

## INTERVIEW

We catch up with **Aditi Ashok**  
one of India's Rio 2016 golf Olympians

# PLANET GOLF REVIEW ISSUE 4

## TRAVEL

Minnesota &  
Northern California

## EQUIPMENT

Titleist, Callaway  
& Evnroll

## HOTEL & SPAS

Monterey  
& Sausalito

## APPAREL

Oscar Jacobson  
& Puma

# VIEW.COM

# WELCOME

With the Olympics and Ryder Cup following on from this weeks Open Championship we meet one of the competitors who hasn't been scared off by the Zika virus and will be teeing it up at the new Olympic golf course and take an in-depth look at what you can do and where you can stay, if you are going to the beautiful state of Minnesota for the biennial Ryder Cup matches.

We have equipment reviews covering drivers from both Titleist and Callaway, we also have Titleist's new hybrid and a great new putter from Evnroll's new range.

If you decide to purchase any of the equipment we have tested where better to let lose than the stunning state of California and you can follow my road trip tour through the northern section of this state that takes in the wonderful Monterey peninsula and through the vineyards of the Napa Valley.

Charmaine brings you two luxury hotel and spa

reviews from that road trip with both offering views that will make your heart leap while watching the sun go down over the Golden Gate Bridge or over the powerful Atlantic Ocean.

We finish this packed issue helping you look good on the fairways of the world with offerings from Oscar Jacobson and Puma.

I hope you enjoy the read, whether on your ipad, iphone, tablet, Android, laptop or computer, we will bring the world to you helping you choose your next trip, piece of golf equipment or apparel.

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## MEET THE TEAM

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# EDITORIAL

# REVIEW







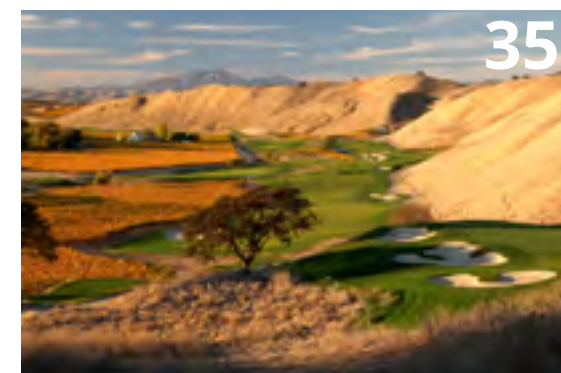
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# PLANETGOLF

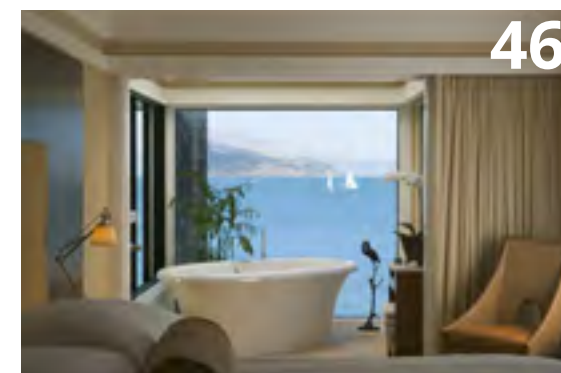
# REVIEW



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# ASHOK UP THE WORLD



Aditi Ashok may not be living up to that play on words from the famous Muhammad Ali quote just yet, but she has certainly taken Indian golf and the Ladies European Tour (LET) by storm.

Aditi won LET's Lalla Aicha Tour School 2016 with the lowest winning score of 23 under par at age 17 and was the youngest winner of a WGAI's professional tournament in 2011 at age 13 years 5 months and is about to represent her country at the Olympic games in Rio\*

We feel that the Olympics offers a great chance for the game of golf to grow around the world, with that in mind we caught up with Aditi Ashok at the Ladies European Tour Lalla Meryem Cup in Morocco for a question and answer session.

\*At the time of writing Aditi looks to be India's female entry to the Olympic Tournament.





**“You can’t just turn up and expect good results if you’re not putting in the work. So I’m lucky I’ve been like that since I started.”**

#### **How did you get into golf?**

We used to go to the golf course as a family every Sunday for dinner and I used to watch the golfer’s from the restaurant, we were intrigued and we decided to learn the game together, when I started learning to putt for the first time, I was having so much fun I didn’t want to leave.

After that I wanted to go back and learn the whole game, then after a while I started to play in club tournaments at the age of 7 and then at junior level, it was fun.

#### **What kept your interest in golf going?**

I used to play other sports at school but nothing competitively, but golf was a lot of fun for me, tournaments were even more fun because it is one thing to learn a sport but to compete and try and win with other kids your age is different so I think that is what kept me going.

As I was walking round watching you play today, your mother told me a story about you being in a bunker and knifing a ball across the green into the bushes behind. You then took 13 shots to get out, after that you spent the next three months 3-hours a day practicing your bunker shots, can you tell us more about that determination?

I guess I am pretty determined at everything I do and give 100%. I think that’s helped me with my golf game because golf needs a lot of effort, you need to practice, you need to be hard working. You can’t just turn up and expect good results if you’re not putting in the work. So I’m lucky I’ve been like that since I started.

#### **Do you enjoy practicing?**

Yes I do, not as much as tournaments but it is important.

#### **Your mother told me a story about you enjoy beating the boys at your golf club.**

Yes when I was young there wasn’t many girls playing golf in India you could count them on one hand, so I used to play with the boys from

the back tees. Growing up like that helped me a lot with my game, being the short hitter where the boys were making the green in two I used to be on in three so there was a lot of pressure on me to make putts.

#### **I take it your short game is your strength?**

My short game and accuracy. I’m not a very long hitter so these are the aspects of my game I work on to keep my score low.

#### **Do you see yourself working on your strength to gain more distance?**

Yes I will, I will need to start going to the gym, there’s other things that I need to work on as well, like eating better, working out more. But at the end of the day you know your golf game and yes I have to work on my weaknesses but I don’t think that should be to the detriment of my strengths, I think that you should work on your strengths more than your weaknesses.

#### **Going into the Olympic year you’ve represented India at the Asian youth games and youth Olympics, I take it your ambition is to make the Olympic team and represent India in Rio?**

Yes I would love to make the team and represent my country and I’m working very hard to do that. It is such a different tournament the whole aura around it, it’s going to be a unique experience and one I’m looking forward to if I make the team. I have a few events before the cut-off so I’ll be trying hard in those to qualify.

#### **Do you feel representing your country in the youth games will help you prepare for the games in Rio?**

It’s a unique experience but it is a normal golf tournament played over four days and I’m getting used to that now I have turned professional. Where it will help is the off course experience of the games.

### Who are your mentors in golf?

Seve. Since I was a child and of course Annika (Sörenstam) because how long she dominated the sport for which was great for women's golf, so she's been in an inspiration for me. Currently in men's golf I really like watching Rory and the way he plays, I would love to be that aggressive on the golf course when I play.

### You have your father as your caddy, is there a reason behind that?

I tend to make all the decisions on the course but it's good to have him on the bag, it helps because he knows me and he's watched me play since I first started. He knows my game and it helps me keep calm, we have a good working relationship and he knows exactly what to say when I'm playing well and when I'm not playing so well.

### Will you stick with that arrangement?

I will for the first few years but eventually it will probably be too taxing for him with all the travel, I will eventually get a caddy but for the first few years I think I will prefer it to be like this.

### What do you enjoy off the course?

Music wise I like One Republic, One Direction a little bit of Taylor Swift, but I like good music, it may not be the same person but I like all sorts of music but mainly pop music.

### How about movies?

I really like Harry Potter a lot! I read the books after the film, I've always watched TV and films more than read books but I read them because people told me they were good and slightly different to the films, there was a lot of stuff in the books that was omitted from the film so I enjoyed reading them. I like Spiderman and I also enjoy the end of the world movies like 2012, The Day After Tomorrow and recently I enjoyed watching Whiplash.

### Do you play or watch other sports?

I played basketball at school but just for fun and with friends, but I have always enjoyed playing golf. My family made me put my clubs away to study and when we went away on holiday.

I used to travel from a young age so I'll be traveling for the whole year and at the end of the year I had to submit my final exams and it started to affect my study while I was traveling and it was tough to do. Eventually I did have to take a break at the end of each year to get organised with school and study more which I think was good, I think you do need a break sometimes.

### Were you itching to get a golf club back in your hands?

Yes I was itching to get back, if you don't play for a while it does get tough because you're working on your body and your swing and you need to keep track of what you're doing. It does start to affect you if you stop playing for a few weeks and don't keep swinging a golf club everyday.

### Do you still get to play golf for fun?

We have a three-ball at home now and again but my mum doesn't play that much anymore so it's mainly just my dad and me and I enjoy it when I practice.

### Do you enjoy that time alone on the practice ground?

Yes it's quiet and these days the world is so noisy, busy and people everywhere so it's great on the golf course or practice ground, just you alone for an hour or two without talking and being by yourself and just hitting golf balls, which I also feel is good for the mind.

★As the magazine goes live Aditi sits inside the Top 40 on the Ladies European Tour after four events

**Right: Aditi with her father and caddy. Below: Taking time out during the Ladies European Tour's Lalla Meryem Cup in Rabat**



**"I really like watching Rory and the way he plays, I would love to be that aggressive on the golf course when I play"**



## ACHIEVEMENTS

Started playing golf at the age of 5

Aditi finished her amateur career as World No. 11 on the World Amateur Golf Rankings winning the St Rule Trophy, Ladies British Amateur Stroke Play, 81st Singha Thailand Amateur and won a Silver Medal at the International European Ladies Amateur Championship during 2015.

Turned Professional on the 1st January 2016, securing a full card to play on the Ladies European Tour. At 17 she was the youngest to win the Ladies European Tour's Lalla Aicha Tour School, with the lowest winning score of 23 under par.

She is the only Indian golfer to have played the Asian Youth Games (2013) Youth Olympic Games (2014) and Asian Games (2014).

Her first national win was at the age of 9 years and 10 months. She is a 3 time National Junior Champion 2012, 2013, 2014 and is 2 time National Amateur Champion 2011, 2014. She has won 80+ national junior and amateur titles. She has played twice at World Amateur Team championships, Junior Open and Faldo Series Asia Grand Final, 4 times at Asia-Pacific Ladies Team Invitational Queen Sirikit Cup, 5 times at the Asia Pacific Juniors and a few others for Team India from the age of 12.

### COURSE RECORDS

Equalled the women's amateur course record of 8 under par on the New Course, St. Andrews Links in May 2015.

Set a women's course record of 8 under par at Karnataka Golf Association, Bangalore in July 2015.

Equalled the men's course record and set a new women's course record with her career's lowest round of 10 under par on Samanah Country Club, Marrakech, Morocco in Dec 2015.



A golfer wearing a light blue polo shirt, brown trousers, a white cap, and white gloves is captured in the middle of a golf swing on a lush green course. The golfer is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing away from the viewer. The background is a soft-focus view of a golf course with a body of water and trees in the distance.

# MINNESOTA

## CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF

Minnesota is your perfect golf holiday destination – featuring award-winning courses, characterised by beautiful, natural settings, excellent conditions and affordability. Golfers can opt for their favourite style – links, deep woods, breath-taking river and lake views.

When you pair accessibility with quality and value, you begin to understand what makes Minnesota a great place to golf and explore.

**m** **EXPLORE  
MINNESOTA™**

Plan your Minnesota golf adventure  
today at [exploreminnesota.com](https://exploreminnesota.com)

**#ONLYINMN**



# A CUP FULL OF POSSIBILITIES

With the Ryder Cup heading to Minnesota in two months time and tax free shopping available at The Mall Of America all year round, native Minnesotan Larry Berle gives you the lowdown on things to do before and after the matches. This is supplemented by Stephanie Mason's 14-page guide of where to stay in Minneapolis, St Paul and upstate Minnesota.

The name Minnesota comes from the Dakota word for "clear blue water" owing to its large number of lakes, the state is informally known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes".

The official motto is L'Étoile du Nord – Star of the North. Minnesota is the twelfth largest in area and the twenty-first most populated state in America, with nearly 60 percent of its population living in the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area, known as the "Twin Cities"

Many of you will know that Minneapolis will host this year's Ryder Cup matches at Hazeltine National Golf Club and with this in mind we have put together a guide of things you can do and where you can stay during your visit to this wonderful state.

Hazeltine National Golf Club is 26 miles East of downtown Minneapolis, 22 miles from the Mall of America and just 9 miles from Paisley Park.

Sunrise over Lake  
Superior from  
Palisade Head





Top left to right:  
Mall of America.  
Canoeing on Lake  
Superior. Bottom  
left to right: paul  
bunyan land.  
Camping; canoeing  
at Boundary  
Waters. Right:  
The sign at the  
Mississippi River  
Headwaters in  
Itasca State Park.



### MALL OF AMERICA

Visit the Mall of America – see [Stephanie's feature on page 13](#).

**If you are coming early, here are some things to do outside of Minneapolis.**

### PAUL BUNYON

Learn about the legend of Paul Bunyan and his companion Babe the Blue Ox.

Legendary lumberjack Paul Bunyan was a powerful giant, very tall and with a stride of seven feet. He was famous throughout the lumbering districts for his great physical strength. Legend has it that his large footprints created many of the 10,000 lakes of Minnesota. He also lived through the winter of the Blue Snow

You can visit Paul Bunyan land just outside of Brainerd MN just 2 hours drive northwest of Minneapolis.

[www.paulbunyanland.com](http://www.paulbunyanland.com)

### VISIT THE HEADWATERS OF THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI RIVER

The Mississippi River is the 4th longest river in the world and the longest in North America at 2320 miles (3730 Kilometers). Its headwaters are at Lake Itasca in northern Minnesota and flows all the way to the Gulf of Mexico through New Orleans and LA

You can visit the headwaters at Lake Itasca State Park

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks)

The Mississippi River is the river that divides the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. You can take paddleboat rides on the river in both Minneapolis and St Paul or take a paddlewheel the length of the river.

### VISIT LAKE SUPERIOR

Lake Superior is one of the 5 great lakes and the largest fresh water lake in the world by surface area. The closest point from Minneapolis

is in Duluth that is about a two-hour drive from Minneapolis. This is where the Edmond Fitzgerald sank on November 10, 1975 and has been made famous by singer Gordon Lightfoot with the song “The wreck of the Edmond Fitzgerald”

You can also visit the “Iron Range” which was a big supplier of Iron Ore to the world and of course Hibbing, Minnesota where Bob Dylan was born and grew up.

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area is about a 3-4 hour drive from Minneapolis (a couple miles past Duluth).

