

# Tryon International Equestrian Center Selected to Host FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2018

By: Carly Weilminster  
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*Potential to be the largest sporting event in North Carolina history with over \$400 million dollars of projected economic impact and 500,000 spectators over the 14-day September 2018 event. Press conference to be held Friday, Nov. 4 at 10 a.m. at Charlotte Chamber of Commerce to unveil details regarding economic impact on North and South Carolina*

For Immediate Release

Mill Spring, NC – November 3, 2016 – Mark Bellissimo, managing Partner of Tryon Equestrian Partners (TEP), announced today that the Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) in Mill Spring, Polk County, North Carolina has been selected as the host venue for the FEI World Equestrian Games™ 2018 (FEI WEG). The Games, which are administered by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI), the worldwide governing body of equestrian sport, is the major international championship event for the eight core equestrian disciplines of show jumping, dressage and para-equestrian dressage, eventing, driving, endurance, vaulting and reining. The FEI WEG is held every four years, halfway between the Summer Olympic Games cycle and will occur from September 10 through 23, 2018.

Bellissimo commented, "We are honored to be selected by the FEI to be the steward of the FEI World Equestrian Games 2018. Next to the Olympic Games, the FEI WEG is the most important event on the world equestrian calendar. We are confident that our partnership and our operating team will create a memorable experience for all involved with the ultimate goal of significantly elevating horse sport in the U.S. beyond the 27 million people who ride a horse at least once a year."

"We are very pleased to announce Tryon as the host of the FEI World Equestrian Games 2018", FEI President Ingmar de Vos said. "The Tryon team submitted a really impressive bid and we have every confidence in the organising committee. It's a truly spectacular venue and almost all the necessary infrastructure for our eight disciplines is already in place. We are looking forward to a fantastic celebration of top level sport as all the disciplines come together to crown their world champions at the Games in two years' time."

"We are thrilled with this news and thank the FEI Bureau for having faith in us and entrusting us with the honor of hosting this prestigious event," Bellissimo said. "It's a really great fit for the Carolinas' equestrian heritage and we look forward to working closely with the FEI and with the USEF to produce a tremendous FEI World Equestrian Games in 2018."

Equestrian enthusiasts from over 70 countries trek to WEG host cities every four years to cheer on athletes from their native countries, much like the Olympic Games. The Normandy FEI WEG had a local economic impact of \$400 million, or 368 million euros, and an attendance of over 500,000 spectators during the 14-day event.

"We are excited about the impact this event will have on the economic health of the Blue Ridge Foothills region of the Carolinas," said Sharon Decker, COO of Tryon Equestrian Partners, Carolinas' Operations.

The event has been held in an impressive list of major cities: Stockholm, Sweden (1990), The Hague, Netherlands (1994), Rome, Italy (1998), Jerez de la Frontera, Spain (2002), Aachen, Germany (2006), Lexington, Kentucky (2010), and Normandy, France (2014).

"We are delighted to welcome the FEI World Equestrian Games back to the United States and are delighted that the event will remain in North America," said USEF President, Chrystine Tauber. "We would like to express our gratitude to Tryon Equestrian Partners for stepping up to host this event with such short notice. Tryon Equestrian Partners has proven their ability to execute complex, high-level events and we are confident in their ability to produce an event of this magnitude. As one of the true pinnacles of equestrian sport, hosting the World Equestrian Games provides a fantastic opportunity to elevate the sport in the United States."

