



#BCTourismMatters

TOURISM WEEK | MAY 24 – MAY 30, 2020



DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Sicamous | Darren Robinson

108 Golf Resort: Overcoming Adversity

Fifty years ago, Block Brothers Realty left a lasting impact in the South Cariboo. Henry Block—an avid horseman, and passionate about ranching life—fell in love with the region, and with his brother Arthur purchased 26,000 acres of land north of 100 Mile House. The brothers set to work creating a “destination resort” for visitors from nearby cities: a place where people could purchase a lot, enjoy recreational amenities, and relax in the comfort of a small, picturesque community. The centrepiece of their haven was a sprawling golf course built to PGA Championship standards, featuring a clubhouse, swimming pool, restaurant and 20-room hotel.

The Block Brothers’ resort was one of the biggest development projects of its time—but the story doesn’t end there. In 2017, ownership of 108 Golf Resort changed hands with Jessica Gong and her uncle taking the reins. A few days later, raging wildfires swept across the region, and the entire community was evacuated.

Overcome with fighting fires that had blazed a path across 30,000 acres of land, the fire department asked the Gongs if they would be amenable to opening the resort so firefighters could rest in between shifts.

Jessica not only agreed—she returned to 108 Golf Resort with the property’s chef, opening all 42 rooms and personally seeing to the firefighters’ needs for nearly three weeks. In addition to donating every single room night, Jessica offered free golfing to any firefighter seeking an outlet after a full day of fighting the blaze. She also donated staff and labour to feed her guests, amounting to a staggering 900 meals per day. Three weeks later, 108 Golf Resort re-opened to the public.

Since then, the resort’s business has grown steadily, thanks in part to widespread admiration for the Gongs’ hospitality and support for the community at such a devastating time. Golf aficionados flock to the area because of the PGA-approved course, and linger thanks to the onsite hotel, a rarity among pro golf courses.

Aside from the links, adventure opportunities abound: horseback riding, kayaking, hundreds of mountain biking trails and two placid lakes are situated within a stone's throw of the resort's backyard. Repeat guests are common; some have been travelling to the resort for 15 years. One skier, an American Airlines pilot, has visited regularly since the '70s.

This year, 108 Golf Resort celebrates its 50th anniversary: half a century dedicated to building community, supporting neighbours and welcoming new friends.

On July 22, 2019 the property will host an anniversary bash for locals and visitors, featuring a beer festival, concert, and 1969 golfing prices—just \$5 for 19 holes.

Recently, the resort announced the completion of \$1 million in renovations and upgrades, as well as a 10,000-square-foot clubhouse and conference centre.

Despite the challenges and adversity in its past, 108 Golf Resort is a powerful example that supporting each other is a key reason that **#BCTourismMatters**.

