

TO A TEE

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Golfers get poetic over Augusta

By Ron Driscoll, Globe Staff | April 1, 2007

*April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.*

The Waste Land (1922), T.S. Eliot

We are guessing that Thomas Stearns Eliot was not a golfer, else he would have harbored a much different outlook on the advent of April.

Golfers in the North are more inclined to curse January, as we watch touring professionals soak up sun and warm breezes in Hawaii and California. And what about the odd March snowstorm that clobbers New England just when we thought local courses were near to playable. Talk about cruelty.

To us, April means the Masters, dogwoods and azaleas blooming in Augusta, Ga., and the chance to actually hit a ball outdoors after watching the first major championship on the golf calendar.

If you have a hankering to head to the source of our collective inspiration, you can soak up the green jacket ambience with the Best of Augusta golf package at the Partridge Inn .

The Partridge has been around since 1892, just had a \$17 million makeover, and bills itself as the "grand hotel of the classic South." And although Bobby Jones's Augusta National masterpiece is not among the course offerings, three of the best local courses are.

Jones Creek , designed by noted architect Rees Jones, was rated the top public course in the area by Augusta magazine in 2005 and 2006 . The River Golf Club , a Jim Fazio design on the banks of the Savannah River, was nominated for Golf Digest's best new course honor in 1998. The third option is Mount Vintage Plantation Golf Club , which opened in 2000. It hosted an LPGA tournament from 2001-2004, testing the likes of Annika Sorenstam and Karrie Webb .

The package ranges from \$120-\$140 per person per night, and includes accommodations, full breakfast buffet, one round of golf with cart, and practice balls. The package is available through the end of the year.

Go to partridgeinn.com or call 800-476-6888 for more details.

Teeth of the Dog

One of Pete Dye's acclaimed course designs and his personal favorite is one of his earliest, the "Teeth of the Dog" layout at Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic. Dye worked on the course for two years before it opened in 1971 , with its seven oceanside holes and a premier collection of par 3s winning numerous honors. Today, the Teeth of the Dog is ranked No. 17 in the world by Golf Digest and No. 1 in the Caribbean by Travel + Leisure Golf .

Casa de Campo also has two other Dye creations, the Dye Fore Course, which stretches to 7,770 yards, and the Scottish-influenced Links Course. From April 9-Dec. 20 , golfers can take advantage of the Simply the Best package for \$169 per night, which includes accommodations, breakfast, and golf with shared cart for alternating rounds on the three courses.

Same-day replay rounds on the Links and Dye Fore courses are available for a \$20 cart fee, while replays of Teeth of the Dog carry a \$75 surcharge. A caddie fee of \$25 is mandatory on Teeth of the Dog . Rates do not include 16 percent tax and 10 percent service charge.

For more details, call 800-877-3643 or go to casadecampo.com .

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