

# TÜRKIYE

The perfect mix of sun, golf, history and gastronomy

# CALIFORNIA Pt1

Tales of hitting the Pacific Coast Highway in a little red Corvette

# CANADA

Off the beaten track in British Columbia with Jane Finn

# THE CAROLINAS

A photo essay bring you the colours and people of these Southern states

# PLANET GOLF

# REVIEW

ISSUE 24

# VIEW.COM

## EQUIPMENT & APPAREL REVIEWS

Ram, PODO and Titleist

## THE MASTERS

Our review and betting guide to golf's first Major of the year

## STAY, PLAY & SPA

Dubai and North Carolina

## PRO TIPS

Power drill and Chipping from Tight Lies



# WELCOME

As always, being the first issue of the year, Happy New Year to you and your families. I hope it's one full of love, laughter, good health, and happy travels. In this issue, Jane heads to British Columbia for some gastronomic delights, while Peter heads up the Pacific Coastal Highway in the first of a two-part series. We also have Peter's impressions from the Carolinas along with a hotel review from the same region, and a hotel review from Dubai in the Play, Stay and Spa section.

No doubt you are all aware of the tragic events in Turkiye and Syria and we are featuring Belek, Turkiye in this issue. I am sure some of you would have donated, but another way for you to help would be to visit Turkiye this year. That way not only will you get to enjoy the country, but the taxes from

the money you spend will bring much needed revenue for the government there.

Spring sees the first Major Championship of the year and those beautiful images beaming into our living rooms from Augusta National, and we feature our renowned betting guide. With The Masters comes the start of the new golf season and we have the latest equipment reviews from Ram, Podo and Titleist, along with tips to improve your golf game from Paul and Shain to get your season off to a winning start.

As you can see, another bumper packed issue from our wonderful team bringing you destinations from around the globe. Enjoy.

## MEET THE TEAM

### Editor

James Mason

### Art Director

Jimmy Kennedy

### Associate Editor

Peter Ellegard

### Hotel and Spa Editor

Charmaine Hibbert

### Features Editor

Jane Finn

### Contributing travel writers

Kukua Akumanyi

Iesha Hinds

Bernadette Kennedy

Stephanie Mason

### Contributing PGA Professionals

Paul Babbage

Shain Johnson

### General enquiries

enquiries@planetgolfreview.com

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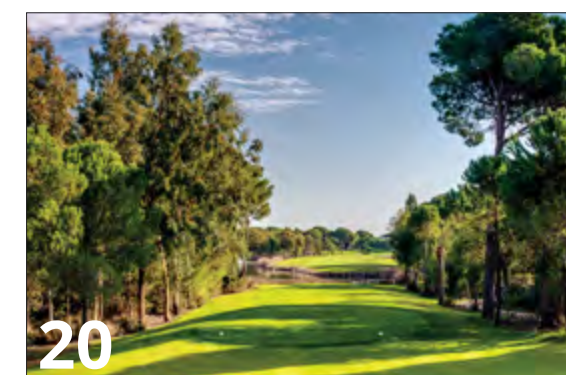
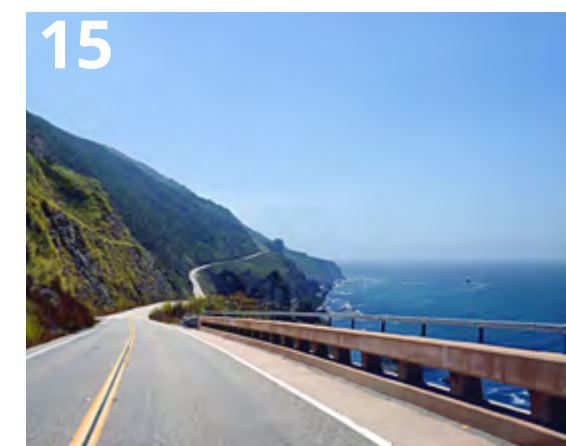
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# WHEN TWO TRIBES...

Strangely ironic that a southern state once associated with slavery and more recently to a modern-day president allegedly trying to tamper with a democratic election result, plays host to a group of apologists for a regime that abuses human rights and murders journalists. Golf's greatest show unfortunately becomes the centre of attention for all the wrong reasons this week

It's that time of year when the emerald fairways and blooms of azaleas beam themselves into our homes as we look forward to the world's greatest players teeing up at Augusta National for The Masters.

But there is a new buzz in the air for this year's first Major Championship and that is the annual champions' dinner, when PGA Tour players are stuck in a room with their LIV Golf counterparts. There has been a lot said over the past few months through the press, but for many in the room this will be their first face-to-face meeting and I for one would love to be a fly on the wall when the first controversial comment is made. My betting tip would be →

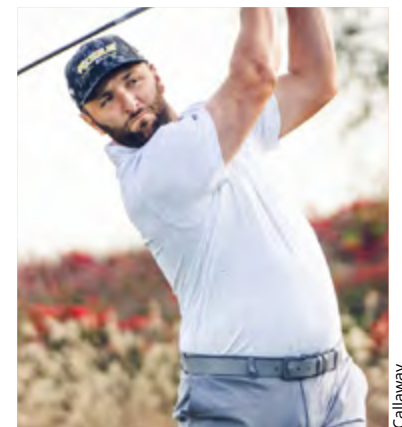
SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER

8|1



JON RAHM

9|1



RORY MCILROY

15|2





## SAM BURNS

40|1



Callaway

## SHANE LOWRY

55|1



Srixon

## JUSTIN ROSE

60|1



@JustinRose99

on Mickelson, followed very closely by Reed, but I would love it to come from one of the game's giants like Nicklaus, Player or Tiger.

There's no getting away from it – all the talk before, during and after The Masters is going to be the continuing debate between the PGA Tour and LIV Golf.

### TIPS TO WIN

Only three players have ever defended their Master title the last was Tiger Woods back in 2001/2, but that could be about to change this year with the form that **Scottie Scheffler 8/1 – with BetFred** – comes into Augusta with. Scottie is the current The Players champion and world number one and he will be right in the thick of it again come Sunday.

Pushing him hard will be world number three **Jon Rahm 9/1 – with SkyBet** – who comes into this week on the back of three wins so far this year and although he hasn't been hitting the heights of January and February everything has been geared to peaking this week.

And is it that time for **Rory McIlroy 15/2 – with Ladbrokes** – to join the select group of players

that have won all four Major Championships? These three players have been pushing each other over the last few month and I see no reason that this new modern day "Triumvirate" won't be battling it out again come Sunday. Rory now has some positive memories to draw on from Augusta and I feel he may just be sitting in the Butler Cabin come Sunday in a certain shade of green jacket!

### MY EACH-WAY TIPS

Coming into this week on the back of a win and a sixth-place finish is **Sam Burns 40/1 – with UniBet** – who has now moved into the Top 10 in the world golf rankings. Sam played in The Masters for the first time last year and missed the cut, but I think we will see him challenging this year.

A third-place finish here last year should give **Shane Lowry 66/1 – with LiveScoreBet** – a lot of confidence coming into this week. Shane didn't have a great record at Augusta until the back-to-back tournaments after COVID when he notched up two Top 25 finishes, which was a bit of a surprise knowing how good his short game is. But, now he has had a taste of being in

contention on the back nine at Augusta on the final day, I feel he will be back in the heat of battle again come Sunday.

### OUTSIDE TIP

A win at Pebble Beach and a sixth-place finish at The Players Championship shows **Justin Rose 66/1 – with LiveScoreBet** – still has what it takes to challenge. Justin lost in a play-off here against Garcia and has another runner-up finish and eleven other Top 25 finishes from his seventeen starts. And I think these could turn out to be very good odds come Sunday afternoon

### LONGER ODDS TIP

Try **Seamus Power 150/1 – with SpreadEx**

We would like to emphasise that betting should be for fun and not a way to make a living. We see it as a way of adding excitement to a tournament while you watch and hopefully this guide will help you make an informed choice.

As always good luck and have fun!



Rolex

## LATEST FIRST ROUND BETTING ODDS FOR THE MASTERS FROM LADBROKES

**Scottie Scheffler 7/1**  
**Rory McIlroy 15/2**  
**Jon Rahm 8/1**  
**Jordan Spieth 16/1**  
**Cameron Smith 18/1**  
**Patrick Cantlay 18/1**  
**Justin Thomas 20/1**  
**Collin Morikawa 22/1**  
**Xander Schauffele 22/1**  
**Dustin Johnson 25/1**  
**Jason Day 25/1**  
**Max Homa 25/1**  
**Tony Finau 25/1**  
**Cameron Young 28/1**  
**Sam Burns 33/1**  
**Sung Jae Im 33/1**  
**Viktor Hovland 33/1**  
**Will Zalatoris 33/1**  
**Hideki Matsuyama 40/1**  
**Matt Fitzpatrick 40/1**  
**Tyrrell Hatton 40/1**  
**Shane Lowry 50/1**  
**Corey Connors 50/1**  
**Brooks Koepka 66/1**  
**Joaquin Niemann 66/1**  
**Justin Rose 66/1**  
**Min Woo Lee 66/1**  
**Patrick Reed 66/1**  
**Tiger Woods 66/1**  
**Tom Kim 66/1**  
**Tommy Fleetwood 66/1**  
**Adam Scott 80/1**  
**Keith Mitchell 80/1**  
**Louis Oosthuizen 80/1**  
**Si Woo Kim 90/1**  
**Aaron Wise 100/1**  
**Abraham Ancer 100/1**  
**Bryson DeChambeau 100/1**  
**Keegan Bradley 100/1**  
**Mito Pereira 100/1**  
**Sahith Theegala 100/1**  
**Sergio Garcia 100/1**  
**Talor Gooch 100/1**  
**Tom Hoge 100/1**  
**Bubba Watson 125/1**  
**Danny Willett 125/1**  
**Jason Kokrak 125/1**  
**Kurt Kitayama 125/1**

[More](#)



# IMPRESSIONS OF THE CAROLINAS



Left: Fire station, Charleston,  
South Carolina  
Below: Hunley submarine replica  
at Charleston Museum



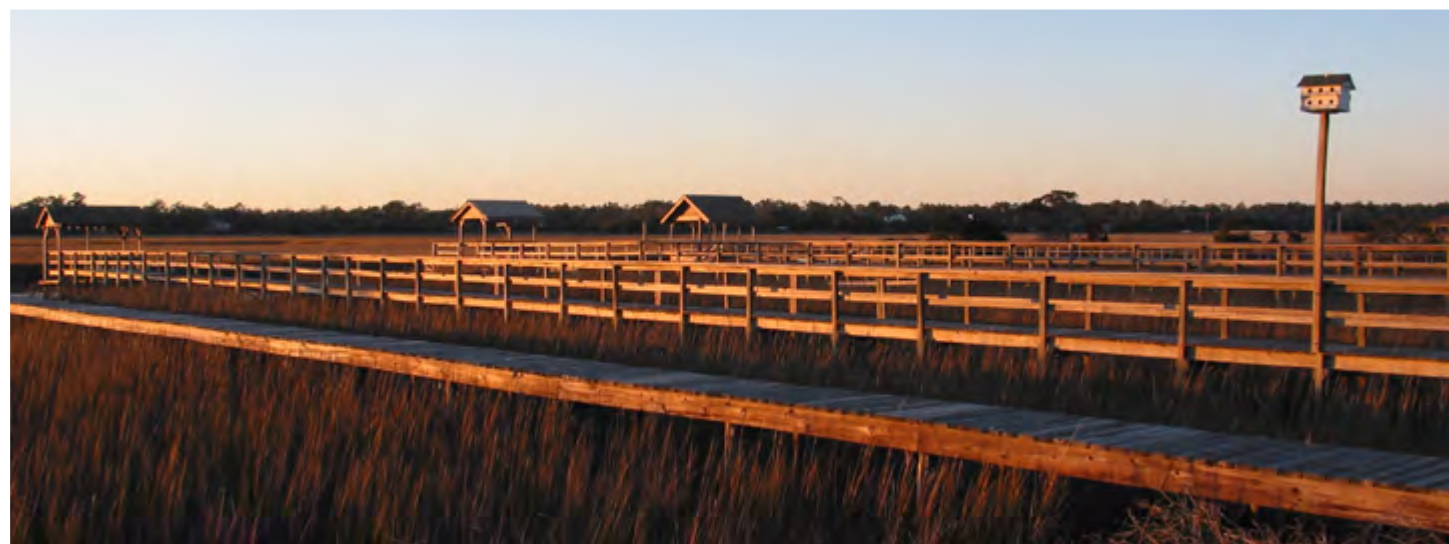
Left: Church and spire,  
Charleston



Left: French  
Quarter signs,  
Charleston  
Right: North Myrtle  
Beach, South  
Carolina