It is a unique area located in the northern third of the Superior National Forest in northeastern Minnesota. Over 1 million acres in size, it extends nearly 150 miles along the Canadian border. The BWCAW contains over 1200 miles of canoe routes. If you love the outdoors this is the place to visit and by September the mosquito population will have dwindled or maybe even disappeared for the season.

[www.fs.usda.gov/detail/superior](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/superior)

If you are a Judy Garland fan you can visit the Judy Garland Museum in her hometown of Grand Rapids MN.

### THE TWIN CITIES

The Twin Cities has no end of attractions

You probably know that when Prince died a few months ago they lit up the Eiffel tower (France) and the Millennium wheel in London in purple in his honour. Minneapolis is where he grew up and this remained his home throughout his life.

Visit Paisley Park Studios and the First Ave Night Club— Paisley Park was the home studio for Prince and First Ave is where the concert scenes of the movie “Purple Rain” took place

[www.princevault.com](http://www.princevault.com)

Here is a list of places that would be significant for a Prince fan to visit

[www.minneapolis.org/princes-minneapolis](http://www.minneapolis.org/princes-minneapolis)

Take in a play at the world renowned Guthrie





Theatre or attend a concert by the Minnesota Orchestra – ranked as one of the top 10 orchestras in the United States.

Attend a live broadcast of renowned radio show “Prairie Home Companion at the Fitzgerald Theater in downtown St Paul Minnesota with its new host since Garrison Kiellor is now retiring.

[www.fitzgeraldtheater.publicradio.org](http://www.fitzgeraldtheater.publicradio.org)

Go fishing or waterskiing or boating on one of Minnesotas 10,000 lakes

See the newest stadium in the National Football League U.S Bank Stadium home of the Minnesota Vikings opening in Aug 2016 <http://www.vikings.com/stadium/index.html> and home of the 2018 Super Bowl

Take a ride on a famous paddle wheel boat – either the Johnathan Paddelford in St Paul

[www.riverrides.com](http://www.riverrides.com)

or the Steamboat Minnehaha on lake Minnetonka (located not to far from Hazeltine

[www.steamboatminnehaha.org](http://www.steamboatminnehaha.org)

The Renaissance Festival of Minnesota is one of the largest in the US and takes place weekends from Aug 20 – Oct 2 (during the Ryder Cup). It is in Shakopee MN not to far from Hazeltine National Golf Club.

[www.renaissancefest.com](http://www.renaissancefest.com)

## GOLF

See issue two of the planetgolfreview magazine for full review and details, [click here to download for free](#)

There are also several wonderful museums in Minneapolis The Walker Art Center and sculpture garden, Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Mill City Museum

[www.millcitymuseum.org](http://www.millcitymuseum.org)

[www.walkerart.org/visit](http://www.walkerart.org/visit)

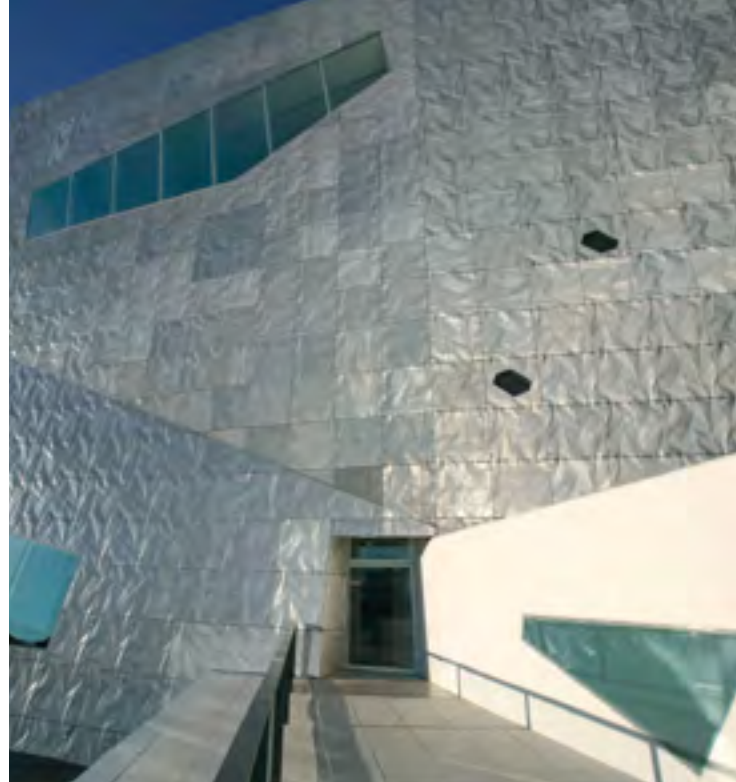
[www.new.artsmia.org](http://www.new.artsmia.org)

## MINNEAPOLIS SKYWAY

And if you venture downtown you will see the largest skyway system in the world connecting all the downtown buildings. There are 9 miles of skyways

[www.skywaymyway.com](http://www.skywaymyway.com)

Top left to right:  
Walker Art Centre.  
First Avenue where  
concert scenes  
for the movie  
“Purple Rain” movie  
featuring local boy  
Prince where shot.  
Bottom: Guthrie  
Mill City.





RADISSON BLU

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

By STEPHANIE MASON

# BLU SANCTUARY

After a 33-hour flight that included delays and being diverted to another state, Stephanie Mason was happy for the speedy check-in and comfy bed at Mall of America's Radisson Blu



Above: The stunning lobby area. Left: one of the comfy beds. Right: The lobby at night, lit up in Radisson Blu's signature colour



After a short drive from the airport, I finally arrived at the first of many spa and hotels I will be experiencing while exploring Minnesota. As I pull up outside the Radisson Blu I know I am going to be in for a real treat. The architecture of the building is incredible and the design is innovative and trendsetting with large windows with metallic details. The reception has thoughtful wooden sculptures that light up at night with the Radisson signature blue colour.

As I stepped into the lobby the first thing I noticed on my left was a warm welcoming fireplace and a large cocoon chair with comfy cushion and I thought this is definitely going to be my go to place to relax after some much needed retail therapy.

As I headed towards the escalator the most scrumptious aroma was leading me upstairs towards what... I'm not sure, but my nose and I are intrigued. As I get to the top of the escalator I arrived at the Fire Lake



Right and below:  
There are several  
room options. Far  
Right: My escape pod  
by the fire.



Right and below:  
Nail treatments and  
massage rooms at  
Solimar Spa & Salon.  
Far right: Another of  
Radisson Blu's room  
options.



Grill House & Cocktail bar where they were serving breakfast, my taste buds are now jumping like I have a mouthfull of spacedust! They have a variety of breakfast treats on offer served in an open-air kitchen.

Checking in was very swift and I am off to my room. As I enter I am stunned, the room is huge with modern décor – I have to say I am a modern type of girl when it comes to décor – the bathroom is light with a stylish bath as well as a modern waterfall shower.

But I have spotted the place where I can just pass the time away, a comfy lounge chair by a tall window, sheer bliss as I take in the view. First, of course, I have to have a quick bounce on the king sized bed, but after a long delayed flight as soon as my head hits the fluffy plump pillows I fell straight to sleep. I will admit I struggled to leave the bed as I awoke the next day but I was eager to get down to the Spa for my treatment.

As I arrived at the Solimar Spa & Salon I was warmly greeted by my technician who offered me a hot beverage and a neck massager which was heated and scented, it was like getting a neck massage with warm hands whilst sitting in a lavender meadow, absolute bliss.

The spa & salon offer a range of different treatments, their signature being their pedicures which was what I chose to have, after 33 hours of travelling it was definitely needed. The ultimate pedicure consists of a 90 minute treatment to exfoliate, nourish, hydrate and promote nail care, they have numerous nail polishes to choose from as well. I would suggest if you would like to visit the spa or salon during your stay, do this when you are booking your room, this is due to it being in very high demand and they will be able to accommodate you. i certainly recommend you book yourself in, you're on holiday aren't you?

Radisson Blu MOA  
2100 Killebrew Dr  
Bloomington, MN 55425  
United States

T: +(01) 952-881-5258  
W: [radissonblu.com/en/hotel-mall-of-america](http://radissonblu.com/en/hotel-mall-of-america)





# HANDS FREE SHOPPING

Tax free shopping at the Mall of America is every girls dream, but we have all been there, 2-hours in and you need a wide load sticker on your back as you knock everyone out of the way and you don't have a finger left to hang a bag on. Stephanie Mason discovers the future and the pleasures of hands free shopping







As I walk into The Mall of America (MOA) from the Radisson blu hotel entrance I am speechless, which doesn't happen too often, I can't believe what my eyes are seeing it is literally a city within a city. The very first thing that catches my eye is the theme park in the centre of the mall called Nickelodeon Universe, which on further investigation has over seven acres of jam-packed fun.

There are 27 different rides from rollercoasters to Rugrats Reptarmobiles, log chutes to carousels and before my eyes I am watching someone zip-line from one end of the mall to the other – I just have to get me a go on that!

To top it all located underneath the mall of America is the Sea Life aquarium, where thousands of sea creatures can be seen in their 300ft of tunnels and a definitely must

see – check attractions at the end for more information.

But I have tickets for FlyOver America a new ride at the MOA. I enter the ride and as we start it really does feel that I am flying over America it truly is breath-taking. I can feel wind on my face and the smells, the water, trees and the misty clouds, the special effects are amazing, it's unbelievably realistic and an incredible experience. As the ride comes to an end I really felt like I have been soaring over the whole of America, I highly recommend you make it a priority whilst visiting the Mall.

But I am here to shop, I have been putting a little aside when I knew I was coming to MOA and I certainly wanted to make the most of the 520 retail shops in the mall, from chain stores to unique boutiques I am spoilt for choice and the best bit, there is no sales tax on clothing

and shoes giving you so much more for your money – I am in shopping heaven. But ladies – and gents – there is even better news, if you are staying at the Radisson Blu hotel there's no need to shop till you drop, the concierge are on hand to take all your bags from you and deliver them to your room.

We have all been there, you want to carry on, but there is no more fingers to hang a bag on and you need a wide load sticker on your back and flashing lights before you keel over from the weight – just me then?! It is a genius service from the people at the Radisson Blu and every mall should offer a similar service.

#### TIME TO RELAX

With all my hands free shopping done, opening my purse and tapping in my pin number has helped me work up an appetite and with over

50 restaurants to choose from you are spoilt for choice and they include The Rock Café, Crave, Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. to name a few but I am heading off to the Fire Lake Grill House and cocktail bar.

As I walk in I think I have made a great choice even if I do say so myself, the décor is very stylish and modern and after being shown to my table I can see they dish up a variety of food, some of which is fresh and locally produced and what turns out to be even more local is their honey bee colony located on the rooftop.

Looking over the cocktails list they have an amazing choice with some very inventive concoctions. After my day exploring the mall I plummet for the Blue Cubed which is a vodka based drink with blueberries, the unique thing about it was the circular blue ice cube in the

**Main: Stephanie makes good use of Radisson Blu bag collection. Top left: Fly over America. Top right: Some of the shops in Mall Of America. Bottom left: Outside Mall Of America. Bottom right: The amazing Nickelodeon Universe inside Mall Of America**





centre of the drink... it is so luscious, I have just ordered another while I make up my mind on what to eat, I think I will be here for a while...

#### TOP TIP

You should definitely download the MOA app whether you have an android or iPhone you can get your hands on this informative app. It tells you all the amazing deals you can get your hands on while you are here and you can save them on your list to remind you when visiting a certain shop or store.

You can plan your day and save your itinerary on the app ensuring you go to all the places you wanted to see or experience. Also, for those of you not staying at the Radisson Blu, you can retrieve your car from the valet with just a touch of a button.

#### MOA ATTRACTIONS

There are 27 different rides from rollercoasters to Rugrats Reptarmobiles, log chutes to carousels, there is also a House of comedy with performance from the top-touring comedians, Minnesota's children's museum, Universe of Light, American Girl, The Lego Store, Crayola experience+store

Located underneath the mall of America is the Sea Life aquarium, where thousands of sea creatures can be seen from their 300ft of tunnels and a definitely must see.

**Right: Stephanie's after shopping choices of Blue Cubed cocktail and salmon. Bottom left: Relaxing after a hard days shopping. Bottom right: Stephanie finds all her shopping waiting in her room.**





Left to right: St Paul at night. Aerial of the beautiful St Paul hotel



THE SAINT PAUL HOTEL  
St Paul, Minnesota, United States  
By STEPHANIE MASON

BACK TO  
THE FUTURE

After a long day and night on the town Stephanie Mason takes a step back in time and samples the luxury of a gangsters moll at the St Paul hotel.

After a lovely day exploring the Mall of America and being pampered in the Solimar Spa at the Radisson Blu, we are now heading into downtown Minneapolis. After a scrumptious steak dinner at Zelo's located at the Nicollet Mall, we make our way to The Jungle Theatre to watch a play entitled Constellations which turned out to be wonderfully produced and acted. It's an intimate theatre seating 150 people and produces 5 main productions each year. If you are visiting for the Ryder Cup, just visiting Minneapolis or on a shopping expedition, I would definitely recommend taking in a play at this beautiful theatre.

After a long night of amazing food, cocktails and catching a play at the theatre, I am looking forward to checking into my room at The Saint Paul Hotel. As we enter the lobby a small orchestral band are playing which sets the tone of the hotel.

The St Paul hotel is very grand with a Chicago gangsters/1920s era feel to it. After being checked in I head up to my room and open the door to a room just as grand as the rest of the hotel. It has a huge wooden bed with a luxury quilt, in fact everything about this room looks luxuriously rich with



Right: The St Paul Grill and its stunning collection of bottles.  
Far Right: The Padelford Riverboats



From Left to right:  
One of the luxurious rooms. Right. The 1930s style hotel lobby. The Como Park Conservatory. The Wabasha Street Caves



dark wooden features and light mocha walls. There’s also a large comfy chair in the corner of the room with a table and lamp perfect for some light reading or in my case some heavy writing.

After a comfy nights sleep I make my way down to the lobby for some brunch – yes I was due an extended nights sleep! – in The St Paul Grill. Stepping into the grillroom and to my left on the wall are black and white signed photos of stars that have dined here. During St Pauls gangsta era in the 1920s Leon Gleckman also known as the Al Capone of Saint Paul used to have a suite at the hotel and a booth in the grill – it’s a shame I can’t find the booth to try out my gangsters moll routine!

The bar is huge and has an impressive display of liquor bottles on gleaming glass shelves. The restaurant is very open planned with huge glass windows letting in the beautiful Minnesota morning sunrays that bounce across the tables and offer a perfect view of the surrounding area.

I decide to order a cheese omelette with sausage and as you would imagine from a hotel like this, it was scrumptious and my waitress kept

my coffee cup nicely filled to keep me energised for the exploring I had planned for the rest of the day.

