

LORALOMA

THOMAS RANCH

LET NATURE TAKE COURSE

ARETÉ *collective*

An Interview with David McLay Kidd

Internationally renowned Scottish golf course architect, David McLay Kidd, is behind Loraloma’s dramatic 18-hole course. He tells us about the skill of letting nature take its course and what he calls, “being at one with the landscape.”

THE ART OF RESTRAINT

Why Loraloma?

We’re not going to get involved in something we don’t think can be good. If the piece of ground doesn’t have compelling natural features to it, it’s very difficult for an architect to make something amazing. And then there’s the client; I can have all the creative ideas in the world, with a great site, but if a client doesn’t get it, I’m hamstrung. At Thomas Ranch, everything came together perfectly. Texas is having a moment and I was very keen to find a project that I could put my thumbprint on.

What can we expect?

We want the course to have a riddle and a story that keeps residents engaged for the rest of their lives. The resort model of something that’s binary isn’t what we’re about; this is more of an oil painting than a watercolor. But it also allows for every different level of golfer. I want people to want to play here all the time.

What are you most excited about on the course?

It lays so well across the land; the contours and the vegetation are so suited. There is nuance everywhere: little rises, bumps, hollows, and big trees that we can wind the golf course through. There are holes playing along the lake edge and amazing cliff-top views over Hill Country. We’re just getting the golfer to explore an already compelling landscape. This is visually vastly more awe-inspiring than anything that exists in the Austin area today.

What’s the number one lesson you’ve learned in golf course design?

This has been the hardest thing I have had to learn in 35 years: when you find a great piece of land, practice restraint.

