



Golfers will find the new Xona Resort Suites in Scottsdale more up to par



Courtesy of Xona Resort Suites
Fresh off an extensive renovation, you notice the difference from the time you arrive at the Xona Resort Suites.

If you're planning a Phoenix-Scottsdale *golf vacation*, it's hard to go wrong with the Xona Resort Suites. The hotel makes a great base to play We-Ko-Pa, Legend Trail and TPC Scottsdale. It used to be just plain old Resort Suites Scottsdale. But after a multi-million dollar facelift, a new name logically followed when the resort reopened this fall as **Xona Resort Suites** (7677 E. Princess Blvd., Scottsdale, www.xonaresort.com, tel. 888-222-1059).

You notice the difference from the time you drive up to the totally restructured lobby, which doesn't resemble the old check-in area at all. Now, instead of a cramped room that looked like a used car dealership office, you've got a full-fledged high-ceiling lobby, with a luxury hotel breezeway and fountain in front.

Inside, there's a stone fireplace, original Sonoran artwork, comfortable furnishings and a few thoughtful conveniences, including a coffee bar, knowledgeable concierge personnel and a dedicated "Golf Expert" to help plan your golf excursions. In addition, newly landscaped gardens, fountains and new walkways have been added throughout the 14-acre property.

Before, the business center and snack shop were behind the lobby; now they are all part of the same open-air complex, which gives guests a much better first impression. Once you check in, a bellman quickly whisks you away to your room, which could be on the other side of the complex. Before, you most likely received a map, and you were on your own.

Xona guest suites get extreme makeover

It's not that anything was really wrong with the old Resort Suites; it's just that the new version is a good deal better.



Courtesy of Xona Resort Suites

The suites at Xona Resort Suites have a fresh, modern look.

The old suites seemed more like apartments than luxury accommodations. And while you won't confuse the new rooms with The Ritz-Carlton, they've been upgraded nicely. Redesigned by Loewen Design Group, one of Scottsdale's top interior design firms, the new suites have contemporary furnishings, lighting, carpet and artwork.

You can get one to four bedrooms, from 600 to 1,800 square feet. All the suites have full living and dining areas, private furnished patios, master bedrooms with bathrooms, fully equipped kitchens, and most importantly, at least two flat panel LCD high-definition televisions in every suite.

The last part would be even better if high-definition programming came with those TVs, but after a day on area golf courses like The Boulders, We-Ko-Pa and Legend Trail, who wants to watch TV? The evening is for celebrating great shots or drowning in your bad score with a few margaritas.

Nightlife at the Orange Iguana

One of the more noticeable improvements at Xona Resort Suites is the new lounge and restaurant.

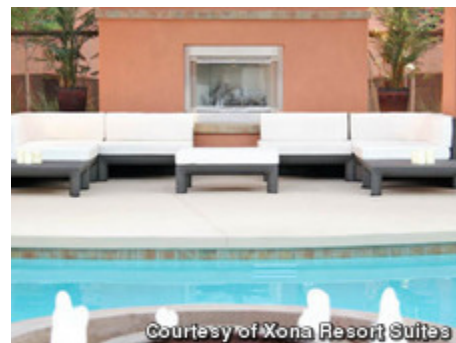
After a trying day at the golf course, you can settle bets and regale great and bad shots at the new Orange Iguana Lounge or relax to a Southwestern fusion-themed dinner at the new Asada Desert Grille.

The Orange Iguana, adjacent to the Asada Desert Grille, sort of serves as the resort's "19th Hole." There, guests can gather around a crackling fire (you don't have to play golf to do this) in a causal atmosphere.

The Asada Desert Grille is a real cornerstone of the renovation. It offers a fusion of the regional flavors with outdoor grilling. The new concept restaurant focuses primarily on grilled fresh seafood, steaks and chops, not too heavy, but significant enough if you haven't eaten since before your round.

The Asada Desert Grille is a little more formal than the Iguana, but still fairly casual. The décor captures Arizona's earth tones of the Sonoran desert, accented by an al fresco patio as well as more intimate seating inside.

The new resort also offers 7,000 square feet of flexible meeting and event space. The meeting rooms feature the latest technology for groups of 10 to 200 people, while the culinary team at Asada Desert Grille can provide the catering for functions. In addition, the Fiesta and Social pool areas can accommodate outdoor luncheons, receptions and social events. There's also the Pavilion Ballroom, which has a private courtyard area that can seat up to 175 people and connects to the Fiesta pool area.



Courtesy of Xona Resort Suites

One of the best spots for unwinding after golf at the new Xona Resort Suites is around the fireplace at the social pool.

Xona Resort Suites: The verdict

It's hard to go wrong with Xona Resort Suites if you're planning a golf trip for Phoenix-Scottsdale, especially if you're bringing a few buddies. Since all the rooms are suites, you can comfortably sleep two to a room and flip for who gets the sofa sleeper. Having two rooms is especially nice if you or your golfing buddy snores.



Courtesy of Xona Resort Suites

The new Xona Resort Suites has a more inviting atmosphere thanks to the addition of fireplaces.

I also really liked the pool areas, especially the social pool with its fireplace and surrounding sofas, a great place to swap stories, drink a cold one and enjoy a good cigar.

There's also a re-commitment to golf here. Xona Resort Suites has a team of "golf experts" to assist guests in planning their golfing excursions. With each of them having more than 20 years of Scottsdale golf expertise, they have a good bit of inside knowledge and can arrange golf outings tailored to each guest's playing level and preferences.

On top of that, Xona Resort Suites has also entered into a partnership with the TPC Scottsdale to offer the PGA Tour

Experience, which can include instruction and a round at the TPC Stadium Course, host to the PGA Tour's FBR Open.