There are lots of things to do close to the St Paul hotel, which included the Xcel arena, science museum and the Ordway theatre where you can watch a musical, then take a midnight stroll through Rice Park back to the hotel – Rice Park is used as an ice skating rink during Minnesota’s winter months.

### THINGS TO DO IN ST PAUL Padelford Riverboats

I would recommend starting your day going down to the docks and hopping on a Padelford Riverboat on Harriet Island. They take you on a sightseeing tour round the beautiful Saint Paul providing a running commentary on the area and places of interest along the way. It’s a great way to find out what Saint Pauls has to offer and what better way to do that than relaxing on a paddleboat.

### The Wabasha Street Caves

You can take a tour round The Wabasha Street Caves and learn about mushrooms, mining, ghosts and the famous ‘Castle Royal’ known as the Gangsters Haven. It was an underground speak easy providing entertainment during prohibition. On Thursday nights you can travel back to the 1930’s and take in one of the Big bands playing in the Castle Royal!

St Paul Hotel  
350 Market St  
St Paul  
MN 55102  
USA

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W: saintpaulhotel.com





## GRAND VIEW LODGE

Nisswa, Brainerd, Minnesota, USA

By STEPHANIE MASON

I've been looking forward to this particular part of the trip.... Why you ask? Well I've never stayed in a cabin before so this is a new experience for me and I have been impatiently waiting for the glacial rain hydrotherapy and massage that I am about to receive tomorrow at The Glacial Waters Spa at the Grand View Lodge.

After being checked in very efficiently, I found my cabin for the evening and I was astonished. It was beautiful and rustic right on the lake with some very beautiful views. After the obligatory look round, checking all the bathroom etc. me and my travelling companion decided to get something to eat and where better to dine then the lodges very own pub called Northwoods.

It's been over a year since I have seen the sun in England let alone one with some heat, so we head for the tables outside so we can top up on our vitamin D, enjoy the scenic view at the same time as enjoying a nice chilled glass of wine or three – multitasking at its best!

I wake up bright and early and before I hit the shower I just sit and watch the sun shiver over the lake, it's so peaceful I could sit here for hours, but I have spa treatment and I make my way to the Glacial Waters Spa sitting amongst the pine trees with a clear blue lake leading the way. I was a bit →

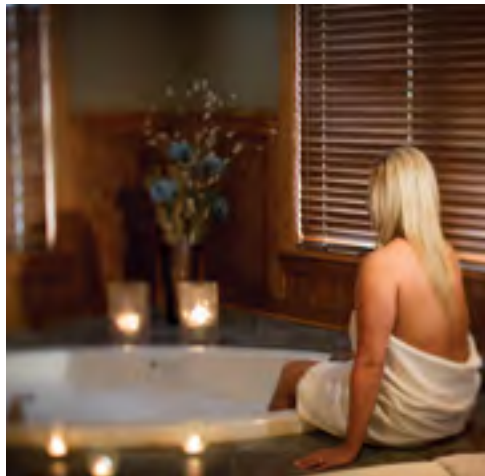
Above: The Grand View Lodge Resort  
main building. Below: One of the many  
cabins that look over the lake

# CABIN FEVER

Stephanie Mason starts to move up state Minnesota  
and discovers lakes, cabins and her third eye.







Far left: Sunset over the lake and the view from the deck of my cabin. Left bottom: The many treatments at the Glacial Waters Spa. Left: Entrance to Glacial Waters Spa

early for my appointment so I relax in the waiting area in front of the cosy wood fire.

They have a range of beverages from hot drinks to cucumber water and light snacks as well, after filling out a short questionnaire I was ready for my treatment. Before starting my masseuse asked me to select 3 essential oils by picking 3 different cards with different signs/meanings written on them, these were linked to the benefits the oils offered.

The first part of my treatment began with a sea salt exfoliation of my whole body, which I was definitely in need of, then the bit I've been looking forward to the most, maybe it's because I am a Pisces but I love anything to do with water. First the masseuse started with a full body hydrotherapy massage with a pressurised Scots hose, which was the ultimate exfoliation for my skin, it was like being under water – whilst still being able to breathe of course. All the tension in my body literally washed away with the water.

Next was the seven-headed Vichy shower, its purpose is to open up the Chakra energy centres and improve circulation and oh my it did that and more, imagine laying underneath a rain storm cascading over your whole body it was incredible.

After drying myself off I received a Shirodhara treatment whilst having my scalp massaged – it is a mixture of plant-based oils flowing continuously onto my third eye, the scents and smells from the different oils are amazing playing havoc with my senses, I've never felt so relaxed before.

As if I haven't been spoilt enough my masseuse finished off the treatment by washing my hair, which I was very grateful for, I am feeling far too relaxed and pampered and I feel like I just want to while away the rest of the day feeling like a new me. As soon as the treatments were finished I wanted to start all over again, it was magnificent and I highly recommend you try this at least once in your life. As soon as I get back home to London

I am going to track down a spa that provides this treatment.

The hotel has numerous activities from golf, hiking, horseback riding, jet skiing and of course ice skating and skiing in the winter, so no member of your family or partner will be left bored while you are getting a well-deserved day of pampering at the spa.

Grand View Lodge  
23521 Nokomis Ave  
Nisswa, MN 56468  
United States

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W: [grandviewlodge.com](http://grandviewlodge.com)



# A FAMILY AFFAIR

Two years ago a storm ripped through Maddens on Gull Lake, Stephanie Mason finds out how family and staff went above and beyond so you could enjoy this beautiful part of Minnesota



Above: Chilling by Gull Lake. Left The inn's new Patio. Right: Cabins views



We are now heading to Maddens on Gull Lake, as soon as I arrive I have a spa treatment to rush off to – it’s a tough job but my sacrifice is all for you!

The grounds and landscape are very impressive so I take a moment to soak in my surroundings from the car before rushing off to my treatment.

As I enter the Maddens spa the receptionist warmly greets me and leads me to the waiting room. After filling in a short questionnaire and sipping a nice hot cup of green tea, my masseuse comes to get me for my signature wrap treatment. My masseuse started my treatment off by putting lavender oil on her hands and waving them over my face whilst I closed my eyes and inhaled the relaxing scent.

I am then scrubbed down from head to toe with an exfoliating brush to remove all the dead skin, she then applies a lotion from Aveda’s collection of lotions infused with different ingredients from their essential oils such as Lavender or Sage. I am then wrapped up with heated blankets and lastly a foil sheet to ensure the heat doesn’t escape.

I then receive a foot, neck and scalp massage, I’m rather ticklish on my feet but her technique did not make me squirm at all, actually it just made me even more relaxed – if that were possible. Whilst I lay here in



my heated cocoon it felt like the world had stopped and it was just me relaxing in this stress free bubble, it's such a blissful moment.

It's time for me to check into my room. As I am walking along I am stopped in my tracks by the pure bliss of my surroundings and I take a moment to appreciate how beautiful Maddens is, with it's luxurious stylish cabins and breathtaking views I know I'm going to love it here.

I'm finally opening the door to my cabin, which is right on a sandy beach looking out on to one of Minnesota's ten thousand lakes. As I step into what is more like a house then a cabin, the lounge is huge with a comfy sofa to relax and watch TV.

As I look to my left there is a porch over looking the lake. I make my way further into my room – which turns into the Tardis from Dr Who, it's so big – there is a huge bed and desk. The bathroom has a large mirror perfect for getting ready, white tiles and a nice clean white tub with shower. The room has a homely feel to it I cannot wait to jump into my huge bed later.

TEAM WORK

After getting ready we head to dinner at The Maddens restaurant The Classic Grill where I will be dining with the owner Brian. It turns into an incredible and unforgettable evening, the stories he tells are fascinating, he has a lovely welcoming charm and was very passionate when he speaks about Maddens.

Brian is the second generation of the Maddens family to run the hotel and his son Ben will be the third, he also joined us during dinner. A few years ago they had a storm that hit them hard and although it was devastating they pulled together and came back stronger and better. Brian explained to me how they really pulled together as a team and united doing jobs that they wouldn't normally do with everyone pitching in to get the lodge up and running.

It is an evening that will live long in the memory, delicious food and great company in a perfect setting, I will definitely be returning for a relaxing holiday next time so I have time to enjoy all that Maddens has to offer. There are lots of activities to do here. [Check here for a full list.](#)

At the Tennis & Croquet Club you'll find tennis courts, USCA-sanctioned croquet lawns, lawn bowling, sand volleyball, horseshoes, badminton, and shuffleboard. Madden's also offers four swimming pools (one outdoor, three indoor) with whirlpools and saunas, a children's wading pool, an outdoor hot tub overlooking Gull Lake, and the Gull Lake waterpark.

Throw in some great golf courses and of course all the winter sports and it becomes the perfect place for those who want to just relax and take in natures beauty or indulge in any of the sports on hand, and of course the pampering at the spa... the choice is yours, but no matter what your choice I know, like me you will be longing for your return to Maddens.

Maddens On Gull Lake  
11266 Pine Beach Peninsula,  
Brainerd, MN 56401,  
United States

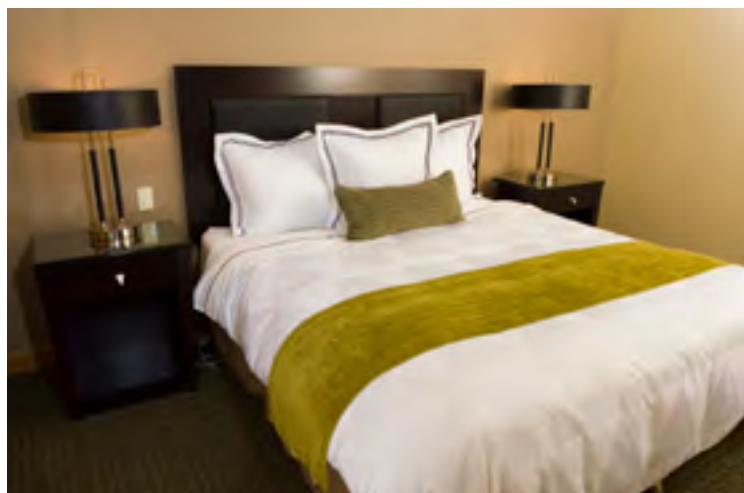
T: +(01) 218-829-2811  
W: maddens.com



Above: Ariel view of Maddens on Gull Lake. Right inside on of the cabins. Below and below right: Inside Maddens spa







# BLOOMING MARVALAS

After hotfooting it around upstate Minnesota Stephanie Mason checks into the Radisson in Bloomington after a two-hour road trip back to Minneapolis and finds the perfect place for her last night

Above: A perfect place to rest your head after a two-hour drive or a long flight. Right The Radisson in Bloomington.

## THE RADDISON, BLOOMINGTON Bloomington, Minnesota, United States By STEPHANIE MASON

After a 2 hour drive from exploring Duluth I grabbed myself some White Castle and headed to my final hotel of the trip which is The Radisson in Bloomington, sister hotel to The Raddison Blu hotel, which is a short distance away. The building is a large colourful brick building, a totally different style to The Raddison Blu but just as spectacular. As I walk into the lobby the first thing I notice is a coffee bar, that will come in handy when I need my fix in the morning. As I walk down the corridor I see vending machines with a variety of snacks for a midnight feast whilst watching a movie.

As I enter my room the word wow comes to mind, it's very stylish and chic with modern furnishings. The bathroom has a shower and bath with white tiling and wooden features. The sink unit is directly opposite the bathroom which I thought was unique, it's a long marble unit with a huge →





Top Left to Right: A warm welcome and not just from the receptionists. One of the water tube rides at the Water Park of America.



mirror and just behind that is a full length mirror perfect for getting ready or to take a quick selfie before hitting the town in that new dress I’ve purchased during my Mall of America shopping spree!!

My bed is low and spacious with light features either side, and there is a bunk bed in the corner which has curtains, guess that would come in handy if a family were using the room and the children were misbehaving... you can send them to bed close the curtain a pretend they’re not even there!

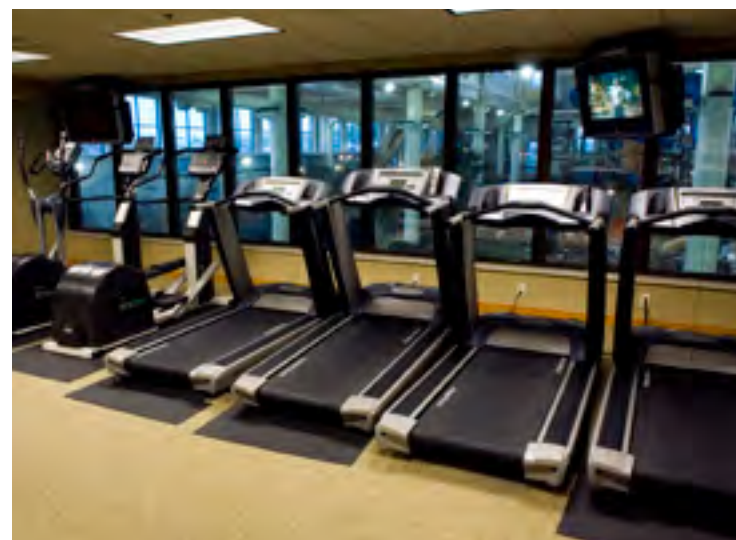
In the corner of the room is a large desk with a hanging light, perfect for me to catch up on some writing whilst tucking into my White Castle Burger. After a good nights rest I head down to the hotels Split Rock Grille for breakfast, and of course for what will be my last breakfast in Minnesota, so what better way to console myself than to order pancakes with a side of bacon and eggs and as you would expect they are absolutely delicious. Regrettably I don’t have time for the waterpark within the hotel grounds, but here is a list of the water parks highlights:

- 5,800-square-foot arcade
- Activity pools with hoops, nets and balancing logs
- Body and tube slides
- Family raft ride, 10 stories tall and more than a mile long
- Flow Rider Surf Simulator
- “Hotel Guest and Group Only” access to Water Park of America, 9-11 a.m. with paid package admission
- Lake Superior wave pool
- Two restaurants and a café
- Water park hotel packages are available for two, three or four pass options

Radisson Hotel Bloomington  
1700 East American Blvd  
Bloomington, MN 55425  
United States

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W: [radisson.com/bloomington-hotel](http://radisson.com/bloomington-hotel)

Right: Plenty of room and comfort. Below: For those who have even more energy to burn. Far right: One of the many water rides at Water Park of America







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26 TITLEIST 915 D3

REVIEW



28 CALLAWAY ALPHA 816



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32 EVNROLL ER1

VIEW.COM

EQUIPMENT



# RECOIL IN JOY

James Mason tests titleist 915 D3 with its new active recoil channel in three very different climates from Morocco, to Warkshire and Surrey.

