

Beyond the green

Pros in more ways than one

by Marilyn de Lang



Doug Reid, CPGA
Head Golf Professional



Port Carling Golf Club has a first-class team of pros on their staff . . . but not just the experts who can coach a golfer on how to get that ball onto the green in the fewest number of strokes! This private club has a highly dedicated crew devoted to making every club member, no matter what their golfing capability, feel valued and welcomed; and each of these pros takes pride in their own realm of responsibility.

One need not be a golf expert to feel at home here. Friday mornings are ‘men’s day’, offering a chance to casually mingle with others, while the ladies are invited to do the same on Monday mornings. With tee times spaced generously, members can enjoy a relaxed pace without fear of holding up more experienced golfers. “Golf’s number one issue is access to the course and pace of play,” says Wayne Middaugh, General Manager and CPGA Executive Professional. “On our course, the players can take it easy and even hear the crickets chirp, because they are not crowded or rushed.”

He describes the philosophy of the club as one that promotes ‘equality’ among members. “We have a comfortable atmosphere here,” he explains. “Our culture is based on professional respect, and we see golf as a social pleasure and a great way to spend leisure time.”

A golf concierge

This climate of respect runs across the board, with staff, members, and guests at ease with each other. Doug Reid, CPGA Head Golf Professional, explains that coaching represents only a small percentage of his duties. He describes himself as a type of ‘golf concierge’, always accessible and highly visible. “Our chief focus is on personal service that starts as soon as our members arrive,” says Doug, “and we take care to appreciate their personal preferences.”

His golfing acumen informs the selections for the club’s retail shop, including a wide array of styles that are sure to appease even the most discerning shopper. Golf equipment is always fully customized for the user. Even grips can be sized to the exact 1/32nd of an inch and come in a full range of colours. You can be sure if it is in the Golf Shop, it can be personalized; and, if it is not, Doug will find whatever it is you are looking for.

Doug also trains the service staff. “Because of our environment of courtesy and respect among staff, members, and guests,” he explains, “our university students return year and after year to work with us.”



They follow his lead on remembering the details that make the members feel at home — perhaps simply that some people prefer a specific sports drink on their cart when they come to play golf — and the result is a team that truly lives up to the club’s goal of ‘exceeding expectations’.

The chef’s personal touch

Executive Chef, John Tassoulis,

is on hand to greet the members throughout the day. Together with his wife, Vaso Tassoulis, the Food and Beverage Manager, John creates an experience of fine dining with a warm family ambience.

His interest in the culinary arts began as a child in Greece, helping his family during special events and festivals. With a background as a chef in fine dining in Europe and

Barbados, he prides himself on creating authentic, delicious food from scratch, using local seasonal produce. John never uses a roux of flour or cornstarch for gravy, but boils it down for natural thickness; and his kitchen exudes the tempting scent of homemade stocks that simmer all day.

Quality is mandatory in John’s domain. When their certified Black Angus young beef arrives in the kitchen, it is unpacked and air-dried in coolers for about fourteen days. This cures the meat on the outside to enhance its tenderness and flavour; then it is custom-carved for

rib steaks ranging from 16 to 28 ounces.

John creates a new menu every weekend for the formal dinners — open to members, dining members, and their guests — and he welcomes his clientele into the kitchen to offer their comments and suggestions. Pub night is on Thursdays, and the bistro barbeque is open seven days a week.

“Our members enjoy good-quality, homemade food,” he says. “The bone-in filet with truffle veal jus is a favourite, and so is our pulled lamb shepherd’s pie.” John also caters to dietary preferences

and allergies, including gluten-free and vegan options, such as squash risotto.

This chef’s enthusiasm for his work is part of what makes the dining experience at the Port Carling club so enjoyable. “I love the freedom to create,” he explains, “as well as the chance to get to know the members in a way that I never could at a public restaurant.”

The pros at this exclusive golf club take pleasure in the hospitable atmosphere they have nurtured, where each person is respected and valued . . . no matter what the number on the scorecard may be! **DS**



Executive Chef, John Tassoulis
creates delicious food
from scratch, using local
seasonal produce.



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