



LUXURY *comes* to COLUMBINE

Over the course of six decades, the 643-acre town of Columbine Valley has grown up around Columbine Country Club. Yet for all the homes that have sprouted in the surrounding neighborhood, the clubhouse belonging to the course that hosted the 1967 PGA Championship never really changed.

But late this summer—50 years after Don January won his only major there and 40 years after JoAnne Carner won the first of five LPGA events contested at the club—Columbine will unveil a new 56,000-square-foot clubhouse with the kind of luxurious appointments, facilities and amenities that befit the club's championship golf pedigree.

THE MEMBERS WANTED IT. In 2015, after years of slow membership decline, the membership decided to reverse the slide and make the club more current and relevant in today's market. By a 72 percent majority, the member-owned club passed the measure—as well as a one-time capital assessment—to build the new clubhouse. All told, the total cost of the renovation, which also includes the pool area, will be \$25 million.

EVEN WITHOUT A CLUBHOUSE, MEMBERSHIP HAS INCREASED. After the decision to raze the old clubhouse and raise a new one, Columbine lost 42 member families but gained 143—a net increase of 101 new families as of March 1, 2017. The average age of the Columbine member is 54.

WHAT SOLD THEM? One of those new members is Lance Fitzsimmons, the 40-year-old CFO of Leprino Foods, who joined with his wife and three children. When he first visited in 2015, the Bow Mar resident says he liked the course more than the clubhouse or culture. "When the new clubhouse passed the vote and I saw the plans, I was sold," he says. "It's a gorgeous design. The vision of updating the club and attracting a younger membership base was very appealing. We also like the amenities like the huge back patio that looks over the golf course. It'll have a gym in there, so it'll be a one-stop shop for golf, working out, eating and entertaining. They've got tremendous kids amenities planned. We love the whole package."

WHAT ABOUT THE PRICE?

When the project was announced, memberships were selling for \$27,500, but the club made it very clear to prospective members that the amount would go up. And it has, more than doubling in 18 months to its current \$60,000. Even that price won't last long, Director of Sales and Marketing Robert Cuillard says. "We have another increase planned for this summer, and by this time next year, they'll be selling for \$75,000. History shows that we're going to keep increasing it and we're getting close to our capacity. We have about 50 memberships left to sell until we're completely full." Family golf dues are \$545 per month.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF GREAT GOLF.

The 7,435-yard Henry Hughes-designed course, which got its own facelift about 10 years ago from Ron Forse, has remained open during the clubhouse construction and experienced a surprising uptick in guest rounds. "An increase in guest play—are you kidding?" says Columbine COO/General Manager Michael Bratcher. "We don't have anyplace to eat! But the conditions have been superb on both the championship course and our nine-hole par-3. When you think of great golf, you look to Columbine. And we're very proud of that." Converting some of those guests into new members supports that pride.



THIS MUST BE SOME CLUBHOUSE. “We’re establishing a level of luxury that we’ve never seen before,” says Bratcher, whom the club hired around the same time as the vote. Bratcher pushed hard for the Greenwood Village-based architecture firm Marsh & Associates, which has designed or redesigned scores of clubhouses in Colorado and around the world. “Marsh clubhouses are not stuffy or formal,” he says. “They’re elegant and luxurious but make you want to hang out.”

IS THE POOL AREA PART OF THE RENOVATION? It was a priority. Columbine—which has always had strong junior swimming and diving programs—spent millions of dollars on upgrades to an outdoor aquatic area that opened last summer. With its 10 cabanas, Tucci umbrellas, coffee shop, indoor-outdoor dining (120 pizzas a day), new men’s and women’s locker rooms, tennis and swim shops outdoor pool, kiddie pool, grass volleyball court and diving boards, the area embodies the resort experience so popular at today’s clubs.

“IF THE POOL IS EXCEPTIONAL, THE CLUBHOUSE WILL BE EXTRAORDINARY,” says Cuillard. You’ll arrive via a dramatic cobblestone auto courtyard highlighted by a fountain and a valet-attended porte cochère. Inside, a receptionist greets you. Telluride stone, travertine floors, wood trusses and exquisite millwork will distinguish the expansive foyer, which affords an unobstructed view through the NanaWalled main dining room to the 18th hole.

