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TRAVEL BY TAMMIE DOOLEY

## THE BEST OF COURSE

*TulsaPeople's travel guide to the region's best golf courses.*

Emerald Falls Golf Course, Broken Arrow

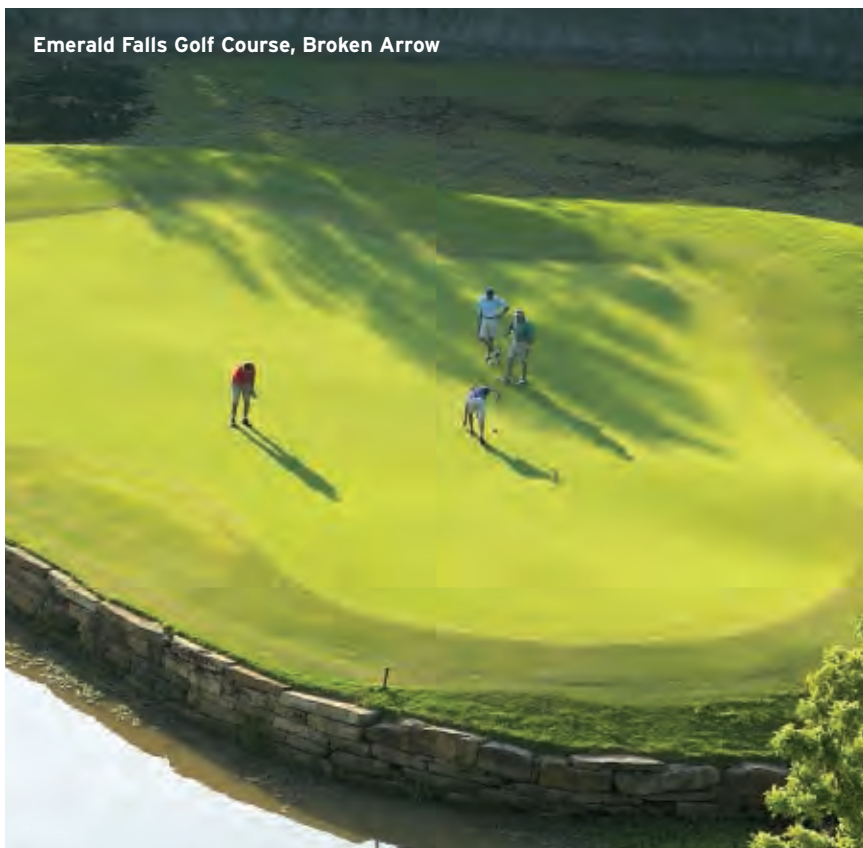


Photo courtesy of Emerald Falls Golf Course.

**WHETHER YOU'RE** A scratch golfer or your handicap more closely approximates your age, spring invariably spreads the golf fever. While Tulsa is replete with choice golf courses, spring also means we're keen to venture beyond our back yards.

We've compiled a guide to public golf courses within a day's driving time of Tulsa. So pack your clubs and a road trip snack or two and hit the road swinging.

### Karsten Creek, Stillwater

Named by Golf Digest as the "Best New Course" in the country the year it opened in 1994, and consistently listed by Golfweek magazine as one of "America's Best Public-Access Courses for Oklahoma," Karsten Creek is also home to the Oklahoma State University men's and women's golf programs. The regulation-length championship layout features four sets of tee boxes.

Golfer **Trevor Reynolds**, a local attorney for Stanley D. Monroe & Associates, says, "The greens fees are pricey, but this course is challenging and always in top condition. It's my favorite course in the state." Karsten Creek offers 7,407 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par 72. The course is rated 77.2 with a slope rating of 152 on Zoysia grass.

1800 S. Memorial Drive, Stillwater; (405) 743-1658;  
[www.karstencreek.net](http://www.karstencreek.net)

### Clary Fields, Sapulpa

Former All-American golfer **Tripp Davis** designed the secluded golf course, which plays to a par of 71 at just over 6,774 yards with accuracy more important than length. It's a heavy favorite among local golf course enthusiasts. According to **Phill Hughes**, local restaurateur (Phill's Diner)

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and a reputed public golf course aficionado, "Clary Fields is visually striking and consistently in good shape. It has the best par 5 finishing hole in the area." The course rating is 70.9 with a slope rating of 119.

9999 S. 49th W. Ave., Sapulpa; 248-4080;  
[www.claryfields.com](http://www.claryfields.com)

**WinStar Golf Course, Thackerville  
(south of Ardmore)**

This regulation-length course ranked in the Top 20 of GolfLink's "Best Oklahoma Golf Courses," a compilation of the top public and private golf courses in the state. Avid Golfer Magazine named the course "Top New Course" in the Dallas/Fort Worth area in 2006. It is regulation-length 7,340 yards play to a 72 par. The course is rated 75.1 with a slope rating of 124.

