

[Stay On This Unique Central Oregon Ranch](#)

Rick Stedman

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Since opening last year, Silvies Valley Ranch in central-east Oregon has been turning heads. Officially called [The Retreat, Links & Spa at Silvies Valley Ranch](#), this property encompasses more than 140,000 acres and has been a working ranch since 1883.

In addition to its working ranch status, Silvies Valley Ranch has luxury cabins, ranch house rooms, a spa, four golf courses, and a soon-to-be-completed RV park.



The serenity of Silvies is right outside your cabin.

According to Colby Marshall, vice president of livestock and guest services, Silvies is in the final stages of adding a dozen pull-through RV spaces just steps from the Retreat entrance where all guests check in.

Full hookups and other amenities will be added and finalized this summer, but there are temporary RV spaces guests can use in the meantime. Those temporary spaces offer electrical hookups, water, and full access to all the resort amenities, which includes a golf cart to get around the expansive property.

As a working ranch, Silvies employs about 20 cowboys who tend to the 3,500 goats and 4,500 head of cows. Visitors enjoy the golf, cuisine, fabulous spa and lap pool, and total relaxation that's available 24/7.

There are a host of other activities year-round, including a ranch tour, fishing, biking, shooting, eco-tours, horseback riding, and wagon rides. Winter activities include snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice fishing, cool golf, and snow bikes.



Visiting Silvies

Fabulous cuisine

The mouth-watering cuisine featured at Silvies is certainly worth writing home about. All of the kitchen creations are spearheaded by award-winning Chef Damon Jones.

Originally from Alabama, Jones is also an avid golfer. He is a premiere ranch-to-table chef and was recently selected as the Chef of the Year by the Oregon Beef Council. Those dining at the ranch enjoy a seven-course meal with Chef Jones delivering a brief overview of each menu item as they are served.

Some of those specialties include ranch-raised organic beef and chevon and other creative ranch tasting menus. There's also a hearty wine list, and the biggest Scotch and Irish whiskey collection in 100 miles!

Unique golf options

Tapping into the creative talents of Dan Hixson, Silvies offers a reversible golf course along with goat caddies. Hixson's resume includes designing and building the Bandon Crossings Golf Course on the southern Oregon coast in 2005. A few years later he followed up with the fabulous 18-hole track Wine Valley Golf Club in Walla Walla, Washington.

The reversible course idea has been on Hixson's mind since he was a kid and got interested in golfing and course design. The landscape and opportunity presented itself at Silvies.

The result came to fruition in 2018 when the Hankins Course and Craddock Course officially opened. Play the Hankins one day and the Craddock in reverse the following day and you'd think each course is completed different. It doesn't look or feel the same!



The Craddock Course

Play the Craddock on even days and the Hankins on odd number days. For the Silvies reversible tracks, nine greens are shared by the Craddock and Hankins courses, with a total of 27 greens, 17 fairways, and 36 holes. The 18-hole championship links-style Hankins Course measures 7,075 yards from the tips.

The Craddock Course is also an 18-hole championship links-style track that stretches to 7,035 yards from the tips. The reversible course concept isn't new. In fact, the Old Course at St. Andrews in Fife, Scotland, occasionally reverses the course.

Goats serve as caddies

One of the unique aspects of golfing at Silvies is the employment of goats who serve as caddies. Caddie Master Bruce LeGoat is joined by his colleagues who go by Mike LeChevon, Peanut LeGoat, and Roundabout LaDoe.

These "employees" are not union members, but they work the system to their advantage, and they do not work for free. If you want them to carry your clubs around the course, they demand peanuts. So basically, you could say they work for peanuts! And, they never offer baaaad advice on the course.



Golf caddie Bruce LeGoat works for peanuts, literally!

As supply and demand dictates, each goat caddie is outfitted with a custom, Seamus Golf-designed pack. The goats, who weigh between 220-250 lbs., can carry up to six clubs, a dozen golf balls, tees, six cans of refreshments for their customers, and a bag to carry the most important item: Peanuts!

Also, a cute baby goat named Rabbit was recently selected as the newest member of the goat caddie team. He began his two-year training program in the spring of 2019.



Rabbit is the latest goat to be selected for the goat caddie program.

At Silvies Ranch, goat caddies were first introduced in 2018 on the 7-hole, 1,177-yard McVeigh's Gauntlet course. This year, however, the goat caddies will also ply their trade on the nine-hole, par 3 Chief Egan Course, which is a mere 875 yards.

"This is a much more player-friendly and goat friendly course that will allow more visitors to experience this unique aspect of Silvies," said Marshall.

Marshall also explained that, in keeping with Silvies' environmental sustainability ethic, Egan's Hideout, also known as the clubhouse, is completely off the electrical grid. The clubhouse is powered by roof-mounted solar panels, with water provided from nearby Paiute Spring.

From most vantage points on the property, the serenity is endless as you look out over the grasslands, native bogs, ponderosa pine forests, and fields of sagebrush and buckwheat. Though you might visit during the warmer peak summer months, a light jacket is advised since the elevation varies from 4,600 to 6,200 feet above sea level. From the golf courses, visitors can absorb the stunning views of Malheur National Forest and the Blue Mountains.

If you don't want to drive five-and-a-half hours from Portland, Oregon or four hours from Boise, Idaho, you can fly into the property. Silvies features a 5,350-foot airstrip to accommodate guests flying in. You can learn more on their website [Silvies.us](https://silvies.us).