BLENDING INDOOR/OUTDOOR DINING SPACES IS CENTRAL TO THE NEW CLUBHOUSE.

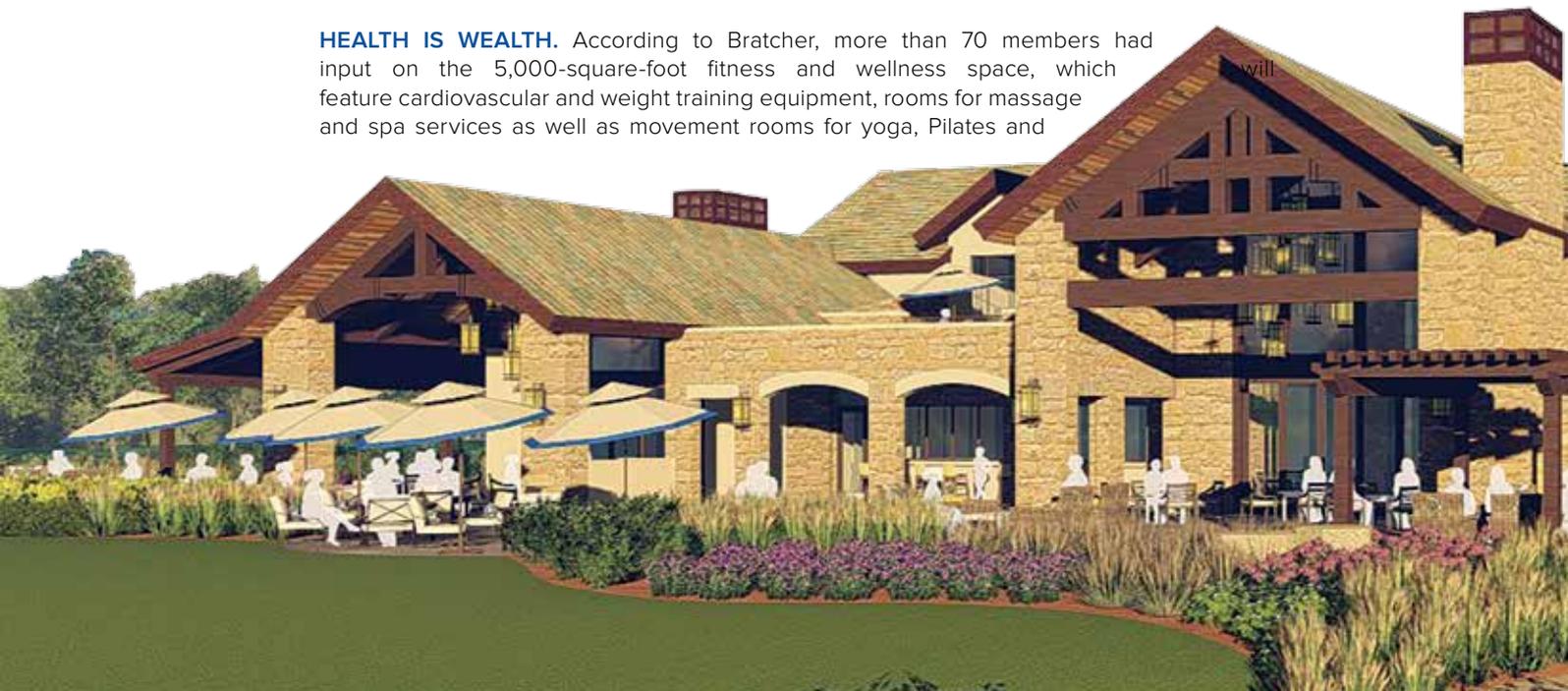
Retractable NanaWalls separate and connect the club’s three distinct and exquisitely appointed main dining rooms to each other and to the expansive multi-sectioned patio that wraps around the rear of the building. Inside, lounge spaces, rounds, banquettes, settees replace the standard four-top tables, while outside fire pits, a pergola and a double-sided fireplace highlight spaces with multiple seating areas. “When you’re inside you’re outside and vice versa,” says Bratcher, who predicts “everyone’s going to want to start outside and work their way back in.”