Route 1, Thackerville; (866) 466-1482;  
[www.winstargolfcourse.com](http://www.winstargolfcourse.com)

**Cedar Creek Golf Course, Beavers Bend  
State Park, Broken Bow**

If you're looking for value, unrivaled natural beauty and the potential for spotting a multitude of wildlife, including but not limited to deer, fox, turkey and the occasional bald eagle, this course will be worth the drive. Located within Beavers Bend State Park, Cedar Creek offers three courses, including championship, men's amateur and women's. The championship course plays to a par 72 over 6,582 yards and is rated 72.3 with a slope rating of 125.

Cedar Creek Trail, Broken Bow; (580) 494-6456;  
[www.brokenbowchamber.com/golf\\_cedar\\_creek.html](http://www.brokenbowchamber.com/golf_cedar_creek.html)

**Emerald Falls Golf Course,  
Broken Arrow**

Rated No. 6 on Golf Digest's "Best New Public Courses" (in 2008), water comes into play on 12 of the 18 holes of this course. "The front nine are tight and as technically challenging as any course in the area," Reynolds says. With 7,148 yards of Zoysia grass playing to a par 72, the course is rated 75.6; the slope is rated 140. The course offers a discount to all Tulsa area veterans, police and firefighters for Monday-through-Wednesday play.

30510 E. 63rd St., Broken Arrow; 266-2600;  
[www.emeraldfalls.com](http://www.emeraldfalls.com)

**Jimmie Austin OU Golf Course, Norman**

Home to the University of Oklahoma golf program, this course hosted the U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship in 2009. Golfweek magazine has consistently named the course among "America's Best Public-Access Courses for Oklahoma." On



Monday through Thursday, the course allows the rare fivesome play. At 7,380 yards playing to a 72 par, the course rates 76.2, with a slope rating of 132. The course will host the Big 12 women's golf tournament this month.

1 Par Drive, Norman; (405) 325-6716;  
[www.ougolfclub.com](http://www.ougolfclub.com)

**Adams Municipal Golf Course,  
Bartlesville**

This course meanders through terrain interwoven with Turkey Creek. Coffey damming has created ponds that come into play on 12 of the 18 holes. The course offers a junior program for the summer, usually beginning in early June, and includes the use of clubs. Adams is a par 72, 6,819 yards with a 72.0 course rating and a slope rating of 119.

5801 Tuxedo Blvd., Bartlesville; (918) 331-3900

**Cherokee Hills Golf Club, Catoosa**

Closer to home and turning up recently on Golfweek magazine's radar, this course has gained steady attention since PGA golfer **John Daly** publically shared his admiration for it. Ranked No. 38 on Golfweek's "Top 40 Casino Golf Courses" list, the course also garnered a position on the magazine's list of "America's Best Public-Access Courses for Oklahoma" for the first time in 2008 (making the list again in 2009). The par-70 course stretches 6,653 yards. Its course and slope rating are 72.7 and 126, respectively.

770 S. Cherokee St., Catoosa; 384-7600;  
[www.hardrockcasinotulsa.com/golf](http://www.hardrockcasinotulsa.com/golf)



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#### Forest Ridge Golf Club, Broken Arrow



Photo courtesy of Forest Ridge Golf Club.

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##### **Forest Ridge Golf Club, Broken Arrow**

Perpetually on Golfweek magazine's list of "America's Best Public-Access Courses for Oklahoma" and Golfink.com's "Best Oklahoma Golf Courses," and consistently on every local golfer's lips, Forest Ridge is a challenging favorite. At 7,083 yards playing to a par 72, its course is rated 76.0, slope 141.

7501 E. Kenosha St., Broken Arrow; 357-2443;  
[www.forestridge.com](http://www.forestridge.com)

##### **Cherry Springs Golf Club, Tahlequah**

"The 16th hole is shot down the hill without a view of the green," Phill Hughes says. "The par-4 blind tee shot is fun. I always enjoy playing this course." The course covers 6,814 yards at a par 72 and is rated 72.8 with a slope rating of 127.

700 E. Ballentine Road, Tahlequah;  
(918) 456-5100;  
[www.cherryspringsgolfclub.com](http://www.cherryspringsgolfclub.com) ■

#### **A walk in the park**

*Oklahoma has seven state parks that include golf courses:*

**Lake Murray State Park Golf Course,**  
Ardmore, (580) 223-6613

**Grand Cherokee Golf Course,**  
Langley, (918) 435-8727

**Sequoyah State Park Golf Course,**  
Hulbert, (918) 772-2297

**Arrowhead State Park Golf Course,**  
Canadian, (918) 339-2769

**Roman Nose State Park Golf Course,**  
Watonga, (580) 623-7989

**Fort Cobb State Park Golf Course,** Fort  
Cobb, (405) 643-2398

**Cedar Creek Golf Course,** Beavers Bend  
State Park, Broken Bow, (580) 494-6456

*Tammie Dooley is a Tulsa-based freelance writer.  
Find her online at [www.SoloRoadTrip.com](http://www.SoloRoadTrip.com).*