



Stanley Thompson's original finishing hole is now the 14th.

Hole by Hole

Twenty-seven Memorable Holes of Mountain Golf

Out of this world

—Bobby Locke, four time winner of The Open Championship

Golf architect Stanley Thompson was a visionary of his era, but he could never have imagined the technological advances enjoyed by today's golfers. The original Stanley Thompson course uses three sets of tees ranging in length from 5,607 yards to 6,938 yards. But despite being shorter than most modern-day courses, the par of 71 provides a challenge for all golfers. Clever bunkering, high fescue rough, tilting greens, and tricky winds combine to protect par against even the best golfers. The greens—a blend of 70% Penncross bentgrass and 30% annual bluegrass (*poa annua*)—are not particularly fast by modern standards, but many are 40 metres (130 feet) or more deep.

The alignment of many holes take full advantage of surrounding natural features; Mount Rundle grabs your attention as early as the 2nd hole, where

the green is dwarfed by sheer cliffs rising 1,500 metres (4,900 feet) above the putting surface. The same peak dominates the reachable-in-two par-five 3rd hole and then famously forms a backdrop for the iconic Devil's Cauldron. The inward nine kicks off with a hefty 218-yard par five requiring a long water carry, then continues with a stretch of strong holes heading towards The Fairmont Banff Springs. This five-hole stretch is often played into the teeth of a prevailing wind; par is therefore an admirable feat. The 15th hole is Thompson's original 1st hole, featuring a tee shot from high above the valley floor and over the Spray River to a wide fairway far below. The final three holes are all relatively short—a chance for one or more birdies—and are fun to finish your round with.

One important consideration for golfers is the elevation in this area. Banff is the highest town in Canada—1,460 metres (4,790 feet) above sea level—and so the air is considerably thinner here than at sea level; because of the reduced friction, the ball flies approximately 10 percent further; for example, if you normally hit your ball 150 yards at sea level with your eight-iron, expect your ball to carry 165 yards at the Banff course.

The following pages illustrate each of the Banff Springs Golf Course's 27 holes—the original 1928 Stanley Thompson 18 and the Tunnel Mountain 9, which was added in 1989. Stunning contemporary photographs and informative text describe the features that make each hole special.



8th hole, Tunnel Mountain 9

Hole 10 Little Bow



Beware of the large bunkers to the left of the 10th green.

The first in a string of difficult holes, the par 3 10th hole is a beauty but a beast, especially into the prevailing wind.

When standing on the tee with the wind blowing into your face, the 10th green, over water almost the entire way, looks very, very small. The deep-faced bunker on the left should be avoided at all costs. Once on the putting surface, watch for a subtle ridge running across the heart of the green.

Black 218 yards
White 197 yards
Gold 128 yards



Hole 2 Aylmer



A pond beside the 2nd green is out of sight from the tee box.

Now that any 1st hole nerves are behind you, take the time to soak up the sweeping mountain panorama from the tee box of this risk-and-reward par 4.

Take advantage of the concave fairway by driving left of the fairway bunkers; long hitters should be careful of running their drives into the pond to the left of the green. Well struck approach shots land softly on this large green, but don't force the issue with a back pin placement.

Black 362 yards
White 339 yards
Gold 316 yards



Hole 8 Tunnel



Looking across to Cascade Mountain from the 8th pond.

Framed by a perfectly placed pond and the distinct profile of Tunnel Mountain, par 3 Tunnel is the most visually appealing hole on the Tunnel Mountain 9.

Swing smoothly and par will be your friend, but let the scenery affect your concentration and the front bunker and fescue-covered backstop will turn your score into four or more.

Black 136 yards
White 118 yards
Gold 102 yards