THE CLUB WILL HAVE FOUR PRIVATE DINING ROOMS.

Downstairs will be the Wine room. Upstairs, the Sunset Room features its own patio overlooking the courtyard and the ballroom. Another popular option promises to be the President’s Room, a boardroom-style space with an 80-inch touchscreen monitor and a deck overlooking the main firepit and 18th hole. The fourth option is a high-back leather booth looking into the kitchen, where up to 10 members can sit and watch the chef prepare a custom meal for them. “You come in and say ‘we want to try something from Spain,’ and let him go crazy,” Bratcher explains. “Our sommelier pairs the wine, and we let our chef dazzle you with five- six- seven-course meals.”

LOCKER ROOM TALK. In both the men’s and women’s locker rooms, members will see their names stenciled into the millwork on the locker rather than engraved on plaques. The men will have a lounge that connects to a billiard room and features a bar and indoor/outdoor dining facilities that overlook the golf course. The equally well-outfitted women’s locker room will sit directly below the men’s and where golfers make the turn. It will feature a lounge, a juice bar directly across from it that will also serve food, and private access to the fitness space.

HEALTH IS WEALTH. According to Bratcher, more than 70 members had input on the 5,000-square-foot fitness and wellness space, which will feature cardiovascular and weight training equipment, rooms for massage and spa services as well as movement rooms for yoga, Pilates and





other classes. “We’re not trying to beat those monster megagyms out there,” Bratcher says. “We’re trying to have phenomenal instructor-led programming.”

SPEAKING OF PROGRAMMING, Columbine offers outstanding, expert-led junior programs in golf, swimming, diving and tennis. The dining areas welcome children, as does the 5,000-square foot event lawn, which is perfect for Frisbee, bocce and other games. For parents who want a safe, constructive place to leave their kids during an on-premises workout, romantic dinner or round of golf, Columbine plans to staff its children’s areas with trained educators who won’t just plop them in front of a television set. Webcams in the childcare area allow curious parents to check in via smartphone apps.

COLUMBINE EMBRACES TECHNOLOGY. “We have apps for everything,” Bratcher says. “We love cellphones here.” Presumably just not in the locker rooms.

ONE OF THE SLICKER FEATURES OF THE NEW CLUBHOUSE is a luxurious, high-end lounge featuring two high-definition golf simulators that can double as televisions, DVD players or videogame stations. In some ways, it’s an extension of the corporate membership the club has had for the last two years at Topgolf in Centennial. “Our members really like the Topgolf experience, which is like bowling inasmuch as you don’t have to be good at it, you just have to have fun,” says Bratcher. He envisions couple of guys playing Pebble on one screen, while their better halves can watch a movie, have some drinks and hang with friends.

SO WHAT ARE MEMBERS DOING UNTIL THE CLUBHOUSE OPENS?

Without a clubhouse, the club sought out ways for members to stay connected with each other and find value in their membership. Last June the club debuted Columbine on Main in downtown Littleton, giving up to 100 members at a time a chance to meet and greet and eat the gourmet food of Columbine Executive Chef Mark Lindstrom. It’s been a huge success—and not only with longtime members. “I think having that restaurant makes it easier when there are new folks joining,” says new member Fitzsimmons. “You’re not coming into cliques. My family and I have made so many new friends and people I now play golf with.”



“IT’S MORE OF A LIFESTYLE CLUB,” says Bratcher, who regularly posts videos to columbinecountryclub.org documenting the progress of the clubhouse. “I hate to be trite or trendy to call ourselves that, but that’s what we’ve embraced. You can do everything here. It’s not just about the great golf.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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It's just better here.

Discover a place where you can truly relax, get away from it all, yet still feels like home. That place is Columbine Country Club. Indulging members with a true first-class and personalized experience in a family-friendly atmosphere, Columbine offers a championship golf course, premier pool facilities, tennis programming for all levels and a variety of culinary options and events.



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