Left: Basket  
weaver, Charleston  
Right: Marshes on  
Pawleys Island,  
South Carolina





Right: Gospel singers,  
Lowndes Grove Plantation,  
Charleston  
Below: Blues guitarist,  
Charleston



Above: Blues  
guitarist,  
Charleston  
Right: Blues singer,  
Mills House Hotel,  
Charleston



# IMPRESSIONS OF THE CAROLINAS



Above: Veteran tour  
bus, Charleston



Left: Shaggers  
(dancing) Hall of  
Fame marker,  
North Myrtle Beach





Left: Single house,  
Charleston  
Below: Street  
scene, Charleston  
Bottom right:  
Sunset behind  
Hilton Head  
Lighthouse, Hilton  
Head Island, South  
Carolina



Above: House  
Museum,  
Middleton Place  
plantation, South  
Carolina  
Left: Porgy and  
Bess Courtyard,  
Cabbage Row,  
Charleston  
Right: Catfish Row,  
Charleston  
Below: Chimney  
Rock, North  
Carolina



# IMPRESSIONS OF THE CAROLINAS

See more of Peter  
Ellegard's work on  
Instagram  
@peterellegard or  
peterellegard.co.uk







# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Jane heads to British Columbia in search of culinary delights from around the world on the Spice Trail, while being protected by a wolf at a sacred site



BY JANE FINN, PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID FINN

The snow-covered peaks loom large, piercing the sky before tapering off to meet the sea. As we descend into Vancouver, I have a bird's eye view of the raw, rugged terrain and dancing lights below. Sandwiched between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, British Columbia's natural beauty is breathtaking and draws me back time and time again. Undoubtedly, this is one of the best places on the planet to hike, ski, canoe, or golf. Still, on this trip, I want to spend time exploring smaller cities and the diversity of culture, cuisine, history and entertainment that makes BC not only an outdoor enthusiast's paradise but a world-class destination.

So, I head southwest to bold, brash, modern Surrey, one of the fastest-growing centres in the country. It's also a city striving to balance environmental protection and economic development in its quest to create an urban oasis. The downtown core is expanding and reinventing itself, as evidenced by the number →

**Right: Classic and contemporary dishes tantalise your taste buds**  
**Far right: Tea complements the savoury spiciness of Indian cuisine**



“I want to spend time exploring smaller cities and the diversity of culture, cuisine, history and entertainment that makes BC not only an outdoor enthusiast's paradise but a world-class destination”





“The graphics on the wall, reminiscent of South America, create a welcoming space, and the karaoke tucked in the corner tells me this joint hops, but the depth of flavour of the pozole will have you coming back for more”

of cranes towering overhead and the new builds popping up everywhere. Still, it’s easy to spot the Civic, the Marriott Autograph Collection hotel that dominates the skyline. Surrounded by parkland and several ethnic communities, it’s the perfect jumping-off point for a new culinary adventure.

**SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR**

Food has always been part of Surrey’s identity, but when the pandemic hit, many restaurateurs closed their doors and put their dreams on hold. But, when venues reopened, the city had a plan to reignite those dreams.

In July 2021, the Spice Trail was launched, a consortium of eateries, independent restaurants, winemakers, breweries, and distillers collaborating to offer visitors a unique food experience. The Trail has brought me to Surrey, but it’s not long before I learn that one trail leads to another and some unexpected delights.

Sometimes, we’re afraid to stray from the tried and true, but the Spice Trail makes it easy to nibble and nosh your way around the globe. I sample cheese empanadas from Colombia, stuffed Bolani flatbread at the Afghan Kitchen,

and zesty honey-jerk chicken with jollof rice at A Taste of Africa. If asked to pick a favourite, it would have to be the Guacamole Mexican Grill - a little gritty on the outside, pure gourmet on the inside! The graphics on the wall, reminiscent of South America, create a welcoming space, and the karaoke tucked in the corner tells me this joint hops, but the depth of flavour of the pozole will have you coming back for more.

After all the calories I’ve consumed today, a little exercise is in order, so I head to Crescent Beach. I share the path with cyclists, runners and dog walkers, frequently pausing to admire the historic gardens and vintage cottages that line the boardwalk. So captivating are the views of the Northshore Mountains ringing Boundary Bay that I wander past Blackie Spit to the Nicomekl River, where kayakers and paddle-boarders are packing up their gear. Suddenly, I remember Crescent Beach is rated one of the best places to enjoy a sunset on the mainland and return just in time to see the sun light up the sky before sinking in a burst of orange, pink and purple flames.

The Cloverdale Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society wasn’t on my radar, but →



Top: The neighbourhood's favourite  
Far Left: Crescent Beach at sunset  
Left: Clove's Lucknowi lamb chops





Above: Restored car, Fraser Valley Heritage Railway  
Right: Race Rocks Ecological Preserve, Victoria



when I saw the sign, I decided to make a quick stop and pick up some souvenirs for my train-obsessed grandsons. That was before I met Grace, a passionate volunteer whose enthusiasm was so contagious that I bought a ticket to ride the rails before I knew it. At Grace’s urging, I later head to the nearby Museum to check out the Surrey on Screen – an interactive exhibit showcasing an extensive collection of ‘Hollywood North’ memorabilia. I linger almost until closing time, wandering from room to room, ending my tour at Our Living Language, a First Nations exhibit that pays tribute to diversity and people’s resilience in the face of change.

More than twenty percent of Surrey’s

population is of Southeast Asian descent. It’s no wonder that two of my top-rated restaurants feature Indian cuisine. My Shanti translates as peace, and that is what I feel as I witness celebrity chef Vikram Vij circulating throughout the eclectic dining rooms. He seems to quickly and effortlessly strike up conversations with strangers, ensuring that everyone feels like a guest in his home as they feast on classic Indian fare.

Clove is chic and elegant at the other end of the spectrum, elevating traditional dishes to a new level. Fabled cocktails like my Magic Mushroom are served in custom handblown glasses that showcase the creativity of Clove’s

mixologists. Every item on the menu, from the herb-encrusted Lucknowi lamb chops to the fenugreek, spinach and mushrooms baked in cashew cream, is exquisitely prepared and presented. Two vastly different experiences, just like the cities I’m visiting, and neither will disappoint you.

### COME SAIL AWAY

It’s time to leave the hustle and bustle of the mainland for the more laid-back lifestyle of Vancouver Island. I walk aboard a BC Ferry in Tsawwassen to see the majesty of the island gradually revealed from the water. I quickly secure a window seat serving up expansive

“That was before I met Grace, a passionate volunteer whose enthusiasm was so contagious that I bought a ticket to ride the rails before I knew it”



Right: The Empress Hotel overlooking Victoria's Inner Harbour. Below: Navigating the Gulf Islands



Top: A fine 'Island Whisky'  
Above: Fan Tan Alley, Chinatown

"I can feel the breeze on my face and the tang of salt in the air as we weave through the Gulf Islands"



views of the Salish Sea and settle in for the ride.

Before long, the gentle rhythm of the waves and the low hum of the engines make me relax until, out of the corner of my eye, I catch a glimpse of Mayne Island. Then it's a mad dash to reach the outer deck before we enter Active Pass. I can feel the breeze on my face and the tang of salt in the air as we weave through the Gulf Islands. The scenery is so impressive that I stop to lean into the moment and fully appreciate the wild, windswept sandstone cliffs and rocky pebble beaches that reach out to welcome me before we head for shore.

### THE GATEWAY TO VANCOUVER ISLAND

On the short taxi ride to the city's centre, I pass Macaloney's, where I'll be tasting 'Island Whisky' later in the week. As the suburbs recede, Victoria, as regal as the Queen for whom

she's named, slowly begins to reveal her old-world charm.

Downtown is eminently walkable, especially from The Oswego, a boutique hotel located in a quiet residential area minutes away from the Inner Harbour. I have a panoramic view of the cruise ships arriving at Ogden Point from our ninth-floor balcony. Still, I need to get out on the water and soon find myself at Fisherman's Wharf, strolling amongst the whimsical floating homes before embarking on a sunset cruise.

I'm fascinated with marine life, and Victoria is one of Canada's premier destinations for whale watching if you have a sense of adventure and no desire to stay dry. Our excursion on Eagle Wing Tours' catamaran is exhilarating and rewarding. We've hardly left the shore before the naturalist on board signals that he's spotted some 'footprints,' indicating that a whale may be about to surface. Captain Pete



throttles down and comes to a full stop as two mature humpbacks execute a double breach off our starboard side. Then with a flick of their tails, they dive deep and disappear.

For the next few days, I clock more miles than I can count, burning off the calories I acquired following the Spice Trail. I study the British influence on the city’s architecture as I wander through the stately Empress Hotel and the Parliament Buildings. I treat myself to high tea in the Abkhazi Gardens and discover an endangered Garry oaks ecosystem within Beacon Park in the heart of the city. I even find room for more outrageously good food when I join A Taste of Victoria walking tour. Not only do I get to indulge my palate, but I also get to meet the creative forces behind the counters and in the kitchens while learning the secrets of Fan Tan Alley, part of North America’s second-largest Chinatown and how the locals thrived during Prohibition. My trip is drawing to a close, but there’s one more thing I’m called to do.

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

Twenty minutes north of Victoria, atop Mount Yos, lies the Malahat Skywalk, a towering new structure that reaches the clouds providing anyone, regardless of age or ability, with the ultimate hiking experience. This tree walk represents a collaborative effort between the Malahat First Nations and the province. Their vision is that this tranquil space will unite people of different cultures and beliefs.

As I step through the gates, I sense a quiet gentleness and feel the spirit of the land. On my

Right: The whimsical floating homes at Fisherman’s Wharf



right, I spot a larger-than-life wolf sculpture by Tanya Bub, whose work I had first encountered at Studio 106. Wolves have a keen sense of community and depend on one another for food, protection and raising their young. Wolf is also regarded as a great teacher, so it’s fitting he should serve as Malahat’s guardian.

It’s an easy climb, and in no time, I’m 356 metres above sea level, enjoying a panoramic view of Finlayson Arms and the distant Coastal Mountains. Home to the legendary Thunderbird, this heavenly perch is considered the most

sacred site on Southern Vancouver Island.

As I gaze across the Saanich Peninsula, the whisper of the wind reminds me of the legend of the five Huaquas. Now is the time to regain our sense of humour, seek happiness for ourselves and others, reignite hope and restore health to people and the planet, so we can collectively move forward in harmony. As the world reopens and we begin travelling more freely and more often, may you find peace and harmony wherever you roam.



Far Left: Tanya Bub’s impressive wolf sculpture welcomes visitors to the Malahat Skywalk  
Left: Finlayson Arms and the Coastal Mountains beckon

HOW TO GET THERE

**Air Canada**  
W: [aircanada.com](http://aircanada.com)

**BC Ferries**  
W: [bcferries.com](http://bcferries.com)

**WHERE TO STAY**  
**The Civic Hotel Autograph Collection®**  
W: [marriott.com/surrey](http://marriott.com/surrey)

**The Oswego**  
W: [oswegohotelvictoria.com](http://oswegohotelvictoria.com)

**WHAT TO DO:**  
**The Spice Trail**  
W: [discoversurreybc.com/spice-trail/about-the-spice-trail](http://discoversurreybc.com/spice-trail/about-the-spice-trail)

**Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society Cloverdale Station**  
W: [fvhrs.org](http://fvhrs.org)

**Museum of Surrey**  
W: [surrey.ca/arts-culture/museum-of-surrey](http://surrey.ca/arts-culture/museum-of-surrey)

**Macaloney’s Island Distillery & Twa Dogs Brewery**  
W: [victoriacaledonian.com](http://victoriacaledonian.com)

**Eagle Wing Tours**  
W: [eaglewingtours.com](http://eaglewingtours.com)

**A Taste of Victoria**  
W: [atasteofvictoriafoodtours.com](http://atasteofvictoriafoodtours.com)

**Malahat Skywalk**  
W: [malahatskywalk.com](http://malahatskywalk.com)

**Studio 106**  
W: [studio106.ca](http://studio106.ca)

**WHERE TO EAT**  
**The Teahouse at Abkhazi Gardens**  
W: [abkhaziteahouse.com](http://abkhaziteahouse.com)



# HIGHWAY STAR

In the first of a two-part road trip along the spectacular Pacific Coast Highway in California, Peter Ellegard reminisces about previous adventures on the legendary scenic route and hits the road once again





“My love affair with the Pacific Coast Highway goes back over 30 years to my first experience driving the southern section of it to San Francisco”

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PHOTOS AND WORDS BY PETER ELLEGARD

There's something very special about California's Pacific Coast Highway. It's one of America's most iconic drives and my favourite road trip.

