

Quivira Golf Course in Los Cabos
Nicklaus' Beauty in the Baja
By Tim Cotroneo



Not even Jack Nicklaus messes with Mother Nature. When this designer of over 400 golf courses was tapped to take on Quivira Golf Course in Los Cabos, Mexico, the Golden Bear carved, shaped, and ultimately embraced the Mother of all Baja golf landscapes.

If great art picks up where nature ends, then Nicklaus' Quivira design reflects this mantra in a 7100-yard composition of sheer cliffs, majestic elevations, and thunderstruck ocean waves. Upon opening in 2014, Quivira was acclaimed as the Best New International Course.

One's mind shifts into overdrive when imagining what this tumultuous 18-hole layout looked and felt like before Nicklaus worked his magic. Nicklaus' before picture included craggy terrain, breakneck inclines, and ocean views that go on for miles. The Quivira of today features awe-inspiring tee shots, Himalayan-like peaks, and more undulations than a Los Cabos Salsa Instructor on Red Bull.

Uncommon Overlooks



Nicklaus wastes no time in making uncommon occurrences par for the course on both Quivira nines. The dramatic crescendo starts at the first tee box with the Pacific Ocean clapping at your back for the first of many aquatic standing ovations. As you navigate Platinum Paspalum fairways, half-moon bunkers, and more cactus than an Clint Eastwood western, you'll need to catch your breath after dropping your putt at the 600-yard, Par 5, fourth hole.

The breather is necessary because you're about to partake in an oxygen rush that goes straight up. The one mile golf cart ride between the fourth and fifth hole is like no other in the universe. If you think this statement is merely bravado, consider this: You'll encounter not one, not two, but three scenic overlooks on your way to the fifth tee box.

This spectacular visual to the east may have you thinking this image is something you and your golf partners should celebrate. Quivira reads your mind by positioning something called a Comfort Station at the top of the cliff. The Comfort Station serves complimentary breakfast burritos along with your choice of beverage. As you sip an orange juice, cold beer, or tequila cocktail, pull up your golf socks before checking out the view at the fifth hole tee box.

Quivira Comfort



For the macho player who chooses to play from the black tees, the postage stamp 5th hole tee box is basically a cliff surrounded by a wall of Pacific Ocean blue. If you think Nicklaus has played all his aces before the turn, realize that the next hole, the Par 3, 180-yard 6th hole is just as ocean friendly, or unfriendly, depending upon where your ball lands. At this point you realize that Jack must have felt like an artist on steroids when he designed Quivira.

By the time you do get to the turn you'll find the second of three Comfort Stations. You may need a beverage to steel your nerves in anticipation of the Par 5, 600-yard 12th hole. This Matterhorn of a golf hole will have you yodeling in Spanish if your second shot goes too far left. As your golf cart plunges toward the equator, the fairway slaloms vertically toward the Pacific Ocean. The 12th takes a hard left at the putting green as you regain your equilibrium. Brace yourself after sinking your putt. It's time to get vertical and drive up a steep bank to the 13th, another ocean hole.

If you're beginning to think that Quivira is a one-of-a-kind golf Baja memory maker, you're right. Not only did Jack maximize the views offered by Quivira and the Pueblo Bonito Resort's 1800-acres, he also tapped into his inner geologist.

Brad Pitt, Boulder Jack, and Whale Watcher



The Quivira property dates back hundreds of years. Flashing back to the 7th hole, you've already experienced a castle-like building that is the oldest still-standing structure in Los Cabos. This building served as a lighthouse in the early 1900s and exudes enough character that it's visible in the movie "Troy" starring Brad Pitt. Nicklaus the artist seamlessly incorporated the lighthouse into his Quivira design, and this landmark can be viewed from various vantage points throughout the course.

On the 16th hole, Nicklaus literally dug deep into Quivira's history. On this 490-yard Par 4, Jack the Geologist tipped his hat to the men who moved heaven and earth creating Quivira. Jack left a giant boulder in the middle of the 16th fairway. Rather than moving this ancient rock, Nicklaus voted to keep it in its discovered resting place. Depending on where your tee shot lands, the 16th is your opportunity to pay homage to a rock dubbed Boulder Jack.



The 18th hole finisher is your last ocean hole hurrah. There is at least a 50-50 chance of spotting a humpback whale frolicking in the Pacific behind the massive 18th green. After completing your Baja round for the ages, spying a whale is the ultimate Los Cabos tribute to Mother Nature. As you shake hands with your playing partners, your Moby moment is Jack's way of saying, "I hope you had a whale of a time at Quivira."

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