In 2014, Tryon Equestrian Partners (TEP) broke ground on the 1,600-acre Tryon Resort, which expands into both Mill Spring and Tryon, NC, and includes the Tryon International Equestrian Center. TEP has invested over \$125 million dollars over the last two years creating the Tryon Resort, which aspires to be the world's premiere equestrian lifestyle destination. The design of the venue contemplated hosting the WEG, so a vast majority of the equestrian infrastructure is in place. Recent events accelerated the opportunity and the schedule. Today, TIEC is rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the world's premier equestrian venues complete with 12 riding arenas, over 1,160 permanent stalls, a variety of onsite lodging, restaurants, shops, and a year-round competition and events calendar. TIEC has already hosted several national equestrian competitions including the 2016 American Eventing Championships and the 2016 U.S. Pony Club Championships East. To see a recent video overview of the Tryon International Equestrian Center, please click on the following link: <http://bit.ly/2ffVehA>

Mark Bellissimo, managing partner of Tryon Equestrian Partners, is also the managing partner and largest shareholder of Equestrian Sport Productions, an organization with more than 150 full-time staff and 1,000 part-time staff, that is the largest show organizer in the US and operates more FEI competitions than any other event organizer in the world with 38 weeks of CDI and CSI events through four venues in the following states: Florida, North Carolina, Colorado, and Central Park, New York. The Bellissimo Family is also the owner and publisher of *The Chronicle of the Horse*, the US most respected and widely distributed horse sport magazine and online media property ([www.coth.com](http://www.coth.com)). *The Chronicle of the Horse's* online media attracts over 8.3 million unique visitors annually. Together Bellissimo and his partners have invested nearly \$500 million in equestrian related assets and properties in Florida, North Carolina, and Colorado which includes the recent \$72 million dollar purchase of the International Polo Club in Palm Beach in the spring of 2016.

TIEC is already a welcomed economic engine for the region, having created hundreds of jobs, and is employing thousands in construction efforts over the last two years. WEG's estimated \$400 million impact will extend up to and beyond Charlotte, Asheville, Hickory in North Carolina and Greenville and Spartanburg in South Carolina. TEP estimates it will invest an additional \$100 million dollars over the next two years during phase two of the development which is primarily focused on resort amenities including lodging and hospitality elements.

"Our partnership built the Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) to support all levels and disciplines of equestrian sport including international competitions and championships," added Bellissimo. "Our partnership's passion for equestrian sport is based on our belief that we can grow the sport in the Americas, and that this country needs a comprehensive high-profile, high-quality destination to showcase all equestrian disciplines to an expanding spectator base and to increase access to horse sport for all socio-economic groups."

For more information or to log inquiries or questions for the 2018 FEI WEG, please visit [www.TryonWEG.com](http://www.TryonWEG.com).

**Media Inquiries: Press conference to be held Friday, Nov. 4 at 10 a.m. at Charlotte Chamber of Commerce to unveil details regarding economic impact on North and South Carolina.** For media inquiries, please contact Michelle McConnell Yelton (828-980-2883) or Carly Weilminster (410-245-7441) at [media@tryon.com](mailto:media@tryon.com).

For more information on Tryon International Equestrian Center please visit the following:

Tryon Venue Slideshow – <http://bit.ly/2a8YmKp>  
Tryon Venue Video – <http://bit.ly/2ffVehA>  
"Saturday Night Lights" Video – <http://bit.ly/2airvhS>  
Opening Ceremonies Video – <http://bit.ly/1lscKVz>

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## What To Do



Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) has quickly become an international hub for many of the world's top equestrian athletes. We welcome guests 365 days a year to watch, dine, shop, and experience one of the premier riding facilities in the world built for the love of horses and our sport.

- Watch riders and horses from all over the United States compete at TIEC from the comfort of our elevated viewing areas around each ring with ample shade and seating. We designed them with spectators in mind! Admission to all of our horse shows is free and open to the public with complimentary parking. Competitions generally start at 8am and wind down in the late afternoon through 5pm. [Click here](#) for our event calendar to find out when the next show is! If you've never been to a horse show before, you might also find our [FAQ section](#) and [Horse Show 101](#) page helpful.
- During non-competition weeks, Tryon hosts other events including festivals and concerts. Come out to the facility, enjoy the views, and grab a bite to eat any day of the year! We encourage you to [follow us on Facebook](#) to stay informed on upcoming performances and special events!
- "Saturday Night Lights" is a Grand Prix equestrian event featuring food, fun, live music, and the highest level of competitive show jumping on select Saturday evenings throughout the year. Bring the whole family: admission, parking and carousel rides are all free! For more information on our favorite event of the week, [click here](#).



