

Mike Strantz

Maverick Golf Trail

*Three States, Six Courses,
One Great Designer*

By James McMahon
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An unconventional architectural style and a flair for the dramatic have earned Mike Strantz the reputation as “the maverick of golf course design.” It’s fitting, then, that a three-state tour of six of his classic works has been assembled into an unforgettable golf experience aptly titled the *Mike Strantz Maverick Golf Trail*.

Stretching from historic Williamsburg, Va. through the scenic Sandhills of North Carolina to the beautiful South Carolina coast in Myrtle Beach is a collection of Strantz golf courses that will stimulate the senses while challenging the skills of golfers of all handicaps.

The collection of courses reads like a roll call of some of the finest and most acclaimed courses to have come along in the past decade. Stonehouse and Royal New Kent are the Virginia layouts; Tot Hill Farm and Tobacco

Road are the North Carolina offerings and the acclaimed True Blue and Caledonia comprise the Myrtle Beach experience. No matter where you begin the trail or where you finish, the golf is as varied as it is unforgettable.

“You can experience six totally different golf courses on this trail,” said Joe Gay, director of golf at Tobacco Road. “You get a lot of variations in all of the golf courses.”

An artist by trade, Strantz is known for creating courses that are visual masterpieces. Not one to be pigeonholed into a specific style, Strantz instead makes full use of a given environment when crafting his layouts. Tobacco Road, for example, is crafted out of an abandoned sand quarry and features amazing waste areas and expansive sand bunkers, while Tot Hill Farm is set amid beautiful Carolina forests and picturesque



rock outcroppings. By contrast, the Virginia layouts are molded in the old Scottish links style, making full use of native grasses and pot-bunkered greens.

“You might see something in one course that reminds you of something in the others, but really each course is its own unique experience,” Gay said. “He takes the piece of land he has to work with and creates the golf course from that.”

Those choosing to experience the *Maverick Golf Trail* are presented with a myriad of options to do so. Whether one wishes to take on all six courses, or just a couple of them, there are affordable custom packages to satisfy any plan. What makes the trail truly unique, however, is each stop is centered in a major Southeastern golf destination that offers a wide variety of golf experi-

ences in addition to the Strantz courses.

“It’s really all custom stuff,” Gay said. “There’s no true start or finish point to the trail. There is no set way to do this trail.”

The problem, however, comes in deciding the course, or courses, to leave off the trail. Five of the six layouts have appeared on both *Golf Digest’s* and *Golf Magazine’s* “best of” lists at one time or another and each of the courses rates among the finest golf experiences in each destination.

“I would be scared to recommend one course over another,” Gay said. In true Strantz form, then, be a renegade and experience the entire *Maverick Golf Trail*.

For more information or to book a package on the “Maverick Golf Trail” call 1-877 284-3762 or visit the Web site at www.MaverickGolfTrail.com. ■