Highway 1, as it is officially designated, winds along the California coastline for more than 650 miles, from Capistrano Beach just south of Los Angeles to Leggett in Northern California's Mendocino County.

I have travelled along the highway on numerous occasions, driving on all but the northernmost 100 miles or so at various times in an assortment of cars.

My love affair with the Pacific Coast Highway goes back over 30 years to my first experience driving the southern section of it to San Francisco. The car rental company called the day before my flight to San Diego and apologised for not having the classic Ford Thunderbird I had reserved, instead offering me a red convertible Chevrolet Corvette. I accepted in a flash. They even delivered it straight to the departures area,

Right: Little red  
Corvette



formulanone





“She relented when she realised it was a rental car and then happily agreed to pose for photographs sitting on the bonnet pretending to write a ticket – even letting two Hells Angels bikers who had stopped to see what was going on hold her in their arms for me to photograph them all with the Corvette!”

so I literally walked out of the airport, loaded my luggage into it and drove off.

### LITTLE RED CORVETTE

I felt like a prince over the following 11 days, zooming along in my little red Corvette acknowledging fellow Vette drivers with a discreet nod like a secret Freemason’s greeting and getting envious glances from other motorists.

I also had several interesting encounters. They included two pick-up attempts by blondes: one who raced me in a blue Triumph Spitfire for a couple of hours, then when I stopped to fill up at a petrol station pulled up alongside and asked if I knew the way to the state penitentiary – immediately conjuring up images of her being a gangster’s moll and me ending up being dropped from a boat in the Pacific wearing concrete boots! – and the other asking for a ride as I was leaving my final hotel in San Francisco to drive to the airport. Too late baby.

At Long Beach, I sheepishly had to enlist the help of the concierge and bystanders when

I stayed onboard former transatlantic liner the Hotel Queen Mary as I didn’t know how to put the hood up. Before getting back behind the wheel I toured Howard Hughes’ giant Spruce Goose flying boat, housed at that time in a huge geodesic dome next to the ship before it was moved to its current air museum home in Oregon a couple of years later.

And in Hollywood, having parked in what I thought was a metered bay for the nearby Walk of Stars and the handprints outside Grauman’s Chinese Theatre, I looked back to see a female cop taking a keen interest in the car. I had inadvertently parked on a red line but had fed the meter of the bay in front, stopping that driver from getting a ticket but almost earning one myself.

She relented when she realised it was a rental car and then happily agreed to pose for photographs sitting on the bonnet pretending to write a ticket – even letting two Hells Angels bikers who had stopped to see what was going on hold her in their arms for me to photograph them all with the Corvette! Sadly, I have mislaid

the photo, but it is etched in my memory.

### TICKET TO RIDE

On subsequent journeys, I have hovered in front of the famous hillside Hollywood sign in a helicopter; sailed on a yacht from Marina del Rey; done yoga on a hotel terrace overlooking the original Muscle Beach in Santa Monica; learnt to surf in one-time hippy town Santa Cruz (promptly retiring after standing on my first wave) as well as taking a historic steam train ride to a nearby mountaintop through a forest of giant redwoods; dived inside the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s towering kelp forest exhibit to help clean the windows with sharks for company and waving to the public on the other side of the glass; flown over – and even under – Golden Gate Bridge in another helicopter; kayaked with sea otters and sea lions in Morro Bay; ridden a horse through vineyards in Paso Robles; and raced around sand dunes in a souped-up dune buggy in Pismo Beach.

I have also been pulled over and ticketed for speeding on Highway 1 by a CHiPS motorcycle



Top left:  
Huntington Beach  
Top right: LA’s  
famous Hollywood  
sign  
Right: Horse-riding  
through vineyards  
in Paso Robles



cop and played golf on a number of courses including Pebble Beach Links.

## SOUTH TO NORTH

The received wisdom for driving Highway 1 is to head south from San Francisco, because you drive on the right and have an uninterrupted view of the Pacific, beaches and cliffs. However, I always head the opposite way and recommend others do the same as the scenery gets increasingly scenic as you venture north from LA. There are also plenty of viewpoints with parking, or turnouts as they are called, so it is easy to pull over and enjoy the views in either direction.

As you drive along, exotic place names leap out to remind you of favourite songs, TV

shows or movies across the decades, among them Huntington Beach (aka Surf City), Venice Beach, Santa Monica, Malibu, Santa Barbara, Big Sur, Carmel and Monterey.

My partner joins me for my latest Highway 1 adventure, her first experience of it. We begin in LA satellite city Venice Beach, after picking up the car in Las Vegas where we spend a few days.

## BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Home for the night is the Venice V hotel. A landmark built in 1915 right on the famed Venice Beach boardwalk, it was originally a hangout for early Hollywood stars including Charlie Chaplin and Fatty Arbuckle and has now been restored as a boutique property embracing its bohemian surroundings and culture.

Every room is different. Ours has beach vibes with its exposed brick walls, looking right over the boardwalk to the beach and skateboard park in one direction and across a couple of low rooftops to an apartment building with the famous mural of a spraypainter suspended by rope from its roof.

The Muscle Beach outdoor gym is close by, but we head the other way along the boardwalk, dodging cyclists and skaters past busking musicians, performers and souvenir stalls to watch the sun setting from a bar, drinks in hand. Surprisingly for the end of June, the boardwalk quickly empties after sunset and even the restaurants and bars shut up shop, so we head back to the hotel.

Next morning we stop off in Santa Monica

to walk its pier, where a sign marks the end of Route 66 after its journey from Chicago. A ride on the pier's famous Ferris Wheel offers great views of the wide, sandy beaches, but I have done that before and time is pressing, so we continue our stroll round the town.

## TINSELTOWN

Hollywood beckons, so we stay for a night at the Hollywood Historic Hotel, another former stars' haunt with photos of Silver Screen greats along every corridor and in each room and an amazing bar straight out of a classic Tinseltown movie scene. They stayed there as the hotel is almost opposite Paramount Studios, where many movies have been filmed. Guests in some rooms have a view to the Hollywood sign, set high on

a hill.

We walk to the Paramount entrance to catch a free bus to Hollywood Boulevard then board an open-top sightseeing bus for a tour of Tinseltown. That evening we drive to Universal Studios, enjoying many of its attractions and rides and finishing with a fireworks and laser show in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

Passing Malibu and Oxnard back on the coast, we take a break in Santa Barbara for a seafood lunch looking out over the marina then pay a quick visit to its beautiful and historic Spanish mission, one of 21 established between 1769 and 1823. Santa Barbara is one of my favourite places on the PCH and has a Mediterranean feel, notably for its red-roofed County Courthouse, but sadly it is just a quick pitstop this time.

“Hollywood beckons, so we stay for a night at the Hollywood Historic Hotel, another former stars' haunt with photos of Silver Screen greats along every corridor and in each room and an amazing bar straight out of a classic Tinseltown movie scene”



Far left: Venice Beach spraypainter mural  
Left: Venice V hotel and Venice Beach boardwalk  
Right: Route 66 ends on Santa Monica Pier



“Back at the hotel, we watch the sun setting behind Morro Bay Rock and anchored boats from the restaurant deck sipping California red wine as a lone sea otter swims past”



Top left: Morro Rock and Morro Bay harbour  
Top right: Elfin Forest  
Right: Sea lions in Morro Bay  
Far right: Kayaking in Morro Bay

Central California’s San Luis Obispo also has a Spanish mission and is worth another stop. Follow the M trail up Cerro San Luis mountain for glorious panoramic vistas of the mission, the city and surrounding countryside.

**TO MORRO**

One of the unsung gems of Highway 1 is Morro Bay, a small fishing community turned boating haven and quaint tourist town a short distance north that I first discovered several years ago. It is unsurpassed for wildlife watching along the California coast.

Whale watching tours head out into the bay from the harbour and on my last stay here I saw a couple of humpbacks surface for air then arch their backs to dive back down while sea lions frolicked in the waves.

Morro Bay’s sheltered waters are protected

by a long sandy spit and towered over by the imposing Morro Rock, an ancient volcanic mound called the Gibraltar of the Pacific by some. They provide the best opportunity to get close-up views of sea otters and sea lions.

Having seen them on a solo kayak trip in the harbour before, I persuade Julie to overcome her fear of water. We join a guided group of tandem kayaks from the Kayak Shack, beaching them to watch cormorants and herons nesting in trees then paddling past our secluded hotel, the Morro Bay Inn, before coming across a group of cute sea otters resting on their backs anchored in place by long seaweed fronds.

They glance at us warily but as we are not allowed to get too close they stay put, the mothers clutching their pups to stop them drifting off in the current. A short paddle away, a wooden platform is choc-a-bloc with sea lions basking contentedly until one tries to steal another’s space and the peace is shattered by a cacophony of barking like a scene from the movie Finding Dory.

A short drive from the town, a circular boardwalk trail takes you through the twisted and stunted trees of the El Morro Elfin Forest and I half expect to bump into a hobbit.

Back at the hotel, we watch the sun setting behind Morro Bay Rock and anchored boats from the restaurant deck sipping California red wine as a lone sea otter swims past.

This really is the life. I have to pinch myself that I am back on the Pacific Coast Highway and I can’t wait to continue up to Northern California.

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
Direct flights to Los Angeles

**WHERE TO STAY**  
**Venice V Hotel**  
5 Westminster Avenue  
Venice, CA 90291  
**T:** +1 310 912 6488  
**W:** [venicevhotel.com](http://venicevhotel.com)

**Historic Hollywood Hotel**  
5162 Melrose Avenue  
Hollywood, CA 90038  
**T:** +1 323 378 6312  
**W:** [hollywoodhistorichotel.com](http://hollywoodhistorichotel.com)

Inn at Morro Bay  
60 State Park Road  
Morro Bay, CA 93442  
**T:** +1 805 772 5651  
**W:** [innatmorrobay.com](http://innatmorrobay.com)

**WHAT TO DO:**  
**Universal Studios Hollywood**  
100 Universal City Plaza  
Universal City, CA 91608  
**T:** +1 800 864 8377  
**W:** [universalstudioshollywood.com](http://universalstudioshollywood.com)

**Kayak Shack**  
10 State Park Road  
Morro Bay, CA 93442  
**T:** +1 805 772 8796  
**W:** [morrobaykayakrental.com](http://morrobaykayakrental.com)

**USEFUL INFORMATION**  
**Tourist Offices**  
**W:** [visitcalifornia.com](http://visitcalifornia.com)  
**W:** [discoverlosangeles.com](http://discoverlosangeles.com)  
**W:** [morrobay.org](http://morrobay.org)  
**W:** [slocal.com](http://slocal.com)



# AMAZING TÜRKIYE

James Mason and Charmaine Hibbert travel to Belek, Antalya in Southern Türkiye with its luxurious hotels, culinary delights that will have your taste buds dancing, beautiful beaches, golf courses to test your skills and history you can touch





**ANTALYA** GLORIA NEW COURSE GLORIA OLD COURSE  
CULLINAN LINKS GOLF CLUB OLYMPOS COURSE CORNELIA  
GOLF CLUB QUEEN COURSE GLORIA SERENITY RESORT



Miguel Discart

The many faces of Antalya





BY CHARMAINE HIBBERT

I am so glad to be featuring Belik, Antalya in this issue of PGR Magazine, with the earthquake having hit northern Turkiye in early February. The government there will need all the help it can get, and you can play your part by visiting this beautiful country. Istanbul is a wonderful city to visit, but the main focus for tourism is in the south and Belek in Antalya is the perfect destination for golfers. In this issue, James will review four golf courses and I will be reviewing the wonderful Gloria Serenity Resort's hotel and spa.

