



STYLE

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## Say Howdy to Golf's Latest "It Girl" Brand: Sierra Madre

And yes, this is their first rodeo.





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The wait is over. Women's golf has a brand that's effortlessly cool. A women's focused brand that finally is able to emphasize technical wear that feels approachable and, dare I say...youthful. As someone who has been working in and around golf my entire life, never have I ever felt truly stylish in a pure "golf" brand. My best fits have always incorporated a piece that's wasn't technically designed for golf but totally works for golf anyway.

So imagine my relief when I came across a brand made by women, for women that's not just voguish in its designs but one that's authentic, a little gritty, and doesn't shy away from interesting colors that aren't just different shades of pink. Enter: Sierra Madre Golf.

Cool isn't cool *enough* when it comes to describing the efforts of Sierra Madre Golf and its co-founders Bonny Riddle and Michelle Anderson. Two incredibly bad ass women who recognized that women in golf deserve better. This led them to building a brand marrying western spirit and feminine strength while creating community that embraces and reflects originality and confidence.

*“We’re based in Austin as a company, and we love the western, rebellious, new frontier spirit... as well as [the word] “Madre.” It’s clearly feminine, it means mother in Spanish, but it just has this bad ass feeling to it, it sounds tough. Madre, to us, is not messing around.”*

**Bonny Riddle, Co-founder of Sierra Madre on how the brand's name came to be.**

It was just over a year ago when Sierra Madre came across my Instagram feed, highlighting one of the most clever uses of a golf accessory I had seen in quite some time—a ball marker hair pin.

If there's one thing I'm going to do, it's lose a ball marker. So how fun (and practical) is a magnetic bobby pin that'll keep your hair out of the way and protect one of the most under-appreciated pieces of golf equipment in your bag.





After seeing such innovation, I knew I had to meet the minds that produced one of my favorite items of 2023.

Bonny Riddle and Michelle Anderson met at a yoga studio in Austin before the height of the pandemic and before they formed what is now a deep, loving friendship and business partnership. Just two yoga fanatics who were unaware of what the other even did for a living.

Riddle, who comes from a background in finance, had the idea to create something new. Golf, let alone starting a golf brand, was uncharted territory for her. So much so that she boldly fired off a DM on Facebook inquiring about Anderson's fashion background (that she had vaguely learned about through her profile).

On all accounts was this a leap of faith on Riddle's part. Leaving her finance career behind in pursuit to become an entrepreneur, and pondering on the idea of investing in a sewing book!

Call it serendipitous or just flat out luck, not only did Anderson have a background in apparel design but her family is packed full of women who golf. "She was like, I have this idea to start this golf brand, and I'd love to talk to you," Anderson said.

"Immediately, I was like, yes, we can absolutely talk. Because what she didn't know was that I have a lot of women golfers in my family. My grandma, my mom's generation has started retiring, they've gotten super into golf, along with so many of my cousins since the pandemic."



Shortly after those conversations Riddle started the LLC in 2020, but it took some time to get things just right. They had the name and the messaging behind the nomenclature but building a brand from the ground up isn't easy... you need product!

*“From our yoga backgrounds, we were so used to being spoiled with exactly what we wanted and needed. It was there and it was fashionable. In golf, as a woman, you really only have a polo...and it doesn't even fit the right way most times.”*

**Riddle on her and Anderson's vision for Sierra Madre and what they wanted to create.**

The first order of business was to create a stylish, wearable top that could look good with anything—a mockneck tee.

The mockneck, for so many, is the casual cousin of the golf polo. It's simple in design but has so many nuances that make it difficult to craft just right. The fit around the neck needs to be tailored but not too tight. Too much fabric around the shoulders? Forget about it, the whole structure of the shirt is off.

But a mockneck for women? You have to take things a step further. You have to be mindful of fabrics, we don't want to show too much sweat. It needs to be feminine but not soft and dainty, it needs a bit of edge.

In September 2022, Sierra Madre released its mockneck tee. Riddle and Anderson would describe it as extremely functional and not overly designed—standing on its own as a staple.

They achieved exactly what they set out to do. They created a mockneck that sits at just about an inch from the neck, fitting properly in all the right places, and designed with premium technical fabrics that make it feel like workout attire but elevated enough to go with a pair of jeans and your best pair of cowboy boots (a fit I actually pulled off not too long ago.)





Piece by piece, Riddle and Anderson released different styles and silhouettes—slowly but surely developing a collection of women's golf essentials. Simple in design but so darling that you'll have difficulty wearing anything else.

Sierra Madre has found its niche in creating appealing and affordable piece that elevate anyone's "cool girl" factor.

*"There's a cool girl that lives in all of us. On paper, she may not be necessarily cool, but you know that confidence you get when you wear those things in your closet and you feel like a million bucks. You radiate confidence. That's what we want to bring out of people."*

Anderson on the fashion influences of the brand and how they translate to Sierra Madre.



Sierra Madre set out to create a space where women in golf could be made to feel like the main character. Everything they do, even beyond the apparel is in line with the female gaze—something that's rather contemporary in the golf world.

For me, what Sierra Madre represents is the new wave that's happening around golf. There's an intentional separation between professional golf and recreational golf, which is a good thing. With the governing bodies in golf working to iron out some very obvious wrinkles, the state of the recreational game has never been better. The rest of us are able to play for the sake of playing, especially with style. Things don't have to be so serious or rigid all of the time...we're being encouraged to let our hair down and untuck our polo at times. It's a game meant to be enjoyed however you see fit. Of course, you should uphold the core values of the game but do so without losing the element of fun that can be easy to forget.

Play six holes or hell, just three! Pick up that nasty tee shot you duck hooked into the woods and drop one in the center of the fairway. Don't putt out. Gift eight-foot gimmes to your friend if they're having one of those days.

This message is especially for the ladies, embrace the imperfections. The sooner you learn that this is a game of unpredictability and recovery more than it is about being calculated and accurate the better. You put yourself in so many uncomfortable situations on the golf course, but trust us, your confidence will grow, slowly but surely . Don't worry about looking bad or silly —because we all do—we're all hitting a tiny white ball around a field, it's inherently unserious to begin with.

Sierra Madre is built for those who want to be themselves, which is most of us at the end of the day.