I have always liked the design of the Titleist drivers the classic lines and the black finish just make them look like they mean business, so when I got the chance to put the 915 D3 through its paces in Morocco I jumped at the chance.





TECHNOLOGY

There are quite a few technologies in play on the 915 range, but the main one is the Active Recoil Channel that sits just behind the face and is deep enough to run your fingers through and runs from heel to toe. The face of the club flexes at impact and recoils to launch the ball on a high low spinning trajectory.

When this is combined with the high-speed forged variable thickness face insert, which has a thick centre section and tapers as it moves out to the heel and toe, all this helps increase ball speed on off centre strikes.

To make all this work the Titleist R&D people have managed to make the perimeter of the face thinner and put the centre of gravity deep and low in the club head, helping keep a high MOI for added stability and forgiveness.

This is all topped off with Titleist SureFit adjustable hosel, giving you total control over the loft as well as the lie of the club so you can adjust the club for a higher or lower trajectory while also adjusting for a fade or a draw. The two combinations give you a total of 16 different settings to choose from.

CLUB TESTED ▶

**Name** Titleist 915 D3  
**LOFT** 9.5°  
**SHAFT** Diamana D+70 Mitsubishi Rayon  
**FLEX** Stiff  
**SET UP** D3  
**RRP** £379 / €470 / \$499

CONCLUSION

Off the bat I have to say I love the club, from the sound at impact to the ball flight and the way it looks at address, everything about the 915 exudes power and precision. I have been playing with the driver since I came back from Morocco and haven't lost a match yet.

But, yes there is a but and it's the Surefit hosel technology. My personal opinion is I think it should be more intuitive, the two rings of 1, 2, 3, 4 and A, B, C, D do make sense, once you know what they stand for and how each ring works. But unlike other drivers on the market you can't just pick it up look at the markings and make your adjustments, you need to read up on how each ring adjusts the club and how you can achieve the trajectory and ball flight you are looking to play.

Is it worth doing that? Yes indeed it is.

As I said I loved everything about the 915 D3 and I would certainly make sure you put it on your testing list. Your professional or fitting specialist will talk you through the adjustment process and you will be good to go. And when you are good to go, believe me you will certainly be more than happy as it is a great driver.



Right: Radial variable thickness face insert shows the thinner blue areas and thicker purple areas creating a larger sweet spot. Below right: Illustration showing new weight distribution of the lighter, 8-11 titanium bodies.



Left: Sole of the 915 D3. Below: SureFit adjustable hosel settings.



LOFT	+1.5°	MOST A·3 DRAW	B·3	A·4	B·4
	+7.5°	D·3	C·3	D·4	C·4
	STD RH LOFT	A·2	B·2	A·1	B·1
	-7.5°	D·2	C·2	D·1	MOST C·1 FADE
RH		1.5° UPRIGHT	.75° UPRIGHT	STD RH LIE	.75° FLAT
LIE					



# ALPHA FEMALE

I was looking forward to taking the Callaway Alpha 816 with me to La Manga after testing the X2 Hot last year - a driver I really enjoyed playing with - and if Callaway could improve on that then I would be impressed.

Pulling off the cherry red classically shaped head cover to reveal the matt black driver just added to me wanting to get this baby out on the course, it really is a great design, no gimmicks and with its deep face it certainly looked like it could punish a golf ball.







## TECHNOLOGY

First up is Callaway's R-Moto technology, this gives the Alpha 816 a thinner face which helps the ball fly off the face faster at impact, and when that works with the deeper face design and its lower centre of gravity, it helps reduce spin rate which is where the Alpha 816 double diamond helps get you some extra distance.

Callaway state their "Dual Distance Chambers" can add an extra 1mph to your ball speed and that can only be good news. The Dual Chambers helps you with the ball flight you are trying to achieve, depending if you are looking for a draw or fade ball flight you move the weight to the right or left chamber. You can then decide the trajectory of your ball flight, now if you hit the ball high or low on the clubface you can now match putting the weight right behind the face at impact.

On top of that you can also control the loft using the OptiFit adjustable hosel, which goes up by 2° and down by 1° and S = Stated loft. There is also the draw setting = D or neutral setting = N giving you 8 different variations to choose from.

## CLUB TESTED

**Callaway Big Bertha, Alpha 816 Double Black Diamond**

**LOFT** 9°

**SHAFT** Aldila Rogue 60

**FLEX** Stiff

**SET UP** Std Loft, Draw bias

**RRP** £429 / €530 / \$499



## CONCLUSION

I loved the Alpha 816, the ball flight and the sound at impact were very impressive and I was getting plenty of distance. What I also like is the look and feel of the club, it looks really mean and moody at address with its matt black finish as if it was telling me, OK time to get down to business.

With all the technology on offer I definitely recommend you get fitted, there is a lot of tech in this club to understand but once you do it's a club I know you will enjoy playing, I certainly have.



Top left to right:  
Illustration showing how the gravity core and face design works.  
View at address.  
Callaway's gravity core weight system. 816 Double Diamond toe and crown view.

Left: Illustration of Callaway's gravity core weight chambers. The Alpha 816s thinner face design.





James Mason finds out how Titleist's Active Recoil Channel technology has turned the hybrid into a powerful club in a golfer's armoury

Like the 915 driver I was looking forward to taking the new Titleist 816 H2 Hybrid with me to Morocco to test. Hybrids have become such a versatile club in a golfer's armoury, they can be utilised on longer par 3s, chipping from rough and semi rough around the green, they are great for longer shots out of rough and of course are fantastic replacement clubs for those who have trouble with their longer irons.



# LETHAL WEAPON



## TECHNOLOGY

The 816 H2 is packed with technology, the main one being the Active Recoil Channel that Titleist are using throughout their new range of drivers, fairway woods and hybrids. The channel along with the ultra thin face work together to deliver you a powerful, low spinning ball flight.

The Active Recoil Channel flexes the whole face at impact and then recoils to put all the energy you have created during your swing back into the ball powering it off the ultra thin face as it recoils.

The ultra thin face increases ball speed not just in the sweet spot but across the entire face of the club, this works in conjunction with the constant thickness face insert that is made from high-strength carpenter steel.

The centre of gravity in the 816 H2 has been improved and moves lower and deeper in the club and helps increase the clubs launch angle, while still keeping its high MOI for optimum forgiveness and stability.

"I FOUND MYSELF USING THE HYBRID MORE ON SECOND SHOTS ON PAR 5s THAN I DID PULLING OUT MY 3-WOOD"



## CONCLUSION

Like the 915 driver, I really enjoyed playing with the 816 H2 hybrid and still have it in my bag at the moment. The club sits behind the ball perfectly and with the adjustability working with the recoil channel and thinner face, all helped gain me added yards. I found myself using the hybrid more on second shots on par 5s than I did pulling out my 3-wood.

But as I said about the 915 driver, I do think the SureFit hosel needs to be a bit more intuitive. I do like the idea of being able to adjust the loft as well as the lie on the club and I think being able to adjust trajectory as well as shot shape gives golfers more options to combat different types of courses and weather conditions.

If you are in the market for a new hybrid I would certainly make sure you put the 816 H2 on your testing list, the technology on these clubs have come a long way in a short amount of time. If you haven't got a hybrid in your bag, I would highly recommend you get one and in the 815 H2 you will have a powerful weapon in your armoury.



### Club tested: ▶

Titleist 816 H2

Loft: 21°

Shaft: Mitsubishi Rayon  
Diamana S+80

Flex: Stiff

RRP: £205 / \$269 / €260





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# SCARE FACE

## EVNROLL

### ER1

James Mason puts Evnroll's ER1 revolutionary milled face putter through its paces in Morocco, Birmingham and Surrey and wins a few unusual prizes along the way.

Putters are such a unique piece of golf equipment, along with your wedges it is the most used club in the bag and depending on how good you are you will use it anywhere between 25 - 40 times during a round of golf.

No matter what kind of technology goes into a putter it will always come down to when you first pick up the club, how it feels in your hands, how it looks to your eye at address and last but not least how it feels at impact on that first putt.



Close up of the  
ER1s milled face.



---

## TECHNOLOGY

Firstly let me go through the technology that the Evnroll has incorporated in their range of putters. The main tech is the milled face, the pattern is a revolutionary design and when you run your finger across the face you can feel the milling across the whole surface. You have all heard of the "Sweet Spot" on a club, but this milling makes the whole face sweet.

"Our unique progressive mill pattern not only broadens the sweet spot across the entire contact area, but also gently gears the ball back to the target line to ensure even heel and toe putts roll online and virtually the same distance as centre hits." Stated Guerin Rife, renowned putter designer.

The technology helps the ball roll off the face at a consistent speed, so even on off centre putts the technology is helping you with your distance control and the ball will

roll to the distance you intended, even if you hadn't hit it out of the middle.

At address, apart from the white line alignment at the back of the putter, there are two dots sitting on the top line of the putter, these sit either side of the centre cavity sightline. 90% of putts are missed below the hole, depending on the type of break on the putt you are looking at – be it left to right or right to left – lining the ball on the outside of each dot will help your ball stay on the high side of the hole longer, giving you more chance of holing out.

The putters come in three different lengths 33", 34" and 35", but each putter comes with a weight that compliments its length. Each head comes in a specified weight that compliments the length. Head weights are 15 grams heavier to allow for a 30-gram counter-weight, this is the combination tour players have found gives them the greatest distance control.

No matter what kind of technology goes into a putter, it will always come down to when you first pick up the club and how it feels in your hands



### Putter Tested:

Evnroll ER1

Shaft: Evnroll putter

Height: 33"

RRP: £249 / \$329 / €320

Top: Two dots on the topline help alignment on breaking putts.  
Below: Alignment aid and back view.

---

## CONCLUSION

I tested the 33" Evnroll ER1 putter and as soon as I got it in my hands I knew by the weight and the look at address I was going to enjoy testing this putter. What I also liked was the thick grip, it wasn't as thick as some out there but it just felt perfect in my hands.

I have had this in my bag now for over two months. After the initial testing in Morocco I have also used it when I spent two days with *Golf Monthly* at the Belfry and a golf day with the Balmy Army winning all my matches and several alcoholic prizes plus a Barmy Army songbook and membership!!

I think you can guess how much I enjoyed playing with this putter and how successful I have been using it, but just in case you haven't picked up on that, I highly recommend you get one of these in your hands before you make your next putter purchase, you will be more than happy you did.



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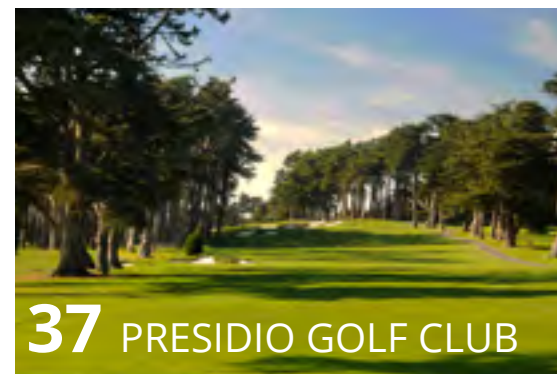


**NORTHERN  
CALIFORNIA**  
**41** GREENHORN CREEK RESORT

VIEW.COM

# DESTINATIONS

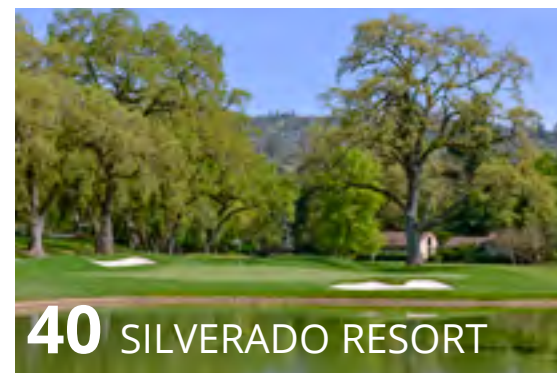
REVIEW



**37** PRESIDIO GOLF CLUB



**38** WENTE VINEYARDS

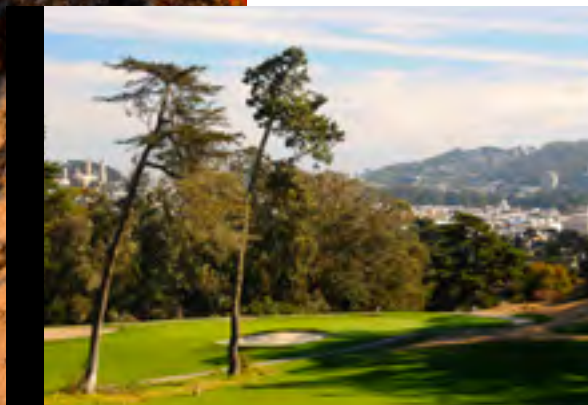


**40** SILVERADO RESORT



# CALIFORNIA DREAMING

James Mason goes off the beaten track to fulfill a long-held wish to explore some stunning scenery and great golf



Main: Pacific Grove Links in Monterrey.  
Left: Presidio GC, San Francisco.

Northern California has some of the most acclaimed golf courses in the world – Pebble Beach, Cypress Point, Olympic Club and Spanish Bay to name just a few. Here I take a look at the hidden gems in this spectacular region of the United States – and believe me there are some great tracks out here offering Pacific Ocean links golf, parkland golf, TPC golf and courses that are so far off the beaten track they supply ‘Caddyshacks’ and cabins for you to stay overnight, with BBQ areas thrown in for good measure.

Of course there is so much else to see and do in Northern California that you may not want to take on the 20 courses in twelve days like I did. You could play 18 holes in the morning then hit the wine-tasting trails of Sonoma and Napa, or



sample the delights of Monterey and its Aquarium and embark on some truly stunning drives.

Golf in California is for everyone: groups on tour, couples wanting to hit the wine trail as well as the golf trail, or simply single golfers. No need to play a course by yourself here unless you want to. They pair everyone up, and like me you'll meet some great people – from fire-fighters in San Francisco to pool guys in Monterey, a doctor from Canada or a Japanese couple on a golfing holiday. It's all out here for you, so get those bags and clubs packed. You're in for a journey of a lifetime.

Half Moon Bay North Course

In 1997 Arthur Hills was given some superb land to work with, and by all accounts the course could've been even better if they had gone through with his original design. That's not to say that what is here now is not a tremendous track – because it is, and not just the famed finishing stretch of holes from the 16th. All of the par-3s are strong – there is not a weak hole among them. The change in elevation from the tees to the fairways offers some great views of the ocean. It's as if the course whispers to you, wanting you to play your best golf and succumb to this wild beauty. And wild it can certainly be – and when you least expect it. The wind can pick up and, like any links course, wreck that immaculate scorecard.