Our trip was arranged with Jet2.com and we certainly had an amazing time, with wonderful weather, lip-smackingly fantastic gastronomy, perfect accommodation, hotel facilities and of course some great golf courses for you to test

your skills on.

Belek is the home of golf in Turkiye and in 2012 hosted the Turkish Airlines World Golf Final. Since 2013, the area has hosted the European Tour's Turkish Airlines Open. For tennis lovers Belek also hosts the Antalya Open, the only professional tennis tournament currently held in Turkey.

There are over thirty 4-star and 5-star hotels in Belek, and the town and the surrounding area is famous for its spas and mineral waters that come from seven springs.

### HISTORY:

Off the golf course you can visit the Kurşunlu Waterfall, which is home to over 100 different bird species. The hidden cave at the back of the

waterfall is another popular tourist destination.

The Hellenistic city of Perge is not too far from Belek and is home to the Aspendos amphitheatre that can hold over 20,000 spectators. The ancient amphitheatre is over 2,000 years old, and still hosts open-air classical ballet and opera festivals today. The Roman ruins at Perge are some of the best-preserved archaeological sites in Turkiye.

There are numerous water activities in the Belek and Antalya area with plenty of boat trips available and lots of historical sites to visit. And The Land of Legends Shopping Avenue is a must visit with its many shops, restaurants, theme parks, shows and events. →

**Below left and top middle: The Roman ruins at Perge**  
**Top right: Aspendos amphitheatre**  
**Bottom middle: Antalya Harbour**  
**Bottom right: Phaselis Cove**

"The ancient amphitheatre is over 2,000 years old, and still hosts open-air classical ballet and opera festivals today. The Roman ruins at Perge are some of the best-preserved archaeological sites in Turkiye"





# TALKING TÜRKIYE

The first golf course may have only been designed in Belek back in 1994, but James Mason discovers that golf in this part of Türkiye certainly hit the ground running





## GLORIA NEW

It has been a long wait to tee it up in Turkiye, but I am standing on the 1st tee on the Gloria New course and to say I am excited would be an understatement. The course looks in fantastic condition as I smash my driver down the fairway. As I make my way onto the dance floor after navigating over the three bunkers that protect the front of the green, I can already see that there are some nice contours, with the possibility of some very tricky pin positions. The greens are slow, but roll perfectly and they can be sped up to a rapid pace for competitions.

The first of the par 5s arrives at the 2nd weighing in at 567 yards, and has bunkers protecting both sides of the fairway in the landing zone for the different length of the players from the tee. I love the crack my clubhead makes as it makes contact with the ball and echos round the funnel of pine trees that you have to play through.

The first of the par 3s arrives at the 3rd hole and depending on your teeing option – there are four teeing options here – it can play anywhere between 189 yards from the white tees to 127 yards from the reds. You play over a rock wall feature to a raised green that is framed by umbrella type pine trees; it really is a beautifully designed golf hole.

The front nine has three par 5s and the final one arrives at the 9th. It measures 528 yards and has water running down the right-hand side. The same body of water runs down the left of the 18th hole, but unlike the 9th you may have to carry this if you put your ball in the wrong position and want to go for the green in two.

The back nine opens up with another tight driving hole through the pines. The first of three par 3s on the back nine arrives at the 12th, with water featuring on both the 15th and 17th par 3s – the latter being the course's signature hole. played to an island green that is reached by a wooden bridge and can measure anywhere between 98 yards and 162 yards, it really is a bit of a show stopper as you not only have the water to carry, but there is a bunker that wraps round the front and left of the green with another bunker on the right.

I walk off the 18th green with a big smile on my face, not only from holing my birdie putt, but it has been a wonderful mornings golf in the sun on a well designed golf course.



**YOU PLAY OVER A  
 ROCK WALL FEATURE  
 TO A RAISED GREEN  
 THAT IS FRAMED BY  
 UMBRELLA TYPE PINE  
 TREES, IT REALLY IS A  
 BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED  
 GOLF HOLE**



COURSE  
 VIDEO 

Top left: Looking onto the 1st green  
 Above top: Looking back down the fairway at the 11th  
 Above middle: Water feature at the Par 3 15th  
 Above bottom: Water at the par 5 18th. Left: 2nd green with the par 3 3rd in the background





COURSE  
VIDEO

Far left: Risk and  
reward par 5 1st  
Left: The beautiful  
par 3 2nd

**I HAVE ENJOYED PLAYING BOTH COURSES, THE OLD DOES COME OUT ON TOP FOR ME, BUT IF I ONLY GOT TO PLAY THE NEW I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T BE DISAPPOINTED AS THEY ARE BOTH WONDERFULLY DESIGNED GOLF COURSES**

### GLORIA OLD

After the perfect golfers lunch of a steak sandwich and a few cold beers I crash my drive down the 1st hole on the Old course and to be honest I am already impressed with the design. There are four umbrella pines at the edge of the water and if you place your ball in the right position you can have crack at the green on this risk and reward opening par 5 hole, which weighs in at 527 yards – and like the New course there are four teeing options here.

There is a beautifully designed stone wall that fronts the green from the fairway, which I have managed to hit and watch my ball bounce back into the water – all risk and no reward for me going for the green in two!

The first of two par 3s on the front nine comes at the 2nd and again is another aesthetically pleasing design, measuring 192 yards played over water to a green that has a stone wall similar to the first hole and a bunker at the back of the green. The second of the par 3s on this nine arrives at the 7th and again plays over water and measures 127 to 199 yards.

Water also comes into play at the 8th, where it runs down the right side of the fairway and

is again risk and reward with your second shot if you are going for the green in two. You not only have the water to carry but also a bunker that wraps itself around the front of the green. Like the new course this morning there are three par 5 on the front nine of the old course and the final one is framed by pines and brings this nine to a close.

The back nine opens up with a short par 3 at 154 yards, but there are three of them on this nine and there are some fantastic par 4s before you get to what would in my opinion vie for signature hole status with the 2nd hole on this course, is the par 3 14th. Again played over water and measuring 195 yards with a large bunker wrapping itself around the front and left of the green and a bunker right, for me the 2nd gets that accolade but I am sure you may see it differently.

The final par 3, unusually, brings the course to a close, but I have enjoyed playing both courses. The Old does come out on top for me, but if I only got to play the New I certainly wouldn't be disappointed as they are both wonderfully designed golf courses.



Above: Looking  
down the 6th  
Top right: Pines  
surrounding the  
9th green  
Right: Pines lining  
the 12th fairway  
Far right: 13th  
green with the  
7th green in the  
background



## CULLINAN LINKS: OLYMPOS

This morning we are heading to the newly named Cullinan Links Golf Club that was formerly known as the Titanic Golf Club and we are teeing off on the 10th hole of the Olympos course. However, I am going to start this review from the front nine and how the course should be played. And looking down the first I am looking forward to playing this nine as this seems like it would be the links nine because the holes on this part of the course run next to the sea.

The opening hole sees you heading towards the sea and it is a wonderfully designed hole framed with sparsely placed umbrella pines, with one sitting in the middle of the fairway. You then play to a green that is framed by white-sanded bunkers.

To be honest, all I can say about the three holes that run alongside of the beach is that they get you to the 383-yard 5th hole, which is a wonderful hole that has the river running all along the left-hand side of the fairway and looks amazing with the white sand of the fairway bunkers glistening in the sun against a mountain backdrop.

The 6th hole plays slightly uphill and then down to the green that has the sea behind it. The 358-yard 9th brings this nine to a close and plays back towards the clubhouse. There is water and a water fountain feature beyond the hill on the right but I hadn't realised this was in play so I am now taking a penalty drop and hit a wedge into the green. It's a great hole to bring the front nine to a close.

The back nine has more of a feel of yesterday with umbrella pines framing the fairway and it already feels different to the front nine. The 11th runs uphill similar to the 6th on the front nine but with pines each side of the fairway. Then you play down to the green with the sea as a backdrop and, at 317 yards, it could be in range for the longer hitters out there.

The 12th brings up the first of the par 3s on this nine, but it is the par 3 16th that is the pick of the bunch on this course. Played over water to a green that has plenty of contours in it, there are lots of tricky pin placements available.

The 14th and 15th holes that get you to the 16th hole are I feel two of the best holes on the course. Framed by pines, the 14th is a par 5 played slightly uphill doglegging to the right off the tee and then moves back to the left



**THE 11TH RUNS UPHILL SIMILAR TO THE 6TH ON THE FRONT NINE BUT WITH PINES EACH SIDE OF THE FAIRWAY. THEN YOU PLAY DOWN TO THE GREEN WITH THE SEA AS A BACKDROP**

with the green being framed by pines and three gleaming bunkers, two left and one right.

The 15th goes in the opposite direction and is played from an elevated tee with the fairway funnelling through the pines and moving slightly from right to left. The course comes to a close with the 489 yard par 5 and gives you a great birdie or even eagle opportunity, and with the green sitting just below the clubhouse veranda it is a wonderfully designed final hole.

Walking off the course I feel conflicted as I did enjoy the course and like the design of most of the holes. I think I was just a little underwhelmed by the sea holes on the front nine, although the back nine certainly made up for those holes and more.

**COURSE VIDEO**

Top left: The lone pine on the 1st fairway. Top right: Mountain backdrop on the 6th hole. Middle right: Sloping 6th green surrounded by pines. Right: Looking back up the 15th





**IT FEELS LIKE THE COURSE MUST BE ONE OF THE ORIGINAL COURSES IN THE BELEK AREA AS IT LOOKS VERY MATURE. IT IS ONLY LATER ON THAT I DISCOVER THAT THE COURSE ACTUALLY OPENED FOR PLAY IN 2006!**

### **CORNELIA GC: QUEEN**

After a very tasty cheese burger we head off to Cornelia Golf Club, which is made up of the three nine hole loops named Tiberius 1-9, Sempronia 10-18 and Gaius 19-27. The Queen course is made up of holes 10-27 and that is the course we are going to play.

Standing on the elevated tee of the 377-yard 10th hole – and like the other courses there are four teeing options – it feels like the course must be one of the original courses in the Belek area as it looks very mature. It is only later on that I discover that the course actually opened for play in 2006!

The one thing you will notice on the opening hole is there are no bunkers. The par 5 11th hole weighs in at a massive 615-yards and is a beast of a hole aptly named “The Long”. I managed to reach the green hitting driver, 3-wood and 4-iron. The first of the par 3s arrives and is named “The Dip” as it is played over a large dip to a green that runs slightly from back to front. It measures 151 yards and has two bunkers at the front. All I will say is don’t be short.

The course meanders through the pines and I am loving every minute of playing it and it

**COURSE VIDEO** 

**Below: The tee shot on the 27th hole named “Lakes”**





really reminds me of some of the classic Surrey courses with its feel and look. I really don't want to pick out holes as they are all great golf holes, but a special mention goes to the 15th and 16th holes named "The Glen" and "Pond" – two stunning golf holes.

On the back nine, starting with "The Black Hill" but on the card as the 19th, keeps the standard going; pine tree-lined, slight dogleg right and played to a raised green. I play my tee shot on the 20th through the trees but as I start to head to the fairway the hole suddenly opens

out with water on the right replacing the trees, which I hadn't noticed from the tee.

The first par 3 on the back nine arrives at the 21st named "The Pots" and it is a beautiful hole played to a raised green that has three bunkers protecting the front and one back left. I am not sure how, but the course seems to shift up another gear as we move into the golden hour and the sun starts to turn orange and the light and shadows bounce off and through the trees.

By the time I get to the 27th hole named "Lakes" I am standing on the elevated tee with

water to carry, which then runs down the right-side of the fairway all the way to the green. At 481 yards its one tough par 4 and in this light it looks amazing. Walking off the green after making my putt for par, I look back at the orange orb that is bathing the course in its wonderful light as it starts to set. It is the perfect ending to a golf course that you really do need to play. It may be young in age, but it sits in the land like it has been here forever and it has been a joy to play.

