

“LAKE LAS VEGAS GOLF” by Cori Brett, Special to the AWGA



Looking down at hole # 17 at South Shores Golf Club in Lake Las Vegas, Nevada.

From high atop the 17th tee, it was just me and the bighorn sheep. A fairytale village lay before us, hugging the shoreline - quaint shops and restaurants, luxurious homes with boat docks, and the glamorous Loews Lake Las Vegas Resort. An elegant black sampan glided through the water towards the distant reaches of the 320-acre lake. Although Lake Las Vegas is only 17 miles away from the Vegas Strip, it's a world apart. Once we settled in, I didn't want to go anywhere else. That's partly because of the great golf.

From Loews we looked across the lake to the emerald green fairways of the exclusive South Shore Golf Club. I couldn't wait. Loews' recent partnership with South Shore allows hotel guests a unique opportunity to play this outstanding course. It's the first private Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course in Nevada. South Shore climbs from the shoreline to rugged desert hills, with dramatic elevation changes and stunning views. After tackling numerous forced carries over canyons and water, I realized why the Gold tees had earned a 131 slope.



Hole # 12 overlooking Lava Butte at South Shores Golf Club.

The back nine was my favorite. It starts with #10 and #11 sweeping downhill and across the road, returning at par-3 #16. The split tee boxes are quite a climb and the green is steeper yet. We all under-clubbed and ended up in the front bunker with a blind shot to the uphill green. Number 17 feels like the top of the world and reveals a panoramic view of Lake Las Vegas. A row of rock outcroppings in front of the Gold tee on #17 blocks any view of the fairway. You just have to trust it's there.

LPGA winner Natalie Gulbis has owned a home at Lake Las Vegas for 9 years. She's a popular South Shore member. In January 2010, Gulbis offered a free short-game clinic for women at the club. The latest buzz is that South Shore resident Celine Dion will return to Caesar's Palace with a brand new show in March 2011.

Loews Resort has all the amenities you'd expect of a luxury hotel and a totally unexpected spaciousness, inside and out. A multi-level lobby area opens up to a huge patio facing the lake. The Lotus Court is definitely the "A" position. The patio descends to a sandy beach where kids can roast marshmallows around a bonfire. Moroccan décor lends warmth with softly-lit lanterns and intricate designs. Fireplaces abound. Both pool areas have generous pool decks and lead to the intimate Spa Moulay. Check out golf packages with South Shore and with nearby Tuscany Golf Club @ www.loewslakelasvegas.com.



Loews Lake Las Vegas Resort at twilight.

After wine flights at Sunset and Vines in MonteLago Village, a water taxi brought us back to Loews for a gourmet Japanese dinner at Marssa. Executive Chef Fuji Fujita is a Master Sushi Chef who creates delectable combinations - "Osaka-style" box sushi, crunchy eel, edamame dumplings. My sake tasting was so good I may give up chardonnay forever. We returned the next night to sit at the sushi bar and watch the chef carefully slice fresh salmon into paper-thin slices that didn't even taste like fish.

Lake Las Vegas is an easy five-hour drive from the Phoenix area, provided you can avoid traffic delays at Hoover Dam. I'm looking forward to another try at South Shore Golf Club!

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