- Come hungry! Open seven days a week year-round, Tryon International Equestrian Center boasts a diverse range of dining options, whether you've planned a family night out with the kids or an intimate evening of casually elegant dining with close friends.
- Open every week, 50s-inspired Roger's Diner offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, with a menu of classic and southern favorites like burgers, patty melts, grits and milkshakes along with breakfast all day. Also offering lunch and dinner service and indoor or patio seating, Legends Grille serves dishes that are prepared using the freshest ingredients and

presented with casual elegance. Get your sushi fix year-round at Blue Ginger Sushi & Noodles where the freshest seafood and locally sourced ingredients are handcrafted into edible works of art. During competition weeks, try Mane St. Coffee, Triple Crown Deli & Subs, Clear Rounds Pub, and The Siesta Cantina. Our on-site General Store also offers groceries, local and NC-based treats and delicacies, and a huge variety of basic toiletries and home supplies for your convenience. For a complete list of dining options, hours and menus, [click here](#). We hope you'll come back often to try them all!

- Every Thursday from 9am to 12pm, visit our on-site Farmers Market in partnership with [Growing Rural Opportunities](#). All produce available is sourced within a 25-mile radius of TIEC, with only farmer grown food products offered for purchase.
- Event vendors selling sushi, fresh-roasted coffee, wood-fired pizza, lemonade, ice cream and a variety of candy and carnival snacks are on-site during horse show weeks. The Tryon Café has on-the-go sandwiches, wraps, salads, and more – horse show food never tasted so fresh, flavorful or healthy! Order your meal to-go and eat ring-side or pull up a chair to sit with friends and chat about the day's activities.



- With stores ranging from the top equestrian brands and classic jewelry to clothing boutiques, antique treasures and more, on-site shopping is a delightful way to enjoy an afternoon or Saturday night at Tryon with friends.
- All of our shops are in air-conditioned beautiful vendor cabins located conveniently on the paved pathway in between the George Morris Arena and our smaller rings. Window-shop without missing a minute of the equestrian action.
- In addition to the highest quality riding apparel and tack, our shops have something for everyone, including resort wear, fine art, jewelry, toys and more. Our official on-site tack shop, Tryon Tack, features Tryon logo apparel, hats, water bottles and accessories. Tryon Tack also has a fun selection of Breyer model horses and other expertly picked gift items for every horse lover or TIEC fan! Our experienced, friendly staff is happy to help you with finding the perfect fit and style for helmets, boots, apparel, tack, or anything else you have your eye on!



- During our Saturday Night Lights Grand Prix show jumping competitions, come out to TIEC for family-friendly fun, including face painting, performers, free rides on the Venetian carousel and a live band! Each week we have a new theme with different activities – some of those in the past have included sand castle building contests, magicians, acrobats, fire twirlers and more! Once the competition begins, we'll get you pumped up with dance contests and t-shirt tosses in between horses and riders soaring over jumps nearly 5 feet high! For more information, [click here](#).
- During competition weeks, we frequently host free ice cream socials and other family events on weekend afternoons while the equestrian action across the show grounds is underway. [Follow us on Facebook](#) for the latest! We're always planning impromptu celebrations for spectators and competitors alike!
- We are proud to feature local performers and bands on various weeknights throughout the year, as well as a weekly Trivia Night! We recommend staying for dinner as our on-site restaurants are also open during performances!
- Kids and families will enjoy walking the grounds and getting to see hundreds of beautiful horses up close. TIEC is the perfect place to begin your love affair with the equestrian sport. We invite you to explore the grounds or simply sit back ring-side and watch equestrians of all ages put their hard work to the test during lively competitions.
- After spending the afternoon admiring the athleticism and beauty of horses during competition, stop by [Tryon Tack](#) before you head home to pick up a Breyer model horse or souvenir for your little one! In addition to equestrian apparel and equipment, we have a variety of toys and gifts that are the perfect finishing touch for a memorable day (and are a lot easier to fit in the car than a pony!)

