

The Lifestyle Magazine of the Central Coast

# Carmel

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## Dina Eastwood

The Local Mom, Mega-volunteer,  
and Wife of Clint on Trying to  
Balance it All

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PARENTS & CHILDREN • BEHIND THE GATES OF THE SANTA LUCIA PRESERVE

## Twenty Years Later, The Pipes Are Still Calling



Photo: By permission of Pebble Beach Company

**A bagpiper adds a sense of authenticity to the Scottish styled Spanish Bay links.**

"Spanish Bay is so much like Scotland, you can almost hear the bagpipes," once observed Tom Watson, golf great and co-designer of The Links at Spanish Bay.

Famously inspired by the seaward-sloping greens and windswept fairways of classic Scottish courses, The Links and The Inn at Spanish Bay opened in 1987. Perhaps it was always intended that "Scotland the Brave" and "Amazing Grace" would echo over the ocean there; still, it was an almost accidental encounter that introduced local bagpipers to the opportunity.

Paul Ratchford, opening general manager at The Inn at Spanish Bay and current president and managing director of The Greenbrier, in West Virginia, traces the 20-year tradition of tartans and tunes back to his old neighborhood.

"I was coming home from work and saw a bagpiper practicing on the street, followed by a few curious kids," he says. Ratchford approached the musician, a member of the Monterey Bay Pipe Band, about playing at Spanish Bay. The pair eventually planned the route that today starts near the first tee, winds along the waterfront, and ends at the lobby lounge patio.

Four pipers initially filled the nightly slots. Michael Gillen, associate professor of Russian translation and interpretation at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, is the sole original player still on the regular schedule. A retired teacher, chiropractor and artist are among the other evening musicians. Some purchased their instruments and traditional kilts in Scotland; some have also studied there, under the world's foremost players.

"When I started, this was a fun way to play on a regular basis," Gillen says. "Now it has become a great tradition, and I am really proud to be a part of that."

The lone bagpiper is as much musical tradition as it is a resort icon: Spanish Bay's logo even features the silhouette of a piper.

"The bagpiper really completes the whole Scottish style of The Links at Spanish Bay," says Pebble Beach Company spokesperson Valerie Ramsey. "It has become a beautiful tradition not only for the guests, but also for area residents who often bring their out-of-town visitors."

The Inn at Spanish Bay's evening hour of bagpipe music begins approximately 30 minutes before sunset throughout the year. (For specific seasonal start times, contact the resort.) Even when cool coastal fog settles over the greens, delighted golfers, guests and locals gather around outdoor fire pits for the show.

"People will stop me after the performance and they are just effusive with praise," says Gillen. "They leave with these really special memories, all associated with hearing the bagpipes in such a magical setting."

—Renee Brincks