From the 394-yard par-4 opening dog-leg right with its green that sits below the fairway and with an ocean backdrop, to the par-5 18th where you have a blind tee shot over a pedestrian pathway, you will enjoy this track immensely.

TPC Harding Park

Harding Park has hosted several PGA events, the Presidents Cup in 2009 and more recently the WGC Match Play Championship. The course opened in 1925 and was named after President Warren Harding. It was designed by Willie Watson, who also conceived the Olympic Club along with Sam Whiting which is situated just across the road, its unmistakeable clubhouse visible from the 13th tee – a hole which I feel is one of the best on the course. In fact the 13th starts a run of very tough holes that make up the finishing stretch and has no doubt put paid to many a scorecard.

The course starts slowly with a fairly easy 395-yard par-4. But what makes this course an uncompromising track is the small greens with their many contours and complexes, some of which will (I think) only become apparent once you've played this course a couple of times. And don't think you're going to come here and overwhelm this track with your driver – apart from the course being over 7,000 yards in length, strategy plays a big part here and if you're in the wrong part of the fairway you'll have some tough second shots into very narrow target areas. I'm informed that the course is always damp because of the climate in this part of town, so make sure you take a windcheater jacket and jumper because the weather really does change from hole to hole.

Presidio Golf Course

This place has a long history and my two playing partners for the day, Chris and Rubin who work for the San Francisco Fire Department, inform me that until 1996 you could only play the course if you were in the armed forces or invited to play by someone in the armed forces.

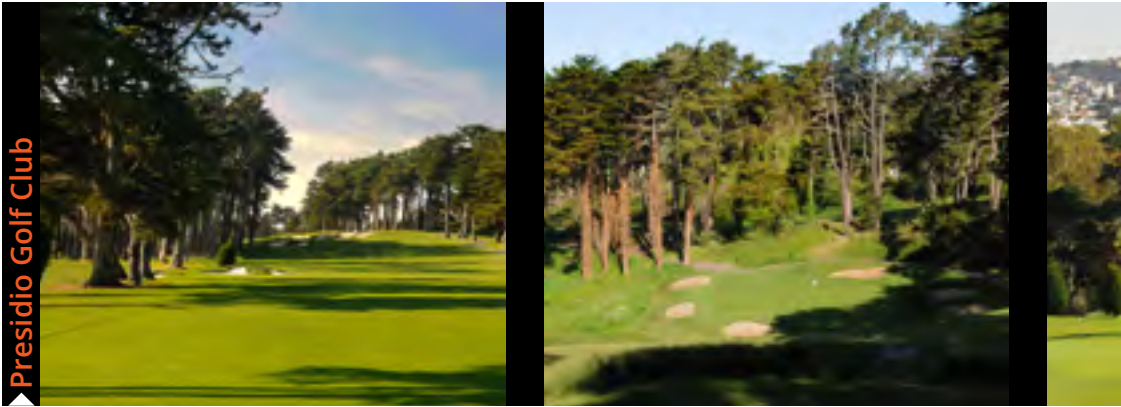
The original course was designed by John Lawson in 1895 after Colonel William M Graham, who was then the Presidio's commander allowed a group of businessmen known as the San Francisco Golf & Country Club to establish a nine-hole course. In 1910 it expanded to its full 18 holes, with Robert Wood Johnstone commissioned as the architect. A decade later British course architects Fowler & Simpson were commissioned to lengthen the course and install a watering system. Thousands more eucalyptus and Monterey pine trees were planted along the course in the 1930s when a tree nursery was built, and today those trees make this one of the most beautiful courses I've played.

The Presidio has been a refugee camp for survivors of the 1906 earthquake, and prisoners from Alcatraz were used to help build the course. When you stand on that first tee from its elevated position, it all seems somehow perfect. The trees truly make this track, not only from a visual and course-strategy standpoint but also as they help shape its microclimate. If you like launching your driver, you're going to love this

Top to bottom: Half Moon Bay Ocean Course 3rd, 16th and 4th holes. TPC Harding Park 11th & 18th. Presidio Golf Club 9th, 4th & 15th holes



Presidio has been a refugee camp for survivors of the 1906 earthquake, and prisoners from Alcatraz were used to help build the course.





track. You can watch your ball sail through the trees from some beautifully designed elevated tees, none more so than the short par-5 2nd hole where after a great tee shot you can leave yourself a long to medium iron. But beware – you could be better off just playing up and wedging on.

I love all the par-3s including the 13th where the green is blocked out from the tee by an oak tree that sits in a small valley, and at 175 yards to an uphill green that is surrounded by out of bounds it's a tough little hole. The 4th and 15th par-3s are both played from elevated tees and how I feel that par-3s should be designed. Each nine finishes with a par-5 and both are very birdie-able. I feel the ninth is the tougher of the two as you need to be in the right position on this dog-leg right to see the green. The 18th has out of bounds down the left and trees down the right making it quite a claustrophobic hole from the tee, but a good drive will see you in position to make the green in two.

Course at Wente Vineyards

Standing on the elevated first tee on this Greg Norman-designed track, you're filled with a sense of awe. To be clear, it's not the best designed hole I've seen but it's a great opener and the sheer contrast between the brown fescue surrounding hills and lush green fairways sends a shudder down my spin. The view really is that good.

The vistas all around the course really do show off the beauty of the area, and it's jaw-dropping stuff. It's not a track you can walk as there are some major climbs, none more so than the replica Lombard Street in San Francisco where you need to ascend from the 9th green to the 10th tee. It's another course where all of the par-3s are well-designed holes, and apart from the third they are played from elevated tees which adds to the uniqueness.

It's one of those courses where its beauty makes you want to play well because an ugly shot would just seem so out of place, like Shrek turning up at London Fashion Week.

There are lots of photo opportunities and no doubt when you get back to the clubhouse while sampling some of the local wines you can text your friends stuck in work with shots of you posing with this stunning track as a backdrop.

Adobe Creek GC

This track is one of three run by the same company, the others being Rooster Run and Windsor GC which I'll be playing this afternoon. Adobe Creek was purchased by the group just over a year ago after it'd been through a lot of problems and with the lack of investment in the course you can imagine how run down it must have got. But all credit to the owners for bring it back to life.

The design is good with plenty of mounding along the sides of the fairways, which help to frame each of the holes. I really enjoy the back nine, which offers some great views of the hills that surround the city. Apparently they're even better when the tops are covered in snow.

This is another Robert Trent Jones Jnr course and I find the design a good test of golf. The Americans like to call this a links type course – but more for the use of the mounding that frames the fairways than being by the sea with its tight sand-based compact grasses.

Water comes into play on seven holes. The finishing holes to each nine are strong and while the ninth gives you a birdie chance, the 18th is a tough par-4 finishing hole. Two of the four par-3s have water as a hazard and your choice of which colour tees to play from dictates how much water will come into play.

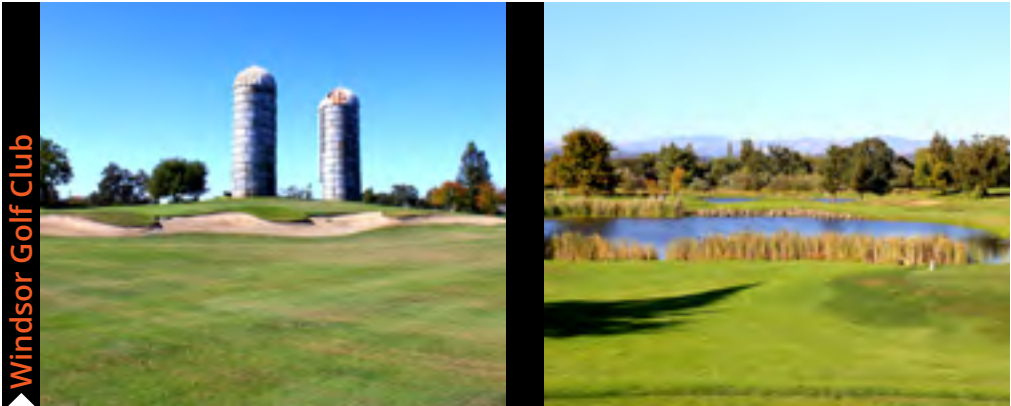
Windsor Golf Club

This venue opened for play in 1989 and you can see how the Fred Bliss design has now bedded in to become a tough challenge. Tough enough in fact that two of the holes, the second and seventh, were ranked in the top 10 toughest on the Nike Tour. They actually moved the tees up on the 432-yard second hole because it was too tough for the pros from the tips!

But for me this is your typical American parkland course. Everything is in great condition and the greens are quick but not too quick. To score well you need to put the ball in the right areas, but you could smash a driver if you wanted and then go from there. This becomes apparent on the par-4 third hole. It's 327 yards from the black tees and 297 yards from the blues, the two landmark grain silos standing as sentries on the left-hand side of the fairway, with so many dents in their sides they must feel like punch-drunk boxers, they've



Top to bottom:  
Wente Vineyards,  
12th, 18th, 7th &  
8th holes. Adobe  
Creek, 9th & 13th  
holes. Windsor, 3rd  
& 13th holes



“It’s a great opener and the sheer contrast between the brown fescue surrounding hills and lush green fairways sends a shudder down my spin.”



been hit so many times. There is a massive bunker protecting the front of the green. Now I know you are going to hit the driver – you’re on tour, why not? So when you’re playing your second shot from the bunker, remember you could have laid up!

All the par-3s are pretty tough with two of them being ranked as the seventh and eighth hardest holes on the course and it’s a true reflection of how they play. Not many courses get that right but Windsor certainly have. My favourite par-3 is the fifth which is played over a reedbed and creek that runs through the course.

I play 13 holes with Jason who is the pro here and when we got to the par-4 eighth hole which measures 368 yards with the green protected by water, he pulls driver and smashes it on the green, carrying everything but obviously no back spin so the ball bounces on and through the green, but I must admit I’m pretty impressed. I take 2-iron, wedge and hole the putt for birdie. Jason makes par, but to be fair I would rather have hit that drive.

**Sonoma Golf Club**

This is a private club that does take visitors and a course that I would very much recommend you play while you’re out here. Sam Whiting, who lists the Olympic Club among his many great achievements, designed this track that opened for play in 1928.

When the starter lets me loose I pull out the driver and crack and the impact echoes through the trees. I love that sound. The ball sails down the fairway and I’m off. Strange, I feel like a kid at Christmas. I just want to get out there, it looks so immaculate. Upon a second glance it’s clear why. There must be at least two people looking after every hole, or at least it feels that way. Later on I see guys heading out to fill divots. If I thought Windsor was in great condition, Sonoma GC takes it up another level. Even the members (I presumed they were members) are polite. They let me and my playing partner for the day – Tyler, a doctor from Canada – through. We actually go through two groups and make it round in three hours.

It’s a bit hard to name standout holes as I really enjoy them all. If there are weak holes on the course they would be the second and 12th but only when you compare them to the

other sixteen. The run from the sixth to the ninth is great, including the par-3 192-yard seventh which is a beautifully designed hole and aesthetically pleasing. I love the way the green on the eighth nestles in the land and is surrounded by trees on this long par-5, and the ninth is a great hole to finish this loop with – it’s uphill to a three-tiered green protected by bunkers. You really need to be in the right positions on this hole.

The 18th is a fitting finale. It offers everything. At 373 yards it’s not the longest and on this dog-leg right you could try and fly the bunker that protects it, leaving you a short iron in to this green. But make sure you are short of the pin – putting back down the slope could see you at least three-putting and maybe more and it would be a shame to end the round like that on this wonderful track.

**Northwood Golf Club**

When people talk about hidden gems, well, this really is one. And not until recently was it discovered that this was a Dr Alistair Mackenzie diamond of a gem.

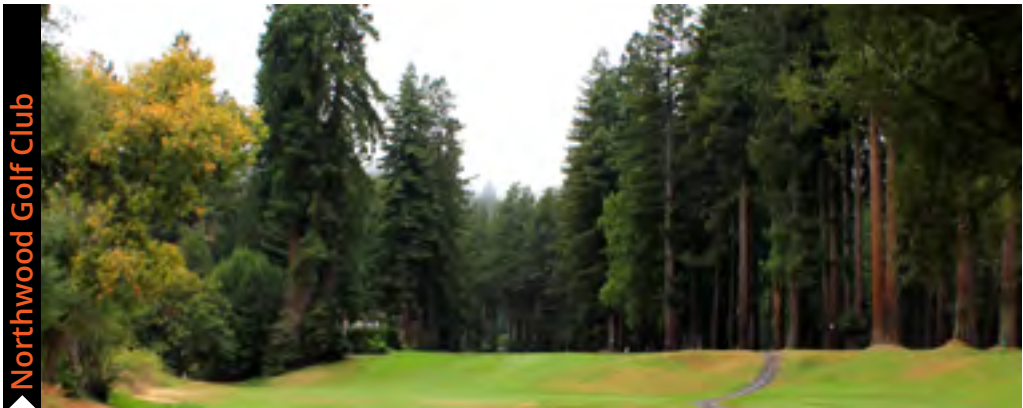
How he was ever allowed to carve this little nine-hole beauty through the tall redwoods is anyone’s guess, but when the presidents of the United States say they need a course to play on while they hold their annual meeting, I suppose you can get away with that sort of thing. All I know is I’m sure glad he did.

Once you’ve grabbed your driver from your bag and stood on the tee, took a look down the fairway and walked back to your bag to grab a long iron, you realise this is going to be a whole new experience. Because when people talk about a strategic course, this is the ultimate example. If I was going to build a nine-hole course this is exactly how I’d want it to be.

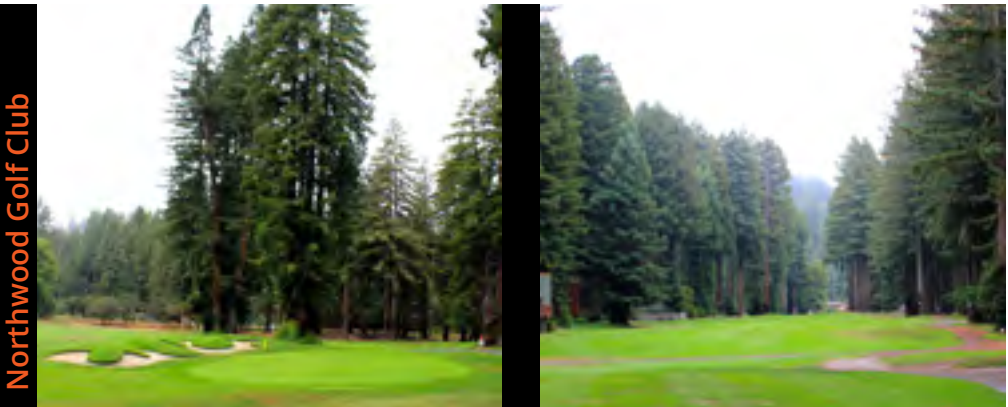
When I tell people I’ve just played at Northwood, the first words out of everyone’s mouths are: “That’s a fun course isn’t it? And yes, it really is. Plus its one that I would recommend you take the time to play because it’s tough but fun. There is a restaurant by the clubhouse and after a bite to eat you’ll be raring to go at it again, this time with the knowledge of where to place the ball to score. But one thing that you’ll certainly walk away with is a smile and salute to the good doctor.