We look forward to seeing you at Tryon International Equestrian Center soon! Have questions? [Click here for our Spectator FAQ page](#) or our [Horse Show 101 page](#).

- See more at: <http://tryon.coth.com/page/what-to-do#sthash.MviYJBZL.dpuf>

# KEY

## RESTROOMS

## PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

## HANDICAP PARKING

## PARKING

## BARN

## RING

## ENTERTAINMENT

## LEGENDS CLUB

## DINING/RESTAURANTS

## LODGING CHECK-IN

## SHOPPING

## LODGING

## HORSE FACILITIES

## GREEN SPACE

## ENTERTAINMENT

- E1 Main Stage Pavilion
- E2 Carousel
- E3 Gazebo
- E4 Jumbotron & Stage
- E5 Recreation Village Playground

## FOOD VENDORS/RESTAURANTS

- F1 Campagna Italian Restaurant  
828.863.1000
- F2 Legends Grille  
828.863.1000
- F3 Blue Ginger Sushi  
828.863.1121
- F4 Roger's Diner  
828.863.1113
- F5 Maine Street Coffee  
828.863.1000
- F6 Triple Crown Subs, Salad & Soups  
828.863.1126
- F7 The Siesta Cantina  
828.863.1124
- F8 Mountainview BBQ  
828.863.1000
- F9 Clear Rounds Pub  
828.863.1000
- F10 Tryon Café  
828.863.1016

## LODGING CHECK-IN

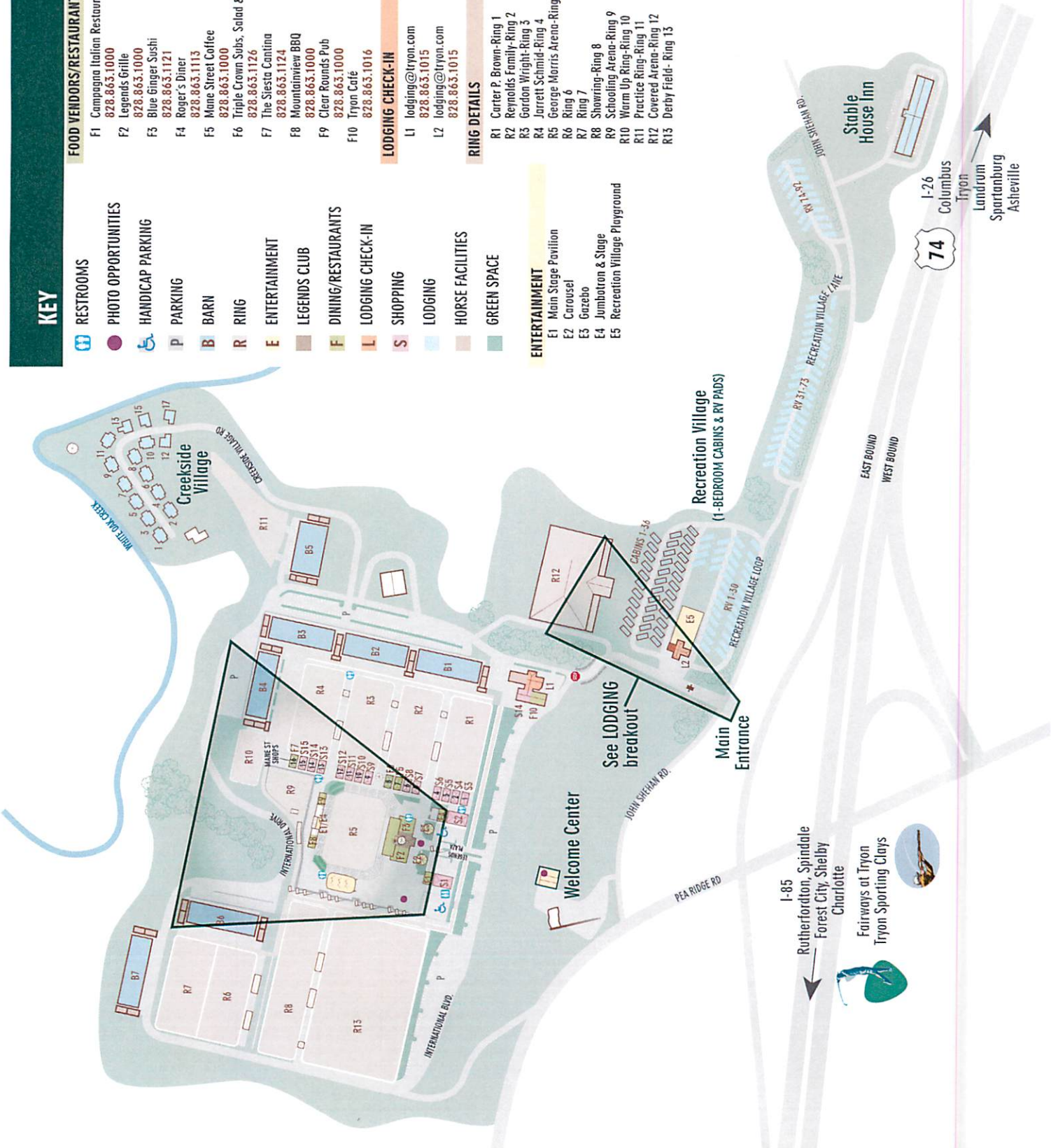
- L1 lodging@tryon.com  
828.863.1015
- L2 lodging@tryon.com  
828.863.1015

