

## Clubs Offer a Fresh Take on the Traditional Bar

By Pamela Brill | December 17, 2019



Photo Courtesy Quail Creek G&CC

**Club and resort properties are designing new bars and pubs that take happy hour to an extended level, with updated space that exudes warmth and comfort.**

Forget about teetering on an uncomfortable bar stool. Instead, imagine sinking into an ultra-plush chair and relaxing over cocktails at an artfully designed pub. These wishes are becoming reality for more club and resort members and guests, as properties develop carefully curated spaces that feel more like upscale destination hangouts than a simple stop-off for grabbing a quick drink. With more attention being paid to lighting, furnishings and overall aesthetics, pubs and bars have officially become the place to be, and to stay.

### Lounge Act

Members of Quail Creek Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City, Okla., are flocking to the club's newest social spot, the redesigned Champions Lounge, which opened in October 2019. Divided into three sections—a bar, family dining and a formal dining spot—this facility now affords something for everyone, including a dedicated space for cocktails.

*"We certainly thought much about branding and took it quite literally. The brand signifies our promise to provide a consistently enjoyable product that you will be proud to bring guests and family to, and show what it means to be a member at Quail Creek." — Philip Watson, General Manager at Quail Creek Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City, Okla.*

Years of constant usage had taken its toll on the club's popular bar, requiring what General Manager Philip Watson describes as a "floor-to-ceiling beautification." Careful consideration was made in choosing design elements that reflected a lively atmosphere and embodied the Quail Creek brand, all the way down to the seating—one of Watson's personal preferences.



### C+RB NEWSLETTER SIGN UP



### ONLINE PARTNERS



### CLUB AND RESORT CHEF

"I wanted a bar stool that was built to last, that you could sit on and watch an entire game," he says. "In the club industry, we are not trying to flip tables the way a traditional restaurant does. We want you to come, sit, and enjoy your home away from home for as long as you feel comfortable." Leather chairs in the same colors as the club logo are situated in the bar area, as well as in other sections of the lounge.

Creating a consistent design that carries the Quail Creek motif throughout, the front of the rectangular-shaped bar itself was crafted in stone and the rest of the space was trimmed in mahogany, to complement the building's original Frank Lloyd Wright design.

"We certainly thought much about branding and took it quite literally," admits Watson, pointing out tables marked with a quail insignia. "The brand signifies our promise to provide a consistently enjoyable product that you will be proud to bring guests and family to, and show what it means to be a member at Quail Creek."

The bar's countertop is fashioned from black quartz with flecks of copper that accent the barware, while the backbar design boasts a mirrored backdrop and mirrored risers, to give the illusion of bottles being suspended in the air (see photo, opposite page).

A three-door mod system houses six gooseneck taps and six pony kegs. Cased in a wood frame and topped with four 55-inch LED televisions, the structure, Watson says, resembles "an upscale sports bar that you can feel comfortable entering from the course, with work colleagues for a business lunch or dinner, or even for a date night."

With bar areas notorious for being dimly lit, the lounge takes advantage of its proximity to the dining area, which boasts 12-foot windows that reflect into the bar after dark. Bolstered by a white ceiling, the bar is also enhanced by can lights overhead and decorative chandeliers. A drop-in ceiling helps to provide a sound buffer, as does felt carpeting under the tables.

In the short time since the Champions Lounge's debut, the space has become a well-frequented, multipurpose facility. "Before the renovation, we were primarily a supper club," says Watson. "Having a section for each of our member categories to dine has made it comfortable every night of the week." While the redesigned lounge is still its infancy, he is anticipating a 50 percent increase in total revenue for the coming year.

### A Room with a View

At Champion Hills Club in Hendersonville, N.C., a recent clubhouse makeover included a refurbished bar area with new lighting, mirrors and shelving. "A modern, updated atmosphere was designed to enhance the architecture, resulting in a sophisticated mountain ambiance," says General Manager/COO Dana Schultz. The redesign project, begun just after the start of 2019, was completed in late March, in time for members to begin to enjoy cocktails in a picturesque setting as spring began to bloom.