Below: Looking down on the 11th green. Bottom left: Water feature on the 24th hole Bottom right: The 27th green with the 20th green in the background

I LOOK BACK AT THE ORANGE ORB THAT IS BATHING THE COURSE IN ITS WONDERFUL LIGHT AS IT STARTS TO SET, IT IS THE PERFECT ENDING TO A GOLF COURSE THAT YOU REALLY DO NEED TO PLAY



## JOURNEY PLANNER

### GETTING THERE:

**Jet2holidays**  
 W: [jet2holidays.com](https://jet2holidays.com)  
 T: +44 800 408 0778

### WHERE TO STAY

**Gloria Serenity Resort**  
 W: [gloria.com.tr](https://gloria.com.tr)  
 T: +90 242 710 23 00

### WHERE TO EAT

**Nemo, Land of Legends Restaurant**  
 W: [nemorestaurants.com](https://nemorestaurants.com)  
 T: +90 505 178 13 46

**Parklak Restaurant**  
 W: [parklakrestaurant.com](https://parklakrestaurant.com)  
 T: +90 242 241 65 53

**Arma Restaurant**  
 W: [armarestaurant.com.tr](https://armarestaurant.com.tr)  
 T: +90 242 244 97 10

### WHERE TO PLAY

**Gloria New Golf Course**  
 T: +90 850 477 0 447  
 W: [gloria.com.tr](https://gloria.com.tr)

**Gloria Old Golf Course**  
 T: +90 850 477 0 447  
 W: [gloria.com.tr](https://gloria.com.tr)

**Cullinan Links Golf Club**  
 T: +90 242 725 53 03  
 W: [titanicgolfclub.com](https://titanicgolfclub.com)

**Cornelian Golf Club**  
 T: +90 242 710 16 00  
 W: [corneliareSORT.com](https://corneliareSORT.com)





## GLORIA SERENITY RESORT

**Belek, Türkiye**

By **CHARMAINE HIBBERT**

After a long wait at Antalya airport for our luggage we are now on our way to Gloria Serenity Resort which takes us about 40 minutes. Following a four-hour flight and the wait, it was good to see a smiling face welcome us at reception and even better news when he says to give him our passports and go and get a drink and he will organise the rest. Perfect.

So a few drinks later and what turned out to be one amazing cheese burger – our snack became a full on meal! – I am heading up to my room in a glass lift and first impressions are that I am going to really enjoy my stay at the Gloria Serenity Resort.

Opening the door to my room, a smile breaks out across my face as on the table is some chocolate and fresh fruit. But not any chocolates; one of them is in a shape of a camera and looks way too good to eat. But you know I am going to give it a try after the obligatory face dive into the pillows. The freshness just adds to my now already happy mood and has put the wait for my luggage at the airport to the back of my mind.

The mini bar is fully stocked and free as this is an all-inclusive resort. The bathroom with its glass doors to the shower and toilet and the spa toiletries and large mirror give the bathroom a luxurious feel and even more so when I spot the jetted Jacuzzi tub. Now I know that I will be →

Top: Sea view bar and relaxation areas

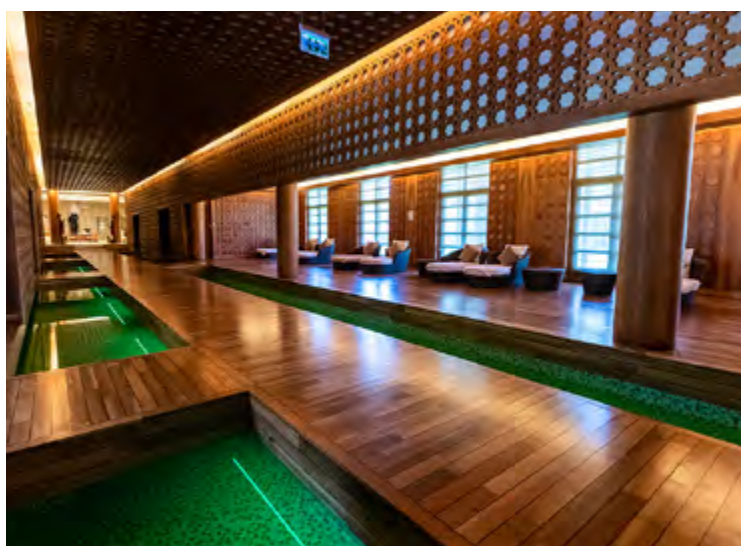
Below: My resort room

# THE BALLAD OF SERENITY

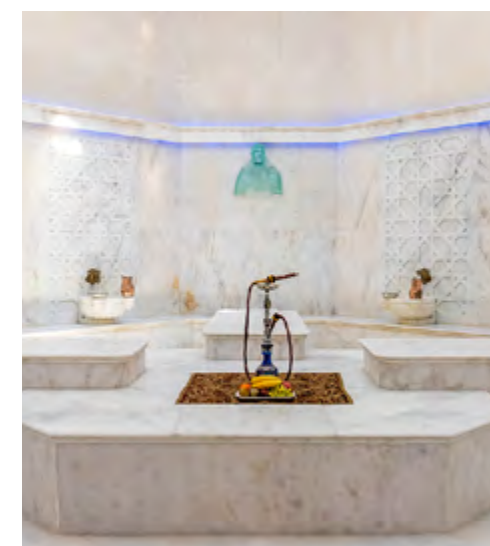
After a long wait for luggage at the airport, **Charmaine Hibbert** was desperate for the Gloria Serenity resort to live up to its name







Top row Left to right: Steakhouse 09, Japanese restaurant Teppanyaki01, Al fresco dining at River Landing A La Carte Restaurant.  
Bottom row left to right: Serenity spa relaxation area, treatment room and Turkish bath



giving that a good workout.

I head to the balcony and even though it is dark the swimming pool lights below are giving me a tantalising glimpse of what tomorrow holds when I open my curtains.

After a wonderful night's sleep and shower, I head to open the curtains. That view now turns out to be not only of the pool below that wraps itself round the resort so you can continuously swim instead of doing laps, but also of the sea before me which heads off into the distance. I sit in one of the two chairs just taking a moment to soak it all in.

## RESTAURANTS

There are eight restaurants and seven bars on the resort, and you can sample cuisines from around the world including Aegean, Asian, French, Italian, Japanese and Turkish. Several are used for breakfast and we have

made Route 66 our breakfast hub for the week.

As we arrive, the staff bring over fresh salads, cheeses, cold meats, various breads and croissants, but I can't take my eyes off the fresh block of honey, and I can see James eyeing that up as well. I open one of the warm croissants and fill it with the fresh honey and my taste buds dance with delight.

I order the French toast, which comes with fresh fruit and is accompanied by the freshly squeezed orange juice. Today's breakfast couldn't have gone much better.

## SERENITY SPA

James has requested that I try the golf massage, which I am happy to do. As I arrive, I can see the pool and relaxation rooms and I meet my masseuse, who shows me to the locker rooms and waits while I change.

She then leads me to one of the treatment rooms. The golf massage is a 30-minute feet, legs, arms and back massage, in which lots of oil is used and I realise how good the massage is when I start to drift in and out of sleep. When I wake up it's because she has started a deep massage into my calves and then I wake again when she starts to work on my lower back. As always, the massage is over way too quickly, but she leads me to the relaxation area and gives me some water to drink.

After 10 minutes or so I decide that I am going to enjoy the steam and sauna rooms and in between the ice-cold jetted shower. At first, I nearly jump out of my skin with how cold it is, but surprisingly I'm getting used to it and look forward to them as I sit in the steam and sauna rooms. There is also a Turkish bath here but, unfortunately, I don't have time to try it. →





Top left and left: Serenity resort views of the rooms and villas. Bottom left: The stage and lighting where the Gloria resorts music festival was held

## FACILITIES

Being so close to the sea for research purposes only, I decide to sample swimming in the warm waters of the sea which I really enjoyed. What I never enjoy is the sand, but there are showers and taps to try and wash away the sand, although you know it is never going to get all of it off.

The good news is there are cabanas with staff who bring you drinks and food, or you can sit and people watch at one of the many beach bars.

James informs me there is a fantastic gym on site – I obviously got my exercise while swimming in the sea – and a beautiful indoor pool as well as the outside pools of which there are three including an Aqua park.

Apart from golf and tennis, you can indulge in table tennis, darts, kangoo jump, game centre, football, beach volleyball and boccia besides various water sports including water skiing, catamarans, ringo, banana boat rides,, parasailing and jet skiing. There are also classes for pilates, yoga, Zumba,

step aerobics and spinning.

## NIGHTLIFE

Apart from the many wonderful restaurants where most have in and outdoor eating areas, there is a stage with lighting, smoke, lasers etc that would be big enough to accommodate Bruce Springsteen and all his E Street Band!

This is my second show while I have been here and tonight is part of Gloria Resorts' music festival that runs for three days in mid-September and features a band from Cyprus that has played non-stop for hours. There are dancers on stilts and trapeze dancers in the audience as well as those on stage. Look out for that festival this year; it is a shame we are only able to sample this first night of the festival, but I can imagine - going by what we are seeing - that it will be an amazing weekend.

## CONCLUSION

The Gloria Serenity Resort has everything that you would need: amazing food, great entertainment, and facilities. You can do as much or as little as you want and with the resort being all-inclusive you can drink and eat all you want 24 hours a day. Throw in Turkish hospitality and the beautiful year-round weather and you really do have the perfect destination.

### Gloria Serenity Resort

Belek Mah. Turizm Cad. No: 12B/B, 07506 Serik/Antalya, Türkiye

T: +90 242 710 23 00

W: [gloria.com.tr](http://gloria.com.tr)





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REVIEW



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**39** RAM TOUR GRIND



**41** PODO





# Farleigh

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### Option 2 £630

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plus 3 x complimentary  
green fee vouchers

All complimentary green fee vouchers are redeemable  
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Register online at [www.farleighfox.co.uk/  
membership/flexiblemembership](http://www.farleighfox.co.uk/membership/flexiblemembership)



Contact Michael Day on 01883 627711  
or email [michael@farleighfox.co.uk](mailto:michael@farleighfox.co.uk)



# NO PAIN MORE GAIN

Titleist claim that the new aerodynamic design of the TSR range gives you more distance without having to increase your swing speed. James Mason hits the fairways with the TSR3 model







## TECHNOLOGY

The design philosophy of the new Titleist TSR3 is to help give you a bigger sweet spot, while also increasing your clubhead speed with the same amount of effort you normally use and this is achieved by giving the clubhead shape a more aerodynamic design.

How the advances in the clubheads aerodynamics have been achieved is by making the sole of the club smoother, the hosel is half the size and with a few other subtle changes the guys at Titleist have helped you increase your clubhead speed, but without you having to put in more effort.

The refined SureFit Adjustable CG Track System makes it easier for you to create a more focused hitting point, so depending where you normally strike the ball on the face, be that in the centre, towards the toe or heel, you can move the weight behind that point, which then puts all the power you generate with your swing right behind the ball.

This works with the Speed Ring VFT Technology which has given the driver a conical variable face thickness, which has helped increase the size of the sweet spot.





## CONCLUSION

I took the TSR3 out with me to Mauritius and loved it. I really like the way it sits behind the ball, the simple design with no glaring graphics. Even the SureFit Adjustable CG track seems to effortlessly blend into the head.

The sound at impact is solid and most importantly the ball flight and distance gained from the increased

ball speed are all pluses.

I do wish the SureFit Hosel adjustability was easier to navigate, but I do understand why and with 16 different options, it certainly does give you the perfect set up for your swing.

So, if you are in the market for a new driver, make sure the Titleist TSR3 is on your testing list. I was certainly impressed and I know you will be too.