Top to bottom:  
Somona, 2nd,  
11th, 14th & 18th.  
Northwood, 9th,  
5th & 2nd holes



“I feel like a kid  
at Christmas.  
I just want to  
get out there,  
it looks so  
immaculate.!”





Links at Bodega Harbour

If you take the same route that I do from Northwood, you end up on a beautiful coastal road leading down to Bodega Bay. This is where part of the famous Alfred Hitchcock film The Birds was filmed.

The course was built in two nines, the second nine being built some 10 years after the first and sitting on land right by the ocean. There are some spectacular views, none more so than when you're standing on the fifth tee overlooking the fourth green and looking out to the Pacific Ocean and Bodega Bay. It really is a stunning sight and the foghorn at the point of the bay sounding every 30 seconds or so only adds to its unique and rugged beauty.

At this moment in time a new pro-shop is being built so the course is playing back to front, but the original finishing stretch from 16-18 is a great run of holes. The 16th is a drivable par-4 – unless the wind off the sea comes straight at you – over a protected reedbed and straight out to sea. There are only the dunes between the green and the shoreline. Unless you're carrying you have to leave your buggy and take the required clubs with you to play the par-3 17th. All the yardages are posted and trolleys are provided if you want to take all your clubs across the wooden footpath that meanders through the reedbed.

The 17th as you can imagine can play anything from a wedge to 3-iron depending on the wind and today it's truly up and against and I hit a 4-iron. The reeds come into play again, running round and in front of the green. It also has four bunkers protecting it and the hill on the right, so you really need to hit the dance floor or you could be racking up a big score.

The 18th is 461 yards in length, but you have to hit an iron to the top of a hill, then play your second shot again out towards the sea with the green below. It's a tough hole to finish on and if you do try to take it on with a driver you'll lose your ball or be hacking round in a lot of growth and wreck your card when you'd done so well to make it this far!

Chardonnay Golf Club

At 6.45am I pull in to the car park at Chardonnay. I get my clubs and shoes and am introduced to my two playing partners who are

from Japan, on a golf tour themselves and have already played at Pebble Beach. The couple don't speak much English but we communicate through the universal language that is golf.

Like most courses in this part of the world you're going to need a buggy and you'll find most green fees do include the buggy hire. There is a lot of walking between holes but at least that gives you a chance to take your camera with you – something I'd definitely recommend because when the sun burns off the early morning mist, the vistas here are awe-inspiring.

The first thing you notice are the hole markers – here they use old wine barrels. There are five teeing options which are named Sovereign, Imperial, Double Magnum, Magnum and Bottle and each hole's name continues that wine connection. The course was designed by Algie Pulley and opened for play in 1991. As the venue's website reveals, there is a lot of wildlife on this track with bird species including hawks, kites, kestrels, hummingbirds and occasionally a golden eagle. There are also rabbits, squirrels, foxes and a bobcat family on the 16th hole which are great fun to watch.

Silverado Resort North Course

There are two courses at Silverado, the North and South, which opened for play in April 1967 when the Silverado Country Club & Resort came into being. The original 18-hole course was redesigned into two 18-hole courses by Robert Trent Jones Jnr, and the North course, which is the track I play, has just been through another redesign, this time by 1976 Open Champion Johnny Miller.

The course is in pristine condition. I've never seen holes cut so sharp, not even when I played in good amateur golf tournaments. You would've thought they have a major tour event coming through anytime soon, they are that good. They have machines that rack the bunkers. They even have machines to blow leaves off the cart paths. You can see why I'm pretty impressed by the condition of the course. Even the tees are in great shape.

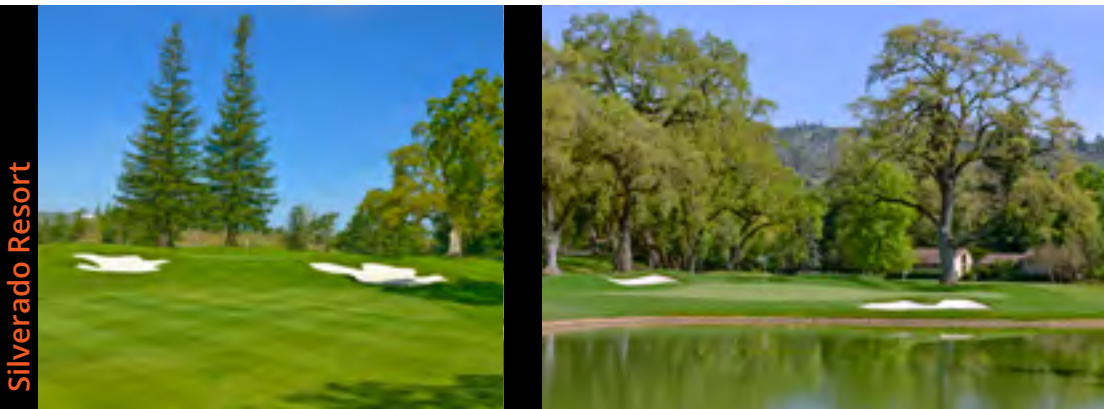
The standout holes for me are the par-4 458-yard sixth. It's a great driving hole and the way the green sits in the trees, surrounded by the traps, it just looks stunning. The par-4 347-yard



Top to bottom:  
Links at Bodega  
Harbour, 6th, 17th  
& 14th. Chardonnay,  
4th & 14th.  
Silverado Resort  
North Course, 2nd  
& 11th holes.



“The course is in  
pristine condition.  
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eighth is a dog-leg left and from the back tees you play over the creek and then up to a raised green, which again is protected by some great bunkering.

I also enjoy the finishing run of holes from 14 through to 18, but a special mention to the 17th as I love the design of this hole. It's a dog-leg left of only 357 yards from the back tee, but with the dew still on the ground and the sun breaking through the early morning mist, it sits beautifully on the eye. I must admit I take a moment not to think about the shot I have to play but the sheer beauty of the hole and the way it just seems to be at one with nature. California dreaming? This moment certainly is, and one I hope you too get to experience.

**Hiddenbrooke Golf Club**

A 25-minute drive from Silverado is the Arnold Palmer-designed Hiddenbrooke, a course that has been rated in the top five of public golf courses in the US. Going by the courses on the list, a few that I have played, I'm really looking forward to playing this track.

My playing partners for the day are Ray, who is a member at the course, and Louie, who is on holiday and visiting friends in California – two great guys who are a pleasure to meet and play golf with.

The course is surrounded by hills and there are some great views – Arnold has used the topography to great effect. There are some fantastic par-3s out here, none more so than the 151-yard 13th hole that is played from an elevated tee across a valley to the green below. It's an even better hole from the very back tee, but they have closed that down now due to the effort it took to get a mower up there and maintain it. But do go and have a look.

The 15th is another par-3 played from an elevated tee, but this one weighs in at 202 yards and although it's downhill, because of the wind that's apparently always against you the hole plays that length. There are actually three par-3s on the back nine and the third one is the 17th, which is sandwich between two par-5s and played over water. Make sure you take a look at the 16th from the very back tee. It's played from an elevated tee and if you get a good shot away you will have around 279 yards left to the green – the same distance Louie has

left himself. He manages to smash his 3-wood to three feet and then misses the putt!

The 18th is a great finishing hole, and when you play your second or third shot into the green you will see why. It's like playing into a mini amphitheatre surrounded by bunkers and mounds.

**Greenhorn Creek Resort**

Greenhorn Creek is about an hour-and-a-half drive from downtown Sacramento and is one of three resort courses I am to play over the next couple of days. Resort courses are very big over here and I can see why – it's a great way to spend a weekend in one of the many fairway cottages that the resort rent out. But Greenhorn has something called the 'Caddyshack' that sleeps up to 12 people with its own barbeque area, living room and kitchen facilities. It's amazing and if you are a group of golfers looking for a place to play and stay, this has to be high on your list.

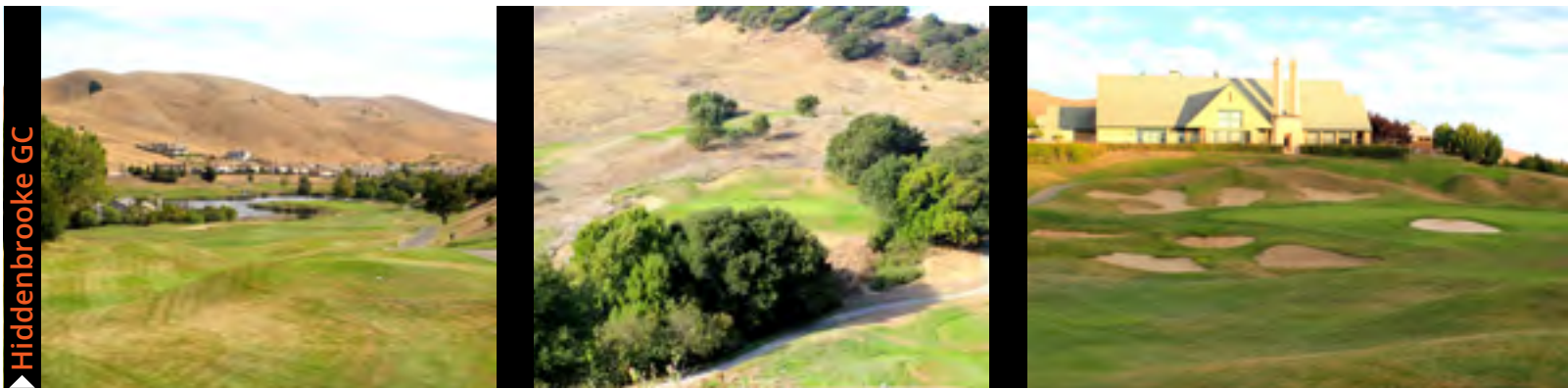
The course was originally designed by Don Boos and opened for play in 1997, and Robert Trent Jones Jnr was commissioned to undertake a redesign in 2002. It sits in the Sierra foothills and you will see lots of evidence of 'grinding rocks' which were apparently used by the Miwuk Indians. There are also lots of reminders of the rock mines that used to be in the area. Both leave their unique mark on this beautiful little track.

I enjoy all the par-3s but the course's signature hole has to be the par-3 13th that is played from an elevated tee with some beautiful views out to the Sierras, water front-right and two big bunkers at the back of the green all making for a great golf hole.

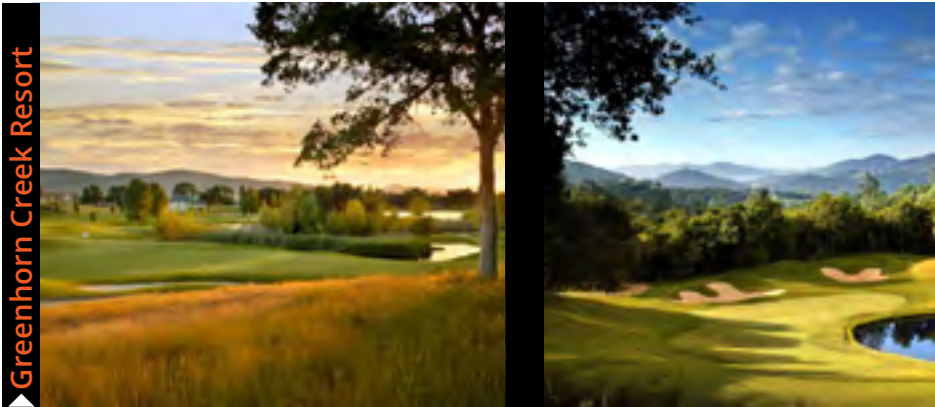
I was going to start naming standout holes but I love the back nine. Once you get in among the trees from the 11th hole, it becomes a thinker's course and a track I really enjoy playing. I'm sure you will too, especially if you stay at the Caddyshack. You'll be wanting to get out and play it again and sit around cooking steak, drinking beer and looking back on what a great challenge this hidden gem is.

**Saddle Creek Resort**

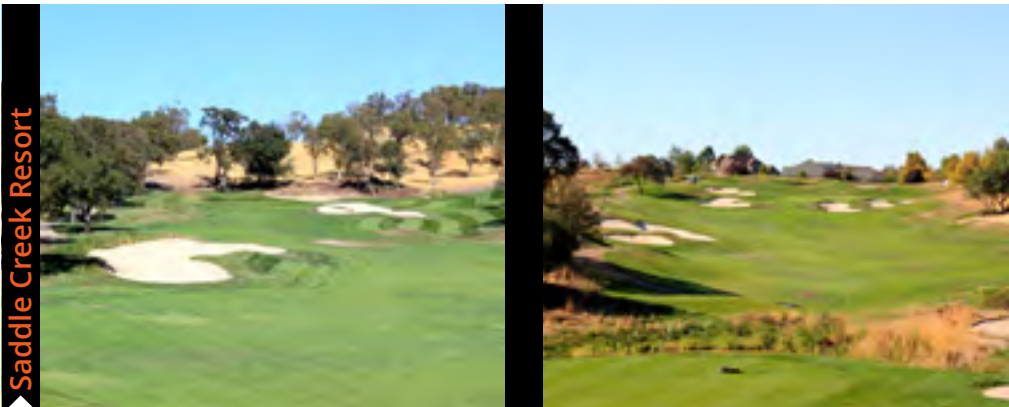
As I stated earlier this course is only a 20-minute drive from Greenhorn Creek and



Top to bottom:  
Hiddenbrooke,  
5th, 13th & 18th.  
Greenhorn Creek,  
5th & 13th. Saddle  
Creek, 7th & 12th  
holes.



“The course is surrounded by hills and there are some great views – Arnold has used the topography to great effect.”





what a stunning design this track is. It runs up to just over 6,800 yards and has five teeing options. The course opened for play in 1996 and has already racked up plenty of awards from Golf Week and Golf Digest magazines.

Designed by Carter Morrish and sitting in the Sierra foothills, Saddle Creek offers you everything. It has sensational views from some well-designed elevated tees, so you can see where you need to be and what the hole has to offer. It has plenty of wildlife, too, including wild turkey – which look pretty big to me as I approach the eighth tee! Add numerous lakes and creeks it becomes not only a great design but also a challenging golf course.

