

Golf with the Girls in The Wild Wild West!

Story by Karen Williams, 2006 WA Golf Champion

As relatively novice golfers, (handicaps of 36 in May 2006 when the trip was taken) my partner and I were a little nervous about going on a golfing specific holiday as we thought the other golfers might be a bunch of big hitting, low handicappers who would be frustrated at our efforts to hack around the beautiful courses in the Perth area that the team at GIRLS OWN ADVENTURES had lined up for us to play.

Although there were indeed some big hitting, low handicappers in the group, we had no reason to be nervous at all. From day one it was clear that whatever our individual abilities and interests, we were all going to get on like a house on fire and have great fun together as well as the opportunity to play some great golf courses.

Our first game of golf on day 2 was at Secret Harbour which is located just outside of Mandurah, about 40 minutes drive from Perth. Having played mostly public courses in NSW, nothing prepared me for my first sight of Secret Harbour.

Boasting 18 stunning holes of links golf set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Indian Ocean, this is a beautifully manicured course with bunkers the size of flying saucers and huge clumps of

fescue grass and water! Quite a bit of it! Take lots of extra balls! Veronica and Suzie of GIRLS OWN ADVENTURES started us off gently on our week-long golf challenge with a team stableford competition which allowed us to get to know one another and our games without the added pressure of playing as an individual.

Our second stop to both stay and play was at The Vines Resort and Country Club. This is a beautiful resort and the course we played (there are two of them) threads its way through the native bush. One of the highlight of the stay here in addition great food, wine (lots of it), accommodation, and laughs - was seeing the free roaming kangaroos hopping out of the way of our wayward golf shots before continuing their grazing.

The third and final stop was Joondalup (The name means "Place of shining water" in the local Aboriginal language). Built in 1985 by Robert Trent Jones Jr. this was my favourite place. It has to be one of the finest resort courses in Australia and I would go back there in an instant.

There are 3 courses on offer Quarry, Dunes and Lake. We played them all in different combinations and they were awesome. There was obviously something about the huge moon-crater bunkers, wide



rolling fairways, beautiful scenery and weather that suited my game as I played the best golf that I had ever played and ended up, during our final evening presentation and awards dinner, being given a trophy declaring me the GIRLS OWN ADVENTURES WA golfing champion. What a result!

There are legions of die-hard golfers who deem Perth home to over 42 golf courses, to be the perfect place to enjoy the game. But its not just golfers who will enjoy themselves on a trip like this. Given the wonderful scenery, sparkling ocean views, beaches and vineyards not to mention the shopping, it is, quite simply, hard not to fall in love with our country most western region. Pretty much anyone who goes to WA will leave refreshed and relaxed and with a head full of great memories.

A Wonderful Week of Golf in Western Australia!

26 March to 1 April 2006

Story by Suzie Wright, Girls Own Adventures

This was Girls Own first week long domestic trip and we were looking forward to playing some great courses, seeing the sights and having fun! But nothing could prepare us for the bright sunshine, crystal clear air, azure blue sky and beautiful green courses of WA. They told us the summer had been mild and as a result the golf courses were in fabulous condition, they all looked manicured!

On arrival into Perth we transferred directly to the historical port of Fremantle for two nights. Fremantle is a great town with famous markets, a myriad of cafés, restaurants and fashionable bars, art galleries and museums all mixed with the best examples of early Australian colonial architecture we have seen anywhere in Australia.