## CLUB TESTED ▶

### Titleist TSR3 Driver

**LOFT** 10°

**SHAFT** Project X Hzrdus Red CB 50

**FLEX** 6.0 stiff

**SET UP** B1

**RRP** £529 / €649/ \$799.99





# WHEN GIANTS WALKED THE EARTH

Led Zeppelin ruled our airwaves and rocked stadiums across America, while Tom Watson, Ray Floyd and Gary Player ruled the fairways mopping up Major Championships both sides of the Atlantic with their Ram golf equipment. Unfortunately Led Zeppelin haven't as yet announced a reunion tour, but Ram Golf equipment is certainly back with a mighty bang





## TECHNOLOGY

The new FX77 irons expand the Ram Golf range and this muscle-backed iron has an elegant, clean design. The dual material construction of the head uses engineered 431 stainless steel which helps to improve forgiveness on off-centre strikes. It comes with a constructed 17-4 stainless steel hot face helping the ball come off the face faster.

The FX77 is a hollow head design allowing for a lower centre of gravity, giving the club more stability through impact.

Ram have gone for a quality KBS Tour 90 shaft, which is KBS's lightest shaft of

their line-up and is designed to give a higher trajectory ball flight and faster swing speeds.

Although still firm, the Tour 90 shaft has a softer tip and a higher centre of gravity, which helps players get the ball in the air and add distance and is perfect for those who have a lower smoother swing speed and tempo.

## CONCLUSION

I took the new Ram Golf FX77 irons on a testing trip to Mauritius and I have to say I was certainly impressed when I pulled them out of the box and so too were a lot of the South African

journalists that were there, also covering the Afrasia Bank Mauritius Open.

I liked the way the club sat behind the ball and for a game improvement iron the top line wasn't too chunky. I felt the head size was perfect and worked well with the wider sole design which certainly helps turf interaction.

The clincher for me was putting in a quality KBS Tour 90 shaft and with it being the lightest shaft in the KBS range this will help players to increase their swing speed and give them a higher launch, which is perfect especially for the shorter scoring irons.

I would say put these on your testing list, but at the moment you can only purchase them online and choose from a variety of options. They include regular, stiff and extra stiff shafts. The grip options are men's standard or oversize and ladies/small. The shaft length adjustments are -1" to +1" in 1/4 increments. They also come in a black option and I love the look of those, but the big selling point has to be the price. The Ram FX77 irons are certainly great value for money and especially for those new to the game. You can get yourself a quality set of irons at a decent price.

## CLUB TESTED

**Ram FX77 Irons**

**SET UP** 4-Pw

**SHAFT** KBS Tour 90

**FLEX** Stiff

**RRP** £299.99 / €339.99/ \$399.99

Left to right:  
Various views of  
the Ram FX77 Iron  
in both steel and  
black finishes





# BACK IN BLACK

To accompany the new FX77 irons Ram have also released the Tour Grind wedges, which come in a black or chrome finish. But how did they perform under playing conditions in Mauritius?





### TECHNOLOGY

The Ram Tour Grind wedges have a teardrop design and are made from a 8620 mild carbon for better feel and consistency around the green, while also helping with durability.

The milled face works with the wider shallower milled grooves, help give the wedges an optimum spin rate to give you better control around the green.

There are six loft, lie and bounce options to choose from, ranging from 50° – 60° with bounce options of 5° – 11° so you are able to find a wedge option that works for you and the type of course you regularly play on.

### CONCLUSION

I took the 50° that has a 5° bounce and the 54° with the 11° bounce with me on a testing trip to Mauritius and, like the Ram FX77 Irons, I really enjoyed playing with them. The feel off the face is slightly harder than I am used to, but the amazing spin and control they gave me around the green certainly made up for that, especially when you start to factor in the price comparison compared to some of the top brands.

As I keep stating, wedges should

make up a big part of an amateur golfer's bag especially if you are playing off a double figure handicap, as it means you are probably not hitting greens in regulation. Having plenty of wedge options in your hands from 120 yards and in is only going to help your golf game improve.

With the price point that Ram come in at, being under £45 for a single wedge or under £100 for a set of three, I think buying a set of Ram Tour Grind wedges is a no brainer, if you're playing off a double figure handicap and want to improve. And especially for those who are just coming into the game.

I would suggest the next time you play, mark on the back of your score card how many times during 18 holes you pull out your pitching wedge or sand iron and if it is over 10 times, then you need to have more than two wedges in your bag. The feel and spin rate you get from the Ram Tour Grind and the price point make these wedges a perfect option for you.

### CLUB TESTED ▶

#### Ram Tour Grind Wedges

**SHAFT** Apollo

**FLEX** Regular

**LOFT** 50° and 54°

**BOUNCE** 5° and 11°

**RRP** £44.99 / €50.99/ \$54.99

**SET OF 3** £99.99 / €112.99/ \$79.99





# BREAK PAR NOT THE BANK



**RAM**



# Back in the groove

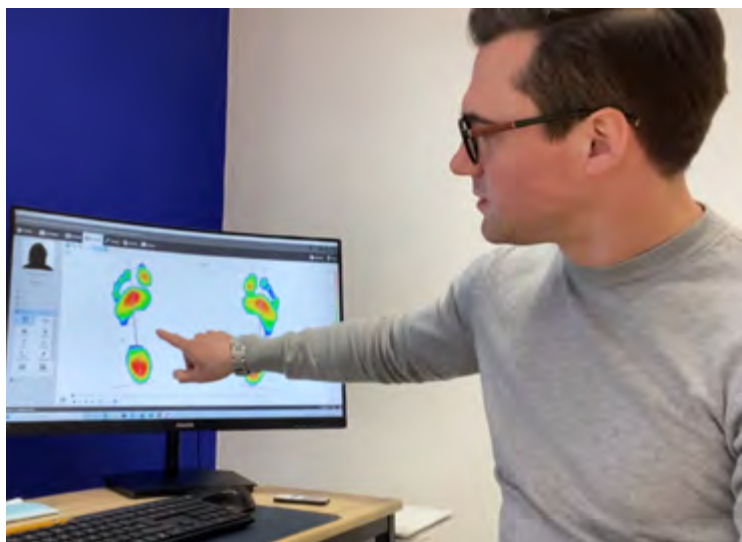
If you play golf regularly, chances are you will have or are suffering with back pain, which most of us grin and bear because we love playing. But could help be at hand?



As I come out of the tube station at Oxford Street and start the five-minute walk to the Podo clinic to meet Christophe Champs who works with many athletes across a variety of sports, I start to wonder how he will be able to help golfers. I am not a great fan of lifts and his clinic is only on the second floor so I walk up the stairs and as I enter the clinic it is not at all what I was expecting.

There is a lot of space, with Christophe's desk in the corner and then some pieces of equipment along the left. We chat about golf and the obvious back issues that come along with years of playing the game.





## AND FOR TOP PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR GOLFERS WANTING TO COMPETE, THINKING CLEARLY AND FEELING LESS FATIGUED AFTER WALKING FOUR-PLUS HOURS COMING DOWN THE LAST HOLE WITH A TITLE ON THE LINE, THAT CAN BE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHOOSING THE RIGHT OR WRONG CLUB/BALL FLIGHT AND WINNING AND LOSING A TOURNAMENT



Christophe starts to get me walking up and down the studio so he can watch from several different angles and then he asks me to stand on some plates.

Your prognosis is going to be different to mine, but I had no idea that I was leaning forward and that my toes slightly claw up to help me maintain my balance. On the positive side I also learn that I am not flat footed, which I always thought I was.

Now the best part of the process is when Christophe kicks into gear and starts to prepare my new inner soles in the studio, taking impressions of my feet on a machine that I would describe as putting your feet in wax, and the gel moulds around them.

He then takes several different materials to make up the various layers for where you need support or to help realign your feet. Or as in my case, push my weight back into my heels and help free my toes from clawing up, which in turn will help my posture and get me standing taller. The whole process for me was about two hours, but this would normally take about 90 minutes as I had a lot more questions about the process for this article.

### CONCLUSION

I have now been using the inner soles since November 2022 and I suppose the headline fact is I used to stretch every night and still do, but if I missed a night then back pain would start to kick in the next day. Now on a recent press trip to Mauritius – see the upcoming July issue for those features – and over the Christmas holidays, it wasn't always possible to stretch every night and this happened several nights in a row. The reason I could go a second night without stretching was my lack of back pain.

One of the strangest sensations is that I sort of feel lighter, not on the weighing scales, unfortunately. I am not sure an alcohol and sugar-based diet is conducive to that. But, in the way I walk and feel after a round of golf, my legs don't feel as heavy.

From a golfer's point of view, these aren't going to improve your golf swing, but where you will see the benefit is towards the end of your round of golf. I felt less fatigued, and as I said lighter, and that can only be a good thing when it comes to not only executing your golf shots deep into your round, but also helping your pre-

shot thought process, as body fatigue also effects your mental ability to think clearly.

And for top professional and amateur golfers wanting to compete, thinking clearly and feeling less fatigued after walking four-plus hours coming down the last hole with a title on the line, that can be the difference between choosing the right or wrong club/ball flight and winning and losing a tournament.

### PODO Orthotics

28 Mortimer street, 2nd floor,  
W1W 7RD, London

T: +44 20 3301 2900

E: [contact@podo.london](mailto:contact@podo.london)

W: [podo.london](http://podo.london)

### ORTHOTICS TESTED

#### Sports Orthotics

**MATERIALS** Thermo-mouldable

**SIZE** 10

**RRP** £369 / €339.99/ \$399.99

Top to bottom:  
Various stages of  
the sports orthotics  
consultation with  
Christophe Champs



## PRO TIP



**PAUL BABBAGE**  
PGA Professional  
Farleigh Golf Club  
T: +44 1883 627711  
W: [farleighfox.co.uk](http://farleighfox.co.uk)  
E: [paul@farleighfox.co.uk](mailto:paul@farleighfox.co.uk)

**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
Instagram: [paulbabbagegolf](https://www.instagram.com/paulbabbagegolf)  
Facebook: [Paul Babbage](https://www.facebook.com/PaulBabbage)

**ALGARVE COACHING TRIP  
WITH PAUL BABBAGE**  
October 2023

### 4-NIGHT ITINERARY:

**Day 1** - arrive - Welcome dinner  
**Day 2** - 3 hours coaching (driving range & short game), followed by lunch, then 18 holes  
**Day 3** - 3 hours coaching (driving range & short game), followed by lunch, then 18 holes  
**Day 4** - 3 hours coaching (driving range & short game), followed by lunch, then 18 holes and a Farewell dinner in the evening  
**Day 5** - depart

**FULL DETAILS CONTACT:**  
E: [natalie@front9travel.com](mailto:natalie@front9travel.com)  
T: 01342 653093  
W: [front9golf.com](http://front9golf.com)

# CHIPPING FROM TIGHT LIES

As we move into spring you will encounter variations in grass growth around the green, producing many tight or bare lies **Paul Babbage** shows you how to execute the perfect chip shot from these types of lies



**Step one:** Stance width 3,6 inches with ball positioned opposite right heel.



**Step two:** Have 70% weight on left leg and try to make sure left shoulder is ahead or in front of left hip



**Step three:** Short, positive, swing and turn back and through - hands shouldn't go past waist height

**Step four:** To control distance apply the above but change club, depending on where the flag is



**Video watch:** A smooth swing, balance, rotating the body and focusing on the ball are keys to a crisp contact





## PRO TIP



**SHAIN JOHNSON**  
PGA Professional  
Farleigh Golf Club  
T: +44 1883 627711  
W: [farleighfox.co.uk](http://farleighfox.co.uk)  
E: [shain@farleighfox.co.uk](mailto:shain@farleighfox.co.uk)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram: [@shainjohnsongolf](https://www.instagram.com/shainjohnsongolf)  
Twitter: [@shainJGolf](https://twitter.com/shainJGolf)  
YouTube: [shainjohnsongolf](https://www.youtube.com/shainjohnsongolf)

# YOU'VE GOT THE POWER

Power in the golf swing doesn't come from the arms and in fact this creates a negative outcome **Shain Johnson** explains how this simple drill will help you add a better strike and power and to your golf game



Here is a drill I like to use to help golfers get a better weight shift in their swing, as well as getting the right sequence of how to start their downswing. Many amateurs like to create power using their arms this creates a negative outcome by actually losing power

**Step one:** Take your normal stance



As well as getting a correct weight shift in the swing it's a good way to unleash some good power. This all starts from the ground up on the way down. I find this drill very effective, which has helped many of my players along their journey

**Step two:** Move your leading foot back next to your back foot



If you find you fall into this category, give this a go. One thing I will say is don't rush it, get the movement and sequence correct

**Step Three:** Now make your normal smooth swing moving forward and stepping into the ball to create better contact

**"One thing I will say is don't rush it, get the movement and sequence correct"**



**Video watch:** Practice is key to creating a solid, powerful strike



# LONDON CALLING

Well Kent & Surrey Golf Alliance really but why let that get in the way of a good headline!

