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McLay Kidd Reimagines Classic Oahu Golf Course For North Shore Club

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Summary

Acclaimed golf course architect David McLay Kidd, known for Bandon Dunes and Nanea, is returning to Hawaii to renovate Turtle Bay's Arnold Palmer Golf Course on Oahu's North Shore. Starting late 2026, the phased, 3-4 year project aims to refine the 50-year-old course's conditioning and strategy for the new North Shore Club, a 20-residence oceanfront community. Kidd describes the work as "highly targeted tactical," focusing on fixing routing issues and enhancing playability while ensuring continuous member access.

Environmental improvements include reduced turf and better cart path design. The reimagined course, a cornerstone of the private club, will also be accessible to Ritz-Carlton guests, transforming an "antique" into a top-tier experience.



The current 17th hole at the Palmer Course on Oahu, which David McLay Kidd is overhauling after the property became a part of the new North Shore Club and its private residential community.
NORTH SHORE CLUB

David McLay Kidd, the acclaimed architect who created the original course at Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, is also the designer of Nanea, the No. 1-ranked course in the state of Hawaii. Now Kidd is headed back to the Hawaiian Islands to overhaul an “antique” on the North Shore of Oahu that’s part of a new private community.

Kidd is overseeing a phased enhancement of Turtle Bay’s Arnold Palmer Golf Course starting in late 2026, a renovation that will be spread across three to four years. The intent is to refine conditioning and strategy of the more than 50-year-old course while maintaining uninterrupted member access for the new [North Shore Club](#) throughout the process.

“From a surgical perspective, I’d say it’s probably highly targeted tactical,” said Kidd, whose recent designs include [Bone Valley](#) at Streamsong Resort (Florida), [Scarecrow](#) at Gamble Sands (Washington) and the Dormie Network’s [GrayBull](#) (Nebraska). “It’s not open-heart surgery that we’re going to do. We’re not blowing up the whole entire thing and reshaping every last piece of it. It’s fairly targeted.”



Renderings of the new residential properties at the North Shore Club on Oahu.
NORTH SHORE CLUB

The North Shore Club is a 20-residence oceanfront enclave developed by [Areté Collective](#), with prices starting at \$5.9 million and initial deliveries anticipated in 2027. Kidd has an existing relationship with Areté Collective, having recently completed the golf course at Loraloma, the developer's private residential club in Spicewood, Texas.

While Kidd is best known for his new course designs, he's also retooled existing courses such as Rolling Hills Country Club overlooking the city of Los Angeles.

"I look at these courses and I'm trying to figure out -- is there potential that got left on the table?" said Kidd. "You know, does the site warrant a 9-out-of-10 golf course, but for whatever reason back then they only could build a 7-out-of-10 golf course. Or maybe time has been the enemy of it rather than its friend. So, that's kind of where we're at.



David McLay Kidd is revising, rerouting and re-strategizing Arnold Palmer's more than 50-year-old layout on Oahu's North Shore.

MATT MORRIS

"There are a few tweaks to the routing," he added. "There is a par 4 on the front that's like a 90-degree turn, which is kind of odd. And there's a couple of other disconnects that we're going to try and fix from a routing perspective, and then just re-strategize the golf course and rebuild the features that are out there."

Refined Routing

The work will entail anywhere between three and five holes being taken offline each summer but ensuring a full 18 holes are available for play throughout the process.

The routing will be refined to include a more balanced mix of holes that better fit the exposed and windy site on Oahu's North Shore that's famously home to some of the most iconic surfing spots in all of Hawaii. In addition, the former 15th hole of the original Palmer course is being eliminated to improve flow while the reimagined closing stretch will include a dramatic short par 3 followed by a potentially drivable par 4.

And from an aesthetic and environmental perspective, improved cart path design will reduce fairway crossings while a reduction in maintained turf will lower long-term water use and maintenance demands.



Rendering of a penthouse terrace at one of the planned residences within the North Shore Club community.
NORTH SHORE CLUB

Although the new McLay Kidd course is a cornerstone piece to the private residential community focused on oceanfront wellness and family-centered amenities, it will still be accessible by guests of the [Ritz-Carlton Oahu, Turtle Bay](#). The Palmer Course has been one of two 18-hole courses at the resort, along with the (George) Fazio course that's currently closed while undergoing improvement projects itself.

Kidd has been doing some work at Nanea on the Big Island, including redoing the irrigation and a bunker renovation effort, and is excited about the chance to team with the [Areté Collective](#) to reimagine one of Hawaii's older courses.

"This thing's kind of like an antique, right? And on the North Shore of Oahu, too," said Kidd. "It's just beautiful. A great spot, a fantastic hotel, and a site that's got a golf course with potential yet to give. For me, those are all phenomenal ingredients. I couldn't find a reason *not* to do it."



McLay Kidd's phased work at the former Palmer Course will take place over three to four years.
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