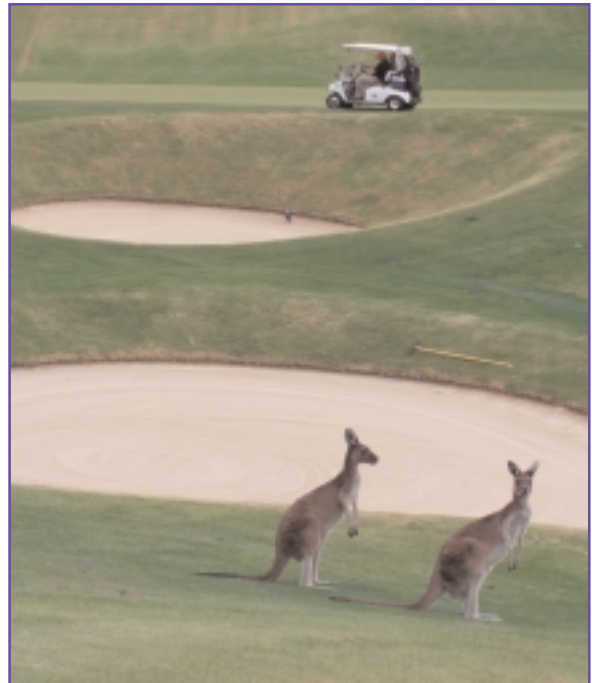


Our group members were coming from Sydney and Melbourne on a few different flights so they met each other at welcome drinks in our hotel with the result that we have come to expect when we put a group of lesbians together, much loud talking, mixing and above all else laughter! Dinner followed with wine and much talk about the next days golf.

Our first game was at Secret Harbour, so much a secret our driver had trouble finding it! There were road works and detours! But we were not disappointed when we finally arrived. It was my first game on a traditional links course with pot bunkers, rolling fairways amid natural sand dunes and beautiful ocean views. Balls rolled forever on the fairways but if you landed in a bunker you were in deep trouble, even if you hit out you had to clear the thick grass fringe around the top.

The next day we moved to Vines Resort & Country Club, in the Swan Valley, where we played the Ellenbrook Course which was long, beautiful, challenging and covered with kangaroos.

I must commend the resort staff here who accommodated our dinner requirements by allowing us to move directly on from the bar into the very upmarket restaurant still in our golf clothes and shoes! Another fun night that spilled over into our room for announcement of the



days winners with celebration drinks into the night.

We scheduled a free day into the itinerary here and most of the girls played another round of golf, one had a massage while a few including me lazed by the pool to get over the slight headache from the night before!

The next morning bright and early, with a boxed breakfast, we were off to Joondalup golf resort. Just 20 minutes from Perth and 3 minutes from the beach, yet totally immersed in bushland setting with twenty seven unforgettable holes, 3 totally different 9 hole courses. Our accommodation was in superb style and comfort, rooms were large and enjoyed views of the beautiful golf course or natural bush. We had saved the best for last!

Our first morning we played the Quarry/Dune combination. The Quarry which as the name suggests is cut from an old limestone quarry with the courses signature par 3 third, which requires a tee shot across a deep ravine to a well guarded

green. The Dunes, a very tight narrow 9, demanding accuracy. To say these courses were a challenge is an understatement, I quickly lost count of how many balls I lost!

We went into town in the evening for dinner to a reasonable Italian restaurant and dined al fresco but the town of Joondalup itself seemed nothing more than a generic shopping centre and railway station with no notable features apart from an interesting post modern police academy building.

The next day we played The Lakes, being a open links style course, and the Dunes combination. A completely different golfing experience. We played daily team events but today's was the most difficult being a Girls Own Golden Ball, teams had to finish with the Golden Ball to win, a big ask on these courses, two teams met the challenge.

Our last night we celebrated our champions with a special Presentation Dinner in the hotels restaurant, we had a private room off the main restaurant and of course had lots of fun and laughs announcing our Girls Own Adventures Western Australian Champion, runner-up and many other prizes.



And now for our next Adventure...

SOUTH AMERICA – Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil & Argentina

24 DAYS - 30 Sept to 21 October 2006

BRIEF ITINERARY: Depart Sydney onboard Qantas for Santiago the capital of Chile, then fly to Lima, Peru's capital, have a Amazon Adventure at Sandoval Lake Lodge in Peru, visit Cuzco, see the ruins of Machu Picchu, the Sacred Valley of the Incas, La Paz, Lake Titicaca and Sun Island, fabulous Rio de Janeiro, see Iguassu Falls from both the Brazilian and Argentina sides, stunning Buenos Aires, and then home to Sydney.

We have worked hard to put together a comprehensive tour that represents good value for money. South America is a vast continent and to maximise our time there it is necessary to fly between many of our destinations. We have endeavoured to cut out the "boring bits" thus avoiding 12 hour stints in coaches and on trains. However, flights to and within South America are expensive and are the most costly component of our fabulous tour. The hotels we will stay in are all 3 to 4 star. Our sightseeing and transfers are confirmed on a private basis just for our group. Portage is included at airports and hotels.

Call if you would like us to send you a complete itinerary. We look forward to helping lesbian travellers connect with the energy of the group when they book on our next adventure. For more information contact Veronica at Girls Own Adventures a division of Albury Kent Travel, Sydney, Australia +61 2 9569 1197.