KASGA (Kent & Surrey Golf Alliance) is a charitable golf society with over 70 members. We support the charity CALM who are tackling men's mental health and suicide. [Find out more by clicking here...](#)

We are looking for companies who wish to get involved in sponsoring us, partnering with us or wish to donate prizes for our charity raffles. All money we raise goes to CALM via our JustGiving page [click this link here](#)

Our events for 2023 are as follows:

- Sweetwoods Park Golf Club – 10th June 2023
- Westerham Golf Club – 8th July 2023
- Galway – 15th – 17th September 2023
- Lydd Golf Club – 4th November 2023
- Princes Golf Club – 1st December 2023

Any support would be appreciated and will help us to raise more money and awareness for this worthy cause.



Website: [kasga.co.uk/#Get-in-touch](https://kasga.co.uk/#Get-in-touch)

Instagram: [@kasga2020](https://www.instagram.com/kasga2020)





**48** PINEHURST RESORT



REVIEW



**52** DUBAI CREEK RESORT



VIEW.COM

STAY, PLAY & SPA



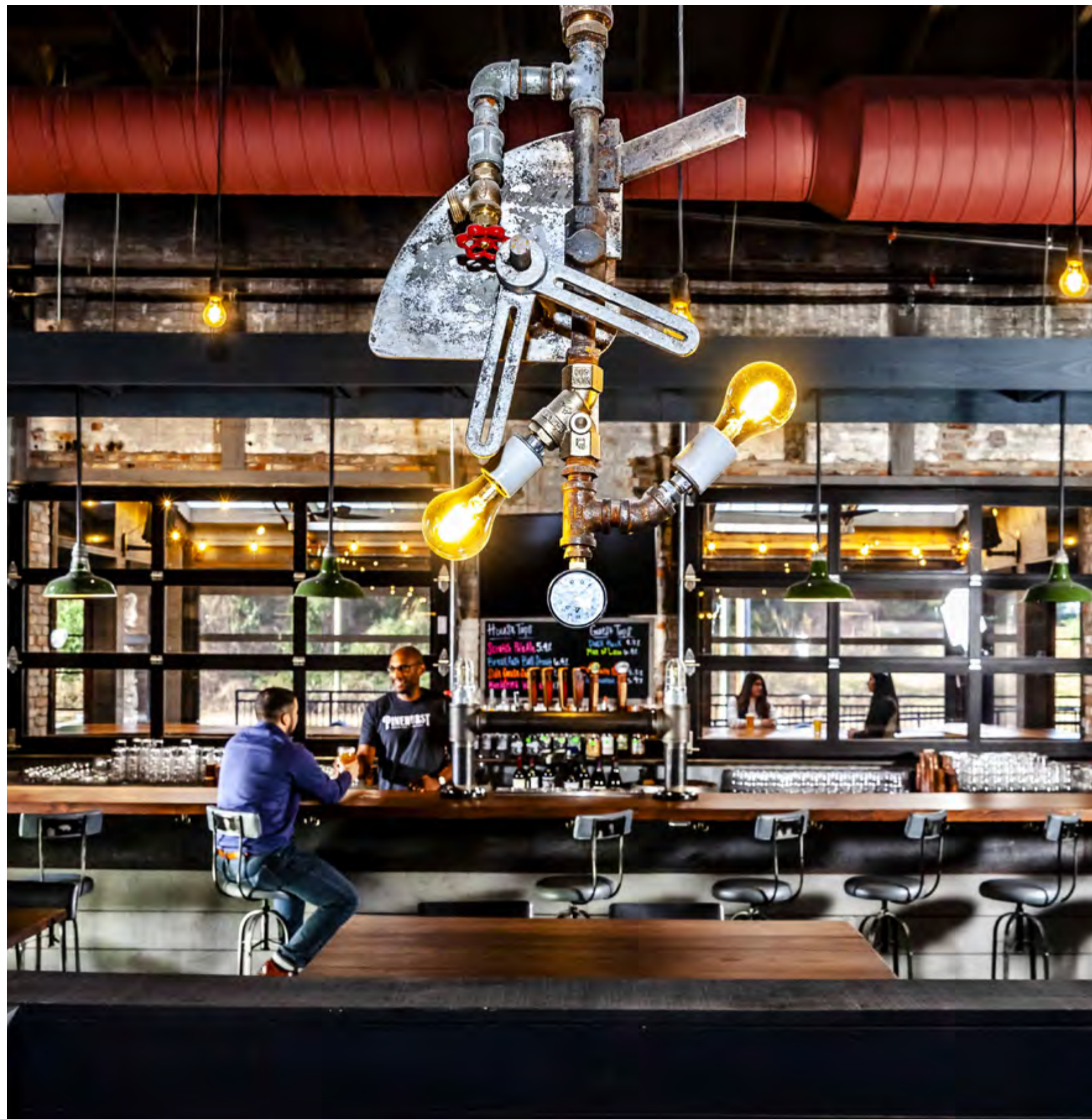
## PINEHURST RESORT

North Carolina, USA

By PETER ELLEGARD

# QUEEN OF THE SOUTH

An icon for almost 120 years and where legendary Scots designer Donald Ross created some of golf's most hallowed fairways and greens, America's Cradle of Golf has **Peter Ellegard** under its spell







***“The Village of Pinehurst was in its infant stage, created originally as a New England-style health retreat of cottages and hotels amidst pine-scented woods”***

Above: Pinehurst  
Brewing Company  
Below: The Carolina  
hotel

It’s known as America’s Cradle of Golf, and for good reason. It was in the sandhills of central North Carolina that a then unknown Donald Ross arrived in 1900, having left his native Scotland and spent a year in Boston after serving as apprentice to Old Tom Morris at St Andrews.

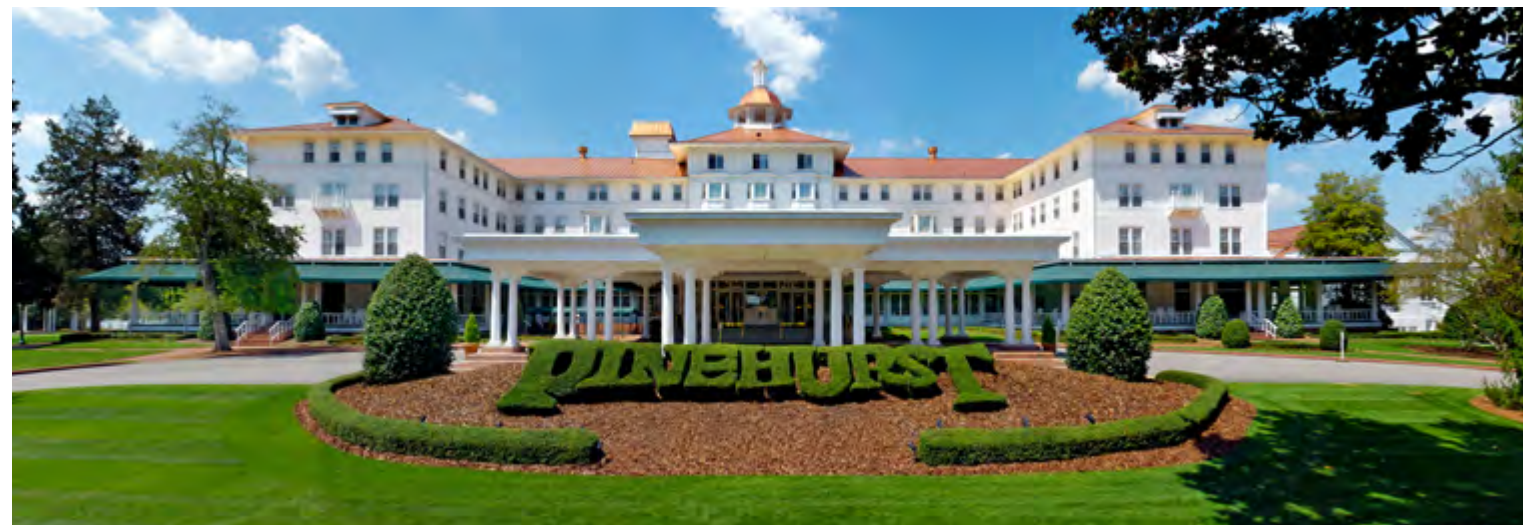
At that time, the Village of Pinehurst was in its infant stage, created originally as a New England-style health retreat of cottages and hotels amidst pine-scented woods by its founder, James Walker Tufts – the man who convinced Dornoch-born Ross to move from Boston to become the area’s first golf professional.

But even with nine 18-hole courses, and

work soon to start on a 10th by Tom Doak and due to open in spring 2024, Pinehurst Resort is much more than just about golf. It is, as its founder intended, a place to relax and recharge your batteries in the sunshine of the Tar Heel State.

One of four hotels at Pinehurst Resort, The Carolina is an elegant and stately Southern belle known as the Queen of the South that first opened its doors to guests in 1901 and is now undergoing major renovations ahead of Pinehurst hosting the 2024 US Open.

In its time, it has attracted famous guests from golf legends to presidents, movie stars and others. Sharpshooter Annie Oakley even ran the Pinehurst Gun Club for 10 years. →





## ROOMS

My heart skips a beat as the minibus taxi pulls into Carolina Vista Drive to reveal the hotel in all its glory, with its grand porticoed entrance behind a low hedge spelling out “Pinehurst”, sweeping, green-roofed verandas and an ornate cupola resembling a Victorian bandstand atop its copper roof. Few hotels make such a stunning first impression.

Inside, The Carolina is just as impressive, accentuating the feeling of stepping back in time but with everything you would expect from a luxury resort.

There are 230 rooms and suites in the hotel, all with pastel décor, while the adjacent Carolina Villas cater to groups of four or more with separate bedrooms and a connecting parlour.

My room, a Deluxe, is airy and spacious and features a comfy king-size bed, armchair, desk, iron and ironing board, in-room safe, coffee machine and a heavenly bathroom with a huge walk-in shower, his and hers sinks and a hairdryer.

You can also stay in the 83-room Holly Inn, the resort’s first hotel that opened in 1895, the Magnolia Inn, built a year later and featuring eight guest rooms renovated in 2022, and The Manor, 100 years old this year and reopened after a year-long renovation. It offers two private hospitality suites and a library and suits groups.

## RESTAURANTS AND BAR

Pinehurst Resort has a range of dining and drinking venues to suit every taste.

The Carolina Dining Room has just reopened after renovation and offers Southern gourmet food but with a relaxed dress code.

The Ryder Cup Lounge, also in The Carolina hotel and named for the 1951 Ryder Cup held at Pinehurst, is being revamped and is closed until September. Until then, the bar has been moved to the front of The Carolina Dining Room.

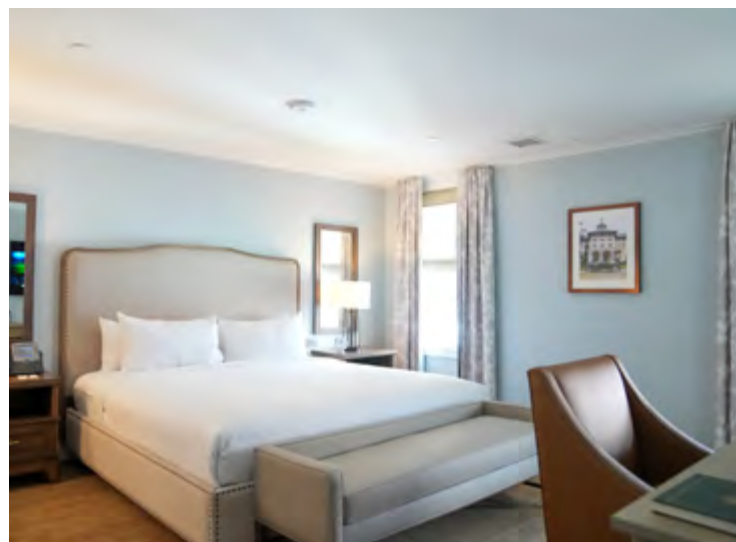
The hotel also has a coffee house open from early morning until 10pm.