## RING DETAILS

- R1 Carter P. Brown-Ring 1
- R2 Reynolds Family-Ring 2
- R3 Gordon Wright-Ring 3
- R4 Jarrett Schmid-Ring 4
- R5 George Morris Arena-Ring 5
- R6 Ring 6
- R7 Ring 7
- R8 Showring-Ring 8
- R9 Schooling Arena-Ring 9
- R10 Warm Up Ring-Ring 10
- R11 Practice Ring-Ring 11
- R12 Covered Arena-Ring 12
- R13 Derby Field-Ring 13

## SHOPPING

- S1 Tryon General Store  
828.863.1000
- S2 Tryon Tack I  
828.863.1114
- S3 Palm Beech Academy
- S4 TBD
- S5 Animo  
303.317.3484 USAanimo.com
- S6 A-H&R Embroidery  
804.513.8829 hreembroidery.com
- S7 A-Bruno Belgrange  
828.287.3637 doncaster.com
- S8 B-Karina Brez Jewelry  
561.400.4085 karinabrez.com
- S9 B-Skiffingtons  
561.670.7186  
Lisa-skiffington.squarespace.com
- S10 Equis Boutique  
Equisboutique.com
- S11 Ariat®  
Ariat.com
- S12 A-Eyes of Wellington  
Eyesofwellington.com
- S13 A-Wellington Equestrian Realty  
516.308.6602 antressaddle.com
- S14 B-Tucci by Newstar  
844.448.8224 newstarfarm.com
- S15 A-Voltaire  
B-Fab Finds by Sarah  
917.499.4004 FabfindsbySarah.com
- S16 A-Black Petticoat  
706.521.5186 blackpetticoat.com
- S17 Lauren@blackpetticoat.com
- S18 B-Fabfri Boots  
561.460.2473 Stivalifabfri.it
- S19 A-CWD
- S20 B-ESI  
ESI.com



I-85  
Rutherfordton, Spindale  
Forest City, Shelby  
Charlotte

Fairways at Tryon  
Tryon Sporting Clays

74

I-26  
Columbus  
Tryon  
Lundrum  
Spartanburg  
Asheville