

Course Review: Eagle Crest (Putting Course)

Writing about the Ridge Course at Eagle Crest Resort near Redmond is easy for the Don half of Don and Pete Golf Oregon, as Don's family has owned a vacation timeshare at Eagle Crest since prior to the Ridge Course's construction and opening in 1992. In fact, Don considers the Eagle Crest Ridge Course to be his "favorite" course to play in Oregon. He's quick to point out that doesn't mean he's saying it's the "best" course, just his favorite.

For some convoluted reason (which was explained to us by the course staff, though not to our content), in the spring of 2010 Eagle Crest decided to switch the nines on the Ridge Course. Ergo, what was originally the front nine is now the back, and vice versa. Don and Pete officially played the course as part of The Quest before they made the change, but this review will reference holes in their current order.

As per the name, the Ridge Course sits on a ridge up above the resort proper, which includes the original Resort Course just across Cline Falls Highway. You get a great view of all the Central Oregon mountains. Pine trees, in particular, are abundant. It's an unusual round on the Ridge Course if you don't see both some deer and long-eared jackrabbits. Curiously, you'll also see rabbits on the Resort Course below, but they are of the "bunny rabbit" variety. You'll also see lots of birds of prey, including, yes, every now and then, an eagle, as the resort name strongly suggests.

The Ridge Course is imminently playable. There are trees, traps and water, but they are placed fairly and if you strike the ball decently you'll avoid most trouble. The greens are always in great shape; much quicker than in the valley, which is typical of Central Oregon greens, but the Eagle Crest greens are very consistent and you can adjust quickly.

Men have four tee options to choose from, meaning you can play the Ridge Course from anywhere between 5600 and 7000 yards. The High Desert elevation of Central Oregon means lighter air, so you'll notice a difference and will likely be clubbing down frequently on approach shots (but it's nice off the tee!).



To many, the course's signature hole is No. 3, a par 3 that looks down from an elevated tee to a narrow green protected by a pond on the right and a trap on the left — and OB, if you go very far left. A drawback, from our perspective, of the nines switch is that this hole comes so early in your round now — it used to be Hole 12. Another favorite for many is what is now Hole No. 16, a short par 3 with a big lake protecting it front to back on the right and lots of bunkers on the left. It is possible to not hit the green here and not be in trouble, but typically once you strike your ball it's either dance floor, sand or water.

Finally, adjacent to the Ridge Course is the Eagle Crest Putting Course. This 18-hole, natural grass, sand traps included putting course is great family fun. Because of Don and Pete's fetish for logo balls, we've even included this little layout on our list of Oregon courses for the simple reason that it has its own logo ball. If you clicked on the review for the putting course, this is what you're getting, by the way — there is no hole-by-hole review, though we did swap out the photo here. ☺ In all honesty, the price to play the putting course seems a little steep, but you get to keep the Eagle Crest Putting Course logo ball that you play with, and the course is usually packed with moms, dads and kids having a wonderful time. It's a great introduction for little tykes of either gender to the game of golf, so that has to be a good thing. Incidentally, Don and Pete had an epic *mano-a-mano* match on the putting course, which Don ultimately won on the last hole.