Other options at the resort include casual restaurant The Tavern and fine-dining 1895 Grille at the Holly Inn, the Market café and North and South Bar at The Manor, fine Italian dining at the Villaggio Ristorante in the Magnolia Inn and a snack bar and relaxed →

Right: Carolina Reno King

Far right: Carolina Reno Suite

Below and bottom: Fine dining  
Bottom right: North and South Bar





***"I adored my time here, from sitting on a veranda sipping wine at dusk to my endless putts for par or bogey cascading off the slick, sloping greens. In short, I discovered the spirit of Pinehurst"***

indoor and outdoor dining at The Deuce in the resort clubhouse.

Barbecue food and pizzas are served up along with craft beer brewed on site at the Pinehurst Brewing Company, set in the resort's historic steam plant building.

### SPA AND WELLNESS

The Spa at Pinehurst is a calming oasis of relaxation, featuring a saline lap pool, sauna, eucalyptus steam room and a range of massage therapies, including a 50-minute Golfer's Massage, as well as facials, body treatments, pedicures and manicures. It is open until 6pm daily.

The Carolina hotel's expansive West Lawn area features a large heated pool open from 10am to 10pm, a kiddies' pool, misting pool, fireplace and outdoor whirlpool. The Holly Inn has a quieter and more intimate pool.

Free for all resort guests and open 24/7, the Pinehurst Fitness Centre is located at the

spa and offers the latest in fitness equipment including treadmills, bikes, cross trainers and weight training machines.

### ACTIVITIES

Being Pinehurst, golf is the main activity on offer. Besides the fabled No 2 and its upturned-saucer greens, there are eight other 18-hole courses as well as 18-hole short course The Cradle designed by Gil Hanse and 18-hole putting course Thistle Dhu, which was America's first miniature course when it opened in 1916.

Outside the clubhouse is a life-size statue of the late, great Payne Stewart recalling his fist-pumping celebration with one foot in the air when he won the 1999 US Open just months before his untimely death in a plane crash.

The sadness of that day couldn't have been echoed more than by the laments played by a lone piper under the clock alongside the clubhouse on my visit.

Among other activities at Pinehurst are tennis, with 16 clay courts at its tennis club, pickleball (a tennis hybrid played on a badminton-sized court), lawn bowls, croquet, biking and e-biking on the Pinehurst Greenway Trail that winds through the Village, as well as swimming, boating, kayaking and fishing on the resort's private lake a short shuttle ride away.

Guests can also enjoy carriage rides of the Village, which was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, who also designed New York's Central Park.

Opposite the Holly Inn are the free-to-enter Tufts Archives, featuring exhibits such as original maps of Donald Ross's courses and photographs of the Village from 1895.

There are boutiques and gift shops to peruse in the Village, while the 33-acre Village Arboretum contains a large lawn area, a pergola garden and three miles of natural walking trails.

### CONCLUSION

Whether you come to pay your respect to the real, and original, Donald and to pit your wits against his amazing creations, and those of the golf courses built since his time, or you just want to soak up the history and atmosphere of America's most historic and revered golf resort, Pinehurst will exceed your expectations.

I adored my time here, from sitting on a veranda sipping wine at dusk to my endless putts for par or bogey cascading off the slick, sloping greens.

In short, I discovered the spirit of Pinehurst.

#### Pinehurst Resort

80 Carolina Vista, Village of Pinehurst  
North Carolina 28374

T: +1 855 235 8507

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



Far left: The Spa at Pinehurst  
Left top: Spa building at dusk  
Left middle: Payne Stewart statue  
Left: Lone piper





## PARK HYATT DUBAI, DUBAI CREEK RESORT

Dubai, UAE

By PETER ELLEGARD

# RIDER OF THE STORM

The last thing on anyone's mind when jetting off to Dubai is rain. But with three days of the stuff lashing down from the heavens, **Peter Ellegard** finds the Park Hyatt Dubai offered more than just shelter from the storm



***“You would be hard-pushed to find a friendlier hotel anywhere. Every member of staff acknowledges you with a smile and greeting. They are also eager to ensure your stay is glitch-free and enjoyable”***

Life doesn't get much better than when your sumptuous hotel room and balcony looks out over a man-made lagoon and beach to a marina full of sleek cruisers and a skyline of soaring towers dominated by the world's tallest building. All that and a top golf course with one of the world's most iconic clubhouses right on your doorstep.

Except when it's raining, which it does torrentially at times for three days of our trip to Dubai. So much so that the Hero Dubai Desert Classic tournament we have come to watch finishes a day later than scheduled because of the rain and our round of golf at the adjacent Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club is cancelled as the course is flooded.

It also lashes down when we play the Earth Course at Jumeirah Golf Estates.

We're staying at the luxury Park Hyatt Dubai, which forms part of the Dubai Creek Resort along with the golf club and its famous

clubhouse shaped like dhow sails.

The resort celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and any disappointment we feel at how the unusually bad weather has impacted our visit is more than made up for by the fabulous hotel, which was named World's Best Golf Hotel in the 2022 World Golf Awards.

You would be hard-pushed to find a friendlier hotel anywhere. Every member of staff acknowledges you with a smile and greeting. They are also eager to ensure your stay is glitch-free and enjoyable. When I report that my desk lamp isn't working and the shower head is leaking before going to lunch, both are fixed by the time I get back to my room less than an hour later.

## ROOMS

Opened in 2005, the hotel blends contemporary design with Mediterranean and Moorish influences and its 223 guest rooms and suites

Bottom left: Terrace view of the downtown Dubai skyline at dusk  
Below: Bar and lounge







Top left: Presidential Suite  
Bottom left: Park Terrace Suite  
Right: Bathroom  
Far right: Park Suite



all feature an outdoor balcony or terrace.

Finding my room is an expedition as it lies at the far end of one wing and getting to it involves negotiating several dogleg corridors and glazed passageways, before taking a lift down one floor. Take the wrong lift and you hit a dead end as only the lobby floor level goes all the way to the ends of corridors.

My travelling companions and I all get lost at some point, as does the trainee receptionist who escorts me to my room with a master key when I accidentally leave my key inside and can't get back in.

The room is beautifully appointed. From the king bed I can look out to Dubai Creek Marina and across the creek to the skyscrapers of downtown Dubai. The compact balcony overlooks the Al Porto beach and lagoon pool, and on the final two mornings the sun allows me to sit outside to enjoy the view.

The bright and airy room has two armchairs and a side table, a desk, an ottoman, a coffee machine and a 42-inch flatscreen TV with cable and satellite channels, although few in English.

A carved, wooden fold-back partition lets natural light flood into the huge bathroom and allows you to see out to the marina from the

twin sinks. A standalone bath occupies the middle of the bathroom and there's a large walk-in shower with a soothing rain shower head and an adjoining walk-in dressing room area. There are two dressing gowns but no slippers, which is rather odd considering the floor is marble and cold to walk on.

Room service and concierge are available 24/7. Wi-Fi is free but, for a top hotel in such a rich country, is surprisingly slow. Video calls are also blocked in the UAE, frustratingly.

## RESTAURANTS AND BAR

The hotel offers a number of dining options. We arrive late on our first day, but even after 10pm the ship-shaped Boardwalk restaurant nestled by the marina is still serving food.

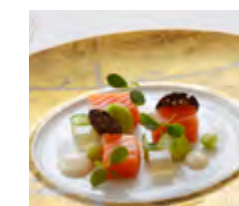
Sampling cocktails to start, we order from the extensive menu. I go for a delicious truffle risotto, a couple of the others have steaks and one goes for a lobster pasta after seeing live lobsters and fish displayed in water-filled tanks.

Lunch one day is at the French Riviera-inspired Twiggy Beach Club restaurant, dining on its terrace. I opt for seafood pasta and it's another winner, as are the sushi and calamari dishes a couple of colleagues try.

***"A carved, wooden fold-back partition lets natural light flood into the huge bathroom and allows you to see out to the marina from the twin sinks. A standalone bath occupies the middle and there's a large walk-in shower with a soothing rain shower head"***



Right: Brasserie du Park restaurant  
Far right top to bottom: Elegantly presented dishes





*“The highlight, though, is the leisurely Argentinean Asado dinner on the Brasserie du Park terrace, where seven courses cooked over an open fire are accompanied by Argentinean Malbec”*



Far left and left:  
Amara Spa  
Below: Hotel exterior  
and Dubai Creek  
Golf and Yacht Club  
clubhouse

Breakfast, both a la carte and buffet, is at the Brasserie du Park and once the sun chases the rainclouds away, we eat outside on the terrace by the marina and its lavish boats.

The highlight, though, is the leisurely Argentinean Asado dinner on the Brasserie du Park terrace, where seven courses cooked over an open fire are accompanied by Argentinean Malbec.

Other dining and drinking outlets include Indian restaurant the Cinnamon Club, Spanish cuisine at Casa de Tapas, Thai food in the Thai Kitchen, New England and Nikkei cuisines in Noepe, Arabic café cuisine and shisha at the Shisha lounge, all-day dining in The Lounge and rare tea blends at the Newby Tea Boutique.

Enjoy sundowners at the Cielo Sky Lounge, Boardwalk and QD’s with the Dubai skyline as a backdrop.

We also have coffee on the terrace below the sails of the clubhouse after playing the short

par 3 course on our final morning.

**SPA AND WELLNESS**

The Amara Spa offers a range of treatments for men, women and couples. They include massages, facials, body therapies such as body scrubs, detox wraps and body exfoliants, and Gharieni experiences using the latest spa equipment that combine nature, science and technology.

The hotel’s gym is kitted out with state-of-the-art Technogym equipment and is open 24 hours to guests. Fitlab provides fitness assessments and tailored programmes by resident personal trainers using cardio and resistance machines as well as free weights.

The 25-metre Amara Pool is dotted with inset palm trees and four whirlpools. Children have a dedicated play area, as they do with the splash pad at the Al Porto pool, which has a beach, and the Lagoon Beach has an infinity





pool. The Clubhouse Pool features a cascading waterfall, diving platform and kiddies pool.

ACTIVITIES

Besides golf on the championship Dubai Creek course and par 3 course, guests can play tennis and padel tennis, or charter a boat from the marina to head past downtown into the Gulf.

The Deira Shopping Centre is within walking distance, while Dubai Mall with its high-end shops, multiple restaurants and attractions including an aquarium and ice rink are located downtown about 20 minutes away.

We visit there and ride up to the topmost viewing gallery of the 160-floor Burj Khalifa, at 828 metres (2,717 feet) the world’s tallest building, accessed from the mall, and watch choreographed fountains dance at night in the Burj Khalifa lake dining in the TimeOut Bar..

A highlight of the trip is the Platinum Heritage desert safari through sand dunes in Murquab 45 minutes from the hotel and close to the Oman border in a veteran open-top Land Rover almost as old as me. That is followed by a falcon display, traditional music and dancing, and a meal of camel meat and other local specialities in a Bedouin camp.

CONCLUSION

Even in the heavy rain we experience – a rare event in Dubai – the Park Hyatt Dubai makes for a hugely enjoyable and relaxing stay.

But it is when the sun shines and the stars twinkle in the clear skies at night that the hotel and Dubai Creek Resort truly come alive with all the outdoor bars, restaurants and activities.

I could sail back there tomorrow. As long as the rain doesn’t come with me!

**Park Hyatt Dubai, Dubai Creek Resort**  
Dubai Creek Club Street, Port Saeed  
PO Box 2822, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**T:** +971 4 602 1234  
**W:** dubaicreekresort.com

Right: Lagoon Beach and Dubai Creek  
Far right: Dusk over the marina and downtown Dubai  
Right below: Buffet station



Right: Dining al fresco  
Far right top: Lounge  
Far right bottom: Cielo at night



ENQUIRES@DIGITALMAGAZINEDESIGN.COM  
DIGITALMAGAZINEDESIGN.COM  
+44 (0)7860 724 897



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