There are holes out here where you can grip-and-rip it, none more so than on the run home from the 15th to the 18th. If you like to let loose with the big stick, these are the holes for you. When you’re standing on the elevated 18th it just invites you to smash away. But don’t be mistaken – this is not a smash-it-anywhere course. There are some great holes out there and I really enjoy both nines – not a weak hole among them – and its one of those courses that you’d love to sample again. If I were to be pushed on standout holes then I would have to name the run from the sixth to the ninth, and the 12th.

Stevinson Ranch

Stevinson Ranch is somewhat remote. Even the guys in the shop, Bob and Mark, both admit it’s “in the middle of nowhere.” So how come a course that sits in a town with a population of only 400, wins so many awards and manages to keep plenty of staff employed?

Well, it’s word-of-mouth which brings more and more golfers to this part of the world – people who, like me, have had to drive at least an hour to get here. But once you arrive you’re so glad you made the journey. This is another track, like Greenhorn and Saddle Creeks, which has made full use of its facilities. These guys have not only put up a “caddyshack” with barbeque for the people who rent out their cabins, they’ve also installed a swimming pool – a great idea as it gets pretty hot in this part of the world. I play in late September and it’s still in the 90s.

The course offers you four teeing options

named Tournament, Professional, Champion and Resort. What they should be named is Tough, Tougher, Even Tougher and Are You Sure You Want To Play From Here?! Put it this way: two sets of those tees come in at over 7,000 yards, or you can mix and match – which is what I do, playing from the Champion tees that measure just over 6,600 yards and playing the par-3s from the back tees, and I find this combination perfect.

I enjoy the course immensely. Its’ tough but fair and fun to play. I relish the par-3s. There are two over water – the fourth and 16th – and you also have a couple of driveable par-4s. These are all risk-reward because if you are not spot-on then the bunkering on both the eighth and 14th will just eat your ball up.

Bayonet

It’s 5.45am and I’m back on the road again – this time for the two-hour drive to the Monterey Peninsula – and all week I’ve been hearing great things about this track, especially after its recent \$14 million renovation. ‘It’s one tough course’ is the theme that’s been running through the many conversations I’ve engaged in. Well, after chatting to Julio Rodriguez, the tournament coordinator at Bayonet and Black Horse, I learn the renovation took place back in 2008 so it’s had plenty of time to bed in. Gene Bates undertook the work but the original course dates back to 1954, and as you can gather from the name it has a military history.

The course sits on the site of the former Fort Ord founded by General Robert B McClure. It was christened in honour of the 7th Infantry Light Fighter Division which was nicknamed the ‘Bayonet Division’.

Standing on the tee and looking out at this beautifully designed hole, I give myself a little pep-talk then tee the ball up and smash. I’m off and running. I’ve made the fairway and for the next three hours I’m seduced by the sheer beauty of the place. When I say beauty I don’t mean in an Augusta National way – although it has that about it. I mean its ruggedness. It’s a man’s course. You know it’s going to test every part of your game and you will not only need finesse and touch around the greens, but strength from the tee and also from the rough if you miss the fairways.



Top to bottom:  
Stevinson Ranch,  
3rd, 4th, 6th & 16th.  
Bayonet, 12th, 17th  
& 18th holes.



“It was christened in honour of the 7th Infantry Light Fighter Division which was nicknamed the ‘Bayonet Division”





The motto of the 7th Infantry Division was ‘Light, Silent and Deadly’ and Gene Bates has kept that motto alive and well on these greens. I’m not going to go into standout holes here because they all stood out. It’s a true test of golf and I love every moment of playing this track. Truly a must-play course.

### Camel Valley Ranch

The journey from Bayonet to Carmel Valley Ranch (CVR) has to be one of the most amazing trips I have ever taken. I stay at Sanctuary Beach Resort which is a five-minute drive from Bayonet. I leave for Carmel around 7am so I could be at CVR for an 8.20am tee time. The early morning mist in Monterey is visible and the SatNav takes me on a road that winds higher and higher until suddenly, as I cruise around a bend, I emerge out of the mist which is now below me as the road still climbs. It’s one of the best views I’ve ever experienced. I just have to stop and take a look.

Back to the golf course, and when you drive through the gates to this resort and get a glimpse of the track you know you’re going to be in for a great day’s golf. But the true gems of this course are not unveiled until you get to the back nine. That’s not to say that the front nine has nothing to offer – you’ll see that’s far from the truth when you stand on the beautiful opening hole. At 341 yards it’s not the longest or toughest of starts, but the view from this elevated tee gives you an insight into what’s to come.

This Pete Dye course opened for play in 1981 and sits in the foothills of the Santa Lucia Mountains, and as you start to play this stunning little track you’ll spot plenty of wildlife like quail, rabbits and foxes. But for me the best part is watching the wild turkeys and deer that just saunter around the 12th tee and fairway, quite amazing. The deer don’t move or flinch when I hit my tee shot.

Now everyone will talk about the view from the 11th tee, and make sure you go to the very back tee even if you’re not playing from them and take a look – the view is breathtaking. I’ve stood on some stunning elevated tees in my time around the world and take my word for it. This is right up there with them. There’s no better feeling than smashing a driver and watching it sail through the air and, after what seems like an

age, hit the fairway below. Well, the right rough actually, but it rolled back out onto the fairway – a bit of local knowledge for you!

There are four tee options that range from 6,117 to 4,433, but it certainly plays a lot tougher than that yardage would suggest. Water features on five of the holes but (I feel) only comes into play on the fourth and fifth holes. The finishing holes to each nine are strong holes, especially the 18th – it’s a great finishing hole and will leave you with nothing but fond memories of those views from most of the tees on the back nine.

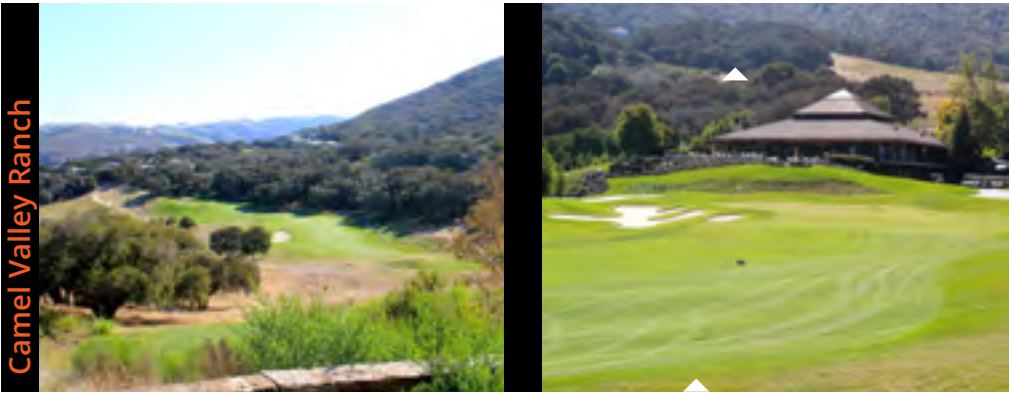
### Quail Lodge Golf Club

Five minutes down the road from Carmel Valley Ranch you have Quail Lodge – a course that has its own little bit of history. This is the place that Bobby Clampett grew up on and where Doris Day’s beautiful home looks down on the 17th green and 18th tee. The designer was Robert Muir Graves. I’m fortunate enough to play with Ross Kroeker, the head pro, and it emerges that his uncle owned the construction company that undertook the building of this course.

If you fancy getting out of your cart for once, this is the track that you can do that on. There are not too many hills and the temperature here today is hot but not unpleasantly so. The course offers three teeing options ranging from 6,449 to 5,478. Standing on the first tee you really do get a sense of what is to come. Although the course is pretty flat there are a lot of tight driving holes and with the hill and trees on your left and the road on your right, anything on the fairway is a great shot.

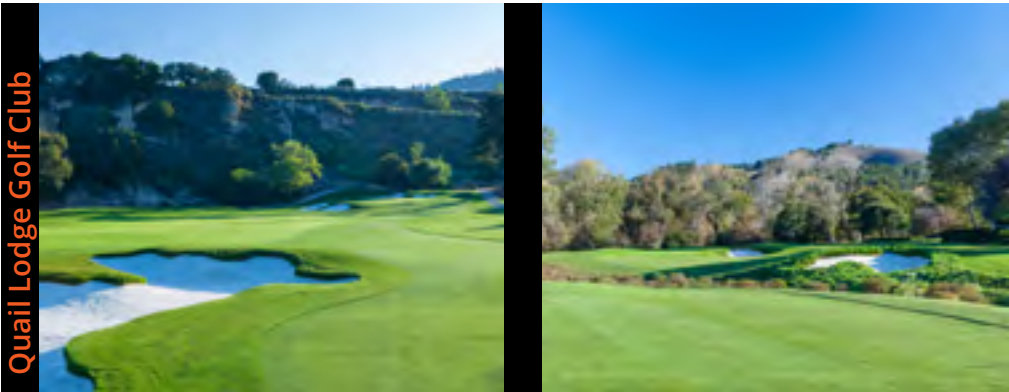
Quail lodge is very much another strategic course and putting the ball in the right areas on the fairway and greens is a premium here. But there are a couple of quirky holes, the 14th and 15th, which are back-to-back par-5 dogleg lefts, taking you round in a full circle similar to the ying and yang symbol.

My favourite run is from the ninth to the 12th. The ninth is more like a right turn than a dogleg right (the 16th is also another right-turn designed hole) and is another three-shot par-5. The 10th and 11th get the back nine off to a great start, with both running through a funnel of trees with hills to the right. There are some great views from both tees.



Top to bottom::  
Camel Valley  
Ranch, 11th & 18th.  
Quail Lodge Golf  
Club, 16th & 6th  
holes

“I emerge out of the mist which is now below me as the road still climbs. It’s one of the best views I’ve ever experienced”



Quail Lodge Golf Club

## JOURNEY PLANNER

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Half Moon Bay Lodge

Half Moon Bay

W: [halfmoonbaylodge.com](http://halfmoonbaylodge.com)

#### Stanford Court Hotel

San Francisco

W: [marriott.com](http://marriott.com)

#### Inn Above Tide

Sausalito

W: [innabovetide.com](http://innabovetide.com)

See review on page xx

#### Bodega Bay Lodge

Bodega Bay

W: [bodegabaylodge.com](http://bodegabaylodge.com)

#### Hampton Inn & Suites

Windsor

W: [hamptoninn3.hilton.com](http://hamptoninn3.hilton.com)

#### Meritage

Napa

W: [themeritageresort.com](http://themeritageresort.com)

#### Citizen Hotel

Sacramento

W: [jdvhotels.com](http://jdvhotels.com)

#### Greenhorn Creek Resort

Angels Camp

W: [greenhorncreek.com](http://greenhorncreek.com)

#### Saddle Creek Resort

[saddlecreek.com](http://saddlecreek.com)

#### Stevinson Ranch

W: [stevinsonranch.com](http://stevinsonranch.com)

#### Sanctuary Beach Resort

Monterey

W: [thesanctuarybeachresort.com](http://thesanctuarybeachresort.com)

See review on page xx

#### Gosby House Inn

Monterey

W: [gosbyhouseinn.com](http://gosbyhouseinn.com)

#### Ritz Carlton Half Moon Bay

Half Moon Bay

W: [ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com)



Pacific Grove Links

This venue may be known locally as ‘the poor man’s Pebble Beach’ but I realise that the only relationship it shares with the latter course is that some holes run along the Pacific Ocean.

The only thing that separates the holes on the back nine from the beach is Sunset Drive and I can see how that road could live up to its name – it must be a beautiful time of day to drive down that road. I team up with Roger and John who run their own pool business and have plenty of stories that keep me entertained along the way – that and watching the seagulls and ravens raid their buggy in a vain search for scraps while the guys are putting out on the 10th and 11th holes.

Two different individuals designed the course. H Chandler Egan designed the front nine in 1932 and Jack Neville designed the back nine in 1960. It’s not the longest course but it’s fun and this is the emotional reaction I receive from most people when you talk about this track. As I go round I can see the course isn’t in the greatest of condition. But like most greens I’ve played on this trip, these were firm and true. It’s not until you get to the back nine that this track comes into its own and you can see why people talk about it so much.

You’ll hear so many times when you are in the States that the course is based on a Scottish links, and when you get out there you find that they are not like a links course at all. But the back nine and especially the run of holes from the 11th to 16th can be truly said to resemble the links holes you’d find in Britain and Ireland. I didn’t play the course in a strong wind, but one look at the trees and the direction they grow and you can see how the gales must whip in off the Pacific, making this a tough test.

Standout holes for me have to be the 310-yard seventh and the back nine. It’s a bit of a shame that I play it on a misty grey day because it’s clearly a fun course.

Right: 12th hole at Pacific Grove Links



JOURNEY PLANNER

WHERE TO PLAY

Central California

Stevinson Ranch GC

W: stevinsonranch.com

Gold Country

Greenhorn Creek GC

W: greenhorncreek.com

Saddle Creek GC

W: saddlecreek.com

Monterey

Bayonet GC

W: bayonetblackhorse.com

Carmel Valley Ranch GC

W: carmelvalleyranch.com

Quail Lodge GC

W: quailodge.com

Pacific Grove Golf Links

W: playpacificgrove.com

Napa

Silverado (North)

W: silveradoresort.com

Hiddenbrooke GC

W: hiddenbrookegolf.com

Chardonnay GC

W: chardonnaygolfclub.com

San Francisco

Ocean Course At Half Moon Bay

W: halfmoonbaygolf.com

TPC Harding Park GC

W: tpc.com/tpc-harding-park

Presidio GC

W: presidiegolf.com

Course at Wente Vineyards

W: wentevineyards.com

Sonoma

Links At Bodega Harbour

W: bodegaharbourgolf.com

Adobe Creek GC

W: adobecreek.com

Windsor GC

W: windsorgolf.com

Sonoma GC

W: sonomagolfclub.com

Northwood GC

W: northwoodgolf.com



# Top 100 *golf courses*



Royal Troon (Old) - Ayrshire & Arran, Scotland





47 THE INN ABOVE TIDE



REVIEW



VIEW.COM

HOTEL & SPA





## THE INN ABOVE TIDE

**Sausalito, USA**

By CHARMINE HIBBERT

We've just left the Wente Vineyards and heading west on interstate 580, there are some great views when you hit the Eastshore Freeway section that leads onto the Richmond San Rafael Bridge, I must admit I'm not a great lover of heights or bridges, but hey you have to get used to a bridge when you're in California, they love a bridge here and high ones at that!!

But its when we hit Marin City and downtown Sausalito, that my heart purrs, it's a beautiful little place and it just seems like you're stepping back in time with all the little shops lining the streets opposite the harbour, but then our hotel comes into view and our first thoughts are wow, its like it's floating on water.

