

# Golf is Life

## Natalie Gulbis

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The most down to earth girl with the biggest desire and hunger on tour to achieve the best, giving golf her all.

### **Natalie Gulbis**

**Web:** [www.nataliegulbis.com](http://www.nataliegulbis.com)

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**Nationality:** American

**Full Name:** Natalie Anne Gulbis

**Birth Date:** January 7, 1983 Sacramento, CA

**Residence:** Las Vegas, Nevada USA

**Vitals:** 5'9", Blonde, Blue-Green Eyes

**Tour:** LPGA

### **Read all about Natalie's life in this excerpt taken from her website:**

Natalie is the first **Latvian-descent** LPGA golfer, and that culture & tradition remain big parts of her life today.

From the very beginning it seemed like I was drawn to golf. Starting at the age of 4, I would tag along with my dad to the local Sacramento courses and picked up the game from him. By age 7, I won my first tournament, and by age 10, I was breaking par.

Growing up I tried to be an all-around athlete, also competing at the high school level in diving and gymnastics. I achieved level 8 in gymnastics, which is only three below Olympic level, but my heart was in another sport.

I continued to really love playing golf, and in high school (Granite Bay HS) I actually played No. 1 singles on the Men's golf team which was a little awkward at first, but everyone really welcomed me and it was a lot of fun. I finished second in the California State Women's Amateur at 13 in 1996, losing in the final to current LPGA player Dorothy Delasin, but I turned it around the following year, beating Delasin in the 1997 final. At age 14, I was the youngest player to qualify for an LPGA event (Michelle Wie at the age of 12 broke that mark in 2002), playing in the Longs Drugs Challenge just 10 miles from my home, which was a very exciting experience. I went on to finish high school in three years, and graduated at the age of 16.

After high school I received a scholarship to play collegiate golf at University of Arizona, the defending NCAA champs at the time. As an Arizona freshman in 1999, I won three tournaments and earned All-America honors. The summer before my sophomore year would turn out to be a major turning point in my golfing career. First, I made the cut at the US Women's Open and went on to tie for 34th place as an amateur. Shortly thereafter, I earned female MVP honors at the USA-Japan Collegiate Golf Championship.

Based on my success during that summer and the opportunity to make a living playing golf, I decided to **turn professional in 2001** after only one year of collegiate golf and attempt to make the LPGA Tour by heading to Q-School later that fall. The success I had during the summer followed me to the fall in Qualifying School, where I won my sectional qualifier by eight shots and tied for third in the final, which meant I had made the Tour fully exempt.

Natalie Gulbis living her dream on tour 2002 marked my rookie year on Tour. I had a great learning experience, traveled to new cities, and met some really great people and new friends along the way. I ended up finishing second in Rookie of the Year points, and most importantly, found a **permanent home on Tour where ever since I have been living my dream!**