipal tracks, including four owned by the city itself (Downriver, Esmeralda, Indian Canyon and The Creek at Qualchan), and three

more by Spokane County (Hangman Valley, Liberty Lake and MeadowWood).

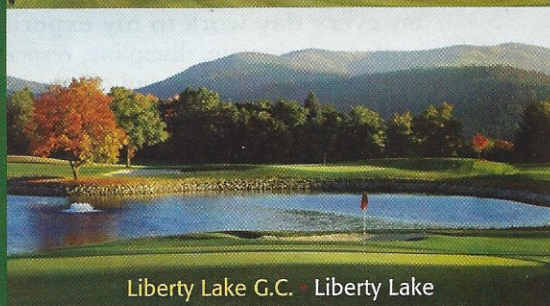
In fact, when we asked statewide voters to rank their 10 favorite Washington courses in advance of our 2015 public course rankings, three different Spokane courses were mentioned (Indian Canyon, Downriver and Liberty Lake) to just one from Seattle (West Seattle), with the Lilac City tracks ranked first, second and third in the state in the "Under \$40" category.

So, if you're truly looking for an affordable golf trip this summer, you could hardly do better than parking yourself in Spokane, and playing the munis (and sure, we wouldn't blame you for ducking over to Coeur d'Alene Resort or Circling Raven, each within 45 minutes of Spokane, or down to Palouse Ridge, about 90 minutes away).

HERE'S THE SKINNY ON EACH:



Indian Canyon G.C. • Spokane



Liberty Lake G.C. • Liberty Lake

DOWNRIVER G.C.

(509) 327-5269 • downrivergolf.org

The oldest of the Spokane munis celebrates its 100th year in 2016, and it's still the sweetest-looking centenarian we've ever laid eyes on. Most golfers rave about the quality of course conditions, and the scenery of the tall trees framing the fairways, with the Spokane River flowing alongside four holes. We credit the fun layout, the friendly staff, and a rate that — as with Esmeralda, Indian Canyon, and The Creek at Qualchan, never climbs above \$35.

ESMERALDA G.C.

(509) 487-6291 • esmeraldagolf.org

Of all the Spokane courses, none stays busier than Esmeralda. That's largely because of its par-70 format and open, flat fairways, which make it a top choice of beginning golfers and others looking to give their scorecard a break. At 6,200-plus yards, though, from the tips (100 yards longer than the white tees at par-72 McCormick

Woods), and with more than 2,000 trees on the property, there's still enough there to keep a decent golfer on their toes.

INDIAN CANYON G.C.

(509) 747-5353 • indiancanyongolf.org

Indian Canyon isn't just one of the state's best munis — it's one of the state's best courses, full stop. Courses that received fewer votes than Indian Canyon in our 2015 poll included well-regarded tracks like Eaglemont, Port Ludlow, Kayak Point, Druids Glen and Gold Mountain's Cascade Course, each of which also come with a higher greens fee (in some cases, as much as double). A classic, Northwest course, Indian Canyon is constructed of narrow fairways, small greens and significant elevation changes; indeed, the course is built into a 240-foot slope overlooking the city of Spokane, with no water but thousands of trees — many right where you wish they weren't. It's not long, but it's by no means easy.

THE CREEK AT QUALCHAN

(509) 448-9317 • qualchangolf.org

Qualchan is Spokane's newest course, which is evident from the design. While the older courses follow the more traditional Northwest script of trees, trees and more trees, Qualchan is a product of the links golf age. Fairways are broad, bunkers and hazards are abundant, and the greens are larger and generally more undulating than those of its Spokane siblings. At courses like Indian Canyon, there's a right way to play a hole, and a wrong way; at Qualchan, there might be two or even three right ways — your own abilities, pin placement and course conditions will determine which one's best to take.

HANGMAN VALLEY G.C.

(509) 448-1212 • spokanecounty.org/parks

Is four great courses for under \$35 not enough for you? Fine, here's three more — Spokane's county's Hangman Valley, Liberty Lake and MeadowWood — each of which top out at just \$34. Hangman Valley is among the most popular, with fairways that generally allow a miss to one side or the other, and greens that aren't too much trouble — provided you don't miss them. Lest you think we're making it sound too easy, though, have no fear — the 610-yard (from the whites!), dogleg-left, par-5 fifth will set you straight, even as it does the opposite to your scorecard.

PALOUSE PICKS

Taking our advice and heading to Spokane to play the state's best collection of munis? Then you'll be needing places to sleep and eat. Might we recommend the following?