The aptly named Inn Above Tide is the ultimate luxury hotel and from the moment you arrive you are spoilt with such wonderful views. All of its 29 rooms and suites face San Francisco Bay and are all directly over the water so you get some magnificent views of the San Francisco skyline no matter where you reside in this beautiful hotel. All you need to do is sit back and relax and take it all in on your very own furnished private deck and just bask in the views of Alcatraz, Angel Island and Marin. With such an unforgettable backdrop as this, it's the perfect end to a near perfect day. →

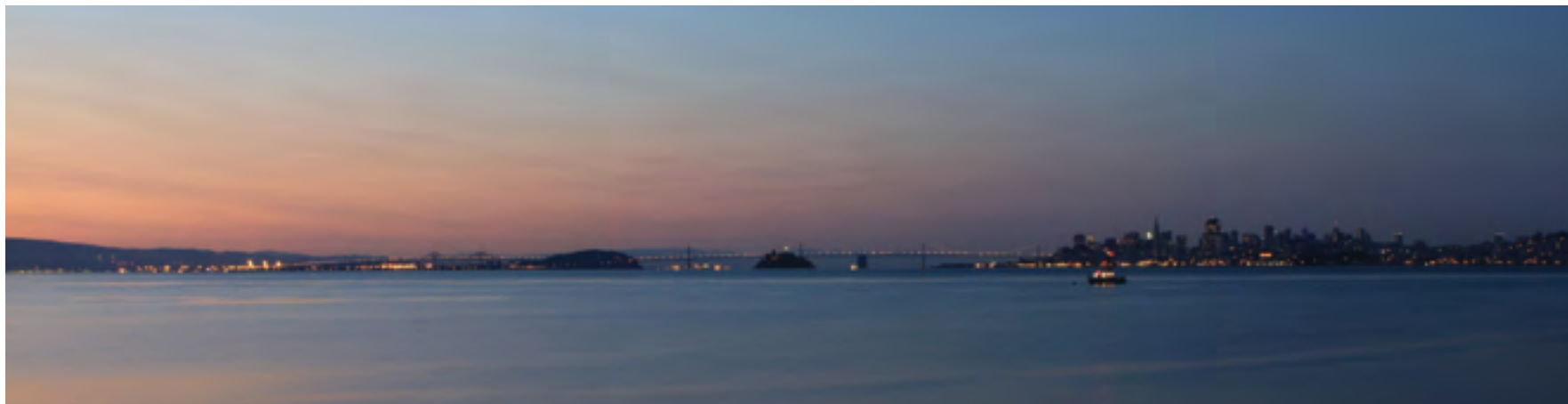
Above: The hotel at night. Below: one of the stunning rooms with fantastic views out to the Golden Gate Bridge

# HIGH TIDE

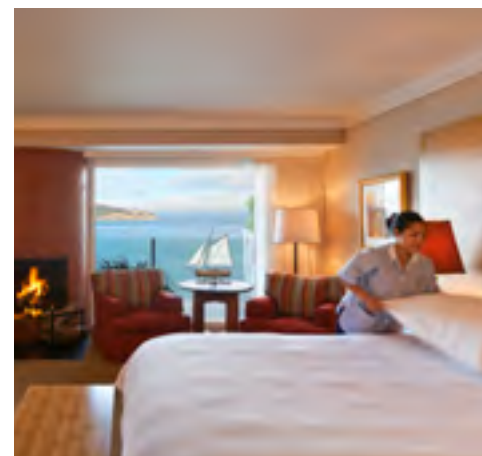
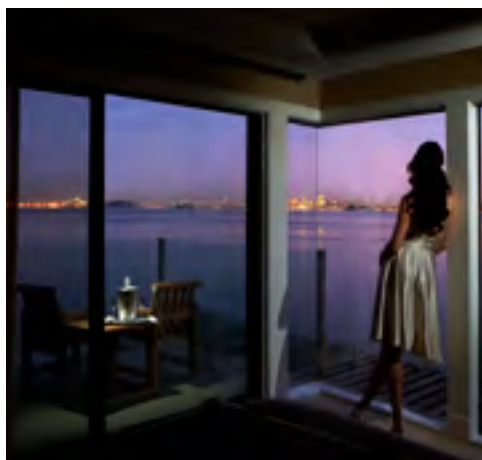
Charmaine Hibbert takes a step-back in time on a visit to Sausalito, California and rests her head at the elegant Inn above tide.







Left and below left: Sometimes you just want to watch the sun go down from your room. Below second left to right: Bath with a view. Middle: Log fires make a special night. Below: Your balcony to enjoy a glass of wine and the view.



## THE SPA

If more is what you want the hotel offers a small but delightful range of spa treatments where relaxation and rejuvenation is key for golfers and none golfers a like. For more information check out the ‘amenities’ section on their website. But bear in mind that the spa treatments do get booked up well in advance, so if a spa treatment is what you crave I would suggest you reserve them at the time of booking to avoid any disappointment.

## SAUSALITO

But if being pampered is not you’re thing and I cannot imagine why! There are other activities to do in Sausalito, excursions and day trips are available and I found the concierge more than happy to arrange anything you wanted. You should definitely hop on a ferry to San Francisco’s many attractions, and enjoy a meal at the numerous great restaurants at Pier 39, especially at Fog Harbour with it’s stunning views of Alcatraz.

You can also take a stroll into Sausalito and wander through their shops, indulge in some fine dining or take in one of the galleries that I was unable

to do due to our very early morning start. I am still extremely gutted about not getting to explore Sausalito more, but there is always a next time and I had such a magical time on this trip that there surely will be a next time.

If you are considering staying at Inn Above Tide you must make time to check out Marin and the vineyards that are 30 minutes north of the hotel, there are a few vineyards that offer private wine tasting, which is an absolute joy. All in all the Inn Above Tide has exceeded my expectations, I am sure they will yours.

The Inn Above Tide  
30 El Portal Sausalito,  
CA 94965  
USA

T: +(01) 415.332.9535  
W: [innabovetide.com](http://innabovetide.com)



# SANCTUARY BEACH RESORT

Monterey, USA

By CHARMAINE HIBBERT

## A SPACE OF YOUR OWN

Sometimes words are not enough to explain a moment in time, but Charmaine Hibbert transports you to Monterey Beach with ruby red wine and powerful surf

I spent years dreaming of going to California and learning to surf there and although I knew there would be no time to learn to surf on this particular trip when the opportunity arrived to go to California I couldn't let the chance slip by. We leave Stevenson in the dark at 5am knowing we have a two-hour drive to Monterey ahead of us.

I was looking forward to taking in some of the views as we hit the Monterey Peninsula and as the dark started to give way to the dawn, the change in scenery is remarkable, nothing really prepares you for the beauty of Monterey and although it isn't the warmest or brightest of days, we can see what a stunning part of the world this is.

We arrive at The Sanctuary Beach Resort in Monterey Bay I feel like I am sleep walking in a dream. Monterey Bay is such a magical place and the gorgeous hotel is situated against the most beautiful of backdrops. Our room has the most amazing beachfront views imaginable. As we arrived I knew this section of the trip is going to be like no other.

Top: The perfect place to watch the powerful Pacific waves. Right: Watching the sunset with friends. Far left: One of Sanctuary Beach Resorts well appointed rooms.





We have our very own private patio, to enjoy these breathtaking views. You cannot fail to fall in love with the view that is bestowed upon you as we watch the Pacific’s waves crashing against the shoreline from our veranda. We open up the bottle of Californian red wine that has kindly been left for us and sit in silence as the Pacific Ocean displays its powerful majesty.

Whether this is a business trip like ours or just one of leisure and pure relaxation you will find Sanctuary Beach Resort like no other resort on the Monterey Peninsula. With 19 acres of secluded oceanfront to explore you should find the time to take a leisurely stroll down to the beach, the crisp sea air and the sound of the ocean is hard to put into words it’s so calming and soothes the soul.

That morning sitting watching the grey ocean with its white capped waves crashing on the yellow sands, with a glass of ruby red wine in hand, will be a moment in time that will leave with me forever.

**SPA TREATMENTS**

Sanctuary Beach Resort offers the ultimate in rest and relaxation. And you can’t go home without treating yourself to one of Serenity Spas variety of treatments to really help you rejuvenate. These treatments include massage, facials and aromatherapy. Who could say no to a full body massage?

Serenity Spa is open from 8am – 9pm daily, but the reservation hours are from 8am – 7pm. If you have a set time in mind it would be advisable to book in advance to ensure the availability of your preferred time, either through the front desk or the Serenity Spa. In room massages are also available, which I just loved the idea of, but please be aware that an additional \$20 service charge will be added and I stress you will need to book in advance if you want this service.

**KULA RANCH RESTAURANT**

Kula Ranch is the brainchild of popular local restaurateur, Joe Loeffler. And although we had an idea of what the food would be like I was still surprised to see there was a sushi bar. Sushi is one of my favourite foods but you can’t beat a bit of steak and ours are prepared to perfection. I have to say the friendly helpful service at the table and the relaxed atmosphere of the restaurant only adds to the feeling of calm and enhanced our experience.

Sanctuary Beach Resort  
3295 Dunes Drive  
Marina, Monterey  
California 93933

T: +(01) 877-944-3863  
W: [thesanctuarybeachresort.com](http://thesanctuarybeachresort.com)

Right: The perfect Sanctuary to watch the sun.



Right: The stunning wood ceiling in the Sanctuary Beach Resorts lobby.  
Right top: Sea view from one of the villas.  
Right Bottom: The villa walk ways.







# OSCAR JACOBSON WEATHER PROTECTION SYSTEM

OSCAR  
JACOBSON

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**WPS**





MOROCCO, WARWICKSHIRE  
AND SURREY MAY NOT HAVE  
A LOT IN COMMON, BUT  
JAMES MASON PUTS OSCAR  
JACOBSON'S WEATHER  
PROTECTION SYSTEM (WPS)  
TO THE TEST IN THREE VERY  
DIFFERENT CLIMATES.

# Fairway Fashion

Like most golfers I always look forward to seeing what the apparel companies come up with in their new yearly summer ranges. Golf fashion not only has to make you look good on the course, but also work with a golfer's swing so there are no restrictions to a full turn and follow through, while also coping with the changes of weather that can occur during a 4-5 hour round. This is why your average polo, jumper or trousers from one of the many high street stores may cover one or even two of those basis but they will never cover all three and making the right choice can help improve your golf.







**ANTON POLO SHIRT**  
**RRP: £55 / €85 / \$80**



**VILLEROY TOUR VEST**  
**RRP: £69 / €100 / \$100**



**KAY TOUR POLO**  
**RRP: £55 / €85 / \$80**



**WYATT V-NECK**  
**RRP: £79 / €125 / \$115**



**BOGART TOUR HALF-ZIP**  
**RRP: £75 / €115 / \$110**

**DAVE TOUR TROUSERS**  
**RRP: £90 / €140 / \$130**



## TECHNOLOGY

Oscar Jacobson's most innovative concept the Weather Protection System (WPS) provides a system utilising different layers helping combat whatever the elements can throw at you.

WPS helps to optimise your game, whether you're playing under the Mediterranean sun or a cold and rainy Scottish links course, the WPS has a three-layer system that ensures you the perfect protection.

### BASE LAYER

The light base layer is breathable and helps wicker moisture away from the body and helps regulate your temperature.

### MID LAYER

The mid layer keeps you warm, comfortable and helps you retain your body heat, again while wicking away moisture. The fabrics used are merino wool and fleece and work with the base layer on dry, cool, crisp days.

### OUTER LAYER

The outer layer is an ultra-light protection made of three layers – a stretch functional fabric on the outside for flexibility, with a soft comfortable lining. The outer layers are wind and waterproof, fast drying and easy to pack and carry in a golf bag. They are also designed with a longer back hem that gives you extra protection when you lean forward to address the ball.

## CONCLUSION

Oscar Jacobson has been involved in golf since the 1970's including forming a long term partnership with the Ryder Cup. The combination I tested were the Wyatt V-Neck, Villerooy Tour Vest, Bogart Tour Half Zip, Kay Tour Polo shirt and Dave Tour Trousers in white, black, grey and red.

The WPS system works perfectly and as I travel and play in different countries with varying climates being able to mix and match the different colours and layers to make them work with that days particular temperatures and elements works perfectly.

The other great thing about the OJ range is they look good on and off the course and when my daughter told me the grey Dave Tour Trousers made me look slimmer, well that was good enough for me!



# SOLID FOUNDATIONS



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GOLF SHOES NEED TO COPE WITH VARYING CONDITIONS JAMES MASON TESTS THE PUMA TITANTOUR IGNITE'S ON COURSES WITH VERY DIFFERENT GRASS AND SURFACES IN MOROCCO, BIRMINGHAM AND SURREY

---

I find it surprising how some people don't realise how important a good pair of golf shoes are. We all want to look good and fashion has always played a big part in golf, looking and feeling good helps a player's confidence, which in turn helps you feel comfortable over the ball.

But your feet and how they interact with the ground are the foundation to your golf swing. A pair of shoes that slip at the wrong time can have devastating implications at impact and the reverse is true. A solid base can help you produce a powerful swing, helping you gain consistency and added distance.



## TECHNOLOGY

One of the biggest things when purchasing golf shoes is how comfortable they are and are they waterproof. The Puma TitanTour Ignite has a two-year waterproof guarantee and with their Ignite Foam technology that gives a golfer cushioning and stability, which is then in cased in their thermoplastic polyurethane frame, that is lightweight and flexible, the Puma TitanTour Ignite gives you everything you could want in a golf shoe.

TitanTour Ignite power and stability comes from a combination of their Duoflex technology that combines hard and soft materials that not only support your feet but let them move in a natural flexible way. This works with the innovative construction of the outer sole that gives you a solid stance on any surface, lie or angle.

The shoe is topped off with a full-grain leather upper, textile lining and heavy gauge thread.



## CONCLUSION

Obviously the first thing you will notice is the design and quality of the shoe as you take it out of the box and the Puma TitanTour Ignites certainly look good and I loved the colour combination – well blue is my favourite colour.

I haven't worn them in the wet yet, but having played with them in Morocco, at the Belfry and in Surrey I have certainly played with them on a variety of surfaces. I loved the way they anchored my feet and they certainly performed well when trying to get an extra few yards on my drives at the Belfry.

One of the biggest tests I put shoes through on these reviews is the number of course and holes I play on successive days, but I can say after playing several days in succession my feet never ached or felt tired in any way.

On the style front they look great, which I always feel is important. If you are looking for a new pair of golf shoes this summer that will work for you come the winter month, I would recommend you take a look at the Puma TitanTour Ignite golf shoe.

## TESTED

### PUMA TITANTOUR IGNITE COLOUR

White / Surf The Web / Green Gecko

SIZE 10

RRP £130 / €165 / \$160



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