



A bunker shaped like Mickey Mouse? Yep, that magical mouse is seemingly everywhere at Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando.

The sand trap guarding the green of the par-3 sixth hole of the Magnolia course is one of the few clues that you are playing golf on Disney's sprawling 40-square-mile property in central Florida. There are other times when it feels like you're miles away from the madness of the world's largest theme park.

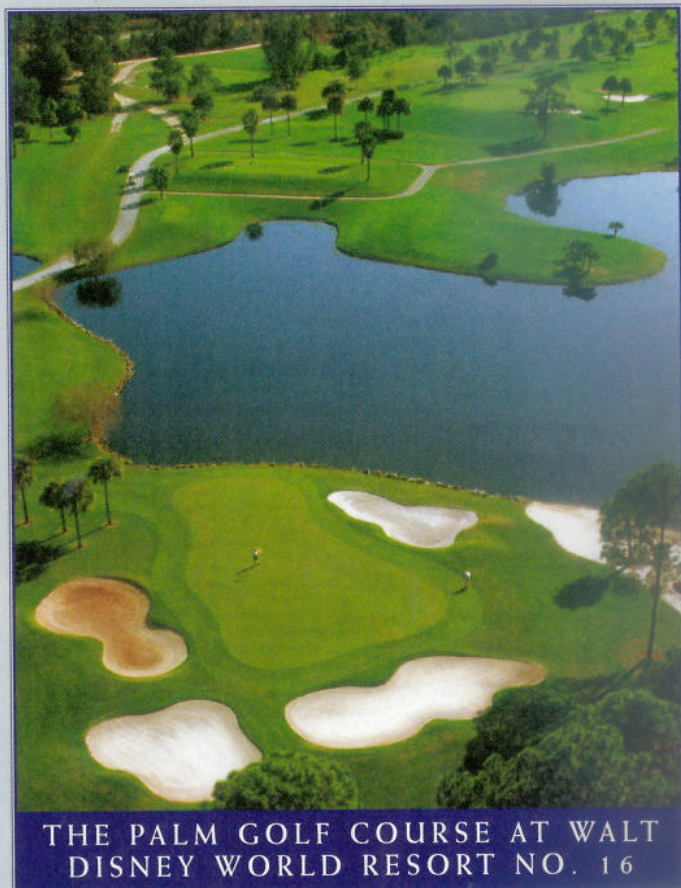
Disney not only delivers four incredible fantasylands for kids — the Magic Kingdom, the Animal Kingdom, Epcot and Hollywood Studios — but four dynamic playgrounds for golfers, too. Every course is a certified National Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, essentially meaning they're one with nature and always in top condition. *Golf Digest* considers Walt Disney World one of the top 75 golf resorts in North America.



The Magnolia and Palm courses host the Children's Miracle Network Classic, a PGA Tour event. Disney has hosted the pros every fall since 1971, the year the courses opened.

The two classic Joe Lee designs sit right across the street from the luxurious Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, a Victorian-inspired hotel that is one of Disney's most beautiful spots. Staying here and teeing it up where the pros play is sure to be memorable, even if your swing goes a little goofy.

Water and bunkers litter the two designs. Signage on every tee recounts a historic moment from a past PGA Tour tournament.



THE PALM GOLF COURSE AT WALT
DISNEY WORLD RESORT NO. 16

OTHERS WORTH VISITING

1. The Beach Club, Gulf Shores, Ala. This Spectrum Resort on the Fort Morgan Peninsula is the largest full-service resort in Gulf Shores with four tower condo hotels, cozy cottages (some with their own pools or hot tubs), a spa and the Southbeach Bar & Grill. It also has special golf packages with neighbors Kiva Dunes, one of the top 100 public courses in the country; and Craft Farms, a 36-hole facility with two Arnold Palmer courses. www.thebeachclub.com

2. Chateau Elan, Braselton, Ga. What started as a winery three decades ago has transformed into one of the South's best golf resorts, cut from 3,500 acres about 45 minutes north of Atlanta. Your senses will drink up the natural rolling settings of the unbridled country and savor the serenity of the resort's European-style 16th-century theme. The par-71, 7,030-yard Chateau course and the 6,735-yard Woodlands course are equally thrilling but take a back seat to the private 6,898-yard Legends course. The Versailles restaurant, named after the Palace de Versailles, serves as the centerpiece of the 275-room Inn under a grand three-story glass ceiling. Wine-tasting and winery tours are popular distractions. www.chateauelan.com

3. Renaissance Birmingham Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa, Hoover, Ala. This former home of a Champions Tour event is arguably the best course on the dynamic Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. The 8,191-yard layout is one of the longest in the world, featuring 10 holes that hug two lakes. An 80-foot waterfall divides the greens at No. 9 and No. 18. More golf is available at nearby Oxmoor Valley, the original RTJ site. Guests who stay at the 259-room castle-like hotel come not only to drive golf balls, but fast cars, too. Ross Bridge is the host hotel for the Porsche Sport Driving School. A 12,000-square-foot European spa, fine dining and the best breakfast buffet around make any stay memorable. www.rtgolf.com/resorts/rossbridge

The 17th hole on the 7,488-yard Magnolia, one of the longest courses on Tour, will need a new marker after Troy Merritt banked \$1 million by winning the 2010 Kodak Challenge during a three-way playoff last November.

While deer, turkey, ospreys and even bald eagles roam freely at the Magnolia and Palm, the real Animal Kingdom is the 7,039-yard Osprey Ridge course. Featuring a secluded setting and strategic layout, this Tom Fazio design is everybody's favorite Disney round. Its scenic par 5s demand some heroic shots for birdies of another kind.

"I love Disney golf, but I like Osprey Ridge the best," says Lee Roy, visiting from Atlanta. "It requires more shotmaking."

The 6,745-yard Lake Buena Vista course delivers more of a country club feel, winding through several Disney resorts. It's not as gorgeous or challenging as the others, but with an island green, it still has its own lovable personality.

The truth is that any of Disney's fairways cast an enchanting spell. It's called relaxation. Visit disneyworld.com for more information.