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Florida courses: The best residential golf in the Sunshine State

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Creek Course Hole #1 at Fiddler's Creek

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By Tim McDonald, National Golf Editor, Golf Publisher Syndications

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ORLANDO, Fla. (March 15, 2007) — I like houses. In fact, I live in one. But, that doesn't mean — no offense — that I want to look at yours when I'm playing golf.

Residential golf courses are frowned upon by many, especially the purists who rave about the "core golf" experience. Others couldn't care less if they bounce a drive off someone's Mediterranean-style roof. Still others actually enjoy house- and condo-lined fairways and don't mind tee boxes so close to back-yard patios that it seems like you're barbecuing with the neighbors.

Well, it's a fact, and an economic reality that golf courses are often possible only when they're tied to real estate, especially here in Florida. And so we play them.

Baby boomers in particular are more and more buying properties in golf communities. As they pour into Florida from the Rust Belt and other bleak, northern parts, they're faced with an overwhelming choice.

To help you choose, here are the communities we feel offer Florida's best residential golf.

- No. 1: Black Diamond Ranch in Lecanto
- No. 2: Ocean Hammock in Palm Coast
- No. 3: Reunion Resort in Orlando
- No. 4: Isleworth in Windermere
- No. 5: Victoria Hills in Deland
- No. 6: Golden Ocala Golf and Equestrian Club in Ocala
- No. 7: Mountain Lake, just outside of Lake Wales
- **No. 8: Fiddler's Creek is one of the more sumptuous golf communities in a city steeped in them, Naples. Less than one-third of Fiddler's Creek will be developed for residential use, while the remainder of the land is dedicated primarily to nature reserves, lakes, parks, golf courses and recreational areas. The Arthur Hills course, the Creek Course, is frequently praised in golf magazines. A second course, The Preserve Course, is in the works.**
- No. 9: Southern Hills Plantation Club in Brooksville
- No. 10: Old Marsh in Palm Beach