North Texas has long presented one of the strongest golfing participation rates in the country, and Dallas has been ranked No. 4 among the 10 Best Golf Cities in America by GOLF Magazine, based on the number of quality courses, affordability, and weather.

But when the summer temperatures top out in excess of 100 degrees, where can these highly educated golf aficionados escape to keep their golf ball in play during the summer?  
The answer: Gaylord, Michigan, America’s Summer Golf Mecca.

Located in Northern Michigan, Gaylord is only a hop, skip and a jump away. Texas golfers can escape the heat by flying into Traverse City’s Cherry Capital Airport (TVC). All three mainline carriers – American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, and United Airlines – serve TVC with hundreds of flights, which makes it quick and convenient to get to beautiful Pure Michigan from DFW International Airport.

Once in the Great Lakes State, golfers take a relaxing hour-long car or shuttle ride through some of northern Michigan’s most beautiful scenery. They will understand as they cruise...
and their stress levels drop. That’s why many top course designers in the world have left their mark in the region.

The small Alpine Village of Gaylord is located toward the top of the state’s Lower Peninsula, or “Mitten,” as it is known, and is home to a collection of 15 championship courses anchored by three world-class golf resort destinations. The region, which was listed among the “Top Buddy Trips” by Golf Digest, has hosted over five million golfers during the summer months over the past 25-years.

Big game golf hunters who come to Michigan immediately seek out Treetops Resort to play the scenic Robert Trent Jones Sr. Masterpiece, which was one of his last designs, built in 1987, and helped coin the resort’s name. From the tee box of the popular par-3 sixth hole, your golf ball drops 180 feet, and your view stretches for over 40 miles over millions of trees.

Tom Fazio’s presence can also be felt here, as Treetops is his only design in Michigan. It’s stunning, designed with the resort golfer in mind for fun and challenge all at the same time. Other big-game and big-name courses include the Smith Signature, which was designed by renowned swing coach Rick Smith. It combines the strong features of golf found in Ireland (greens and bunkers) with the ruggedness of northern Michigan.

Rick Robbins and former PGA Tour player Gary Koch designed the Tribute at nearby Otsego Club, which is the senior resort member of the Mecca. It is a breathtaking golf experience that spans 1,100 acres through the Sturgeon River Valley with holes that meander up and down ridges offering stunning views. One of the many highlights is standing on the tee of the third hole, a 380-yard par four that drops 200 feet to the green and showcases spectacular views of the river valley.

A popular add-on for any golf package in the Mecca is the popular Threetops Par 3 course at Treetops, home of the popular ESPN Par-3 Shootout and often tagged the No. 1 par 3 course in America. The Shootout helped put the region on the national map featuring superstars Phil Mickelson, Fred Couples and Jack Nicklaus over the years, and scored its biggest ESPN national replays when Lee Trevino aced the seventh hole in 2007. It’s regarded the richest payday ever for a single shot – a cool $1 million. A plaque commemorating the moment sits on the tee and awaits golfers hoping to match the big skin.

Golfers can pair the many big game courses of the region with a variety of accommodations like the resort style lodging at Michigan’s Most Spectacular Resort – Treetops Resort; or the Hilltop Lodge at Otsego Club, or a luxurious home from Pine Cone Accommodations and experience one of the best golf trips in the country. The Hilltop, the premier lodging facility in the area, is a quaint executive lodge retreat with eight luxury suites and a common area with a 30-foot fieldstone fireplace as the centerpiece. It is perfect for groups looking for high-end luxury, while Pine Cone offers everything from condominiums, cabins in the woods, as well as luxurious 4-5-6 bedroom homes with lake frontage.

For those looking for great value and a close walk to the first tee from a cozy townhome, or spacious lodge...
room, make sure to check out The Loon Golf Resort. This quintessential northern Michigan golf resort features 54-holes known as The Loon, The Lakes, and The Ridge, which was formally Marsh Ridge Resort. Of the three, The Loon is the most popular with its premier conditions and country club atmosphere. Golf groups love the townhomes, which feature four bedrooms and modern amenities. The resort also offers fine dining options at The Ridge and casual fare at The Loon clubhouse.

Golfers with a more rustic woodland trip in mind will want to head for the Natural at Beaver Creek. The Natural offers 18 challenging holes that wind through elevated forested terrain around some of the most scenic wetlands found in Northern Michigan. The rustic cabins at Beaver Creek offer a peaceful setting with two- and three-bedroom options accommodating groups of up to 10 golfers. In addition, RV travelers will find Beaver Creek is home to a large RV park equipped with all of the modern benefits.

While golf and lodging options are plentiful in the Gaylord area, there are plenty of non-golf options like boating and fishing on Otsego Lake, shopping and dining in the Alpine Village of Gaylord, as well as nearby fly-fishing streams regarded as some of the finest in the country.