

# Clubhouse Design Creates Authentic Tie to the Regional Culture



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*A Look at the Process Behind Ridge Creek Golf Course in Dinuba, California*

**AS AN INTERIOR DESIGNER WHO SPECIALIZES IN GOLF CLUBHOUSE DESIGN, THE BACKBONE OF MY WORK IS GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BE USING THE SPACE.**

For Mary Cook & Associates' design of the clubhouse of the daily-fee Ridge Creek Golf Course in Dinuba, Calif., we wanted to appeal to the regional aesthetic, which draws heavily from the area's agricultural roots.

Before my firm even started to think about paint colors or furnishings, we met with city planners and learned

about the central California valley town's industries, natural beauty, political issues and history.

We discovered local artists, scoured antique shops and read books on the region. Our staff really spent time getting to know the people of Dinuba.

The Ridge Creek clubhouse needed to have a relaxed atmosphere, a feel that was not too fussy. The facility manager KemperSports wanted the interiors to reflect the California craftsman architectural style, which is defined by a one-story structure

with a large central entrance and details such as exposed rafter tails.

With that design canvas in place, our team worked hard to complete the interiors with furnishings, art and other ornamentation that has meaning to the area (see sidebar). Not only did we want the final touches to be authentic, we also wanted to match the earthy and natural toned color palette that we had established.

Dinuba's 18-hole course now serves as a focal point for the entire community. Renowned golf course architect John Fought designed the 7,495-yard



championship course and the golf course will eventually include a residential community of 400 homes. Therefore it was important for us that the Ridge Creek clubhouse is showing the quiet city as a place to live and as a place to do business.

J. Edward Todd, city manager of Dinuba, said the clubhouse design was pivotal in creating a sophisticated golf destination in California's central valley.

Since the golf course and clubhouse opened, the response has been tremendous.

More than 1,500 rounds of golf were enjoyed during the first week of business and the facility has become a sought-after destination that has energized the town, with outsiders coming to enjoy the Ridge Creek experience. **BR**

*Mary Cook & Associates was founded in 1986 to provide the highest quality design services to the builder/developer, golf/resort and senior housing industries. The firm is known for its ability to combine high quality execution with a deep understanding of demographic, geographic and historical influences to create boldly diverse looks specific to the needs of our clients. For more information, visit [marycook.com](http://marycook.com).*



## GETTING THE FINAL TOUCHES RIGHT

Creating an interior design that captivates is a multi-layered process. The final layer, usually art and accessories, has a strong impact when there is real significance to the choices.

For the Ridge Creek clubhouse, we started by looking at artists who have been inspired by the region. We used the works of local naturalist/conservationist John Muir and photographer Ansel Adams, employing sepia-toned black-and-white photographs of the redwoods and sequoia trees of Yosemite and Sierra Nevada.

For texture, we commissioned Kelly Marshall, a fiber artist from Minnesota, to create one of her beautiful Craftsman-style tapestries. One way to instill a sense of heritage or legacy is to use antiques.

We found a map of the region from 1802 and had it custom matted and framed. Then we gathered several varieties of antique woods, mostly found on eBay, and combined them with black-and-white historical golf images.

During the process we learned of the near extinction of the Kern River trout and a local group's success in saving it. To honor this effort, we found hand-colored trout prints and a colorful collection of fishing fly commonly used in the local rivers.

To create a focal point of great pattern, color, and texture in the main gathering room, our team collected a variety of Native American and California mission baskets to make a wall collage. In another space, we assembled framed botanical prints of leaves, fruits and nuts from the region. Our finishing touch was a large wood wall clock, which adds dimension and also reminds golfers to watch for their tee times.