DoubleTree by Hilton Spokane City Center

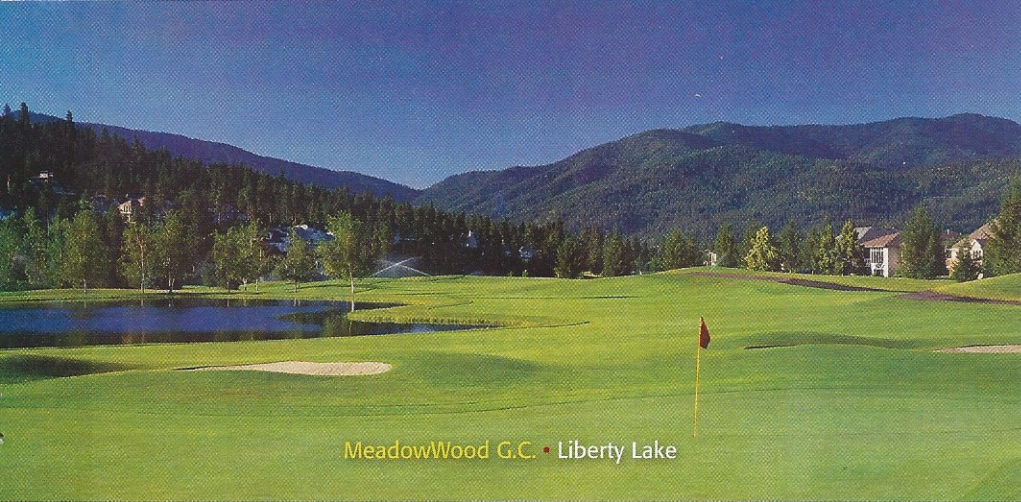
(509) 455-9600 • doubletree3.hilton.com

With a downtown location, it's central to all of the great Spokane tracks, while also putting you close to the river and prime shopping and restaurant districts.

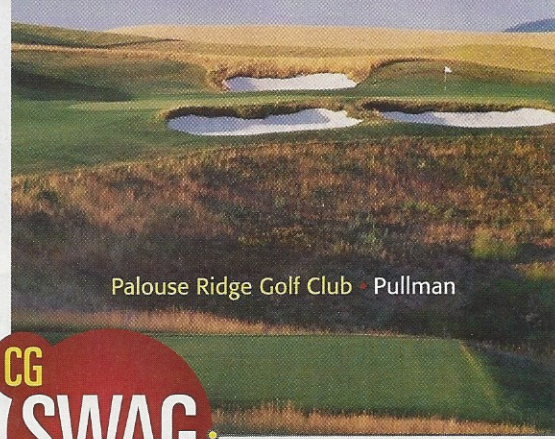
Churchill's Steakhouse

(509) 474-9888 • churchillssteakhouse.com

There's no better steak in Spokane — that's because the cuts are carved in-house to ensure maximum freshness and quality, then served alongside Spokane's most delicious cocktails.



MeadowWood G.C. • Liberty Lake



Palouse Ridge Golf Club Pullman



Win a Twosome at Palouse Ridge!

Summer practically screams for a golf road trip. And after the winter we had, heaven knows we all need to throw the top down and hit the road for some fun in the sun. That's why we've locked down a twosome at Palouse Ridge with your name on it – just log on to CascadeGolfer.com, enter your name and information, and you could be teeing it up at one of our favorite courses in the state, for free! And on the off chance you can't find a partner, our number is right there on page four – we'll even bring snacks for the road.

Enter to win today at CascadeGolfer.com!

LIBERTY LAKE G.C.

(509) 255-6233 • spokanecounty.org/parks

Like The Creek at Qualchan, Liberty Lake is more open than many Spokane tracks, making it a good choice for a golfer who is solid with their irons, but wayward with the big dog. If you played it prior to 2010, it's worth a return to see what's new – the course closed for two years from 2008-10 while a \$6 million renovation was performed, moving tee boxes, re-contouring greens, and adding bunkers and water features. It's fun to play, and at \$34, it's one of the state's best values.

MEADOWWOOD G.C.

(509) 255-9539 • spokanecounty.org/parks

Of all of the Spokane courses, none is more linksy than MeadowWood. Fairways are wide, greens are easy to hit (but hard to two-putt), and water, while present on several holes, isn't too much of a factor. Instead, rolling fairways, doglegs and elevation changes are the main challenge – that, and the prettiness of the surrounding landscape. Once named among Washington's 10-best public courses by *Golf Digest*, the Robert Muir Graves design also has a larger footprint than most of the Spokane munis, with the front and back nine played on either side of a scenic pond.

PLAY • STAY • DINE

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VISIT SPOKANE
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Fantastic Courses, Amazing Prices

Some of the best golf in Washington is in Spokane. Check out our amazing lineup.

City of Spokane

- Downriver
- Esmeralda
- Indian Canyon
- The Creek at Qualchan

Book tee times online

Spokane County

- Hangman Valley
- Liberty Lake
- MeadowWood

Special deals available



DOUBLE TREE
BY HILTON™
SPOKANE CITY CENTER

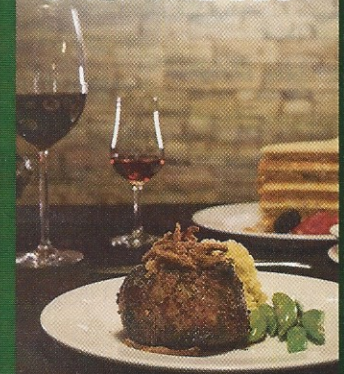


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For more information on Spokane golf go to: visitspokane.com