

This new Texas retreat is getting a David McLay Kidd course — and amenities galore

BY: [JOSH SENS](#) | DECEMBER 14, 2023



A *menitized* is not a word in the dictionary, but it is used from time to time in [golf-industry circles](#), and its meaning isn't difficult to construe. It refers to a club's relationship to non-golf extras — the services, attractions and experiences that add to a property's allure.

Expectations around amenities have changed over the years. Swimming pools and tennis courts, upscale perks of the past, now come so standard they barely merit mention. Even comfort stations with restaurant-worthy cuisine no longer count as novelties — not in an age when [drones can air-drop drinks](#) to foursomes on the course.

In a highly competitive market, what counts as the country's most *amenitized* club? That's hard to quantify. But a new development in Texas is making a strong case.

Golf architects, Kidd says, “love working with edges, especially when those edges happen to be water.” His routing at Loraloma has plenty of those, with half of its holes running along the Pedernales River, where it feeds Lake Travis, on a site studded with live oaks and rock outcrops, and rippled with gulches, ravines and ridges, which give way to unspoiled views. The course, Kidd says, “is meant to be an exploration of a compelling landscape.”

[Loraloma at Thomas Ranch](#) is a private resort community, situated in Hill Country, outside Austin. For golfers, its main attraction will be a championship course by Bandon Dunes designer [David McLay Kidd](#), his first project in the Lone Star State. True to Kidd’s reputation for a lay-of-the-land work, the course, which is slated for completion in the fall of 2024, seizes on the contours of rollicking terrain.

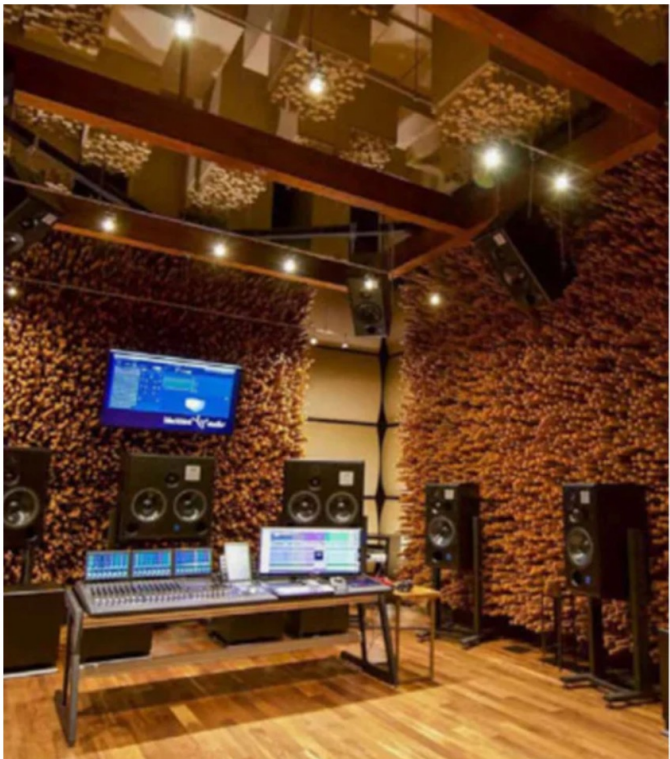


This artistic rendering of the design shows the variety of the terrain.

COURTESY OF LORALOMA AT THOMAS RANCH

About those amenities, though. Like the course, they are inspired largely by their surrounds. In a community that covers some 2,200 acres, more than half the land will be devoted to open space, including 40-plus miles of hiking and biking trails, and more than two-miles of riverfront, within minutes of homeowners' doorsteps. Swimming pools? Sure. But also a classic swimming hole called Limestone Gulch, replete with rope swings and wooden rafts. This is Texas Hill Country, and Loraloma, which means "lore of the land," aims to tease out the story of a community at one with nature. A fishing pond, stocked with a variety of local species, will be staffed by professional anglers, offering private lessons. A community farm and orchard, along with a greenhouse, will provide residences and restaurants throughout Loraloma with seasonal fruits, vegetables and herbs, year round.

Close ties to local culture are part of the story, too. A private amphitheater, tucked against a hillside, will serve as an extension of Austin's thriving music and theater scene with a rich calendar of live performances and events. A state-of-the-art recording studio, equipped with a writer's room and listening lounge, will allow members to shape their sound.



Among the many amenities on property: a music studio and watering hole.

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The full list of non-golf extras goes on. An equestrian center. A meditation garden. Pickleball. A sports park. A spa and wellness center. Docks and a boardwalk. A fieldhouse with a kids' club and a private theater.

Loraloma will have a mix of membership levels, with golf memberships capped in the 375 to 425 range. For now, though, the community is extending an offer to smaller group of founding members, which will be limited to 25 families. The opportunity comes with preferred pricing on cottages starting at \$1,995,000 and homesites starting at \$885,000. As part of the deal, founders will receive two resident golf memberships, a waiver on annual dues for 10 years, complimentary cottage rentals, and an array of other perks, including first dibs on future phases of real estate development. On top of all the other local amenities, of course.

For more information, [click here](#).

