

## “ALAMO CITY GOLF” by Cori Brett, *Special to the AWGA*



OK, I was eavesdropping. The lady wearing a red, white and blue shirt with sparkly red stars was scanning the brass plaques listing the heroes of the Alamo. “There’s his name,” she proclaimed proudly to her companion, “my granddaddy had a county named after him in Tennessee.”

I realized the Alamo isn’t some musty museum, but a true living legend. 2011 marks the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the epic battle. Several hundred brave defenders, including Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie, held off some 2,000 of General Santa Anna’s troops for two weeks until they were finally overwhelmed. The original fort is surrounded by gardens and courtyards, inside stone walls.

San Antonio is not only home to the beloved Alamo, it also happens to be the premier golf destination in Texas. From historic Brackenridge Park Golf Course (1916) to the brand-new TPC San Antonio, there’s plenty of great golf. Check out [www.visitsanantonio.com](http://www.visitsanantonio.com).

Only a 10-minute taxi ride from the Alamo, Brackenridge is the Lone Star State’s first public course. “Brack is back” became the slogan after a massive 2008 renovation brought Brackenridge up to modern standards while preserving most of A.W. Tillinghast’s original design features. Like square greens – I counted six. Narrow fairways skip back and forth across the San Antonio River, often playing to elevated greens that make the course feel longer than its 6,300 yards. It’s a walking treat, fairly flat and shaded by more than 6,000 mature oak trees. The original Tudor-style clubhouse harkens back to another time.



Everything’s big about the new JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa, a 1,000-room luxury hotel with six restaurants, large spa and even a water park. It’s due to open January 2010, adjoining the long-awaited TPC San Antonio. Pete Dye designed the Canyons

Course. The Greg Norman-designed Oaks Course will be the new home of the Valero Texas Open. Both courses measure more than 1,000 yards longer than Brackenridge.



Established resorts may feel the pressure. Westin La Cantera, a sophisticated ranch-style property with two golf courses, currently hosts the Valero. Hyatt Regency Hill Country is a long-time favorite with lots of family-friendly outdoor activities and 27 holes of golf.

My last stop in San Antonio was the famous River Walk. City noise and traffic

fade away in this pedestrian paradise located one story below street level. Stone pathways border the winding San Antonio River for four miles. Giant cypress trees shelter cozy nooks while foot bridges allow passage across the River. Quiet park-like stretches lead into active areas with European-style sidewalk cafes, art galleries and specialty shops. I joined a festive group for dinner aboard a river cruiser. When the boat docked, it was a short walk to the lovely Watermark Hotel & Spa. The River Walk is just plain romantic. It's on the top of my list for an anniversary weekend that would certainly include a few rounds of golf on San Antonio's great courses.

*"Escape with Cori" on assignment to exotic and fun golf destinations. First-hand impressions from an experienced golf travel writer and AWGA member, available only on the AWGA website.  
[www.coribrett.com](http://www.coribrett.com)*