Upon entering the main entrance of the clubhouse, visitors are brought directly into the Mountain View Room, followed by an immediate right into the wine room and then into the Fazio Pub. Paying homage to the local landscape, the club's design team chose a palette of blues, greens and caramels reminiscent of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Taking advantage of the sweeping views, a revised seating plan makes better use of the space.

*"A modern, updated atmosphere was designed to enhance the architecture, resulting in a sophisticated mountain ambiance. [And] every effort was made to utilize North Carolina's artisans, furniture makers and craftsmen."* —  
□ Dana Schultz, General Manager/COO at Champion Hills Club in Hendersonville, N.C.



### CLUB + RESORT BUSINESS DIGITAL EDITIONS



Browse the current issue and archived issues of Club & Resort Business in an easy-to-use, high-quality format. Bookmark, share and interact with the leading club and resort magazine today.

[VIEW LATEST ISSUE](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[MANAGE CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION](#)

“Wood tables and slightly more casual seating are used to create more dining opportunities, as the room was formerly underutilized,” says Schultz, noting that this layout provides more interaction between tables. “Every effort was made to utilize North Carolina’s artisans, furniture makers and craftsmen.” Refinished hardwood floors, tall oak wooden beams and warm oak tones throughout are balanced by polished brass and worn gold accents.

Also softening this space is a myriad of lighting elements, including LED tape lights that showcase the bar’s bottles and glassware on 18-foot reclaimed wood shelves, modern recycled glass globes, and Ralph Lauren chandeliers peppered throughout the dining area. “One member commented that fixtures were her favorite detail, because they feel like constellations in the night sky,” notes Schultz.

With steady lunch and dinner business at the Fazio Pub, the club has seen a 10 percent uptick in total food-and-beverage revenue. “It’s inspiring to see members take ownership and pride in their club,” says Schultz. “Thanks to their support, the club continues to grow and thrive.”

## HUB of Activity

As New Year’s Eve rang in 2019, members of The Club at Grandezza in Estero, Fla., had good reason to celebrate. The occasion was marked by the opening of the HUB Bar, part of a clubhouse renovation that included an updated ballroom and new coffee bar.

*“Members appreciate the convenience of having the [new] HUB Bar so close to the main dining area. Not only the convenience, but the new and beautiful atmosphere add to the appeal—and the appetite.” — Stacey Henson, General Manager at The Club at Grandezza in Estero, Fla.*

For the bar, an outdated Tuscan-themed interior with crown moldings and dark furnishings was retired in favor of a lighter, modern look. “The new design incorporates the beauty of the ocean, the golf course, and resort living that members are now able to experience and call home,” says General Manager Stacey Henson. “It is elegance redefined, and perfect for the tropical surroundings and Florida lifestyle of our members.”

To open up existing sight lines, the bar area (formerly known as the Tapestry Bar) relinquished some of its wall space, creating a direct path from the Grande Hallway and just past the Grande Ballroom. A grand piano takes center stage, as members move from the clubhouse’s main entrance through the lobby and toward the bar and ballroom areas. “The entire area is open and light, reminding one of remarkable museums,” says Henson, noting the original artwork dotting the walls.

Upon reaching the west wall of the bar, a shift in focus is unavoidable, as three framed “bubble walls” come into view (shown at left in photo on opposite page). “This work of art provides a feeling of peace and tranquility, as the droplets of water appear to move effortlessly to the top of their attractive glass-walled containers, with streams of water creating a soothing and comforting feel of soft rain,” observes Henson.

Once visitors tear themselves away from the bubble walls, they can grab a seat at the 15’-wide x 21’-long horseshoe-shaped bar, designed with granite countertops in a tan and pebble-flecked pattern and custom-fitted with taps. A center island, housing two keg coolers underneath and bar stemware on top, is designed in the same color scheme of the back bar.

This 24-foot-long console is framed in chocolate-colored wood and coordinates with custom-made bar stools and chairs in blue, tan and rich brown stripes. Chocolate-colored square tables and chairs, where guests can enjoy a cocktail or partake of the bar menu, round out the seating options.



While the HUB mainly serves as a hot spot for pre-dinner cocktails and appetizers, it has also become a popular place for hosting special events. “The large lobby space that leads to the HUB is also a wonderful place to host large gatherings, and members appreciate the convenience of having the HUB so close to the main dining area,” says Henson.

Because this part of the club can become quite busy, designers installed a discreetly placed, sound-reducing ceiling material inside the crown molding above the bar. A combination of carpeting and wooden tile is also designed to minimize excess noise.

With a booming bar business, expanded menu options and updated clubhouse amenities, the Club at Grandezza is reaping the benefits of greater food-and-beverage output. “[It’s] not only the convenience, but the new and beautiful atmosphere add to the appeal—and the appetite,” remarks Henson.

## Circle of Friends

Rain or shine, the members of Audubon Country Club in Naples, Fla., will be able to enjoy drinks with friends in a soon-to-be-unveiled facility that combines indoor and outdoor amenities under one roof. Due to open in February 2020, the Courtside Café will include poolside dining, lounge areas and a fashionable bar that looks out onto a vibrant outdoor scene.

“The renovation was born out of the desire to have a fully renovated space poolside for members to dine casually, relax and enjoy the Southwest Florida lifestyle outdoors,” says General Manager Michael Rodriguez. While the café is comprised of tabletop seating, lounge chairs nestled alongside firepit tables, and a display kitchen, the bar will serve as the space’s primary focal point.

*Audubon CC’s new Courtside Cafe is scheduled to open in February 2020 with a literal centerpiece: a circular bar situated half inside and half outside the venue.*

Situated half inside and half outside the café, the circular bar will beckon guests immediately upon entering the space. “The indoor/outdoor gathering bar further enhances the indoor/outdoor dining experience, [which is] a very popular amenity with South Florida country clubs,” says Architect Adrian Karapici of Peacock + Lewis, the design firm for the project. To create distinct, yet connected spaces, a 26’ x 9’ sliding-glass wall will be able to retract into designated pockets on either side and be closed during hot weather. A total of 18 bar stools (9 exterior and 9 interior) will be positioned around the bar (see rendering above), offering a seamless transition between the indoors and outdoors.

The bar itself will be fashioned from prefabricated quartz, to mimic the style of the self-serve buffet counter and color-coordinate with the white tongue-and-groove cypress wood ceilings. A coastal palette evoking sea and sky, driftwood-colored chairs and blue fabrics will blend nicely throughout the space. Ceiling fans, wall-mounted sconces and ceiling-mounted decorative pendant-light fixtures will provide visual appeal overhead, while television screens atop the bar will keep members abreast of live sporting events.

As the cafe was being readied for its grand opening, Rodriguez was enthused by the prospect of now being able to present the Audubon membership with a full-fledged social scene, including post-game cocktails. “We anticipate the Courtside Café to be the new go-to place after golf and also throughout the day for casual outdoor dining, pizza and craft beer,” he says. “We are planning extended hours, so members in the community can get in their golf cart and come to the club, without the hassle of ever leaving the gates.”

## Summing It Up

- > Investing in comfortable bar seating prompts longer stays and potentially greater bar tabs.
- > Enhanced bar lighting bucks tradition, creating ambiance and better illumination.
- > Bar furnishings that coordinate with existing décor offer a consistent design.

**C+RB**

### Tell Us What You Think!

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.

**RELATED ARTICLES**[READ MORE >](#)

**Taking a Hard Look at Soft Goods in the Pro Shop**

**Westlake G&CC Superintendent Is Back Where She Belongs**

**Brandon Johnson Confirms 'Rising Star' Status as Farmington CC Responds to Pandemic**

**Golfers Need to Mind the Curve to Keep Courses Open**

Connect with Club & Resort Business on Social Media



**Club+Resort**  
— BUSINESS —

[ABOUT](#)  
[CONTACT](#)  
[ADVERTISE](#)  
[SUBMIT INDUSTRY NEWS](#)

[NEW PRINT SUBSCRIPTION](#)  
[MANAGE CURRENT PRINT SUBSCRIPTION](#)  
[EMAIL NEWSLETTER SIGN UP](#)  
[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

Copyright © 2020 WTWI Media, LLC. All Rights Reserved. [Site Map](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [RSS](#)